

Equality versus Equity

"We must open the doors and we must see to it they remain open so that others can pass through."

– Rosemary Brown, politician, activist

OFTEN USED INTERCHANGEABLY, THEY HAVE DIFFERENT MEANINGS AND, WHEN ACHIEVED, PRODUCE DIFFERENT RESULTS.



EQUALITY

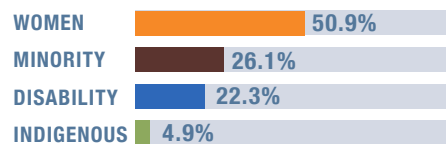
Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.

The aim of equality is perceived fairness in having access to, or distribution of, resources. For example, all people have the right to apply for a job, and each person doing the same job is given the same resources when they start.

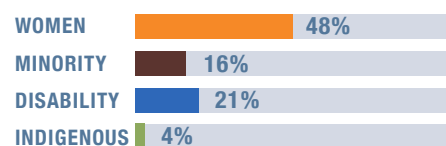


CANADIAN WORKPLACES Equal Opportunity Designated Groups

General Population



Labour Force (Employed)



EQUITY

Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and needs, and allocates resources to provide individuals with equal opportunity for success regardless of their circumstances.

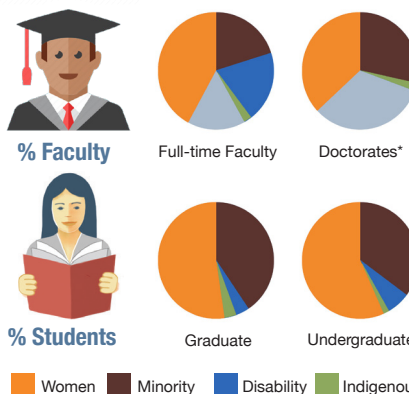
The aim of equity is to distribute power, access, and resources in a way that gives everyone a fair opportunity to achieve the same outcome.

Equality in Education

In Education, equality means all students have access to the same opportunities and resources.

89% CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES THAT REFERENCE EDI IN THEIR STRATEGIC PLANS.

Source: Universities Canada (2023)



Source: Universities Canada (2019) – Equity Diversity and Inclusion at Canadian Universities. *Data on doctorates with disability N/A.

Equity in Education

In Education, equity is the practice of accommodating the individual needs of each student so that regardless of their circumstances, they have the same opportunity as their peers to meet the learning outcomes of the program. Equity aims to achieve better outcomes for all students.

EQUALITY



EQUITY



NEEDS TO ADDRESS TO ACHIEVE EQUITY IN EDUCATION



Disabilities



Race & Ethnicity



Poverty



Access to quality teachers



Family Crisis



Food insecurity and Hunger



Lack of home stability



Abuse



Homeless



English as second language

EQUALITY

Everyone gets the same resources.

Not all people can participate.

EQUITY

Everyone gets what they need.

Everyone can participate.

COMPROMISES THAT NEED TO OCCUR

To achieve equity, resources are not necessarily equally distributed. In a school setting, if all children are given the same resource without thought to individual circumstance, some children may face additional barriers or limited access to the intended goal. For example, if you provide students with learning materials via an audio-video, with no captioning or transcripts, a hearing-impaired student will not have equal access to the learning materials and may struggle to meet learning outcomes.

Teachers need to consider, and ask themselves how they are fostering equity, diversity and inclusion.

Students who use a wheelchair will not be able to use a desk with an attached chair, which may leave them in an uncomfortable seating position and therefore create a barrier to accessing learning that other students may not face.

"What does my classroom look like, sound like and feel like when it is equitable, diverse and inclusive and when instruction is responsive to the full range of student diversity?"
 – Physical and Health Education Canada 2021



By harnessing the ideas and talents of everyone in the research community, we drive innovation, make our country more competitive, and all Canadians benefit.

– The Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality

Resources:

Module Activity: Visualizing Equality vs. Equity. <https://risetowin.org/what-we-do/educate/resource-module/equality-vs-equity/index.html>

Hand to Mind: Equity vs. Equality – Diversity in the Classroom. <https://www.hand2mind.com/blog/equality-vs-equity-in-education>

International Women's Day. <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Missions/18707/Equality-versus-Equity-What-s-the-difference-as-we-EmbraceEquity-for-IWD-2023-and-beyond>

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Dr. Jennifer Jakobi, Rebecca McCullough, Haizley Trevor-Smith, Iryna Molodecky. Supported by the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Chairs for Women in Science BC and Yukon program. We are grateful for Dharshi Lacey (Director, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Anti-Racism) and Kara Ellison's (Human Rights Advisor) thoughtful comments on content, and an earlier draft.



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