



Counterweight

The Counterweight Method

This is the approach that Counterweight recommends people adopt when addressing Critical Social Justice (CSJ) issues at work, school or university. A more in-depth guide can be found [here](#) which we advise everyone to read.

BUILD CONFIDENCE IN YOUR PRINCIPLES

MANY PEOPLE FEEL INSTINCTIVELY THAT CRITICAL SOCIAL JUSTICE APPROACHES ARE UNETHICAL

But it's important that you consider precisely why you find CSJ ideology objectionable and become confident articulating your principled beliefs. Use this [article](#) to begin conceptualising CSJ ideology for what it truly is: a set of beliefs about the nature of unequal outcomes between groups in our society.

Although CSJ proponents endeavour to present their explanations as factual and unquestionable, there are actually many legitimate ways to analyse and address this important issue. At Counterweight, we favour a liberal humanist framework. But how do you understand the subjects CSJ tries to explain? Which of your values and beliefs do you find CSJ in conflict with and why?

What would you do differently to tackle the issues CSJ aims to address? You can use this [article](#) to begin reflecting on these questions and start building confidence expressing your ethical position on these subjects.

START WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF CHARITY

AND AFFIRM SHARED VALUES

CSJ policies are often introduced by well-meaning people who sincerely want to make the world a better place. Because CSJ advocates often position their approach as the only legitimate one, you may also find that policy makers are not aware that ethical alternatives exist. The principle of charity suggests that, in the absence of clear evidence of wrongdoing, we interpret the actions of others in the most charitable way possible.

Unless you know otherwise, begin by approaching CSJ advocates as though they are not aware of the controversial ideological roots of the policies they are pursuing. It's also important to recognise that the good intentions of CSJ policy makers are intended to address real societal problems: racism, sexism and homophobia continue to exist.

Having a principled disagreement with the methods of CSJ doesn't mean that you are bigoted or don't care about these issues. Always affirm your commitment to addressing ethical wrongs like racism, sexism and homophobia and highlight common ground and shared goals with policy makers advocating CSJ approaches.

DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE, CITE EXAMPLES

AND OFFER ALTERNATIVES

You will need to demonstrate to CSJ policy makers that your concerns come from a place of knowledge and that you have given careful thought to the proposed course of action. It is important to feel confident discussing the theoretical background of CSJ, to be able to cite examples of its impact in the real world and to offer viable alternatives to CSJ approaches.

Understanding as much as possible about CSJ ideology is the first stage in this process. You can begin by exploring Counterweight's growing [Toolbox](#) of learning materials about CSJ and consulting our list of alternatives to CSJ trainings [here](#).

BE A PART OF ONGOING CHANGE

AND BUILD A COMMUNITY

It's going to take time to make the case for positive alternatives to CSJ. If you decide to take a stand, you'll be committing to a long and sometimes frustrating process. Fortunately, you are not alone, and there are a growing number of organisations who will support you.

[Subscribe](#) and [apply](#) to join the Counterweight Discord server and you will be welcomed by a non-partisan online community who share your concerns. We will soon be hosting virtual Town Hall events where we hope the community will share their experiences of CSJ and come together to find ethical solutions to the challenges it poses. You can find a list of other organisations doing work in the area of CSJ [here](#).