**SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES**

**Race Equity Action Plan[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**January 2022**

**Background and context**

Racism in several forms remains endemic in Britain, and is present in all sectors of society, including in Higher Education (HE). “Structural Racism” is the normalisation and legitimisation of an array of historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal dynamics that routinely advantage white people, while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of colour.  In Higher Education this can be seen in hiring practices across senior management, teaching and professional services staff. For example, fewer than 1% of professors in the UK are black while 89% are white[[2]](#footnote-2) and this lack of diversity is also reflected at Sussex University and in the School of Global Studies (GS). Another effect of structural racism in HE is the existence of the BAME awarding gap, which is the difference in grade outcomes between UK domiciled BAME students and UK domiciled white students, and which also exists at Sussex.[[3]](#footnote-3) A further example is the lack of Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs) diagnosis for BAME students in the HE sector.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The School of Global Studies is committed to anti-racism and to challenging aspects of our institutional practices that function to oppress, marginalise or limit our *Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)* students and staff[[5]](#footnote-5).  We realise that a lack of diversity, representation and anti-racist practice in our teaching, research and professional services staff has a profound effect on students from BAME communities.

**The BAME Awarding Gap at Sussex and in Global Studies**

At Sussex University there is a statistically significant difference in the rate of good degrees (1:1 or 2:1 or merit/distinction at MA/MSc) achieved by UK domicile BAME students compared with white students, despite these students entering Sussex with the same entry qualifications. This demonstrates that the production of the negative difference in degree results occurs in the University, and is a direct consequence of what takes place at the University rather than simply a reflection of broader societal inequalities[[6]](#footnote-6). In 2019-2020, with a move to online teaching in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GS BAME awarding gap disappeared. It is crucial that we establish the reasons for this, particularly as, in 2020-21, the gap returned. In 2020-21, Sussex had an awarding gap of 6.7%.. However, in GS in the same period, the awarding gap was 12.4% , with 97.8 % of white UK domicile students achieving a 2.1 and above, as opposed to 85.4% of BAME UK domicile students. Similar concerns also exist with regards to international BAME students, where there is an awarding gap of 38.6%,[[7]](#footnote-7) .There are a number of other factors that contribute to this gap, including, but not limited to ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages).

Our school commits to continually developing and implementing measures to ensure that race and ethnicity are no longer determining factors in our awarding of ‘good degrees’, until our BAME awarding gap is permanently eradicated. The School is committed to reassessing its processes and practices in all areas to eliminate racism and embed anti-racist practices, as well as to ensure that all students and staff members are treated equitably, without prejudice, assumption, or stereotype. We recognise that this action plan does not equate to race equity work.  Instead, it outlines the commitment of the school to ensure that the measures outlined in the plan are addressed in a timely and consistent manner.

**Our aims**

* To permanently eliminate the School of Global Studies’ BAME awarding gap.
* To decolonise our curricula and teaching styles and embed anti-racism in our syllabi.
* To implement a mentoring support programme to optimise the reach and quality of support for BAME staff and students.
* To actively recruit BAME staff and students and improve recruitment practices to ensure fair and equitable opportunities.
* To prioritise the retention of BAME students and staff and ensure that the School’s demographics reflect the diversity of the global community.
* To create a culture of anti-racist practice and zero-tolerance for racism.
* To design clear informal and formal complaints procedures and routes for individuals to report concerns of racism, sexism, ableism, or any discriminatory behaviour; to ensure resolution of these concerns and clear consequences for such behaviour; to empower individuals to challenge this behaviour wherever it occurs.
* To ensure that the School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee (comprised of students, academic and professional staff) advises and reviews work in this area regularly.

**Areas of Action**

1. Decolonizing the Curriculum (DTC) and inclusive pedagogies

2. The Student Experience

3. Staff recruitment, promotion and retention

4. Staff mentoring, training and awareness building

5. Complaints and reporting procedures

**1. Decolonizing the curriculum (DTC) and reformed pedagogies:**

In 2018-19, all Global Studies departments began to undertake work to decolonize the curriculum. This involved staff training with Advance HE, staff student fora, departmental workshops, and redesigning core modules during teaching away days. Each department in the School has made specific commitments to further efforts to decolonize the core curriculum, and to have advanced these actions into optional modules by 2023. It is recognized that decolonization in academia is an ongoing process, and the School is committed to the regular review and overhaul of teaching and learning practices, including modes of assessments, that the progression of our DTC agenda necessitates.

**Actions**

1. Ensure that the staff appraisals process continues to include a section on commitment and activity towards DTC by staff and that this is regularly monitored.
2. Ensure that each department has put in place a system for DTC (which will involve using the Learning and Teaching Inclusivity Checklist (LTIC)[[8]](#footnote-8) as well as reviewing assessment modes and reflecting on this via the Module Audit Process.
3. The school is committed to lobbying for Mid-Module Evaluations (MMEs) and Module Evaluation Questioners (MEQs) to include questions on the diversity of readings/authors, inclusive teaching approaches and the delivery of teaching material as well as through regular forums, workshops and events.
4. Departmental Race Equity Leads and EDI committee to review the process of DTC annually

**2. The Student Experience**

Global Studies recognises that the lack of concerted focus on race equity issues contributes to BAME students having very different student experiences from white students. We are committed to improving the experience of students from BAME backgrounds by: initiating a student network programme; implementing a mentorship programme to improve the quality of student support; and introducing a culturally competent academic advising scheme. The BAME student excellence and mentoring programme is designed to provide safe spaces, mentoring and support for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students. This includes daily safe space office hours for BAME-identifying students. A member of staff in the school will have responsibility and workload allocation for managing this programme.

**Actions**

1. Global Studies to lobby USSU to make diversity and inclusion training mandatory for new and current student representatives; School Student Experience Group (SSEG) will have EDI and race equity issues as standing items on all its agendas.
2. Student UG and PGT EDI representatives to invited to attend SSEGs to speak to these agenda items.
3. Further develop and improve existing BAME Excellence and Mentoring Programme
4. Implement a BAME MA scholarship programme
5. Ensure race equity and cultural competency training is central to changes made to academic advising across Global Studies
6. Welcome Week inductions at UGT / PGT levels to include focus on BAME and wider anti-racist school commitments.

**3. Staff Mentoring and Training**

Global studies staff are committed to advancing race equity through mentoring, training and awareness efforts. The following proposed actions intend to begin bolstering faculty understanding and awareness of the symptoms and effects of institutional racism in our school, as well as encouraging a culture of collaborative anti-racist learning and development. The departmental Race Equity lead role ensures that a member of staff from each of our departments takes on the work of reviewing and overseeing the implementation of this and future race equity action plans in the school. Working within our EDI committee, we hope for these staff members to eventually form an active part of mentoring, training and disseminating information to the faculty body. Furthermore, the BAME Coaching and Mentoring Network will aim to create a culture of support and personal and professional development for BAME staff members to overcome structural barriers of racism and prejudice working in academia.

**Actions**

1. To support and further the reach of the BAME Coaching and Mentoring Network for staff.
2. To encourage the University to develop and offer race equity training as a mandatory part of academic and professional staff development in line with REC ongoing work.
3. To appoint one member of staff as Race Equity lead in each department.
4. To ensure race equity work is upheld and regularly reviewed within the school by HOS, departmental race equity leads, DEDI, DOSE and the EDI committee.

**4. Staff recruitment, promotion and retention**

We recognise the lack of diversity within our faculty in Global Studies and commit to actively diversifying and strengthening our recruitment, retention and promotion practices. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) reports that in 2018/19 only 17% of academic staff were of Black or Minority Ethnic ethnicity, whilst this figure fell to just 12% of non-academic staff[[9]](#footnote-9). In 2020/21 24% of academic staff in Global Studies were of Black or Minority Ethnic Ethnicity: 12% Asian, 4% mixed, 5% other and 3% black. This highlights the need to actively recruit and retain black members of staff in particular (Global Studies Equalities Report). The school of Global Studies commits to develop a culture of inclusive recruitment, fair promotion, and active retention of its academic staff and professional services staff. We will ensure that Black and Minority Ethnic academic and PS staff receive coaching and mentoring support to ensure career progression and that all members of staff, particularly those involved in recruitment and promotion, undergo race equity training.

**Actions**

1. To provide all staff involved in staff recruitment processes with race equity training, and ensure that they understand and support the School’s  commitment to anti-racism.
2. To actively support BAME members of staff in their career progression through coaching and mentoring support.
3. To ensure that our recruitment and retention practices for staff are informed by our anti-racist values and wider commitments to diversity and inclusion (including issues arising from the lack of diversity in senior staff).

**5. Complaints and reporting procedures**

A key part of being an inclusive and supportive school to work and study in is having clear complaints and reporting mechanisms. These can be formal and informal and are a crucial part of enabling the school to know when things have gone wrong and to act effectively in response. The school will support and promote existing university structures and continue to work to improve these.

**Actions**

1. Clarify and improve the informal and formal complaints procedures through working with HR and OSCAR (Office for Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations).
2. Clearly signpost students to USSU Student Advice, the online report and support tool and other means of obtaining confidential support.
3. Encourage reporting through the new ‘Report and Support’ system for both staff and students
4. Handle reports of racism sensitively and seriously with clearly signposted options and ways to respond.

**Action plan**

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| **Action** | **Owner** | **Participants** | **Deliverables** | **Start** | **End** | **Updates** |
| 1.1 Ensure the appraisals process  includes a section on commitment to DTC by staff. | HODs, HOS, | DEDI, HOS, HODs. EDI committee | 1.1.1 Ensure progress on DTC of reading lists and other material (including reference to race and racism). | Sep  2020 | Nov 2020 | Done |
| 1.2 Ensure that each department has in place a system for DTC (including using the Learning and Teaching Inclusivity Checklist (LTIC)[[10]](#footnote-10), reviewing assessment modes and reflecting on this in the Module Audit Process. | HODs | Specialist teaching staff working groups (IR); Senior member of Dept. working on DTC and staff year groups (Anthropology); Head of ID; Head of Geography; Every member of Global Studies to use the LTIC checklist in DTC. | 1.2.1 Revision of reading lists and other materials.  1.2.2 Mainstream anti-racism into teaching.  1.2.3 Continually update the canvas site with material and examples that reflect good practice.  1.2.4 Make checklist available to students for transparency around commitments  1.2.5 Identify further resources/ networks useful to discipline- specific DTC work, and amplify/ support their activities where possible.  1.2.6 Lobby inclusive pedagogies training for lecturers and seminar tutors  1.2.7 Ensure student  feedback on DTC is used to develop module content for all GS modules  1.2.8 Highlight how this feedback has been integrated for students to see | Sep  2020 | Sept 2022 |  |
| 1.3 Lobby for change in University MEQs and other forms of module feedback. | DTL, HOS, DOSE | PS, DOSE, DEDI | 1.3.1 Raise issue regularly with university leadership through DTL, DOSE meetings. | Sep 2020 | Sep 2022  EDI committee to review progress termly |  |
| 1.4 Departmental Race Equity Champions and EDI committee to review the process of DTC annually | Race Equity Leads | DTL, HOS, HODs, DOSE, DEDI, Race equity champions | 1.4.1 HODs to ensure DTC goals are met in each dept.  1.4.2 Progress to be monitored by HODS and the Race equity champions annually | Sept.  2021 | Sep 2023 (Annual  review) |  |

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| **Action** | **Owner** | **Participants** | **Deliverables** | **Start** | **End** | **Updates** |
| 2.1 Global Studies to lobby USSU to make diversity and inclusion training mandatory for new and current student representatives. | DOSE, SEO | HODs,  HOS,  PS | 2.1.1 All student representatives to have undergone diversity and inclusion training | Jan 2022 | Sept. 2022 |  |
| 2.2 SSEG to have race equity issues and EDI concerns as standing items on all its agendas | DOSE, SEO | DOSE,  SEO | 2.2.1 Ensure BAME/EDI issues are a standing item on SSEG committee  2.2.2 Ensure UG and PGT EDI Representatives are invited to attend and speak if they want to | Jan  2022 | Ongoing |  |
| 2.3 Further develop and improve existing BAME Excellence and Mentoring Programme | 1-2 race equity champions of a department in Global Studies, HODs, | HOS,  DEDI,  DOSE, | 2.3.1 Enact safe space office hours for BAME students  2.3.2 Organise for example anti-racist, decolonial, mental health, careers and employment, researching and anti-racist organising workshops in consultation with BAME students | Dec. 2021 | Sept. 2022 |  |
| 2.4 Launch a BAME scholarship programme | HOS and DEDI |  | 2.4.1 Secure funding for 5 MA-level scholarships for UK domiciled BAME students  2.4.2 Work with local schools, the SU and the university comms department to ensure the scholarships are well advertised  2.4.3 Review the rewarding of scholarships in consideration of students’ background | May 2021 | Sep 2022 | Funding agreed for 5 MA scholarships of £5000 each . Scholarships advertised, Autumn 2021 |
| 2.5 Global Studies to work towards reforming Academic Advising and student support system to centralise race equity in its practice | HODs, HOS, DOSE | HODs,  DOSE,  DTL | 2.5.1 Work to ensure that AA material foregrounds race equity.  2.5.2 Work to ensure staff/student relationships are informed by a race equity agenda  2.5.3 Work to ensure Academic Advising Systems consider inclusivity and creating safe spaces, have better transparency, input for student feedback and clear reporting structures for students to access  2.5.4 Global Studies to centralise race equity concerns in future developments of academic support and to lobby for this centrally at the university. | Jan.2022 | Ongoing |  |
| 2.6 Welcome Week: Inductions  (UGT/PGT) to include focus on BAME student experience and anti-racist school commitments. | DOSE, DTL,  PGR Convenors, DDS, SEO | HODS | 2.6.1 All new students to be invited to attend  welcome week inductions, which will include reference to GS’s anti-racist commitments.  2.6.2 All new students to be invited to attend welcome week inductions where there is a focus on BAME student experience | Sept. 2022 | Ongoing    Review annually |  |

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| **Action** | **Owner** | **Participants** | **Deliverables** | **Start** | **End** | **Updates** |
| 3.1 To support and further the reach of the BAME Coaching and Mentoring Network for staff | Coaching and networking lead | HOS, Members of network from all departments | 3.1.1 Mentoring BAME staff  3.1.2 Ongoing training of new mentors  3.1.3 Improve visibility and therefore engagement with this programme through advertising | March.  2021 | Ongoing | May 2021 - BAME Coaching and Mentoring Network Launched |
| 3.2 Encourage the University to develop and offer race equity training as a mandatory part of academic and professional staff development. | HOS, HOPS | EDI committee, Race Equity champions | 3.2.1 Academic and professional services staff to undertake mandatory race equity training. | Sept. 2021 | Sept. 2023 |  |
| 3.3 Each department to appoint a Race Equity leads. | HOS, HOPS | HODs, Race equity champions | 3.3.1 Ensure Race Equity leads are appointed fairly and voluntarily  3.3.3 Race Equity leads to address race equity issues in each dept. | Sept. 2021 | Ongoing |  |
| 3.4. The EDI committee, race equity champions, DEDI and DOSE to meet once a term to monitor the advancement of REAP. | HOS, DEDI | DEDI, DOSE, Race Equity champions, EDI committee | 3.4.2 Publish members’ names on GS website  3.4.4 Meet twice a term to to monitor REAP advancement  3.4.5 Publish meeting minutes and achieved commitments so that all staff and students can access them | Jan. 2021 | Ongoing  Review EDI membership and efficacy annually |  |

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| **Action** | **Owner** | **Participants** | **Deliverables** | **Start** | **End** | **Updates** |
| 4.1 Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and promotions processes have received race equity training and that they understand and support the school’s commitment to anti-racism. | HOS, HOPS | HODs | 4.1.1 Lobby for ‘unconscious bias’ training for all staff involved in recruitment and promotions to be expanded to include race equity training.  4.1.2 Actively working on improving the diversity of staff recruitment teams.  4.1.3 Investigate the issue of precarious employment and casualisation for academic staff | Sept.  2021 | Sept. 2022 |  |
| 4.2 To actively support BAME members of staff in their career progression through coaching and mentoring support. | HODs | HOS, | 4.2.1 Targeted support, including mentoring / coaching focusing on career progression for BAME members of staff | Sept.  2021 | Sept. 2023  Review termly |  |
| 4.3 Ensure recruitment and retention practices for both academic and non-academic staff are informed by our anti-racist values and wider commitments to diversity and inclusion (including issues arising from the lack of diversity in senior staff). | HOS, HOPS | HOS, DEDI, EDI committee | 4.3.1 Increase numbers of BAME staff  4.3.2 Improve retention of BAME staff  4.3.3 Ensure BAME staff are supported in promotion processes and encouraged to apply for senior positions’  4.3.4 To improve recruitment practices to ensure active recruitment of and equitable opportunity for Black applicants. | Sept.  2021 | Sept. 2024  Review annually |  |

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| **Action** | **Owner** | **Participants** | **Deliverables** | **Start** | **End** | **Updates** |
| 5.1 Clarify and improve the formal and informal staff and students’ complaints procedures, working with HR and OSCAR | HOS, DEDI | HoDs, DOSE, OSCAR | 5.1.1. Clear step-by-step guide written for complaints procedure and disseminated via school website with links included on module canvas pages | March  2022 | Ongoing |  |
| 5.2 Clearly signpost USSU Student Advice or others who can be consulted confidentially | DOSE, DEDI, | PS | 5.2.1 Information materials for all students included on website and module canvas pages | March  2022 | Sept. 2022 |  |
| 5.3 Encourage reporting through ‘report and support’ system | HOS/DOSE | PS | 5.3.1 Include information on ‘report and support’ in relevant communication with students and ensure staff are aware of reporting system through addressing it in school and department meetings | Sep 2021 | Ongoing |  |
| 5.4 Handle reports of racism from both staff and students urgently with a clearly signposted set of options | HOS, HOD | DOSE, OSCAR | 5.4.1 Clear communication is made with OSCAR to ensure clear guidelines and support provided to reporter within two weeks | March 2021 | Sept. 2022 |  |

**Acronyms**

BAME - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic [[11]](#footnote-11)

DDS – Director of Doctoral Studies

DDR – Director of Doctoral Research

DEDI – Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

DORA – Director of Recruitment and Admissions

DOSE – Director of Student Experience

DTL – Director of Teaching and Learning

EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

LTIC - Learning and Teaching Inclusivity Checklist

HOD – Head of Department

HOPS - Head of Professional Services

HOS – Head of School

PGR - Postgraduate research

OSCAR - Office for Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations

REA – Race Equity Advocate

REC - Race Equality Charter

1. This action plan has been informed by earlier research and action in the school, such as the 2018 Diversity Audit (conducted by Dr. Diane Chilangwa Farmer and Dr. Carolyn H. Williams), the Mind the Gap Project conducted by Dr Althea Rivas (now SOAS) and Dr Akanksha Mehta (now Goldsmiths). It has been drafted by the Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (DEDI), with input from the School’s Race Equity Advocates (REAs) and members of the School Management Team, in consultation with staff and students. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-55723120#:~:text=Only%20155%20out%20of%20more,than%203%2C000%20in%20that%20time (Accessed 12.03.2021)  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Widening Participation, Access, Success and Progress Data May 2021, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Hoyles, A. and Hoyles, M. (2010) ‘Race and Dyslexia,’ *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 209-231 for a discussion of the links between between race, racism and SpLDs and the lack of research evidence. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Throughout this document, this acronym is used for ease of coherence and understanding. The acronym is a broadly descriptive term which does not necessarily reflect the varied experiences and identities of minority individuals and groups. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. These trends are further supported by research conducted by Advance HE. See general access to reports published at: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/reports-publications-and-resources> (Accessed 23.06.2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Widening Participation, Access, Success and Progress Data November 2021, School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Available for download to staff on ‘Global Studies Teaching and Learning Resources’ Canvas site. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Higher Education Staff Statistics (23 January 2020). <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/23-01-2020/sb256-higher-education-staff-statistics> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Available for download to staff on ‘Global Studies Teaching and Learning Resources’ Canvas site. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)