

Sheffield Hallam University: (striving for) An Inclusive Culture	
1 INTRODUCTION	
	<p>As Chief People Officer (CPO) I have overall responsibility and accountability for all matters pertaining to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The role of the CPO was created just over a year ago when for the first time, EDI for both students and staff was brought under one direction. Prior to that, guidance had been in a variety of places across the University, resulting in a lack of consistency, communication and ability to monitor progress. Whilst there is still a deal of work to do, there is a renewed sense of purpose and urgency to this important work.</p> <p>SHU embraces its diverse population of students and staff and takes its responsibilities stemming from this diversity, seriously. It is committed to building and maintaining an inclusive campus and culture for all.</p> <p>This report presents the approach taken by SHU in its determination to eliminate any form of racism. As a large, applied University committed to its civic duties as well as being a major employer, the University Senior Leadership Team is keen to ensure that its stance on eliminating any form of behaviour that is not in accord with the University's Values (Ambition, Collaboration, Inclusion, Innovation and Integrity) is unequivocally articulated.</p>
2 CONTEXT	
	<p>There are a number of external activities that Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) has, or is, taking part in, in relation to our stance on eliminating racism. In 2020, the Vice Chancellor confirmed that the University will apply for Institutional Bronze Race Equality Charter Mark (REC) with Advance HE in 2021. This provides a framework for Institutions to identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and students and requires us to commit to a 3 year institutional plan to address race equality and we are committed to the five guiding principles of the REC. We were a participating University in the Halpin Sector Report: UK Universities' response to Black Lives Matter, published in November 2020 and we are continuing to review and develop our approach to hate incidents in response to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) report "Tackling racial harassment: Universities challenged". This report raised disturbing realities about the higher education sector; that racial harassment was under-reported and that reporting mechanisms, where they existed, were ineffectual. In short, the sector was not doing enough to eradicate discrimination.</p> <p>SHU encourages students and staff to report racist/hate incidents and provides a 24/7 on-line reporting tool called 'Report & Support'. To access help, Students can also make direct contact with 'Hallam Help' to report incidents, and staff have their line manager, Human Resources and Organisation Development and Trade Unions to offer support. Additional Support for students who are victims of race/hate incidents is offered by Student Services and the Students' Union whilst staff have access to our Employee Assistance Programme for counselling support. Any reports of incidents are treated with the utmost seriousness and are actively investigated with appropriate sanctions applied. Our Inclusive Hallam Champions also play an important part in this work. These are staff members of all grades and backgrounds who have volunteered to act as a sounding board and confidante for any colleague who would welcome a conversation about any concerns or are just not sure about something. The Champions also function as a useful way of gathering intelligence about the University's cultural climate in a safe and confidential way.</p>

SHU has recently adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism which, whilst a hotly contested issue, was considered to be the correct approach. The working group is now reviewing the approach to be adopted on a definition of Islamophobia.

The University has also recently created a steering group which provides oversight of all activities across SHU in relation to refugees and asylum seekers. Whilst the primary purpose is to provide an organisational culture and practice that is genuinely inclusive and welcoming to sanctuary seekers, we are also working in partnership with societies such as STAR and Element (with whom 2 staff members are trustees) and are striving to attain the status of University of Sanctuary.

The Inclusive Hallam Series was launched in October 2020 and is a series of monthly, large scale events designed to share the lived experience of people with protected characteristics. These have successfully illustrated how prejudice affects real lives and have featured guest speakers who have spoken frankly about their experiences in order to raise awareness and understanding of the issues which affect protected groups. Part of this series is 'Let's Get Comfortable Talking about Race' which is a three-part series of events which invites delegates to discuss various aspects of this emotive topic. Pitched as a safe space, these events have been designed as opportunities for discourse and reflection and have successfully addressed some of the nervousness that surrounds the issue of racial equality.

3 WORK WITH SCHOOLS

The formative years of education are invaluable in establishing expectations for students. SHU recognises that access to Higher Education for black and minoritised students can be impeded by systemic educational barriers spanning the student lifecycle. To increase the number of BAME students taking part in vital school outreach programmes SHU has:

- Developed a school targeting profile and used this to select school delivery partners with high BAME populations.
- Delivered community engagement 'in community' with BAME populations.
- Developed a Gypsy Roma Traveller outreach programme.

Through South Yorkshire Futures, SHU's social mobility programme, work is underway with the Inspiring Governance charity to understand the barriers for BAME staff and increase their number in becoming school governors. More diverse boards better represent and serve their school communities which in turn leads to better school outcomes for the next generation.

SHU is the biggest trainer of teachers in the region. Many of the people who train with SHU go on to join the teaching workforce of South Yorkshire and consequently any improvement on the diversity of intake to the teacher education cohort will affect the diversity of the teaching workforce of tomorrow.

4 WORK WITH THE STUDENTS' UNION

The Student Recruitment and Widening Participation team recognise the importance of their own racial competency to provide effective support for minoritised students. A series of training and development opportunities has been delivered in the past year. The importance and immediacy of this work is made all the more acute with the convergence of COVID-19 (disproportionate effect on those from black and minoritised communities) and the growth in awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement.

The team are working with the Students' Union to improve racial diversity in the University Student Ambassador scheme; a paid opportunity for students to promote Higher Education in

general and SHU specifically. The team recognises appropriate use of role models as an effective method of encouraging and supporting diverse participation.

5 WIDENING PARTICIPATION

There is an identified access gap at SHU for black students which the Student Recruitment and Widening Participation team has taken action to address. The team are actively supporting black applicants into the University this year through the Black British Applicant Access Project. Use of focus groups and admissions data has been used to establish a picture of the current population and access journey through University systems and processes, identifying where barriers exist and working across teams to develop solutions to pilot.

The team have created an enhanced package of support for Black British Applicants applying to SHU for 2021 – giving them access to the SHU Progress applicant support scheme, which supports students from under-represented groups and provides one-to-one application support, interview workshops and access to a contextual offer. The scheme has a strong track record of supporting under-represented groups to join the University. 90% of students felt that being on SHU Progress supported them throughout the application process to university. 58% of applicants who took part in the scheme subsequently enrolled (50% higher than non-SHU Progress applicant to enrolment rates).

In our 2020/21 -2024/25 Access and Participation Plan, SHU has created a plan to address its largest inequalities and to ensure that students, no matter their background or experience, are supported to access, achieve and thrive in higher education. Targets have been set, based on student ethnicity; including a commitment to raise the proportion of new entrants who are from a Black British background from 4% to 6%. This should assist in reducing the degree attainment gap between black and white students and eradicate both the degree attainment gap and the highly skilled employment gap for under-represented BAME students compared to their peers who are white and from the most represented backgrounds.

6 DEGREE GAP

In September 2019, a cross-University ‘Narrowing the Gaps’ forum was formed to deliver a consistent response to the Degree Awarding Gap and share best practice. Through this process, a Race Equity Corporate Action Plan (REACP) was structured around findings from the NUS/UUK report in 5 key areas to success.

For each College, the Degree Awarding Gap is a strategic objective and forms part of the planning and monitoring in Teaching and Learning activity across all Departments. A regular Race Equality Forum meets to network, evaluate, and embed what works within the student experience.

Examples are:

- The Student Union BAME ambassador and Mentor scheme, drawing on alumni and staff to support student leadership.
- Principles of Success – a BAME student leadership programme.
- Employing more staff of colour offers BAME role models to our students.
- The College of Health Wellbeing and Life Sciences (HWLS) successfully implemented minoritised students network groups across Nursing and Midwifery (N&M) and Allied Health Professions (AHP) where students of colour meet to share their experiences. The group has since expanded to include staff and people from non-BAME backgrounds to increase awareness and non-discriminatory behaviours.

- As an applied university, supporting students on placement is deemed essential within the Sheffield Region. In Teacher Education BAME students are encouraged to explore how the education team can address any potential disadvantage within a placement. This year has witnessed an improvement of placement prospects for BAME students’ projects in some departments.
- The Department of Law & Criminology works with external employers to provide positive BAME role models, directly connecting to discipline areas.

Listening to our students is regarded as an essential aspect of our responsibilities. ‘Listening Rooms’ is a programme where students of colour can talk freely about lived experience.

7 ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY

Within the Department of Academic Development and Diversity, SHU delivers a rolling programme of training and development. This explores both individual learning and possible and perceived structural racism to make changes. Examples are:

- Developing cultural competence in staff and students to improve understanding of culture as a concept and identify ways in which knowledge of difference can shape practice and afford staff with a greater appreciation of the nature and extent of biases and taken-for-granted ways of being and knowing.
- Closing the Attitude Gap where the aim is to engage the audience in discussion about self and then move to a starting point in developing students’ academic self-concept. Both the student and staff learning has been developed to embed within courses the following points:
 - Exploring language and terminology
 - The notion of individual privilege and position
 - Noticing and addressing micro-aggressions, realising that if we hold privilege (white privilege for example) we can be both an instigator of a micro-aggression whilst developing our anti-racist practices.
 - How to act as an anti-racist and positive by-stander
 - Embedding Equality Impact Assessments in every-day actions.

8 OUTREACH

To support our students as they advance from student to employee, SHU works extensively on employer engagement, outreach and influence by focusing on talent attraction, skills, and workforce development. There are increasingly important discussions held with employers about recruiting for diversity, including from BAME communities, however this is mostly the domain for large private sector and public sector employers. Examples are:

- South Yorkshire Police - Police apprenticeship has targets relating to diverse applicants. Ambition to recruit more police officers who are representative of the community.
- Amey Rail - Recruitment and selection to ensure recruitment to more diverse apprentice cohorts.

- Careers and Graduate Fairs - many larger employers are particularly keen on applicants from BAME backgrounds.
- Sheffield Business Together consortium - SHU and University of Sheffield (UoS) are on the steering group where working collaboratively on their EDI agenda to support what they do in the City is important.
- NHS Health Placements and Recruitment - ongoing work with the South Yorkshire Trusts on recruitment, selection and training ensuring BAME representation for placements.

9 FUTURE ACTIVITY

There is clear evidence that we have a BAME Graduate Outcome deficit both regionally and nationally. SHU are committed to closing this gap and are working with strategic partners in key sectors as outlined above, however there remains significant issues within SHU and our regional economy. These include:

- SHU does not have an ethical framework to guide which employers we partner with and our influence on their recruitment practices.
- There remain systemic issues in certain sectors as outlined above e.g. differential in key sectors like Digital and Computing.
- The Sheffield economy is dominated by SME businesses who sometimes lack capacity and capability to focus specifically on race equality and recruiting for diversity.
- SHU should develop a progressive action plan to work with employers (particularly SMEs) to influence their approach to BAME selection, recruitment and retention.
- BAME student engagement and support has developed significantly in the last two years, however there remains significant work to be done to ensure a fully developed offer to support BAME students both in curriculum and with our central offer.

10 CLOSE

Some of the work described is not purely or solely about race discrimination but envelops intersectionality as at SHU we consider that it is essential that the whole is embraced as part of our cultural competence.

Covid-19 has intensified many of the inequalities that exist across society today. For younger people, minoritised groups, people with disabilities as well as members of the LGBT+ community, the emotional detriment that inequality creates has increased because of the pandemic. The University has worked hard to expand its understanding of the relationship between EDI and wellbeing; and will continue to support staff and students that identify as belonging to one or more of the groups described above.

Over the past twelve months resources have been invested to secure a new, and enhanced formal governance structure for EDI. Chaired by the CPO, the EDI Committee (EDIC) is accountable to University Leadership Team (ULT) and the Board of Governors and provides critical oversight for all aspects of staff and student EDI. Membership includes staff members, the University Chaplaincy, representatives of the Staff EDI Networks and Trade Unions.

The achievements of the past twelve months highlight an important period for staff and student EDI and clearly delineate a marked departure from the approach previously adopted.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

	SHU welcomes the coming together of major employers and service providers in order that collaboration can be undertaken in confronting some of our City and Region's issues.
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