

ual:

# Ethnic Representation Index

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## Executive Summary

Two years on from the killing of George Floyd is an appropriate time to reflect on progress universities in England have made rooting out systemic racism. Floyd's murder forced a reflection on the persistence of racism in society. The Universities UK's advisory group acknowledged 'institutional racism and systemic issues' in higher education. Institutions resolved to do more.

We must do more because racism holds back Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E) students. This report reflects on the way it affects their academic prospects. But we must also recognise it affects their mental health too. A report by Unite Students found three-quarters of B.A.M.E students reported an effect on mental health due to racism.<sup>2</sup>

With the B.A.M.E student population in universities in England rising, the problem could yet get worse. In the 2019 / 2020 academic year, the proportion of B.A.M.E students in England was 27.4%.<sup>3</sup> For the over 100 universities covered in this report the proportion of B.A.M.E students was 32%, a proportion expected to increase by 2030. Without further resolve on racism, B.A.M.E students' risk being left at further disadvantage.

A recent report by the National Union of Students (NUS) identified the main problem:

...the lack of B.A.M.E academic and senior staff members. A common theme raised by B.A.M.E students through our engagement was the knock-on impact that not having any teacher who 'looks like me' has on a sense of belonging and aspiration, engagement and attainment.<sup>4</sup>

It is imperative that universities find a way to collectively measure progress on these issues. That is the purpose of the Ethnic Representation Index (ERI). The ERI examines ethnic representation, belonging and inclusion among B.A.M.E students and staff in higher education institutions in England. It seeks to measure progress, too, and to quantify B.A.M.E student intake relative to their regional locations.

The index presented in this report shows that progress, so far, has been insufficient to meet the scale of the problem. There is, on average, a lack of B.A.M.E representation among staff and senior leadership. B.A.M.E students lag behind white peers when it comes to the university experience. And the success of anti-racism programmes, like decolonisation, are mixed.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unitegroup.com/living-black-at-university>

<sup>3</sup> 12.2% Asian, 8.7% Black, 4.5% Mixed ethnicity, and 2.0% Other ethnic groups across all universities

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/B.A.M.E-student-attainment.pdf>

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In particular, the report identifies 10 headline findings:

1. Average B.A.M.E student representation (32%) does not match B.A.M.E representation among academics (17%) or professors (10%).<sup>5</sup>
2. This disparity is greater at a more senior level, where B.A.M.E representation among governors (11%) and executives (4%) falls behind B.A.M.E representation too.
3. For Black students (9.5% of students), the problem is worse still, with Black academics (2.7%) and professors (0.7%) falling short of the student average.
4. And at a senior level, average Black representation among governors (2.6%) and executives (0.9%) falls well behind the average Black student population.
5. Black students, in particular, face significant entry barriers, with 78% of universities, analysed as part of this report, less likely to make Black students an offer to study when they have the same entry profile as other applicants.
6. B.A.M.E students tend to be less satisfied than their white peers, with over 90% of universities showing higher rates of dissatisfaction among B.A.M.E students.
7. The B.A.M.E awarding gap (the difference between the number of white students awarded first-class or 2:1 degrees compared to B.A.M.E students) reveals no university with parity, even among those with majority B.A.M.E student populations.
8. At a number of universities, the B.A.M.E awarding gap persists, despite their commitment to anti-racism strategies like decolonisation initiatives.
9. Comparisons of continuation rates (likelihood to complete a degree) show 44% of universities reporting equivalent or better B.A.M.E continuation rates relative to white students. This, however, is lower for Black students, at 36%.
10. The access gap ratio (B.A.M.E representation as a proportion of the local community), demonstrates a large proportion of the B.A.M.E students relative to the regional B.A.M.E population are gaining entry into universities, demonstrating demand for university education and socio-economic mobility among this group.

These findings show some measure of progress. But evidently, it is not progress enough. Universities with large B.A.M.E populations could, for instance, increase B.A.M.E representation among staff and senior leadership through determined changes to recruitment policies. Universities where B.A.M.E student populations are low,

<sup>5</sup> Average of 105 universities in England report in this index

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meanwhile, limit the learning environment, the opportunity to introduce varying perspectives, and the development of increased capacity for tolerance.

It is not the purpose of this report to put Foreward firm policy proposals. That goes beyond its scope. Where it can make recommendations is on transparency and accountability. The ERI relies on the capture and reporting of data. But more is needed. The indexes remain a work in progress and additional metrics would provide greater insights, as would suggestions on how to improve interpretation.<sup>6</sup>

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6 The specific metrics required will be revisited in the conclusion

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# The Ethnic Representation Index (ERI)

Racism is complex, pervasive and remains a problem for society. Higher education is no different. Its impact endures over time. Racism that prevents B.A.M.E students from thriving in education or in their professional lives affects the life chances of subsequent generations: children from minority backgrounds are more likely to be poor and less likely to see people who look like them in positions of power and authority. And so, the cycle continues. The rewards of creating change, however, are great. Eradicating systemic racism would improve the lives of millions. And it would lay the foundations for a more productive and inclusive society.

Our central goal is to help universities recognise that it's not enough to tackle one of these domains. To succeed, anti-racist work needs to be as complex, pervasive and multi-generational as the racism it seeks to overcome. The Ethnic Representation Index (ERI) has been designed to help universities develop anti-racist strategies that can live up to that challenge. Our aim is to build a useful tool that will both inspire and put pressure on university leaders to be comprehensive in their efforts to become anti-racist institutions.

The ERI is an innovative way to capture the representation and experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E) students and staff in higher education institutions in England.<sup>7</sup> It measures and appraises the performance of institutions across a range of indicators. Its findings will be published annually and made open access.

The purpose of the ERI, where possible, is to capture the journeys of B.A.M.E students and staff. For students, it seeks to capture their experience and sense of belonging, relative to ethnic representation among staff and senior executives. For staff, it measures representation at academic and professorial levels, and among governors and senior leaders.

Belonging is defined in numerous ways in academic literature. But it is widely agreed that a sense of belonging is critical to academic success and well-being. The ERI has a particular focus on belonging as it relates to ethnic representation at every level of the academic community.

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<sup>7</sup> HEI with a B.A.M.E population of less than 3% and small and specialist institutions are not included.



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The current ERI is based on four principles:

1. proportional representation of B.A.M.E students and staff<sup>8</sup> in academic, governance and leadership positions;
2. the principle of equity in student experience and opportunities;
3. student populations as a reflection of social mobility in the location in which the institution is based; and
4. the strategic initiatives by institutions to root out systemic racism and improve inclusion.

From 2023, we will aim to build a ranking model, with universities compared against one another both at the national level, and regionally. At this time, however, we want to build an understanding of our model, and invite constructive criticism so we can improve the metrics, weighting, or other aspects of the methodology. This method invites universities to consider more than just access when it comes to ethnicity representation.

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<sup>8</sup> Non-executive professional services staff are excluded from this research

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## Building the ERI

The ERI takes into account the representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E) communities (students and academics) within higher education, with additional focus on relative representation between Black and white communities. This is due to the significant deficit in outcomes for Black students and staff. Evidence for this difference is supported by the ERI data itself. For this reason, the report provides two indexes: a B.A.M.E index and a Black index.

An additional metric is included for the Black index, 'Black offer rate'. This is the university Offer Rate for Black applicants less the average sector Offer Rate for all applicants with the same entry profile. This is for 18-year-old applicants only. The student offer rate data is provided by UCAS in disaggregate form (Black, white and a range of minority groups), however there isn't grouped B.A.M.E data. As such, only the data for Black students was employed for this analysis.

The ERI indexes are built on indicators listed below, with a fuller definition and data source detailed in Appendix A.

Metric	Justification
B.A.M.E/Black Students	The proportion of B.A.M.E/Black staff relative to B.A.M.E/Black students is an important indicator for belonging
B.A.M.E/Black Academics	
B.A.M.E/Black Professors	
B.A.M.E/Black Executives	Representation of B.A.M.E/Black executives and governors in decision making processes
B.A.M.E/Black Governors	
NSS Teaching B.A.M.E/Black Gap	Satisfaction indication for B.A.M.E/Black students
NSS Assessment B.A.M.E/Black Gap	
NSS Academic Support B.A.M.E/Black Gap	Satisfaction indication for B.A.M.E/Black students
B.A.M.E/Black Award Gap	Indication of academic outcomes
B.A.M.E/Black Continuation Gap	
B.A.M.E/Black Access Gap Ratio	Indicative of university admission of B.A.M.E/Black applicants
Black Offer Rate Gap	Indicative of university 'selective admission' processes for Black applicants

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Associated data was obtained from the following sources: the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), the Office for Students (OfS), the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs) made to all universities listed. For both tables, 'No data' meant no submissions to HESA or OfS for that specific indicator. Student data is for home students only, excluding international students.

All data presented in the tables detail the percentage values per indicator for each institution. RAG flags visually present the relativity based on ethnic composition and metric thresholds. For indicators on academic, professorial, executive and governor composition, the RAG flags are presented relative to student composition.

Examples include:

- A red flag where academic composition is less than the student composition by more than 5%, an amber flag where composition is between 0.1% and 4.9%, and a green flag where composition of academics is equal or greater than the student composition.
- RAG flags for the Awarding and Continuation gaps, and for NSS data were based on standard deviations for each metric. Amber for variations between 0% to the first standard deviation and red above the first standard deviation. Green for values that are equivalent or above.
- Where institutions have initiatives such as a decolonisation scheme, this is flagged in green, otherwise as red.

The thresholds for RAG flags per indicator are detailed in Appendix A.

Any data supplied by the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) is presented in line with HESA's Rounding Methodology, which states that percentages should not be published if they are fractions of a small group of people (fewer than 22.5). Where this is the case, we have replaced the relevant value with 'low'. The assignment of 'low' applies even if the value is zero, which is the case for numerous institutions.

This proposed methodology for the ERI is designed for, and belongs to, the higher education sector. Improving it further will require more co-operation. We need to work together to make it a fairer and more accurate reflection of representation and belonging. And while it is not always possible to quantify belonging, it is the intention of the ERI to make best use of available data to provide the best possible insight.

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# Observations from the first iteration ERI

In this section of the report, we present data compiled for the first time to give universities an indication of how they would score on this approach. Our goal in building the ERI has always been to build consensus for an ambitious but fair way of measuring progress towards the elimination of structural and institutional racism from our universities.

It brings together evidence across four domains, each a vital indicator of the reality of university life. These domains are:

- Professional representation: data on the diversity of the university's academics, executive, governors, and staff
- Student experience and outcomes
- Widening participation
- Anti-racism agenda

Each university's data for all metrics is presented in the index. The results are presented visually with a Red, Amber or Green rating, so that each leadership team can see – at a glance – where they are doing well, and where more work is needed.

The data sources, years associated with the data, and the threshold employed for RAG rating is presented in appendix A.

The ERI for B.A.M.E and Black is detailed in the tables at the end of this document.

## A. Professional representation

This domain is designed to assess how a university is doing in terms of its academic staff, its governors, and its senior management. This matters on its own terms: universities should be offering professional opportunities without prejudice or discrimination. Like all employers, universities should be aiming to bring people from diverse backgrounds into management and leadership positions. But diversity matters in universities for a second reason: it sets the tone for student experience. A diverse faculty and administrative team, in which students can see themselves reflected, supports the teaching and learning journey.

Because our goal is to foster a sense of belonging, we consider it important that the academic and professional staff are broadly reflective of the student body. We have therefore focused on the ratio between B.A.M.E students and these staff groups. This is important because some universities are doing particularly well at recruiting diverse students but not reflecting the student body at management and academic levels. We believe this can be harmful to the student experience and reinforces subtle ethnicity-based hierarchies.

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## i. Academic representation

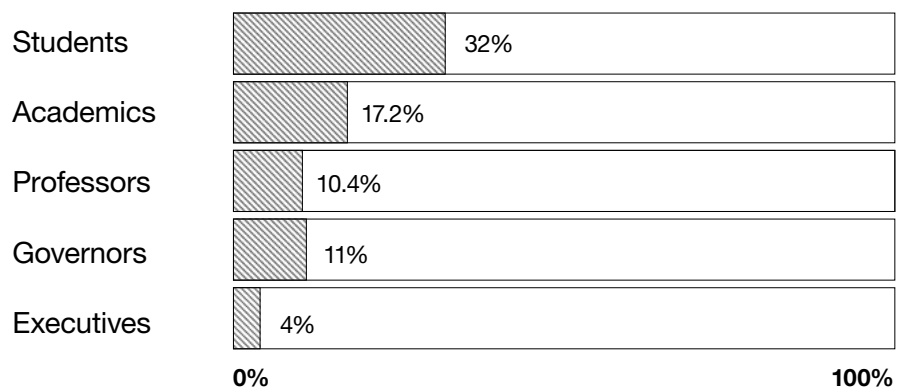
23 universities have a B.A.M.E student population of more than 50%. This includes Russell Group universities, like Imperial College, and post-1992 universities, like Birmingham City University. A high proportion of B.A.M.E students, though, does not necessarily mean a comparable proportion of B.A.M.E academics. Aston University, for instance, has the highest proportion of B.A.M.E students (74%). However, only 15% of its professorial staff, and 26% of its academic staff<sup>9</sup> are B.A.M.E.

Kingston University and the University of Westminster have relatively low levels of professorial representation relative to their student body. They have B.A.M.E student compositions of 61% and 63% respectively. Yet in each respective case, representation among professorial staff is 8% and 7%. They are not alone. Both Imperial College and King's College London have B.A.M.E student populations of 52% and 56% respectively. But, in each case, only 10% of professorial staff are B.A.M.E.

On average, 10% of university professorial staff, and 17% of academic staff, are B.A.M.E.

This problem is more considerable on the Black ERI index. 11 universities have a Black student population of over 20%. Indeed, four universities have Black representation over 30%. These include London Metropolitan University (35%), University of East London (34%), University of West London (31%) and University of Bedfordshire (31%).

### B.A.M.E representation – average of 105 institutions included in ERI table



But, while Black students represent 9.5% at all universities reported, only one university exceeded this threshold among its academic staff: University of East London. Indeed, a significant percentage of universities do not have a single Black professor. However, due to HESA's aggregation policy for publication and other data sharing

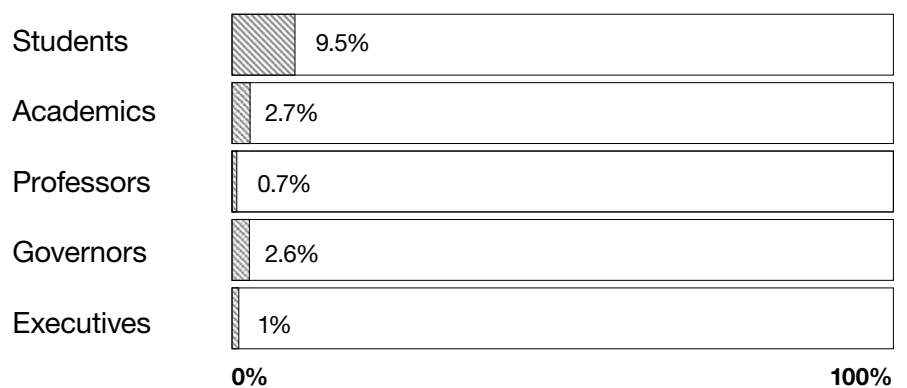
<sup>9</sup> Academic staff refers to all academic levels (professors, readers, senior lecturers, etc.)

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agreements, the exact number cannot be stated in this report.<sup>10</sup> It is noted that 73% of all universities have less than 1% Black professors among their professorial staff. The largest Black professorial compositions can be found at University of Derby (8%), London South Bank University (7%) and the University of West London (7%).

On average, 0.7% of university professorial staff, and 2.7% of academic staff, are Black.

## Black representation – average of 105 institutions included in ERI table



Some universities such as the University of Derby, Liverpool John Moores University and Teesside University have professorial B.A.M.E compositions higher than their B.A.M.E student compositions (26%, 21% and 33% respectively). On average, B.A.M.E students account for 32% at institutions, while B.A.M.E academics account for 16%, and B.A.M.E professors, 11%.

Meanwhile, 24 institutions have relative parity (90% or above) between their academic and professorial staff composition. The University of Derby and Teesside University both have proportionally almost twice as many B.A.M.E professorial staff compared to B.A.M.E academics.

By contrast, only 11 institutions have relative parity between Black academic and professorial staff. The top four institutions include Bath Spa University, University of Derby, University of the Arts London and University of Chester. The institution with the largest proportion of Black academics, the University of East London, with 11% representation, has only 2.3% Black professors. At De Montfort University meanwhile, the Black academic composition is 7%, while 3% of professors are Black.

<sup>10</sup> Professor indicates a member of staff holding a contract which aligns with the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) contract level 5A 'Professor'. This level indicates a senior academic appointment which may carry the title of Professor but which does not have departmental line management responsibilities.

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Coventry University, University of Bedfordshire and Middlesex University, meanwhile, are among the top ten institutions for their proportion of Black academics. Yet, for each of them, there is not a single Black professor<sup>10</sup>. This could suggest Black academics in these institutions are not progressing into professorial roles.

## ii. Governor and Executive representation

Average B.A.M.E student representation across all universities covered is 32%. Yet, average representation among governors is 11%, while among executives it is 6.8%. Among 91% of institutions, governor representation is less than the B.A.M.E student composition, while among the remaining 9% it is higher.

Meanwhile, the average Black student composition across all universities covered is 9.5%. Yet the average Black representation among governors is 2.6% and among executives 1.4%. Just 14 universities have governor representation that equates to, or is higher than, their Black student composition.

In addition, a total of 34 universities (32.4% of universities) declared no B.A.M.E representation on their executive boards. This includes universities with a significant B.A.M.E population: Kingston University, the University of Westminster, the University of Buckingham, the University of Hertfordshire, Manchester Metropolitan University, Coventry University, the University of Northampton and the University of Warwick among others.

Brunel University, which has over 70% B.A.M.E students has a 7% B.A.M.E executive composition. Aston University, meanwhile, with a 74% B.A.M.E student composition, did not declare whether any of its executives were B.A.M.E.

Worse still, only eight universities (7.6%) have Black staff on their executive boards, including those with significant Black student populations. A number of universities with relatively large Black student populations did not have any. They include: Queen Mary University, Birmingham City University, Anglia Ruskin University, the University of Wolverhampton, the University of Northampton, Kingston University, Coventry University, London Metropolitan University and Brunel University.

By contrast, the top two universities for Black executive representation are London South Bank University (22%) and Leeds Trinity University (20%).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Data presented for B.A.M.E and Black executives was collected via Freedom of Information Requests in late 2021 and early 2022.

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## B. Student experience and outcomes

This domain is designed to assess how a university is doing in terms of its teaching practice and support for B.A.M.E students. This is important because higher education should be a pathway to future attainment, whether in terms of professional life or wider wellbeing. If students from B.A.M.E backgrounds are not able to thrive at university in the same way as their white counterparts, then higher education is failing them. For this domain we have drawn on a number of indicators from the National Student Survey (NSS), as well as information on the “awarding gap” and the “continuation gap”

NSS data provided is an average over three years, from 2015/16 to 2017/18. Yearly spot data was not made available by the OfS (see comment in ‘An incomplete picture’ section). Observations from the NSS data showed that at 70% of universities, B.A.M.E students were less satisfied than white students across all three indicators of Teaching, Assessment and Academic Support for this period.<sup>12</sup> 93% of universities, meanwhile, showed a worse experience for B.A.M.E students across at least one indicator. At 65% of universities, Black students were less satisfied than their white peers on all three NSS indicators. And at 85% of universities, Black students were less satisfied on at least one indicator.

While the experience for Black students relative to B.A.M.E students is comparatively better, the overall picture shows a deficit in the ethnic minority student experience for the period of NSS data.

Awarding gap data presented covers the 2019/20 academic year. The B.A.M.E awarding gap (the difference between the number of white students awarded first-class or 2:1 degrees compared to B.A.M.E students) reveals ten universities with gaps in excess of 20%. The worst performing include: Canterbury Christ Church (30%), the University of Northampton (22%), the University of Bedfordshire (25%), the University of Buckingham (24%), Newman University (26%), Bournemouth University (20%), the University of Sunderland (26%), the University of Suffolk (22%), Staffordshire University (20%) and the Arts University Bournemouth (22%).

The awarding gap for Black students is, at some universities, even greater. At the University of Buckingham, for instance, it reached 45%, followed by Newham University (40%), Canterbury Christ Church University (38%), the University of Bedfordshire (33%), the University of the West of England (32%) and Staffordshire University (31%).

No university demonstrated a lack of an award gap for B.A.M.E and Black students relative to white students.

The best performing universities on the B.A.M.E awarding gap, by contrast, with gaps of less than 3% are predominantly Russell Group universities. They include: Imperial College (1%), University of

<sup>12</sup> NSS data provided is an average over three years, from 2015/16 to 2017/18. Yearly spot data was not made available by the OfS (see comment in ‘An incomplete picture’ section). Ethnicity breakdown was available for the years 2015-2018 only.



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Durham (2%), UCL (2%), the University of Bath (3%), the University of Oxford (3%) and King's College London (3%).

Universities with the smallest awarding gaps for Black Students include University College London (2%) and King's College London (4%).

Performance on reduced awarding gaps does not reflect B.A.M.E student composition. Indeed, some universities with over 50% B.A.M.E composition still had attainment gaps. They include: Aston University (7%), Imperial College (1%), London School of Economics (3%) and Queen Mary University (4%).

Conversely, on B.A.M.E continuation rates (the likelihood a B.A.M.E student completes their degree), 45 universities demonstrated comparable or better B.A.M.E continuation rates relative to white students. The worst performers, by contrast, are the University of Suffolk (-15%), the University of Cumbria (-12%) and London Metropolitan University (-10%).

However, for Black students, 32 universities had a comparative or better continuation rate relative to white students. The three worst performing universities are London Metropolitan University (-11%), University of Suffolk (-11%) and Falmouth University (-11%).

## C. Widening participation

This domain is designed to assess how a university is doing in terms of admitting students from B.A.M.E backgrounds to their courses. Access to higher education, and the professional opportunities that accrue from it, needs to become equitable. The diversity of the student body is a useful indicator of whether a university is offering opportunity fairly to people of different ethnicities.

However, it is not as simple as saying that universities should have the same percentage representation of each ethnicity as the UK or England population. The regions of England vary substantially in terms of ethnic diversity. We have, therefore, compared student diversity against the reference point of the population of the region in which the university is based. This means our baseline expectation is that London universities should have higher proportions of B.A.M.E students than, for example, universities in the North East.

Indicators include the Access gap, Access Gap Ratio and Offer Gap (Black index only due to data availability).

For B.A.M.E students, both the access gap (B.A.M.E composition relative to the regional B.A.M.E population) and the access gap ratio show increased enrolment to university. This reflects the success of university access and participation programmes and the civic roles universities play in the towns, cities and regions in which they are based.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Two metrics are provided: the Access gap and the Access gap ratio. The latter is employed for future ranking calculations and the former for information. The Access gap ratio represents the ratio of the B.A.M.E/ Black Access gap relative to the regional B.A.M.E/ Black composition.

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A few institutions could do more, however. Negative outcomes for access were noted at University of Worcester, Bishop Grosseteste University, York St. John University and Edge Hill University. Similarly, for Black students, UCL and Imperial College could do more too, as they stand out for their limited access for Black students relative to their regional ethnic composition.

Data obtained from UCAS, meanwhile, show that 78% of English institutions analysed within this report are less likely to make Black students an offer to study when they have the same entry profile as other applicants.<sup>14</sup> The University of Chichester, for instance, is almost 20% less likely to offer a study place to a Black student than the sector average, followed by Liverpool Hope University (-11%) and Leeds Beckett University (-11%).<sup>15</sup>

## D. Anti-racism agenda

Over recent years, a number of strategic initiatives have been launched in our universities to root out racism and promote inclusion. This domain is designed to measure how well a university is doing to engage with these initiatives. This matters because it signals the intention of the university's leaders to tackle racism and because these initiatives provide structured, expert-informed ways to approach that work. Some also include external accountability, which demonstrate a university's commitment to be transparent and enable students and others to scrutinise anti-racism work.

A majority of universities have a decolonisation initiative, while just under half (45%) of institutions analysed in this report have a specific anti-racism strategy.<sup>16</sup> These policies work to acknowledge and dismantle systemic racism. They are an encouraging development with a different focus to 'Diversity and Inclusion' strategies, which all universities already have in place.

A total of 74 universities have signed up to Advance HE's Race Equality Charter (REC) with 19 achieving Bronze at the time of writing. The Charter is a banner of inclusivity and anti-racism and provides a way for institutions to reflect on institutional and cultural barriers that inhibit ethnic minority staff and students.

Some universities, like the University of Wolverhampton, De Montfort University and the University of Brighton, have a decolonisation initiative, anti-racism strategy and a REC Bronze award. However, their graduate award gap for B.A.M.E and Black students remains in the bottom half of the index. Change may come in time. But without a means to measure progress, examples of success cannot be shared across the sector.

<sup>14</sup> The HEI Offer Rate for Black applicants, detailed in Table 2, highlights an institution's likelihood to make a study offer to a Black applicant relative to the average sector offer rate for applicants with the same entry profile. UCAS defines this as: 'how the offer rate differs from the offer rate that would be expected, as given by the average offer rate statistic. Positive values indicate where the offer rate is higher than the average offer rate, and negative values indicate where it is lower'.

<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that this indicator is for 18-year-old applicants only.

<sup>16</sup> Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

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## An incomplete picture

The index, while comprehensive, is incomplete. Freedom of Information (Fol) requests, for executive and governor ethnicity information, were hard to obtain from a handful of institutions. Some university Fol offices, or equivalent, sent website links, which implied judgements on ethnicity could be made visually. This reveals inadequacies in equality and diversity training.

A number of universities, meanwhile, refused to provide any information, including on executive staff. Others referenced Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act for not providing specific numbers, and instead offered a range of numbers – ‘less than 5’. There may be a policy to explain this. However, it speaks to one of the inquiries behind this study: whether the sector can offer reassurance it is making progress on ethnic diversity among executives and governors.

To make more information public would help address the systemic racism the Universities UK’s report highlighted. Thankfully, approximately 70% of institutions provided complete data as requested, and an additional 20% provided partial information. Where institutions did not specify executive numbers, or a range, we have visually identified these institutions in the table with a blank red flag in the executive columns.

The ERI table should have included NSS data for the academic year 2019/20 only. However, obtaining B.A.M.E/ Black NSS data for a specific year from the Office of Students (OfS) was not possible. The OfS does retain such information and recognises its public interest. But it declined to provide it, citing Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act: ‘Publishing this level of disaggregation would be likely to affect providers’ reputations and future enrolment.’

A balance must be struck between empowering current students and future applicants to ask questions about inclusion and belonging, and the financial interests of universities. This report recommends weight is put on the former. B.A.M.E students ought to be empowered to make informed choices about their future. The OfS’s position is counter to that. The availability of NSS information, broken down by ethnic categories, released annually, would spur institutions to act on systemic racism. This benefits everyone.

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## Conclusion and getting involved

This report shows that, two years after the Chair of Universities UK's advisory group acknowledged 'institutional racism' in higher education, there is still work to do. While some progress has been made, it is insufficient to meet the scale of the problem.

In particular, representation among B.A.M.E staff and senior leadership is not reflective of the student body in many institutions. In many cases, the differences are great, with the problem especially stark at the executive level. This is unacceptable, especially in universities with sizeable B.A.M.E student populations.

Second, B.A.M.E students are lagging behind their white peers when it comes to the university experience. Black students, in particular, face greater barriers to entry. And there are, among many institutions, significant awarding gaps for B.A.M.E students. It is little wonder B.A.M.E students tend to be more dissatisfied at university than their white peers.

Further, this report shows that, at many universities, the success of anti-racism programmes, like decolonisation initiatives, are mixed. This is an area for further inquiry.

There are some signs of progress. Continuation rates for B.A.M.E students are moving towards parity with white students. And a majority of universities have closed their access gaps, proving the success of university access programmes and the positive role they play in their regions.

This report recommends greater effort to create change. Transparency and accountability matter, and data will be critical to showing it. Institutions should endeavour to capture and report it, so they can demonstrate progress, and so institutions learn from each other. As an annual appraisal, we hope that the ERI will become a record of our common endeavour.

The ERI is a work in progress. Its methodology is designed for, and belongs to, the higher education sector. Improving it further will require more co-operation. We need to work together to make it a fairer and more accurate reflection of representation and belonging. And while it is not always possible to quantify belonging, it is the intention of the ERI to make best use of available data to provide the best possible insight. We are open to dialogue about how to improve the indicators we have included in this beta version of the ERI, and how to add additional or alternative measures. Data on the ethnicity pay gap, ethnic composition of professional services staff, graduate outcomes for B.A.M.E and Black students, as well as results from the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and records of racist incidents, would strengthen it by providing a deeper insight.

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Nearly twenty-five years ago, the Macpherson report acknowledged the scourge of institutional racism and advocated rooting it out with a 'zero tolerance' approach. Britain has made great progress since then. But the task is unfinished. Universities should take the lead. If they are to truly reflect our society, they must strive to reflect it in all its diversity.

We welcome correspondence from anyone with an interest in working with us as the ERI develops: you can contact the ERI team at [eri@arts.ac.uk](mailto:eri@arts.ac.uk)

# Appendix A

Indicator	Description	Year	RAG flag thresholds
B.A.M.E/Black Students Data source: <a href="#">HESA*</a>	Percentage of B.A.M.E/Black UG students relative to all UG students by Full Person Equivalent (FPE)	2019-20	No RAG used
B.A.M.E/Black Academics Data source: <a href="#">HESA*</a>	Percentage of B.A.M.E/Black UG students relative to all UG students by Full Person Equivalent (FPE)	2019-20	A red flag is given where the academic composition is less than the student composition by more than 5%, an amber flag if the composition is between 0.1% and 4.9% less and a green flag if the composition of academics is equal or greater than the student composition.
B.A.M.E/Black Professors ++ Data source: <a href="#">HESA*</a>	Percentage of B.A.M.E/Black UG students relative to all UG students by Full Person Equivalent (FPE)	2019-20	
B.A.M.E/Black governors Data source: HESA Purchased Data***	Percentage of B.A.M.E/Black governor members	2019-20	
B.A.M.E/Black Executives Data source: via Freedom of Information Request	Percentage of B.A.M.E/Black executive members	2020-21	
B.A.M.E/Black Award Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS APP Monitoring Dataset**</a>	Percentage difference between B.A.M.E/Black and white students in achieving 1st and 2:1	2019-20	A green flag is given where the B.A.M.E/Black student rate is higher than or equivalent (0%) to white student equivalent, amber for variations between 0% to the first standard deviation and red above the first standard deviation.
B.A.M.E/Black Continuation Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS APP Monitoring Dataset**</a>	Percentage difference between B.A.M.E/Black and white students continuing their study one year and 14 days after they started	2019-20	B.A.M.E standard deviations (5.8% award gap and 3.1% continuation gap);  Black standard deviations (8% award gap and 3.3% continuation gap);
NSS Teaching B.A.M.E/Black Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS TEF Dataset**</a>	Satisfaction difference for B.A.M.E/Black students relative to white students	2015/16 to 2017/18 +	A red flag is given for scores above the first standard deviation, amber for variations between 0% and the first standard deviation and green for equivalent (0%) and above.
NSS Assessment B.A.M.E/Black Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS TEF Dataset**</a>	Satisfaction difference for B.A.M.E/Black students relative to white students	2015/16 to 2017/18 +	B.A.M.E standard deviations (2.1% teaching; 2.7% assessment and 2.2% support);
NSS Academic Support B.A.M.E/Black Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS TEF Dataset**</a>	Satisfaction difference for B.A.M.E/Black students relative to white students	2015/16 to 2017/18 +	Black standard deviations (3.6% teaching; 4.3% assessment and 3.5% support);

B.A.M.E/Black Access Gap Data source: <a href="#">OfS APP Monitoring Dataset**</a>	Percentage of new UG entrants relative to its regional community	2019-20	A red flag is given for negative scores and a green flag for all positive values.
Black Offer Rate Gap Data source: <a href="#">UCAS</a>	HEI Offer Rate for Black Applicants less the Average Sector Offer Rate for all applicants with the same entry profile. This is for 18-year-old applicants only.	2019-20	A red flag is given for scores less than -2%, amber between -0.1% to -1.9% and green to scores at 0% and above.
Relative B.A.M.E/Black Access Gap ratio Data source: <a href="#">ONS</a> , Entrants: HESA Purchased Data	The Access gap ratio detailed represents the ratio of the B.A.M.E/Black Access gap relative to the regional B.A.M.E/Black composition.	2019-20	A red flag is given for negative scores, whilst all positive scores are marked green.
Anti-Racism strategy Data source: via Freedom of Information Request	Institution strategy to tackle racism	2021-22	Where institutions have a university-wide anti-racism or decolonisation initiative, they are given a green flag, otherwise they are given a red flag.
Decolonisation scheme Data source: via Freedom of Information Request	University/Departmental initiative	2021-22	
REC member Data source: <a href="#">Advance HE</a>	Institution signed up to the Advance HE Race Equality Charter	2021	Institutions that are REC members or have a REC Bronze Award are given a green flag, otherwise they are given a red flag.
Bronze Award REC Data source: <a href="#">Advance HE</a>	Award for Race Equality Charter	2021	

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+ NSS results for these years was the only offer from the OfS

++ Professor indicates a member of staff holding a contract which aligns with the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) contract level 5A 'Professor'. This level indicates a senior academic appointment which may carry the title of Professor but which does not have departmental line management responsibilities.







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