

2264 Meaningfully Tackling the BAME Attainment Gap at UEA

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Summary

This policy mandates the Student Officer Committee 2018/19 to form a taskforce dedicated to tackling the BAME Attainment Gap at UEA, which will work with UEA to create and publish a UEA Equality Strategy. This UEA Equality Strategy will guide both uea(su) and UEA to tackle the massive BAME attainment gap at the university through curriculum diversification and creating commitments from UEA towards hiring BAME academics and commitments from uea(su) towards encouraging BAME students into academia.

Council Notes

1. The UEA attainment gap is apparently 17.8% and the UEA executive at the council meeting on the 19th April 2018 admitted that their data on the attainment gap at UEA could be communicated better to the faculty and to students.
2. That the data on the attainment gap, wherever it is published, is inaccessible. However, the UEA executive have acknowledged that at UEA there is an attainment gap that must be tackled.
3. "Despite entering with the same qualifications, Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students are leaving university with lower outcomes than their White peers." ¹
4. That other universities, such as Kingston University, have already published strategies to tackle the BAME attainment gap and other inequalities within their university. ²
5. The UEA Equality Data Report (Students) 2017 states that "almost a third" of the student population at UEA are BAME including international students, and that 17% of all 'Home Fee' students are BAME. ³

¹ Panesar, Lucy, 'Academic support and the BAME attainment gap: Using data to challenge assumptions', *Spark: UAL Creative Teaching and Learning Journal*, 2 (2017)

² <http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/strategy-and-annual-reports/>

³ <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/equality/policies-schemes-and-action-plans/equality-information-and-ref2014>

6. The UEA Equality Data Report (Staff) 2017 states that UEA is behind the national percentage of BAME Academic staff by -5 (National percentage: 13.9%. UEA: 8.9%).⁴
7. That same-race representation in academic and teaching staff has a positive effect on the student's academic achievement.⁵

Council Believes

1. The attainment gap is created and maintained by structural and institutional racism in the UK, and that if the SU and the university are truly committed to equality and diversity that the BAME attainment gap must be relentlessly tackled until it is closed.
2. That if UEA wants to still be able to claim its motto of 'Do Different' that it must *actually* do different by tackling the attainment gap.
3. That nearly a third of all fee-paying students falling behind in attainment by 17.8% is shameful and a strategy must be created to tackle it.

Council Resolves

1. To mandate the incoming Student Officer Committee (2018/19) to form a taskforce of SU staff, elected SU officers, members of the BAME Liberation Society (and any subsequent caucus dedicated to BAME students in the SU) and members of the UEA Equality and Diversity Committee that is dedicated to tackling the BAME Attainment Gap at UEA, which will have duties as follows:
 - a. To create, hold and advertise multiple remunerated focus groups for self-identified BAME students to talk about their lived experiences as BAME students at UEA, focusing on experiences with racism, the diversity of their curriculum and their teaching staff. This will partially inform the UEA Equality Strategy.
 - b. To additionally survey students in public student areas (The Hive, The Square, etc.) on the same topics as the focus groups. This will partially inform the UEA Equality strategy.

⁴ <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/equality/policies-schemes-and-action-plans/equality-information-and-ref2014>

⁵ Egalite, Anna, Kisida, Brian, and Winters, Marcus, 'Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement', *Economics of Education Review*, 45 (2015), pp. 45 - 52

- c. To lobby the university for transparency on the BAME attainment gap data, by making it public, updated yearly and easily available to students and the SU.
 - d. To create and publish a UEA Equality Strategy, which both UEA and the SU will observe.
2. To mandate the Students' Union to affirm its commitment to working with the University and students to close the BAME attainment gap.
 3. To open a dialogue with UEA's academic staff to diversify the curriculum by encouraging module leaders to actively include BAME voices in modules through Student-Staff Liaison Committees and Faculty Convenors.
 4. To work with the NUS Black Students Campaign (and any subsequent NUS liberation campaigns focused on BAME students) to create the UEA Equality Strategy.