University of Essex
Race Equality Charter Action Plan
2023 – 2028

[Consider adding an extra sentence about how the action plan reflects application and priority objectives have been identified. Cross references numbering will need to be checked in case of movement]

Priority Objectives

- Increasing the ethnic diversity of our PSS, paying particular attention to the proportion of Black staff and Asian staff.
  - Related actions:4.2a – e; 6.1a, 6.1b
- Increasing the proportion of B.A.M.E. UK academics overall, paying particular attention to increasing Black UK academics.
  - Related actions: 4.2a – g; 5.2a – e; 5.3a – d; 5.13a, 5.13b
- Increasing the proportion of B.A.M.E. staff (UK and non-UK) in senior roles for both academics and PSS.
  - Related actions: 4.4a – c; 4.8a – c; 5.4a; 5.8a; 5.11a; 6.2a – d; 6.3a, 6.3b; 7.9c
- Improving the overall lived experience for staff and students from minoritised ethnic backgrounds by improving the inclusivity of University culture and encouraging the whole community to better understand race and racism and to be better allies.
  - Related actions: 3.1a – d; 3.2a, 3.2b; 3.3a, 3.3b; 7.5a – d; 7.7a, 7.7b; 8.1a; 8.5a, 8.5b; 8.6a
- Ensuring the ethnicity degree awarding gap continues to reduce and progress seen in the last three years continues until the gap is eliminated.
  - Related actions: 7.6a – f; 7.8a, 7.8b; 7.9d; 8.2a - c

REF	Issue Identified	Action(s)	Success Measure(s)	Timeframe	Responsible
Section 2: Self-assessment process					
2.1	We will need to refresh the REC SAT to ensure it is fit for purpose post-application with appropriate representation from different backgrounds and parts of the University. This will need to be reviewed regularly and before the end of the award period.	a. Confirm the SAT membership post award and collect full monitoring data to ensure intersectional diversity.	• SAT membership is published. • Membership is ethnically diverse and representative of staff and student communities, and job roles. • Annual monitoring reports are considered by People Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group.	January 2024, following the results of current application. Annually thereafter.	Action owner: REC SAT Co-Chairs
		b. Identify additional SAT members from the Faculties of Science and Health, and Arts and Humanities where representation is currently low.	• There is proportionate representation from the 3 Faculties.	January 2024, following the results of current application	Action Owner: REC SAT Co-Chairs Supported by: ED
2.2	It will be essential to ensure we can maintain momentum to complete the actions proposed, and to prepare for future self-assessments.	a. Convene twice termly meetings of the SAT to provide updates from action owners. Agree the point of escalation if progress on the actions is stalling. [Frequency will increase 18 months before the end of the award period and reflected in workload allocation and PDR].	• Relevant information is shared at each SAT, and two-way communication is established with other University committees and key stakeholders as appropriate. • Progress and challenges are reported termly to PCIAG,	Twice termly, starting from December 2023	Action Owner: REC SAT Co-Chairs Supported by: EDI Project Manager, EDs, Registrar, Students' Union, Director of People & Culture

				escalating to USG and Council as appropriate.		
		b. SAT meetings will include planning for the next REC surveys to ensure maximum engagement	• Survey completion rate increases (target: 30%)	January 2024, following the results of current application	Action Owner: REC SAT Co-chairs Supported by: Director of Communication, Director of Inclusion
2.3	Staff and students need to be kept up to date on work planned and progress made. Strong collaboration with our Students' Union will be essential.	a. Provide termly updates to staff and students using different formats as needed. (e.g., publish updates from the VC, blog posts from SAT members and 'you said, we did' pieces.) Track engagement with the staff and student communities.	• Increase in awareness of race work across the University, evidenced through staff and student surveys and engagement with race-related actions and activity. • Communications will be monitored to ascertain which are most effective.	Termly meetings with Communication teams from March 2024.	Action Owner: REC SAT Co-chairs Supported by: Director of Communication, Director of Inclusion
		b. Hold regular meetings with the REC Co-chairs and the SU to improve communication, maintain student representation on the SAT and collaborate on actions wherever possible and appropriate.	• Active student representation on SAT.	Termly from April 2024	Action Owner: REC SAT Co-chairs, Chief Executive SU.
Section 3: Institution and Local Context					

3.1	Anti-racism work with our University campus security teams has been in place in 2022/23 and we want this to continue. This will contribute to the sense of belonging by B.A.M.E staff and students.	a. All new campus security staff complete specific training on race and good campus relations as part of their induction (within 6 months of joining).	• Our target is for an increase of at least <u>10%</u> of staff and <u>10%</u> of students from <u>all</u> ethnic groups who respond with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the following statement in the next REC survey: 'If I reported a race-related incident to my institution, appropriate action would be taken.' The current baseline is as follows: 58.07% of White staff, 26.09% of B.A.M.E. staff. Based on the results of the next survey we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in future REC surveys.	Training will be in place for new staff from January 2024. Essential booster training will be available from July 2024 and refreshed annually.	<u>Action Owner</u>: Head of Security and Campus Safety <u>Supported by</u>: Head of Internal Communication
		b. All campus security staff complete annual booster training on race and good campus relations.			
		c. Clarify for staff and students how to report any issues they encounter, and how these are reviewed by the SAT. This will build on existing communication campaigns.	• Any race-related complaints or incidents are reported to the SAT as soon as possible and appropriate action taken.	Information about Report and Support is in place and additional signposting will be refreshed April 2024.	<u>Action owner</u>: Head of Campus Security <u>Supported by</u>: REC SAT Co-chairs
		d. Increase the diversity of the campus security teams by: • Advertising jobs widely using positive action statements.	• 15% of campus security staff will be from B.A.M.E. backgrounds by 2028, reflecting the population of Essex (as per 2021 Census).	Staff demographics reviewed annually by SAT to monitor progress.	<u>Action owner</u>: Head of campus security <u>Supported by</u>: Head of Resourcing

		• Using University networks and contacts to specifically target potential applicants from B.A.M.E. backgrounds.			
3.2	Our senior leaders have been working with colleagues to become more race literate (e.g., reverse mentoring has been introduced for members of USG, and an inclusive leadership programme has been delivered). This commitment will continue and strengthen to help to ensure race and ethnicity are considered systematically in decision making processes.	a. Introduce race equity reverse mentoring for Deans and Deputy Deans. [The power balance of the mentoring partnership must be considered, and B.A.M.E. staff should not be forced to participate or be overburdened and the need for those being mentored to also take responsibility for their own learning and development allyship to be emphasised]	• Results from the next staff survey, and the REC surveys reflect staff and student confidence in senior management commitment to race equity.	REC survey 2025.	<u>Action owner</u>: Head of Academic and Professional Practice; Senior Inclusion Manager and EDI Lead <u>Supported by</u>: Executive Deans and Registrar
		b. Introduce a new question in the next REC survey, to ascertain staff and student confidence in senior management's commitment to race equity.	• We will identify a baseline and target from the results of the next REC survey.	To be introduced in REC Survey from 2025	<u>Action Owner</u>: REC SAT <u>Supported by</u>: EDI Project Manager

3.3	We need to increase the frequency and quality of conversations about race across the University. This will help to encourage the whole community to consider race and ethnicity in how they work and deliver at the University.	a. Identify and deliver anti-racism training to all staff and students, which should include: allyship, microaggressions, implicit bias, privilege, conflict resolution/ bystander interventions. The best method for delivery will be identified (possibly online, followed by face-to-face sessions or group discussions).	• At least 80% of staff and students to have undertaken the training by the next REC submission. • Increase in engagement with the REC survey overall (contributing to 30% completion rate) as well as increase in agreement that people are able to be themselves at work and are supported by their colleagues.	Training identified throughout 2024 and rolled out over next three years.	<u>Action Owner:</u> Senior Inclusion Manager <u>Supported by:</u> People Developers
		b. Introduce race specific elements in our role-based training where needed and appropriate. This will include as a minimum training for line managers and recruiting managers.	• Role-based training completed to an agreed schedule and completion reported as part of essential training reporting. • The next REC survey will include a question on respondents' confidence in having conversations about race. At least 50% of respondents will feel respond that they would feel somewhat confident, confident, or very confident in having conversations on race.	Training delivered January and September 2024 with repeated delivery 2024/25 and 25/26. Evaluation of training to take place in March 2027	<u>Action Owner:</u> Head of Academic and Professional Practice <u>Supported by:</u> Senior Inclusion Manager and EDI Lead
Section 4: Staff Profile					
4.1	Our staff ethnicity disclosure rates are currently low and need	a. Re-deliver the Your Profile Counts campaign with at		Strategy for AY 2023-24	

	to increase to help to ensure we build our understanding of our workforce and identify key trends and patterns. Work on this is under way through the Your Profile Counts campaign. Staff meetings and forums are helping to identify why people are reluctant to share their ethnicity. In addition to low disclosure rates overall, we have a higher proportion of staff disclosing under the 'Other' ethnic group category, suggesting the need for additional detailed categories.	least 2 high-profile campaigns each year. b. Introduce an annual 'check and update' census campaign	• Increase ethnicity disclosure rate from 85% (2023) to 95% overall by 2028. • Progress over time to be tracked through regular reporting to the REC SAT, containing data as at March 31st every year of this action plan.	developed August 2023. Strategy to be reviewed in July 2024 for any changes to be made for AY 2024-25, and this cycle to be repeated annually	<u>Action Owner</u>: Director of Inclusion <u>Supported by</u>: Head of Internal Communications, Head of Management Information
		c. Identify and propose possible additional ethnicity categories to staff through an all-staff consultation. Additional categories will be checked by the Management Information team to ensure that they can be mapped onto existing HESA categories.	• Reduce the number of staff included in the 'Other' category to <3%.	Additional categories identified by February 2024; systems changes implemented following approval from PCIAG and USG and in place for AY 2024/25	<u>Action Owner</u>: Senior Inclusion Manager and EDI Lead, Head of Management Information <u>Supported by</u>: Inclusion Managers
4a – Academic Staff				
4.2	The University has a low number of UK B.A.M.E. academics. We are working to increase recruitment of	a. Redesign our recruitment pages to increase diverse imagery and case studies.	• B.A.M.E. applicants increase by 10%.	Develop and implement targeted	<u>Action owner</u>: Head of Resourcing

academic staff and we also want to do more to encourage progression of non-white B.A.M.E. students into academic roles (in addition to other areas outlined in section 5 below). The University reviewed recruitment and onboarding processes in 2022/23 and a related action plan is in place which will work alongside these actions.	b. Advertise vacancies through B.A.M.E. networks and targeted recruitment	• Positive actions statements are used in 100% of jobs advertised where there is underrepresentation.	approach by November 2023.	Supported by: Recruiting Managers Inclusion Manager, Head of Internal Communications
	c. Analyse data on where applicants saw the vacancies to help measure if we are reaching B.A.M.E. audiences.	• New recruitment web page and content is published as part of Working at Essex.	Increase in applications by 10% to be achieved by June 2027	
	d. Use positive action statements (where appropriate) consistently. Link to the University's work on race equity to reassure potential applicants of our commitment to race equity.		New web content available April 2024	
	e. Publish case studies of staff who commute (including from Greater London which is more diverse than Essex) and highlight the possibility of flexible and hybrid working.			
	f. Create supported programmes that give a post doctorate path in the field(s) of interest/research, including time for professional development.	• B.A.M.E. applicants increase by 10%.	Increase in applications by 10% to be achieved by June 2027	Action Owner: PVCR

Supported by: Dean of PGR |

		Allocate workload time to PIs for mentoring.			
		g. Promote fellowship opportunities to encourage B.A.M.E. individuals to apply for supported post doctorate positions within the University, providing support for progression into permanent posts. Monitor postdoctoral applications from B.A.M.E. students following the implementation of post doctorate programmes.			
4.3	The proportion of B.A.M.E. staff on fixed term contracts, rather than permanent contracts, has been substantially higher in the Faculty of Science and Health than in Arts and Humanities or the Social Sciences. The University Joint Working Group on Decasualisation is concluding and an action plan is in place which will work alongside these actions.	a. Provide mentoring and career development sessions to staff on fixed term contracts in Science and Health to support them to apply for permanent posts. e.g., what does a good Education Statement look like, how to develop a funding plan etc.	• More balanced distribution of staff on fixed-term contracts by ethnicity, B.A.M.E across the three faculties. • Staff on fixed-term contracts to be proportionate with White staff on fixed term contracts.	Spring 2025	Action owner: EDs Supported by: Heads of Department

4.4	Only 36.62% of B.A.M.E. REC survey respondents agreed with the statement: Work-related opportunities for development, such as temporary promotions or profile-raising opportunities, are allocated fairly and transparently. In comparison, 53.85% of While respondents agreed with this statement. This suggests that encouragement for promotion and informal information on progression are inconsistent for different staff groups	a. Provide mandatory training for HoDs and members of ASC on the impact of racial bias on progression and development at the University.	• 100% of HoDs have completed the mandatory training within 6 months of appointment.	July 2024	Action Owner: Head of Academic and Professional Practice Supported by: Chair of ASC, Executive Deans, Heads of Departments.
		b. Introduce and promote a new online mechanism/portal for colleagues to express interests in development opportunities (e.g. committee membership, participation in working groups, project teams). Analyse patterns for expressions of interest annually through the EDI annual report.	• Increase of at least 10% of staff from all ethnic groups who respond with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement: Work-related opportunities for development, such as temporary promotions or profile-raising opportunities, are allocated fairly and transparently. Based on the results of the next survey we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in future REC surveys.	Phased development beginning in December 2023. Full implementation July 2024. Target: 60% of all respondents agree with this statement October 2026; further target for October 2028 to be set upon review of results in October 2027	Action owner: Director of OD; Supported by: Head of Internal Communications
		c. HoDs discuss promotion criteria regularly with academics and during their PDRs.	Staff surveys re-run to result in a closing of the gap between B.A.M.E. staff and White staff members'	October 2026; further target for October 2028 to be set upon	Action Owner: Executive Deans Supported by:

			responses to this question, with a gap of <10% by next REC survey.	review of results in October 2027	HoDs
4b – Professional and Support Staff					
4.5	Our existing employee exit process needs to be strengthened to ensure we are capturing reasons why UK and non-UK B.A.M.E. and non-UK White PSS are more likely to resign than UK White PSS. We also find that UK B.A.M.E. PSS are more likely to leave for all reasons as compared to UK White PSS. All reasons include resignations but also contract ending and retirement.	a. Amend the leavers' questionnaire to include questions by protected characteristics and re-launch it to enable stronger data collection.	• Revised questionnaire is launched, with a response rate target of 30%. • If completed, this will enable us to better understand whether there are different reasons for leaving by ethnic group (and other protected characteristics).	Revised questionnaire is launched in January 2024; Increase of at least 10% in the leavers' questionnaire response rate in the first year. Based on the results over the next year, we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in the future.	Action Owner: Senior Employee Relations Adviser Supported by: Head of Management Information; Inclusion Managers

		b. Provide information to all line managers on the leaver's process. Line managers to prompt the leaver to complete the exit questionnaire, and other elements of the exit process, such as the offering of an exit interview.		Increase of at least 10% in the leavers' questionnaire response rate in the first year. Based on the results over the next year, we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in the future. Exit questionnaire and interview data reported to REC SAT in March 2025; further measures to be identified and recommended by September 2025	Action Owner: HR Business Partners Supported by: Line Managers

4c – Grievances and Disciplinaries

4.6	Data analysed suggests that number of B.A.M.E staff involved in disciplinary cases was proportionate to their overall population (B.A.M.E. staff were involved in 17% of cases, whereas they make up 15% of the overall population). however hypervigilance can impact process and conversations outside disciplinary cases, such as management conversations.	a. Provide training to line managers and Employee Relations Advisers on how biases against B.A.M.E. staff can lead to hypervigilance of performance and avoidance of challenging conversations.	• Training is completed by all line managers. • Rates of disciplinary cases against B.A.M.E. staff are in proportion with White staff	July 2025	<u>Action Owner</u>: Business Partners, Senior Employee Relations Advisers <u>Supported by</u>: People Developers, Legal providers
		b. Source Employment Law training on matters around discrimination and hypervigilance of performance management and deliver it to P&C staff.	• Training is completed by P&C teams as appropriate.		
4.7	Data analysed suggest there is a lower likelihood of B.A.M.E. staff raising grievances and we need to understand this in more detail and take action to address the issues identified.	a. Organise focus groups and/or surveys with staff to explore why B.A.M.E. staff are less likely to raise a grievance.	• Focus groups delivered. Emerging themes shared with REC SAT. • More B.A.M.E. staff feel confident to raise issues via existing processes, (e.g. Report and Support, line manager, P&C). This will be measured via the focus groups and staff surveys.	July 2024. The first REC survey following the submission to be used to develop our baseline for measuring impact moving forwards	<u>Action owner</u>: Inclusion Manager <u>Supported by</u>: Rec SAT co-Chairs
		b. Develop a communication campaign to raise awareness of the grievance procedure and how grievances are managed.			
		c. Include a new question in the REC survey and monitor regularly.			

4d – Decision-making Boards and Committees					
4.8	B.A.M.E. staff are proportionally underrepresented in decision-making committees. Representation of B.A.M.E. staff in these decision-making committees needs to increase, without over-burdening any individuals.	a. Identify and seek to mitigate the barriers to B.A.M.E staff representation on decision making committees. b. Incorporate the use of positive action where there is underrepresentation on committees. c. Share details of opportunities with relevant staff network chairs and inclusivity leads in departments.	• Increase membership by 2% from the current baseline or bring in line with proportional representation for each committee. However, it must be noted that progress in this area is dependent on a number of other work and actions including those on improving nominations processes, increasing the number of B.A.M.E. staff and the number of B.A.M.E. staff in senior roles, as some committee positions are ex-officio.	Academic year 2026/27	<u>Action Owner</u>: Head of Corporate Governance and Deputy Academic Registrar
4e – Equal Pay					
4.9	During the 3-year period analysed, the hourly pay for B.A.M.E. staff is on average lower than that of their White colleagues, although this is not the case for PSS in some faculties and in some years. A Joint Working Group on Equality Pay Gaps was concluded recently. Monitoring the impact of the strategies recommended	a. Data collected on ethnicity pay gaps by the Equality Pay Gaps Working Group will be analysed, and recommendations will be made to PCIAG and USG in the Autumn term. The specific impact of the recommendations made will be evaluated in 2026.	• Implementation and review of the actions will be undertaken following the Joint Working Group on Equality Pay Gaps' recommendations.	Working group established 2022-23 Impact of the recommendations to be seen by 2026	<u>Action owner</u>: Director of People & Culture

	will help us understand what is working and where further work is needed.				

Section 5: Academic Staff	

5a – Academic Recruitment	

5.1	There is a lower proportion of UK B.A.M.E. staff applying for academic roles in comparison to UK population, especially given our proximity to London.	Refer to actions in 4.2a – 4.2g.			
5.2	B.A.M.E. candidates are less likely to get shortlisted than White candidates, with various trends in hiring rate .This indicates the need to develop and provide assurance of a fair and equitable recruitment process.	a. Additional race-specific content will be included in the Recruitment and Selection training and completion will be required by all panel members.	• Recruitment and Selection training revised and new content added. • 100% completion for all members involved in shortlisting and in the interview panel. • HoDs analyse data trends in their area and develop local actions as appropriate.	Training on recruitment and selection is already compulsory, Additional components included by 2024 and revised annually from AY 2024/25	Action Owner: Head of Resourcing, Resourcing Advisers Supported by: Senior Inclusion Manager / EDI Lead
		b. Implement and evaluate the actions recommended by the Review of Recruitment and Onboarding.	• Proportional increase of B.A.M.E. applicants being shortlisted and appointed across academic and PSS roles.	January 2025 (but possible phasing of corrective	Action Owner: Director of ERR, Head of Resourcing

		c. Process changes to remove any possible bias including anonymised shortlisting (as at action 6.2)		actions thereafter)	
		d. Take action to increase diversity of recruitment panels. E.g: • Provide specific training to increase the number of trained panel members with a focus on increasing representation. • Deliver a communication campaign about the benefits of being a panel member.			
		e. Include information about applicant, shortlisting and appointment rate in People Landscape dashboards so that HoDs can see trends and patterns in their area and act.	• Each faculty to develop and implement recommendations based on their respective trends. This will be reported to PCIAG annually.	Dashboards reviewed and updated by January 2024 Improved shortlisting rates expected by September 2027	Action Owner: HoDs Supported by: HR Business Partners Head of Management Information Inclusion Managers

| 5.3 | B.A.M.E. staff were less likely to agree that the University's recruitment process was fair and transparent, and that the University's recruitment and selection policies led to the best candidates being recruited. We need to review the recruitment journey for applicants, identify and implement potential barriers. This action will work alongside the Review of Recruitment and Onboarding and action plan. | a. Communicate details on the recruitment process for academic posts and what steps are being taken to mitigate racial bias at each stage with current and prospective staff. Encourage HoDs to communicate their local actions as they are developed.

b. Review why B.A.M.E. people are less likely to be shortlisted and ensure reasons are captured/challenged.

c. Ensure recruiting managers provide feedback to internal candidates (if not successful at interview) to encourage development and continue to provide feedback to external candidates if requested.

d. Ensure B.A.M.E. employees are always represented on panels (and training put in place to ensure a large pool is created). The success of this action will be linked to | • In next REC survey: 82% of B.A.M.E. staff agree that the University's recruitment and selection processes are fair and transparent (up from 61% and in line with White respondents in the last survey).

• 68% of B.A.M.E. staff agree that the University's recruitment and selection policies led to the best candidates being recruited (up from 48%, and in line with White respondents in the last survey).

• Proportional increase of B.A.M.E. applicants being shortlisted and appointed across academic and PSS roles. | Implement by April 2024, impact to be seen by June 2027

Selection process for leadership positions to be agreed by Jan 2025

REC Survey Data impact expected by 2028 | <u>Action Owner</u>:, Head of Resourcing

<u>Supported by</u> Recruiting Managers Resourcing Advisers |

		completion of other actions.			
5.4	Comments from the staff survey indicate that there are inconsistencies in the process for internal/departmental leadership role allocation, for roles like Director of Education, Director of Research, etc.	a. Agree standard nomination and/or selection process for internal/departmental leadership positions.	Open text responses in the next REC survey indicate higher confidence in internal/departmental leadership nomination/selection processes.	Standard process identified; implementation of process to take place from AY 2025/26.	<u>Action Owners:</u> EDs <u>Supported by:</u> HoDs and Faculty Managers

5b – Training

| 5.5 | Leadership and management programmes are either open to all staff or colleagues at a specific career stage. Data highlight a wide gap in attendance between White and B.A.M.E. staff at leadership and management courses. This includes internal courses (Future Leaders & Strategic Leaders) and external training (Aurora). For internal courses, while the gap has closed over the three years of analysis (2018/19 – White 75.2%, B.A.M.E. 19.5%; 2020/21 – White 57.1%, B.A.M.E. 35.7%), there was reduced participation | a. The data on nominations and uptake will be presented to the REC SAT annually, and then cascaded to the PCIAG, faculties and departments so that inequalities can be identified and Managers/HoDs asked to reflect on the nomination process. | • Number of staff members attending leadership and management courses should increase by 10% for staff from all ethnic groups, from the current baseline. Based on the progress made we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in the future.
• As the number of staff members attending courses increases, the gap between White and B.A.M.E. staff attending courses should continue to be in proportion with the population of B.A.M.E. and White staff. | September 2028 | <u>Action Owner:</u> Faculty Deans and Section Heads for Professional Services |

				September 2024	Action owner: Director of OD
	from all staff during the period of analysis. For Aurora, no B.A.M.E. candidates attended the course through central funding in the period of analysis.

Survey data suggest some leadership courses may be off-putting for B.A.M.E. staff and perceived as Eurocentric in content and inclusivity. See also actions 6.2a – 6.2d below. | b. Review the University nomination processes to identify areas of potential bias and propose actions to PCIAG. | • In next REC survey, an increase of at least 10% in staff of all ethnic groups responding with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the following statement: Work-related opportunities for development, such as temporary promotions or profile-raising opportunities, are allocated fairly and transparently. Based on the results of the next survey we will revisit this target to see if a higher increase can be expected in future REC surveys. | | |
| 5.6 | Professional Development opportunities are open to all staff but survey data suggests that B.A.M.E. staff generally do not feel as encouraged or enabled to access development opportunities. The University needs to ensure equity of provision, and increased transparency. | a. Develop an online mechanism/portal for all staff to register aspirations and interest in development opportunities (e.g. for institutional citizenship, training and development, task-and-finish groups, and other relevant activities). (See earlier action 4.3b)

b. Promote the full range of professional development opportunities. Provide examples for how employees can engage | • As above.
• See actions 5.6a – 5.6e relating to PDR | Phased development beginning in December 2023. Full implementation July 2024. J | Action Owner: Head of Academic and Professional Practice

Supported by:

Faculty Deans and Section Heads for Professional Services |

		with informal, social and peer learning opportunities focused around: reflective practice, mentoring, coaching, shadowing, secondments, networks, and action learning.			
		c. PDR guidance revised to re-emphasise time for staff training and development. This will help to ensure line managers are proactively advocating development opportunities for B.A.M.E. staff.			

5c – Appraisal/Development Review

5.7	Feedback from staff is that the University Performance Development Review (PDR) system is not used consistently. Data are not centrally collected, making it difficult to analyse take-up, employee experience and impact of PDR on performance, or to identify differences across ethnic	a. Provide assurance that a PDR takes place at least annually for every member of staff. Managers and individuals will be required as a minimum to record the date PDR takes place in the University information management system.	• Completion reporting is included in the People Landscape dashboards. An annual confirmation report shared with EDs and Registrar to follow-up as required. • In the next REC survey: 80% of B.A.M.E. staff agree to	Assurance requirement, training, and PDR campaign in place from January 2024. Survey question included in	<u>Action owner</u>: Director of OD

	groups. The REC Survey showed that although B.A.M.E. staff were just as likely as White staff to complete appraisals, they were significantly less likely to agree that their appraisal was useful and that career progression opportunities were allocated fairly.	b. Deliver an annual University PDR Campaign which promotes effective PDRs and starts the PDR annual cycle. c. A clear description of the University PDR model is published which will be embedded in recruitment, welcome, probation and promotion material. The rationale for the model will be clear and focused on the support for career development, progression at all stages and roles. d. Training is provided to all line managers and staff in a range of formats and specific to career stages (e.g., through the professional development hub, management and leadership programmes). This will ensure managers are confident to hold effective PDRs and all staff can engage with PDR conversations.	some extent that they have an annual appraisal with their manager. This will be an increase from 62% in the last survey. • 70% of B.A.M.E. respondents agree to some extent that their appraisal is evidence-based and transparent. This is an increase from 52% in the last survey, and in line with White respondents in the previous survey. • Results from the annual Employee Voice question are considered by the REC SAT.	Employee Voice October 2024. Further milestones to be agreed following next REC survey.	

		e. A survey question is included annually in Employee Voice surveys on the experience of professional development conversations and PDR. Responses are analysed to identify and respond to patterns.			

5d – Career Progression

| 5.8 | Analysis highlighted promotion success rate gaps between B.A.M.E. staff and White staff. There was an 8% gap in grade 9 Lecturer roles, a 7% gap in Reader and 6% gap in Professor roles. Qualitative discussions with FDs and staff members show that encouragement for promotion and informal information on progression may be lacking for B.A.M.E. staff. | a. Regular workshops on academic promotion criteria and requirements, and processes, to be organised and delivered. Workshops to remain open to all staff, but to be shared via the B.A.M.E. forum and other internal communications channels to raise awareness and increase participation from B.A.M.E. staff. | • Promotion success rate gap between B.A.M.E. and White staff to reduce to under 4% across all academic grades and roles | Workshops to be arranged and delivered once a term from January 2024

Success rate gap to reduce by December 2027 | Action Owner: HR Business Partners

Supported by: Faculty Employee Relations Advisers People Developers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

		b. See action 4.8a – 4.8c for actions related to increasing B.A.M.E. staff representation on decision-making committees, which we expect will improve promotion success rates for B.A.M.E. staff.			
		c. See action 5.7a – 5.7e for actions related to PDR and appraisal, which we expect will improve encouragement and access to informal information on progression for B.A.M.E. staff.			

5e – Research Excellence Framework (REF)

5.9	We will provide assurance on the effective implementation of the REF Code of Practice to advance race equity in the University.	a. Review institutional Code of Practice and the constitution of the group with oversight for this. Data to be made available to that group, as part of REF 2028 preparation. b. We will continue to monitor the proportion of B.A.M.E. staff submitted to REF 2028, and identify further actions as required.	• Success is dependent on the success in recruiting more B.A.M.E academic staff, as we submit all our Grade 9 ASER/ASR staff to REF. • Actions on improving support for B.A.M.E. academic staff are captured across Section 5.	Academic Year 2023/24	Action Owner: PVCR Supported by: REO/Research Committee/REF planning group

| 5.10 | We will provide assurance on and identify opportunities to enhance race equity and inclusion within UoA Research Environments. Positive action is needed in this area to help overcome the potential bias within the funding allocation processes for B.A.M.E. staff. | a. Use the REF review process and forward planning to reflect on UoA research environments and the effectiveness of EDI within UoAs. | • All UoA Environment statements are able to evidence the effectiveness of EDI actions at both institutional and UoA level. | We do not currently have a benchmark for research grant awarding but will develop one as part of the action. We will update the action plan once we have a clear target. | Action Owner: PVCR

Supported by: REO/Research Committee/REF planning group |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.11 | Allocation of research grant funding contributes to academic career progression. Research, and information from UKRI suggests that B.A.M.E. academics nationally are less likely to be awarded research funding, and specifically larger research grants. Positive action is needed in this area to help overcome the bias within the funding allocation processes for B.A.M.E. staff | a. Ensure our current mentorship and peer review systems actively target junior B.A.M.E. staff who might be applying for grants. | • In addition to an increase in research grant funding being awarded, we should also see an impact on B.A.M.E. promotions | | |
| | | b. Establish a framework – drawing on our promotions process – for gathering data on the ethnicity of staff applying for and securing research grant income. Based on that establish a University benchmark for how much research grant funding is currently awarded to B.A.M.E. academics, and agree an ambitious aim for impact. | | | |

5f – Support Given to early career researchers					
5.12	Current networks such as Newcomers, and programmes such as 'Wise up Wednesday' are open to everyone, but we do not currently know whether B.A.M.E. early career staff find them as useful and/or inclusive as their White counterparts. We want to understand whether our main networks are inclusive and fit for purpose.	a. Run focus groups with members and participants and review the programmes overall with a race lens to understand how race equity can be better embedded. b. Ensure that regular feedback and satisfaction surveys are run, and results can be disaggregated by ethnicity to understand experiences of staff from different ethnic groups.	• B.A.M.E. early career researchers and academics feel the networks and support available is useful and inclusive to the same extent as White early career researchers and academics. This will be evidenced from staff surveys and evaluation of opportunities.	July 2025	Action owners: Head of Researcher Development, REO; Assistant Director (Academic and Research) Library and Cultural Services.
5.13	The University is proud of its work on 'Transitions and Transformations: Black Researchers' Journey' and we want to continue that work. This will continue to create more personalised support for Black doctoral students and Early Career Researchers through the provision of general and targeted development opportunities.	a. Develop and implement targeted mentoring and sponsorship programmes (part of the Transitions and Transformations project). b. Develop an online virtual platform (the Black Researcher Hub) with personal and professional development opportunities (part of the Transitions and Transformations project)	• At least 5 sponsors and 5 students join the scheme by Year 3 of the project. Once a user feedback mechanism is developed, we will identify appropriate targets for positive feedback to further measure the success of this action. • A 2% increase in Black students numbers going from UG to PGT and PGT to PGR, using HESA data and Essex	Initial target for sponsors and students to be reached by July 2024 Black Researcher's Hub launched in time for AY 2023/24 The Transitions and Transformations Project is	Action owner: DD PGRT (for T&T and external partners) Supported by: Director of OD

			data on access and progression	governed by a separate Strategy Board, who monitor the project and action plan. Additional targets and milestones will continue to be set through that group. The project is scheduled to run for 4 years, until January 2026.	

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Section 6: Professional Services Staff

6a – Professional and Support Staff Recruitment

(Also see actions 4.2a – 4.2e)

6.1	B.A.M.E. applicants are currently not being shortlisted at the same rate as White applicants.	a. Ensure paperwork relating to shortlisting and recruitment is completed in full, including sections on why candidates have not been successful. A central system for capturing this and monitoring/moderating this will be developed	• 2%-point increase in B.A.M.E. staff being shortlisted at application stage.	April 2024	Action Owner: See also actions 5.1 – 5.4) Resourcing Advisers

		b. Undertake a pilot of anonymous recruitment for professional services position on a larger scale to previous attempts. Trial within some departments/teams, evaluate and if an increase is seen in shortlisted candidates from B.A.M.E backgrounds, roll out more widely.			

6b – Training

| 6.2 | More opportunities are needed for colleagues at all grades to access leadership and management development programmes. For example, Future Leaders is advertised as typically grade 8, which restricts opportunities for staff in lower grades. We will be focusing on increasing access to leadership and management development opportunities which will support staff to develop skills, knowledge and expertise that will prepare them for future roles. This includes University-delivered programmes, external programmes, and access to apprenticeships. (see also action 5.2) | a. Change the grade for members of staff to access the Future Leaders Programme to grade 7 so that more B.A.M.E. staff can access the training programme, and ensure this is communicated in the advertisement.

Also see actions 5.5a and 5.5b. | • Number of B.A.M.E staff being nominated and participating on Future Leaders programme is representative of the staff population. | Nomination process revised from January 2024. Due to scheduling of the programme an increase would be expected in the following cohort January 2025. | <u>Action owner</u>: People Developers |

		b. Identify a development programme which staff on lower grades can access and use positive action where appropriate to encourage B.A.M.E. applicants to apply.	• First cohort of the programme delivered and the experience of colleagues evaluated, specifically in relation to accessibility and the nomination process. Areas for improvement identified and actioned. • Number of B.A.M.E staff participating in the programme is representative of the staff population.	September 2025. Future actions and timeframes will be set following evaluation of the first programme.	
		c. Deliver a termly communication campaign to raise awareness of the leadership and management development opportunities available to all staff.	• Engagement levels with communications tracked and action taken to use alternative formats when required.	From January 2024	
		d. Deliver training to line managers on having effective development conversations with staff to identify professional development needs.	• Improved development conversations with line managers will support leadership development of more B.A.M.E. staff	January 2024	<u>Action owner</u>: People Developers

6.3	Impact of leadership training on development and progression of B.A.M.E. staff is currently unknown. We need to better understand the impact of the different programmes available, measure whether they are as impactful for B.A.M.E. colleagues as White colleagues and use that information to take action if needed..	a. Collect training evaluation data systemically to see if there has been learning and impact. This should include external training. Use it to understand difference in experience and satisfaction by ethnicity. b. Conduct short surveys before, immediately after and one year after completion to measure people's desire and ability to progress and the impact of the programme on that desire and ability.	• Mechanism to capture external training is developed and in use. • Development dashboard is in place to provide patterns of engagement by Faculty, Department and Section. • In the longer-term this should translate into equitable take up of places on programmes and an increase in B.A.M.E. staff progression.	October 2024	Action Owner: Head of Academic and Professional Practice Supported by: Head of Management Information Commercial Applications Director of ERR HoDs Heads of Section
	Access to citizenship work at the University can be ad hoc and based on word of mouth or line management recommendation. Some opportunities are communicated to all staff but not all.	See actions 4.4b and 5.5a			
	Opportunities for more junior staff need to be made available to participate in projects in the University.	See actions 4.4b and 5.5a			

6.4	REC survey comments suggest that support from line managers for training and development opportunities is inconsistent for B.A.M.E. staff	a. Ensure line management training includes specific information on anti-racism, microaggressions and implicit bias. This should include developing support and guidance for training providers and line managers for race inclusive practice.	• Organise focus groups with B.A.M.E. staff following the next promotions round. • In next REC survey, open text responses on support from line managers for training and development will be more positive	Focus groups to be arranged in April 2024 Impact in REC Survey expected in June 2026	<u>Action owner</u>: Chair of ASC Director of OD <u>Supported by</u>: Director of Inclusion

6c – Appraisal/development review Actions on appraisals are the same as in section 5 actions 5.6a – 5.6e. The scheme and plans for the scheme applies to both academic and professional services staff. Please see actions 5.6a – 5.6e for actions relating to appraisals.

6d – Professional and support staff promotions

6.5	Our data highlight that White staff are more likely to progress into higher grades that their B.A.M.E. counterparts. PSS do not have a defined progression route like academics. Knowing what positions are available, how and when to apply, and line manager support are crucial to success.	a. Broaden networking opportunities for B.A.M.E. staff (e.g., Chrysalis, specific networking events) to help open up opportunities for progression. b. Create information, advice and guidance for PSS on mechanisms for developing and progressing across the institution. c. Where staff apply for internal vacancies and are unsuccessful, ensure	• More B.A.M.E. staff will participate in internal citizenship roles that are key development opportunities. This should positively impact progression of B.A.M.E. staff. This links to Action 5.8 above. • By 2028, the same proportion of B.A.M.E. staff will progress into higher grade roles compared to white staff.	July 2025	<u>Action owner</u>: Assistant Registrar

		feedback is provided and staff are encouraged to work with the line managers to address any relevant development needs.			
6.6	In the period of analysis, we have observed an inconsistent trend in the proportions of PSS staff by ethnic groups, that make up the pool of those who have been successfully appointed to a higher-grade role. While B.AM.E. staff were underrepresented in the successful group in 2018/19 and 2019/20, they were overrepresented in 2020/21.	a. Continue monitoring this data every two years, to eventually create a larger data set to ascertain trends from, and act on any gaps observed. This data should be monitored through Gender Pay Gap reporting.	• The proportion of each ethnic group represented in successful appointment to higher grade PSS roles should remain consistent (give or take 5%) with that group's overall population within PSS.	Monitoring to commence from GPG Report 2025	<u>Action Owner</u>: Head of Management Information, Senior Inclusion Manager and EDI Lead
6.7	HERA regrades are carried out in specific circumstances when a particular role has evolved to meet operational requirements. Data suggests an inconsistent pattern in how frequently HERA regrades are processed for B.A.M.E. staff. Additionally, data from the REC staff survey shows that the process is complex to navigate.	a. Monitor HERA regrade success rates by ethnicity.	• A process to monitor this is integrated into existing HR systems Data to be extracted from this system and analysed as part of the next REC submission.	Process developed by August 2024, in time to be launched for AY 2024/25	<u>Action Owners:</u> Head of Management Information, HR Business Partners
		b. Arrange focus groups, one with PSS and one for line managers, to better understand experiences and any challenges that staff/managers have faced with the HERA process.	• Open-text responses from the next REC survey demonstrate stronger knowledge and understanding of the HERA process amongst staff.	Focus groups to be held February 2025, recommendations made and implemented from AY 2025/26 onwards.	<u>Action Owner</u>: HR Business Partners, Inclusion Managers

		[Focus groups will evaluate: knowledge of the HERA eligibility criteria, knowledge and/or experience of HERA process, challenges faced by staff and line managers in applying for a HERA regrade, and other areas as identified.]			

Section 7: Student Pipeline

7a – Admissions

7.1	Applications from UK Black and Asian students have fallen over the last three years, whereas applications from White applicants have increased. This trend has been observed across the sector, and we have developed a UK Recruitment Recovery Plan in response. The 2021 REC student survey found 51.15% of students agreed they would consider the ethnic/racial diversity of the university before applying to study there.	a. Review prospective student/student recruitment materials to look at the narrative around diversity at Essex as well as pictures and other content included. b. Ensure that role modelling is embedded in our approach to schools engagement and outreach, by inviting senior B.A.M.E. academic and PSS to participate. The aim of this is not to present a false picture of the University, but rather to highlight the diversity that exists and the	• Maintain UK B.A.M.E. applicant rates at least 24%, with an aim to increase year-on-year applications from UK B.A.M.E. students.	January 2025 Focus groups delivered December 2023	Action owner: Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment

		work we are doing to advance race equity.			
		c. Invite (and remunerate) relevant student societies to contribute to open days, to share their experiences and highlight the diversity of the University.			
		d. Run focus groups with target schools from areas that we are aiming to increase recruitment. This should include senior B.A.M.E. academic and PSS to participate as part of the focus groups. Relevant actions can then be developed and implemented.			
7.2	Students self-identify their ethnicity on their application, so it can be difficult to ascertain the exact figures for non-UK applications, as many have opted not to disclose their identity. In 2021 this accounted for over 56% of non-UK applications. .	a. Assess and research ways in which ethnicity is better determined for applications, with particular emphasis for non-UK students.	• Increase ethnicity disclosure rate by 5%.	September 2025	Action owner: Director of Admissions
		b. Review the ethnicity options and question on PG application forms, and update them if systems-side challenges allow	• Forms are updated and disclosure rate increases by 5%	September 2025	Action owner: Director of Admissions

7.3	Some courses and departments have de-centralised selection processes, which may be more susceptible to racial bias.	a. Ensure unbiased admissions in decentralised selections, such as admissions for courses through interviews and audition, in line with our Fair Admissions Policy.	• An increase in successful B.A.M.E. applicants in courses with decentralised selection processes	March 2027	<u>Action owner</u>: EDs Director of Admissions
7.4	At present, we do not monitor student outcomes compared to UCAS Tariff data, which could help us understand whether ethnicity has an impact on the likelihood of students with the same predicted/actual grades (i.e. UCAS tariff points) being offered a place at the university.	a. Include UCAS Tariff data in our annual EDI reporting, which is usually done through the Education Committee. Through consultation with the Education Committee, we will identify which EDI report this data should be included in.	• This will enable us to understand whether ethnicity has an impact on the likelihood of students with the same predicted/actual grades (i.e. UCAS tariff points) being offered a place at the university. Following the first reporting cycle with this data, Education Committee we will be able to review if any gaps are apparent, and if actions are required.	Confirm the reporting mechanism throughout AY 2023/24; reporting on UCAS Tariff data to commence from AY 2024/25.	<u>Action owners</u>: Director of Admissions; Head of Planning and Data Insights
7b – Undergraduate Student Body					
7.5	The student body at the University is more diverse than Colchester, where the main campus is located. This can lead to a situation where the University is campus is much more diverse than the local area, and students can feel less sense of belonging in the surrounding area.	a. Reach out to local organisations (e.g. One Colchester, IAG and Community 360) and authorities to implement actions to improve B.A.M.E. student experience.	• More positive comments from students in the next REC survey. A question will be added on the sense of belonging in and out of the University to develop a baseline from which we expect to see improvement	July 2027	<u>Action Owner</u>: Head of Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service
		b. Explore why some faculties have a significantly lower		July 2027	<u>Action owner</u>: Director of

	We want to ensure we do all we can to keep students safe wherever they are and make the Campus as inclusive and welcoming as possible.	B.A.M.E representation than others and inform marketing and recruitment teams to revisit their strategies to enhance the B.A.M.E. recruitment activities and incentives.			Marketing and Student Recruitment
		c. Each faculty to develop their own marketing and outreach plan to address faculty-level and/or discipline-specific trends and needs.			
		d. Enhance the awareness and understanding of different religious beliefs and cultural practices thus challenging stereotypes and false beliefs about particular cultures amongst groups on and off campus. Work with organisations like One Colchester and Community 360 to achieve these goals.			<u>Action owner</u>: Faith Centre Manager Supported by: Inclusion Managers Director of the Students' Union Student Experience Committee

7c – Course Progression and Student Engagement

| 7.6 | Both UK and non-UK B.A.M.E. and White students have experienced a dip in progression from 2019/20 to 2020/21. This could be attributed to the pandemic. However closer analysis highlights a much wider gap between progression from non-UK students from all groups as opposed to UK groups.

Student engagement, with available support for academic activities as well as with wider community-building activities, can be important for students' sense of belonging, and in turn their course progression. Actions aimed at improving the sense of community and belonging at the University can benefit students from all ethnic backgrounds and in particular can help with improving progression gaps between UK and non-UK students.

Further actions in progress that we expect will positively impact progression are detailed in 7d. | a. Continue to monitor low engagement through the Student Engagement Policy. [At the moment when Education Committee receives data on student engagement, the data is used to identify any action that needs to be taken, and this is then continually monitored. We recommend this approach be maintained.]

b. Outcomes by ethnicity and department are reported and considered in the planning process and the Education Committee.

c. A scalable model of the Personal Tutoring Approach will be developed for implementation across all departments from AY 2024-25. | • Identify reasons for the drop in progression for all student groups.

• Improve progression rates for all student by 10%, and reduce the gap between UK and non-UK students by 5%. | This is already in place and is monitored twice a year through Education Committee, which produces an action plan in response to the data to provide assurance to Senate. | Action Owner: PVCE

Supported by: Head of Planning and Data Insights |

		d. Produce regular reports about engagement with academic support programmes by ethnicity, nationality and language skills.	• Ensure student engagement by protected characteristics, including ethnicity, is proportional to overall their population or higher. Baseline data to be reviewed and collected from PDI on initiation of the project.	Initiate monitoring from AY 2024/25	<u>Action owner</u>: Student Development Manager (Skills for Success)
		e. Improved tailored communication about the programmes available for academic support, including one-on-one bookable sessions and workshops (this can include communication at different stages of the admission cycle for new students, or different points of the year for existing students).		Launch a renewed communications and awareness campaign for courses starting in AY 2024/25	<u>Action Owner</u>: Student Development Manager and (Skills for Success) and Director of MASR
		f. Continue reviewing the content and accessibility of the course from a race-lens. Ensuring that student feedback is disaggregated by ethnicity to understand student experience by ethnicity. This contributes to reducing the attainment gap between B.A.M.E. and White students. Work on the attainment gap is done through the Access and Participation plan and monitored through the	• Content of the workshops remains applicable, relevant, and helpful for all students.	Sample content is reviewed by the Inclusion Team by December 2023; any recommendations implemented for AY 2024/25

Feedback is collected and monitored on an ongoing basis. | <u>Action owner</u>: Student Development Manager (Skills for Success) and Inclusion Manager |

			Education Committee, and we expect academic support programmes to support this work as well.		
7.7	Proportion of B.A.M.E. staff is lower than B.A.M.E. students, and 65% of students surveyed agreed that the ethnic/racial diversity of the University impacts on their sense of belonging. We want B.A.M.E. students to see themselves reflected in the academic workforce and to consider academia as a career path. We also need all students to see B.A.M.E. staff in a variety of roles and grades to break down stereotypes and implicit biases.	See actions across sections 4, 5, and 6 to increase recruitment, retention, and improve development opportunities for B.A.M.E. staff.			
		a. The ethnic diversity of visiting researchers and fellows is monitored over time, to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds see themselves reflected in academic roles at the University.	• Open text responses in the next student and staff survey should reflect that staff from all ethnic groups feel a sense of belonging at the University.	June 2028	Action owner: PVC Research
		b. Race Inclusion Champion to work with B.A.M.E. Staff Forum, One Essex, and the student-facing internal comms team to raise the profile of B.A.M.E. staff at Essex.		June 2024	Action Owner: Race Inclusion Champion

7d – Attainment

| 7.8 | Historically over the last eight years the University has been aware of lower awarding levels from Asian and Black students than White students and have set an institutional target to close this gap, as stated in the Access and Participation Plan 2019/20 (APP).

We need to ensure the recent reduction in the awarding gap (seen during Covid-19) remains in the first instance and does not creep back up. Then we need to continue to decrease it until it is eliminated.

There are a number of workstreams that are already in progress to improve progression and attainment amongst Asian and Black students and decrease the gap amongst different ethnic groups. | a. Continue monitoring the awarding gap, as is currently done through the Education Strategy and Access and Participation Plan actions. Actions to reduce the awarding gaps re-evaluated and adjusted as needed. | • Annual reporting of awarding gaps is maintained; awarding gaps continue to reduce.
• Yearly milestones to reduce the attainment gap between White and B.A.M.E. as set out in our Access and Participation Plan are as follows:

- 2020-21 – 13.6%
- 2021-11 – 12.8%
- 2022-23 – 12%
- 2023-24 – 10.4%
- 2024.25 – 8.8%

It should be noted that since these targets have been approved by the OfS, our attainment gap has consistently been smaller than the target. | The current Curriculum Review, in which one key theme is decolonising the curriculum, was launched in 2021/22. The PVCE will continue to meet with departments annually to review their progress against performance indicators.

Aim to see a continued reduction in the attainment gap between White | <u>Action owner</u>: PVCE, EDs and HoDs |

Examples of current projects that are underway for AY 2022-23 include: a revised approach to personal tutoring to be implemented following a successful pilot, to provide support based on individual students needs more effectively, a review of the impact of changes in assessment practice by different protected characteristics, and student voice groups (SVGs) which involve working with current students and the SU to integrate student feedback into future work and teaching activities. These are regularly reviewed at least once a year through the Education Committee. A scalable model of the Personal Tutoring Approach will be developed for implementation across all departments from AY 2024-25.	b. Continue reviewing and implementing the decolonising curriculum at the module-level. Provide necessary training and support for the decolonising curriculum members and module leaders.	• The current Curriculum Review, in which one key theme is decolonising the curriculum, was launched in 2021/22. The PVCE will continue to meet with departments annually to review their progress against performance indicators	and B.A.M.E. students, as set out in our Access and Participation Plan.

7e – Postgraduate Pipeline

7.9	Whilst there is little change for B.A.M.E. and White PG students overall, there are still much higher numbers of White UK PG students than B.A.M.E. UK PG students	a. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Black, Arab and Mature Student bursary (for returning Essex students) and the impact that it has had.	• Year-on-year increase in Black and Arab students. Work with Director of MASR to identify current baseline after introduction of the bursary.	Annual monitoring has been in place since the bursary was introduced in AY 2021/22 and will continue. Baseline to be identified and targets set after observing trends over 3 years, by May 2025.	Action owner: Director of MASR, reporting to Fees and Funding Group
		b. Assess the impact that Transitions and Transformations programme has on the PG student experience for UK-domiciled B.A.M.E. students.	• Increase B.A.M.E. PG recruitment by 10%.	May 2024	Action owner: Dean of PGRE
		c. Ensure the representation of B.A.M.E. faculty members across PGR academic committees/forums	• Increase membership by 2% from the current baseline or bring in line with proportional representation for each committee. However, it must be noted that progress in this area is dependent on a number of other work and actions including those on improving nominations processes, increasing the number of B.A.M.E. staff and the number of B.A.M.E. staff	May 2025	Action owner: Dean of PGRE

			in senior roles, as some committee positions are ex-officio.		
		d. EDs in the planning round and PVCE in EDIAG to ensure that proportional actions are put in place to address any withdrawal, failure, or continuation trends by ethnicity.	• Reduce PGT withdrawals overall, with an aim to close the gap in withdrawals across ethnic groups	This is already ongoing on an annual basis, but REC SAT to analyse the data and actions every three years and share additional recommendations where relevant	Action owner: EDs PVCE

7f – Postgraduate Employment

7.10	The information we have on Graduate Outcomes is largely from the Graduate Outcomes Survey, which graduates complete 15 months after they complete their course. Response rates to the survey are especially low for non-UK students, but in speaking to the Alumni Relations team, we know that non-UK alumni still engage with the Alumni Relations team and some international alumni networks are fairly active.	a. Introduce targeted career support for B.A.M.E. students in partnership with the University's Career Service and local businesses. Ensure that where required, support is specific to UK/non-UK students so that both groups are adequately supported.	• Through more targeted support and working with alumni, we expect that the gap between B.A.M.E. student outcomes and destinations will reduce.	May 2026	Action owner: Dean of PGRE PVCE
		b. Using the Graduate Outcomes survey results, disaggregate outcomes and destinations by		September 2024	Action owner: Student Development Manager, working

		ethnicity. Identify sectors or paths (such as further study for UK B.A.M.E. students) where B.A.M.E. representation is low, and work with B.A.M.E. alumni to support B.A.M.E. students to enter those areas. Examples could include mentoring schemes, information days where alumni are invited to speak about their experiences, or other activities as deemed relevant based on the data.			with the Head of Alumni Relations
7.11	While the Graduate Outcomes survey does allow us to disaggregate responses by ethnicity, there is currently no specific programme of work in place for supporting B.A.M.E. students in improving outcomes or entering sectors where B.A.M.E. representation is low.	a. Introduce annual employability event focusing on PGR employability by faculty		January 2024	Action owner: EDs

Section 8: Teaching and Learning

8a – Course Content/Syllabus

8.1	Management and monitoring of the Transitions and Transformations: Black	a. Implement future plans around the Transitions and Transformations: Black	• Monitoring over five years will allow to follow successes and areas for further	September 2026/27	Action owner: Dean of PGRE

		Researcher's Journey project. We have already started to actively recruit Black students.	support/improvement. Potential to link to post-doctorate opportunities in the future.		
8.2	Efforts on decolonising the curriculum are embedded across all departments, but no mechanism is currently in place to share learning and best practice	a. Evaluate the impact of work and events to date on decolonising the curriculum, share good practice and learn how to make initiatives as effective as possible. Ensure evaluation is built into any future initiatives from the outset.	• Annual reporting of awarding gaps is maintained; awarding gaps continue to reduce. • Yearly milestones to reduce the attainment gap between White and B.A.M.E. as set out in our Access and Participation Plan are as follows: - 2020-21 – 13.6% - 2021-11 – 12.8% - 2022-23 – 12% - 2023-24 – 10.4% - 2024.25 – 8.8% • It should be noted that since these targets have been approved by the OfS, our attainment gap has consistently been smaller than the target.	Aim to see a continued reduction in the attainment gap between White and B.A.M.E. students, as set out in our Access and Participation Plan.	Action owner: EDs
		b. Annual meeting to share best practice organised; HoDs review plan every two years to ensure consistent evaluation and improvements are made.			
		c. Organise annual meeting to share best practice in decolonising the curriculum. HoDs to review plan every two years to ensure consistent evaluation and improvements are made			

8b – Teaching and Assessment Methods

8.3	Assessment of each individual department's Annual Review of Course (ARCs) documentation is needed to monitor how module reviews and course assessment strategies have been devised, with detailed analysis of particular demographics.	a. Introduce a 'common index' data structure linking to the multiple dashboards available within the University.	• Maintain improvements seen, and continue meeting or exceeding yearly milestones to reduce the attainment gap between White and B.A.M.E. as set out in our Access and Participation Plan are as follows:	3-5 years (implementation)	Action owner: Quality and Development Team Supported by: Head of Planning and Data Insights
8.4	Reviews are needed across various policies, including the Rules of Assessment Advisory Group, who have been asked to consider embedding several 'force majeure' and no detriment measures into the Rules of Assessment.	a. Continue to monitor award gaps alongside operation of the Rules of Assessment over the next three years to ensure changes made in assessment processes are having the desired impact.	- 2020-21 – 13.6% - 2021-11 – 12.8% - 2022-23 – 12% - 2023-24 – 10.4% - 2024.25 – 8.8% It should be noted that since these targets have been approved by the OfS, our attainment gap has consistently been smaller than the target.	Monitoring is already in place annually through Education Committee, which will continue	Action owner: PVCE
		b. Conduct review of 'Extenuating Circumstances Policy'. Annual reviews over the next three years allow monitoring of a complete cohort, and subsequent cohorts for comparison data; quantitative (award gap) and qualitative/learning (systematic outcomes) opportunities. A review of extenuating circumstances policy is currently being undertaken by the organisation.		Review under progress, to be completed by July 2023	Action owner: PVCE

8.5	More robust measures and monitoring practices need to be implemented to ensure that conversations around automatic biases take place before all committees meet to discuss cases e.g., around their extenuating circumstances.	a. Add a statement to agendas for committee meetings regarding automatic/unconscious bias to be read out by the Chair.	• Those participating in Committees will be aware of how automatic bias or unconscious bias can impact decision making and have a negative impact on others.	December 2023	Action owner: Head of Corporate Governance
		b. Committee Secretaries to ensure members complete role-based essential training including specific reference to automatic bias.	• Role-based essential training for Committee members is published and completion tracked.	August 2024 to be repeated annually	Action owner: Committee Chairs and secretaries Supported by: Governance Support Officer, Inclusion Manager OD Policy and Projects Officer

8c – Academic Confidence

8.6	Lack of knowledge or confidence in regard to anti-racism approaches on campus/wider community.	a. Work with Santander to embed the Union Black training within the proposal and delivery of the University's anti-racism training package. Uptake and impact of the training will be evaluated.	• Union Black is available till May 2024. Work with Union Black to understand how many staff and students signed up to it and completed the programme. • Information about Union Black Training is included in induction packs.	Ongoing until July 2025	Action owner: Director of Inclusion Head of Academic and Professional Practice Supported by: Senior Inclusion Manager & EDI Lead