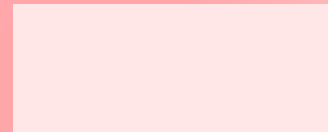


Setting the scene: anti-racism in UK universities

Minto Felix

2nd Year Doctoral Student, Department of Education

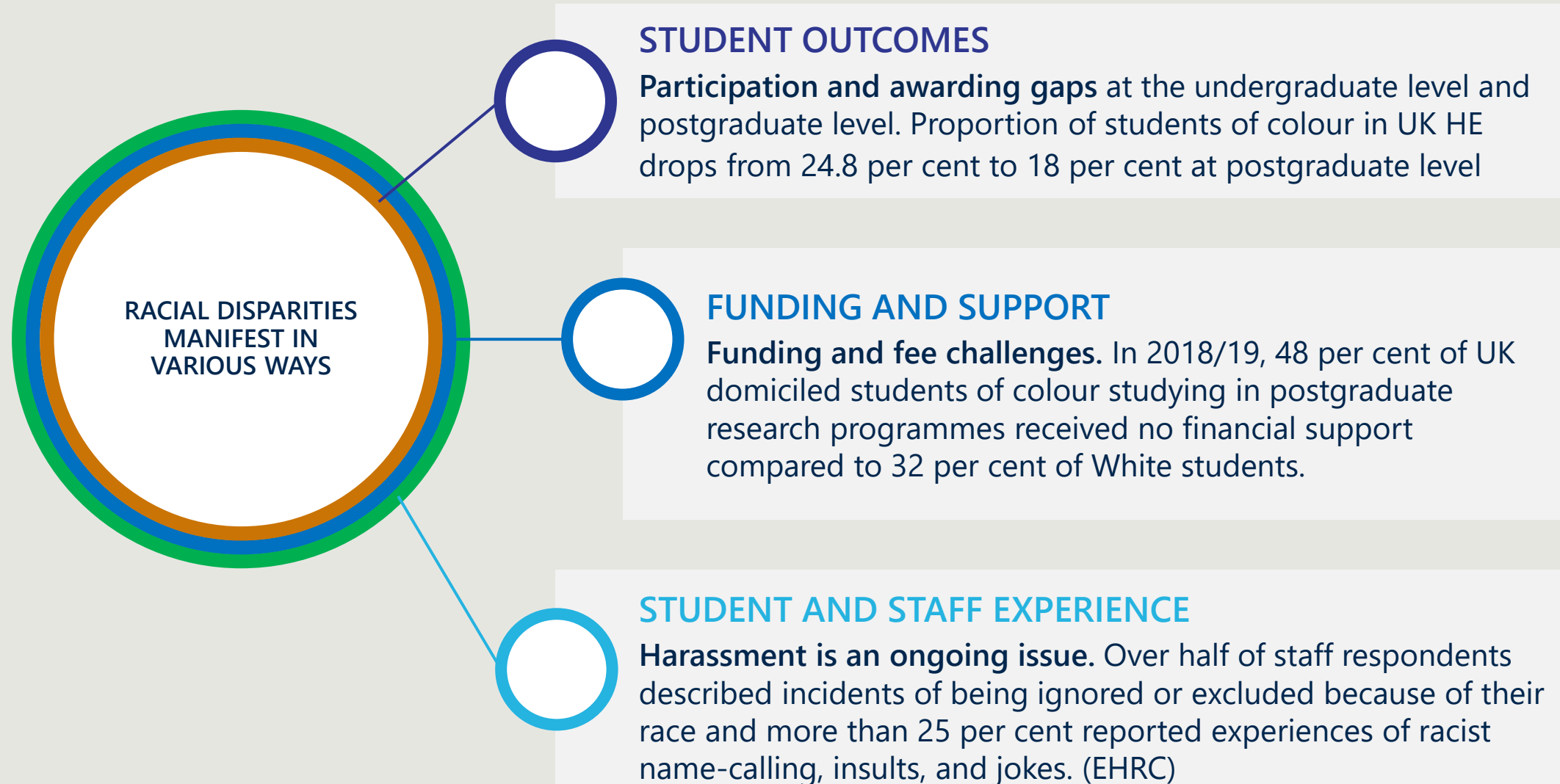
Consultant, Nous Group



A complicated yet hopeful picture

- Students and staff of colour experience racial disparities and there is still some evidence of a colonial orientation within UK higher education
- Institutions are acknowledging past failings and racial equity is rising to the top of the agenda
- There is a need to build evidence about interventions that make a genuine difference to advancing racial equality
- Change is underway but a wider transformation of the 'HE business model' may be needed to achieve racial equity

Serious racial disparities in UK higher education



Catalyst for change

DESPITE SUSTAINED EFFORTS, PROGRESS HAS BEEN SLOW

The Race Relations Amendment Act was introduced in 2000. HEIs have been required to develop anti-racism plan since 2002 but there has been little change.

BLACK LIVES MATTER HAS BROUGHT SHARPER FOCUS

The murder of George Floyd and subsequent BLM protests have prompted many higher education institutions to re-evaluate their ways of working.

Race in higher education: A timeline

-
- 2000** Race relations amendment Act
 - 2002** Higher education providers have been required to develop race equality policies and action plans
 - 2015** "Rhodes must fall" campaign
 - 2019** #Closingthegap campaign
 - 2019** "Tackling racial harassment: Universities challenged" published
 - 2020** "Tackling Racial Harassment in Higher Education" published
 - 2020** Black Lives Matter protests

A growing number of UK institutions are acknowledging failings and (re)committing to racial equity

Imperial to review its history and legacy

by Deborah Evanson
30 June 2020



Imperial College London is to launch an expert review of its history and legacy in the context of its present day mission.

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

Legacies of Enslavement

“ We read the future by the past ”

— Alexander Crummell

History is inescapable in Cambridge. It is inconceivable that a British institution as old as our University would not have been touched by colonial practices of enslavement and enforced labour – whether benefiting from, helping to shape, or indeed challenging them.

A society's historical baggage and its modern-day challenges are inextricable. Understanding our past and shaping our future are not separate projects. The University of Cambridge is exceptionally well placed to undertake both of them.

The legacies of enslavement form a part of who we are today, and inform what we wish to achieve. We can never rewrite history, or do away with our heritage, but we can try to address prevailing inequalities. This process begins through greater self-knowledge and self-reflection.

Professor Stephen J Toope
Vice-Chancellor

University of Cambridge Advisory Group on Legacies of Enslavement

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

RADA 1 at RADA

We recognise that RADA has been responsible for maintaining structures that are systemically racist. We are aware that RADA has been and currently is institutionally racist. We are profoundly sorry for the role we have played in the traumatic and oppressive experiences of our current and past Black students, graduates and staff.

We are sorry for our inadequate response to The Lives Matter movement. The movement has brought action against racism into the foreground and we recognise the need for urgent and fundamental change.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART

These efforts are mirrored, amplified and challenged globally.



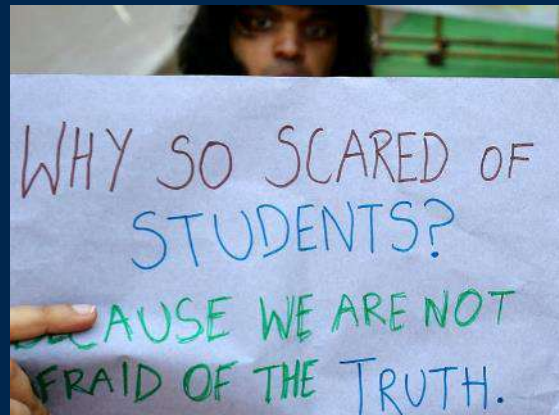
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY



WHAT I WANT YOU TO KNOW...

Creative and innovative Asian Canadian scholars, students, professionals, and alumni have called the U of A home for much of our history. They've dared to discover and continue to lead us on a path to do the public good. As you take the time to listen, engage, and learn, here's what a few of our community members would like you to know.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

We require a stronger evidence base of 'what works' and 'for whom'

"What does it mean to decolonize?" cannot be an abstract universal. It has to be answered by looking at other W questions: Who is doing it, where, why, and how? —Mignolo and Walsh (2018, p. 108)

'We spent £250k on new programmes and initiatives to tackle anti-racism' – *Professional services leader, London HEI*

Positive signs but is it all making a difference?

LONDON MET UNIVERSITY



New leader for equality, diversity and inclusion

28 October 2021

Change & development

Share page: ○ ○ ○



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

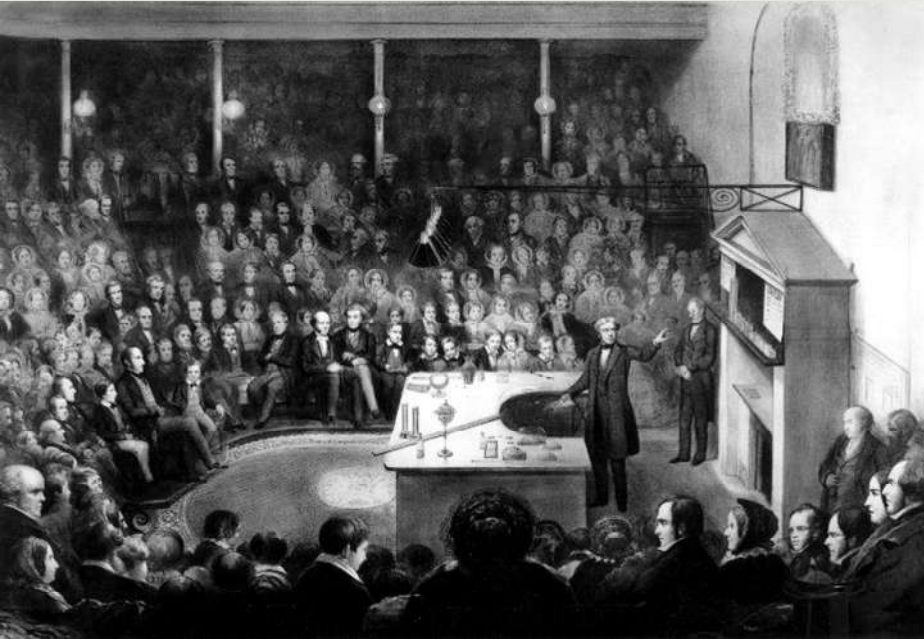
STRUCTURAL FACTORS THAT CONSTRAIN AND MAY IMPEDE PROGRESS

- Fee and funding model (for international students in particular)
- Demographic boom and widening access
- Political will and ideological debates

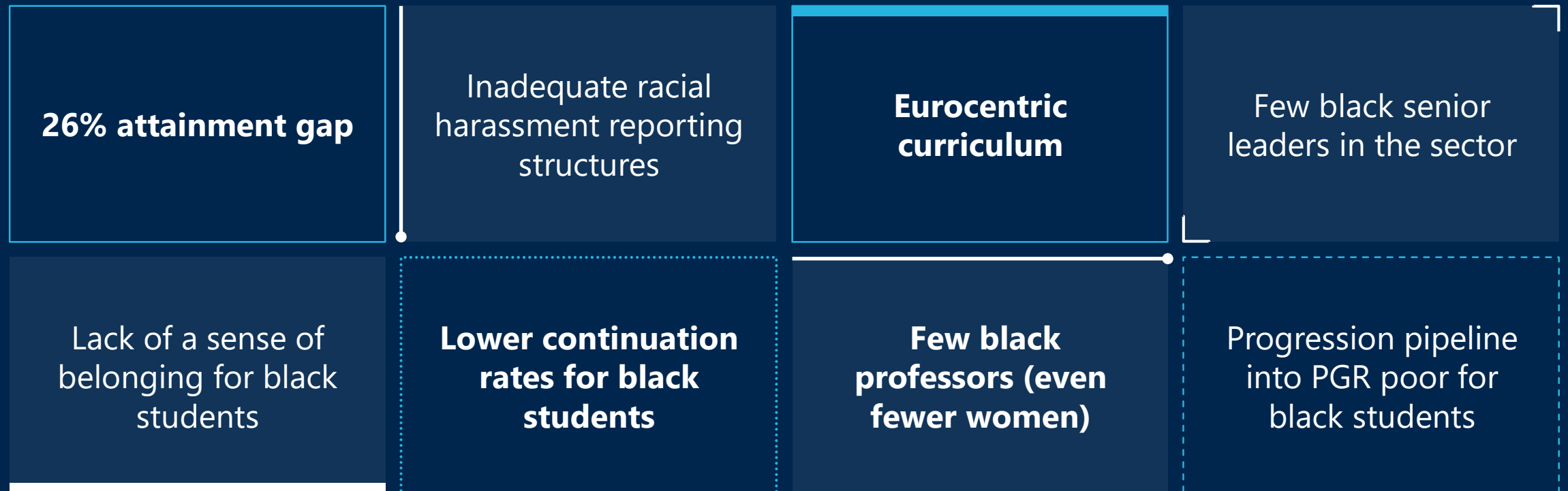
How are institutions faring?

Amatey Doku, Nous Group

Different times, same ecosystem

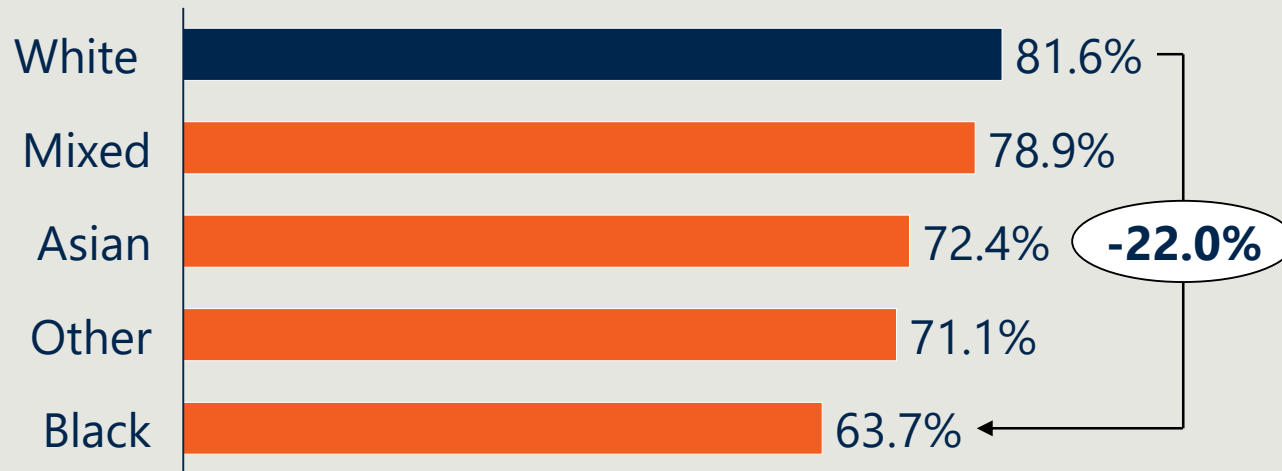


Racial inequalities persist in HE today



BAME students face inequalities in attainment,...

Percentage of students receiving a 1st or 2:1 by ethnicity in 2019/2020



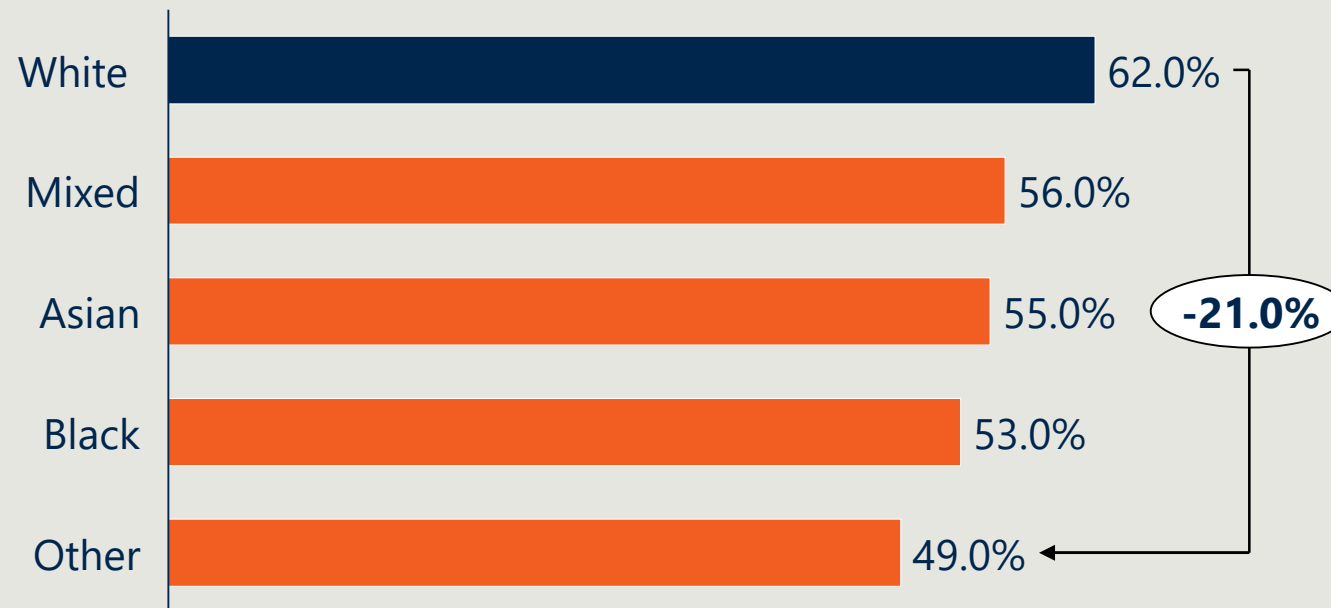
HESA data

13%
BAME
awarding gap

...graduate outcomes,...

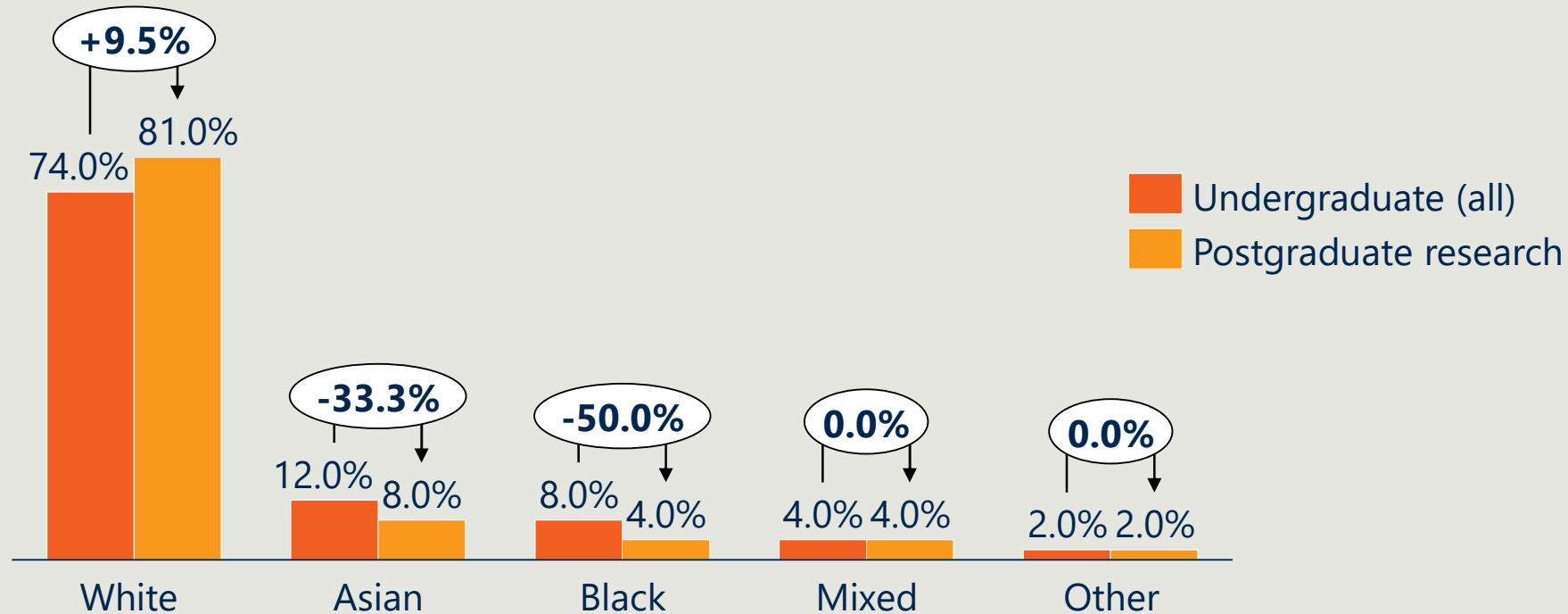
21%
graduate
outcomes gap
between white
students and
students of an
"other"
ethnicity

2017/18 Graduate outcomes by ethnicity: students in full-time employment (significant interim study included)



...and progression

2019/20 HE student enrolments by ethnicity, comparing undergraduates to postgraduate research students



HESA data

10%
percentage
increase for
white
students
from UG to
PGR but
50% drop
for black
students

In students' own words

“When I arrived at university it didn't seem like diversity was being celebrated and utilised in the way I was used to.”

Joel, University of the Arts, London



“It's understandable that staff might not know what BAME students go through and the issues they face; but it's about being open to understanding and learning about these.”

Salma, Aston University



“Having a tutor from the same background as me gave me a sense of comfort. I was able to talk to them not only about academic issues, but also advice for me personally.”

Sanif, Kingston University, London



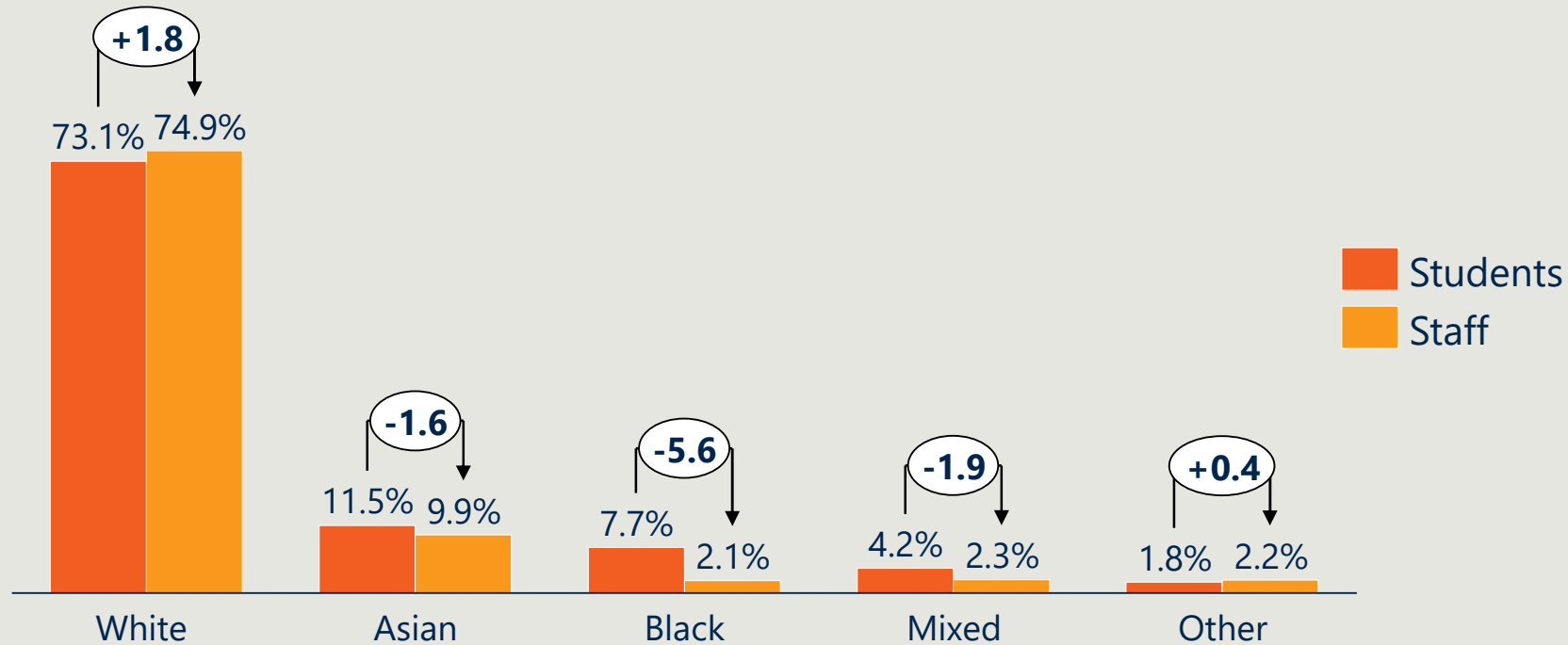
“I would like to see more diversity in staff at the university. There is currently a barrier there, which more diverse staff would help to overcome. It helps to see people you relate to.”

Joy, University of Kent



BAME staff are underrepresented....

Student enrolments and academic staff by ethnicity 2019/20



HESA data

Only 155
(>1%) out of
more than
23,000
university
professors
are black

...particularly at senior levels

Managers, directors and senior officials (academic) by ethnicity 2019/20



HESA data

The impetus for change has been building...



...and BLM and Covid-19 have brought sharper focus



Universities' vision for ending racial inequality

- Support services are culturally competent
- Curriculum and broader educational offer reflective of diverse student backgrounds
- Diverse academic and non academic staff at all levels within the university
- Incidences of racism on campus are rare and dealt with quickly
- Black students feel as though they belong at the institution
- Black attainment gap eliminated



Start with stories



Different institutional approaches

Countyshire University

- University Exec team launches BAME inequality strategy 1 month after #BlackLivesMatter protests and issues a strong statement taking a zero-tolerance approach to racism
- New strategy responsibility of Equality and Diversity team and delivery to be met within existing budget
- Attainment gap work remains unchanged with PVC Education under inclusive teaching strategy (includes decolonizing the curriculum)
- Initiatives for year 1 include
 - Roll out of unconscious bias training (not mandatory but encouraged)
 - Establishment of 3 new groups with black representation to tackle racism (BME attainment gap committee, BME student experience committee, BME staff recruitment working group)
 - All black students to be enrolled on mentoring scheme to raise aspirations
 - Black staff and students invited to “listening sessions” every month to give their views on how to tackle racism in the university

University of Fibchester

- University Executive team conducts an institution wide listening exercise of BME staff and students on race
- Report back to senior team disaggregates experiences in “BME” category and provides clear recommendations for action prioritised by the staff and students affected
- Executive team recruits PVC Inclusion, reports to VC, sits on Exec team and oversees implementation of recommendations and all Equality and Diversity work in the institution
- Exec team launch a £200k anti-racism strategy which includes:
 - Mandatory race equity training for all staff
 - Race equity training incorporated into induction for all students
 - Institution wide culture change programme to upskill all staff on inclusive practices in teaching and in the workplace
 - Racial harassment reporting unit established to deal with all forms of racism experienced by students and staff

A cultural diagnosis



Key principles when tackling racial inequalities

Take a strategic institution-wide approach

Centre BAME students' and staff experiences when implementing solutions

Source appropriate expertise

Resource effectively



About Nous

Nous Group is an international management consultancy operating across the UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

For over 20 years we have been partnering with leaders to shape world-class businesses, effective governments and empowered communities.

450

PEOPLE

5

COUNTRIES