



BAME Awarding Gap Case Study

Inclusive Curriculum in Psychology

Evi Katsapi & Nicola Abbott

What did you do/who's involved? What evidence /rationale underpinned your choice?

Our aim was to address the 'Eurocentric' curriculum in Psychology by engaging with ethnic minority students to help produce a more inclusive curriculum, which better reflects the diverse student body on the Level 5 module 'Social and Development Psychology'. We applied for [Changemakers](#) funding to create a project to decolonise the curriculum on our module. We recruited BAME student volunteers (x5) from the module to lead focus groups with their fellow students. The student volunteers created interview questions and ran two focus groups each with 6-7 students (we used pizza as an additional incentive to take part!). The key messages from the focus groups formed the evidence base for the project.

Outcomes from the focus groups indicated that a lot of the module content was not relevant to students' cultures, they felt they were "being taught with a certain culture's research or theory". There was a desire to feel represented.

The results of the focus groups impacted the module in several ways:

1. Flexibility in the focus of assessments: Students were free to delve into their interests, experiences and backgrounds (touching on ethnic identity if they wanted to). The module leaders were happy for students to make their assessments more culturally inclusive.
2. Engagement and resources: A student-populated library was created where each week students would add a piece of research on a topic that interests them, with a focus on something they identify with within their culture. The library is then used by all students on the module and is a valuable resource of diverse content

and the module assessments. Many students commented on the Module Evaluation how the Student Library was useful for their assessment preparation (e.g. diverse, ready-made list of background literature).

3. Student participation: Students were partners and collaborators in the project. From volunteers who ran the focus groups, to the focus group participants, to the students contributing to the student library.

What would you tell someone who is interested in doing something similar?

The benefits of creating a project like this outweigh the time invested in it. It took some time to get the project off the ground initially, i.e. to arrange the focus groups, but once this was done there was minimal input from us (Programme Leaders). The initial efforts to set the project up are worth it as longer term less is required of you, as there is a bank of resources built up from the first cohort (and ongoing cohorts).

We would recommend that staff start to have these types of conversation in their classes already. It's important for staff to build confidence in talking about race and identity politics before involving students.

What difference has this made to staff or students?

In general, students have really liked the changes, even though they may have been eye opening for some. Feedback on the module is that students like how issues have been covered and touched upon. We have received comments on the NSS about how inclusive our degree is, and how there is relatable content on the degree.

By working on this project students not only broaden their understanding of issues around race/identity/intersectionality but also gain valuable employability skills such as interviewer skills, data collection skills, report writing and communication skills.

What are your plans for the future?

To implement these changes across the whole degree and to create a step-by-step guide for this model of making the curriculum more inclusive (e.g. resource toolkit). We also are developing an application for funding for a new project to extend on from this work on a larger scale, to build this in more consistently across our Programme (and hopefully support other Programmes across IOE).

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For more information on this case study please contact Evi Katsapi <mailto:E.katsapi@ucl.ac.uk> and Nicola Abbott <mailto:n.abbott@ucl.ac.uk>.