

Advance HE EDI Conference 2020

Courageous conversations and adventurous approaches: Creative thinking in tackling inequality

18 March 2020
The Radisson Blu, Edinburgh, UK

Session abstracts

For ease of reference to the session abstracts, simply click on the title of the session you wish to view and you will be automatically taken to the abstract in this document.

Parallel session 4 (18 March 2020: 12.00 – 13.00)				
EDI and leadership	Belonging and safe space	Bridging the gaps	Thinking forward	Skills building for EDI change agents
Room: Dunedin 1	Room: Dunedin 2	Room: Canongate 1	Room: Canongate 2	Room: Holyrood
4.1 Interactive breakout	4.2 Panel session	4.3 Interactive breakout	4.4 Interactive breakout	4.5 Interactive breakout
<u>A taste of 'Fierce Conversations'</u>	<u>Race equality</u>	<u>Courageous conversation and the ethnicity pay gap in higher education</u>	<u>Equity and diversity for students, by students</u>	<u>Challenging unconscious bias; Developing awareness and providing effective training regarding equality, diversity and inclusion in higher education</u>
Dr Naomi Irvine, People Development Associates	Kaushika Patel, Professor Richard Hall and Chris Hall, De Montfort University Dr Melanie Crofts, De Montfort University	Dr Jenny Cook, Brunel University London	Dr Sammy Li, University of Birmingham	Stefanie Anyadi and Nicole Brown, University College London

Parallel session 5 (18 March 2020: 13.45 – 14.45)

EDI and leadership	Belonging and safe space	Bridging the gaps	Thinking forward	Skills building for EDI change agents
Room: Dunedin 1	Room: Dunedin 2	Room: Canongate 1	Room: Canongate 2	Room: Holyrood
5.1 Interactive breakout	5.2 Interactive breakout	5.3 Interactive breakout	5.4 Interactive breakout	5.5 Panel session
<u>Quantitative Intersectionality, or: What does the language of Mathematics have to say about diverse lived experiences?</u>	<u>Embedding EDI</u>	<u>How are we doing and when will we know we are there? Indicators of EDI</u>	<u>Earn as you learn: Widening participation through apprenticeship as debt-free degrees</u>	<u>There is a place for everyone... so long as everyone is kept in their place: Exploring belongingness in higher education</u>
Dr Harriet Grigg, Newcastle University	Dr Rachel Van Duyvenbode, The University of Sheffield and Zey Suka-Bill, London College of Communication Professor David Webster, Dom Jackson-Cole and Ben Mason SOAS, University of London Dr Graeme Pedlingham and Dr Katherine Kruger, University of Sussex	Dr Caroline Wilson, Coventry University	Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Professor Sally Smith and Debbie Meharg, Edinburgh Napier University	Associate Professor Nick Gee and Dr Barbara Howard-Hunt, Birmingham City University

Parallel session 6 (18 March 2020: 14.50 – 15.50)

EDI and leadership	Belonging and safe space	Bridging the gaps	Thinking forward	Skills building for EDI change agents
Room: Dunedin 1	Room: Dunedin 2	Room: Canongate 1	Room: Canongate 2	Room: Holyrood
6.1a Oral presentation	6.2a Oral presentation	6.3a Oral presentation	6.4a Oral presentation	6.5a Oral presentation
<u>The Curriculum Inclusivity Assessment Toolkit: Developing a comprehensive approach to EDI in HE</u>	<u>Giving voice to, and institutional action derived from, the student narratives of navigating the perinatal period</u>	<u>The 'holistic' student: Approaches to support mental health and increase resilience and life chances</u>	<u>Quality management and gender equality in professorial recruitment. The case of a Swiss university</u>	<u>Social class: The elephant in the (class)room</u>
Dr Alys Einion-Waller, Swansea University	Andrea Cameron, Abertay University	Michelle Low and Gemma Reynolds, West Lothian College	PD Dr Nina Jakoby, Office for Gender Equality and Diversity	Karen Arm, Solent University
6.1b Oral presentation	6.2b Oral presentation	6.3b Oral presentation	6.4b Oral presentation	6.5b Oral presentation
<u>Athena SWAN: One for all and all for one</u>	<u>Bloody big project: Tackling period poverty with Design</u>	<u>Black, depressed and on the brink of death</u>	<u>Measuring and correcting inequality in opportunity in higher education: Insights from an equality audit of a single academic department</u>	<u>Tackling sexual violence - whole university approach</u>
Dr Ismini Vasileiou, De Montfort University	Ruth Cochrane, Edinburgh Napier University	Lynette Nabbosa, Bloomsbury Institute London	Professor Denise Hawkes, University of Greenwich	Ana Miguel Lazaro, University of the West of England
6.1c Oral presentation	6.2c Oral presentation	6.3c Oral presentation	6.4c Oral presentation	6.5c Oral presentation
<u>Closing the ethnicity attainment gap in higher education institutions: Courageous leadership in instigating and embedding institutional change</u>	<u>Talking Taboos: Menopause in the workplace</u>	<u>Examining the intersection between sexual orientation and gender identity and LGBTQ mental health</u>	<u>How to create career ceilings: Conflicting logics and gender equality in the British and German public sector</u>	<u>Exploring the academic resistance towards attempting to decolonise the curriculum</u>
Dr Kenisha Linton, University of Greenwich	Dr Emma Watson and Victoria Murphy, Imperial College London	Stuart Mckenna, Manchester Metropolitan University	Stuart McClure, Queen's University Belfast	Danielle Chavrimootoo, Kingston University

Ignite and Soapbox session (18 March 2020: 16.10 – 17.10) Room: Dunedin

IG2a: Making the invisible visible: Stammering at university, Professor Deborah Johnston, SOAS University of London and Dr Naheem Bashir British Stammering Association

IG2b: A different hue of blue: Critical reflections of responsive interventions, Diana Ashley-Donaldson UAL : CSM and LCF

IG2c: Measuring and correcting inequality in opportunity in higher education: Insights from an equality audit of a single academic department, Professor Denise Hawkes, University of Greenwich

SB2a: What is a university education for?, Aranee Manoharan, Kingston University

SB2b: Resistance, intolerance and privilege: The absence of black staff in senior leadership in higher education, Annette Hay, Coventry University

SB2c: The company: A student-staff partnership activity, Dr Eirini Bazaki and Reem Alasadi, University of Southampton

SB2d: Black, depressed and on the brink of death, Lynette Nabbose, Bloomsbury Institute London

Session 4.1: A taste of 'Fierce Conversations'

Dr Naomi Irvine, People Development Associates

EDI and Leadership

Interactive breakout session, Room: Dunedin 1

In order to bring out lasting, meaningful culture change, leaders need to be developed to align with the target culture. Organisations need to use conversations about culture to underscore its importance. This 'Fierce Conversations' taster session will give attendees insights on how to ignite productive dialogue that interrogates reality, provokes learning, resolves tough challenges and enriches relationships. It's the place to begin, the cornerstone of great leadership, healthy cultures, intelligent strategies and whole-hearted execution.

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Session 4.2: Race equality

Kaushika Patel, Professor Richard Hall and Chris Hall, De Montfort University, and Dr Melanie Crofts, De Montfort University.

Belonging and safe place

Panel session, Room: Dunedin 2

This panel session will explore initiatives that have been successful in addressing underrepresentation of BAME students and staff and look to address the balance of race equality across institutions. It will include briefings on: How De Montfort University have focused on decolonising the university and moving towards an anti-racist university; and key findings from the 'Freedom to Achieve' project, also undertaken at De Montfort University.

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Session 4.3: Courageous conversations and the ethnicity pay gap in higher education

Dr Jenny Cook, Brunel University London

Bridging the gaps

Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 1

Universities are facing challenges in addressing gender and ethnicity pay gaps. Evidence-based actions are being published and implemented, yet the pay gaps are not reducing or set to reduce for a significant number of years. This workshop uses our data to highlight key issues, sector-wide challenges and asks where do courageous conversations need to happen if we are going to effectively approach the ethnicity pay gap faced by staff in higher education?

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Session 4.4: Equality and diversity for students, by students

Dr Sammy Li, University of Birmingham

Thinking forward

Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 2

The Office for Students, Access & Participation Plan, the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework, and the National Student Survey are some of the triggers contributing to the rising attention around student equality. The University of Birmingham will share their examples on embedding student equality on campus through a co-production and bottom-up model of "Equality and Diversity for Students, by Students". From their student research for their Race Equality Charter application to the recent development of the E&D Student Ambassador programme in partnership with the University of Amsterdam, we will explore practices that utilise students' lived experience for equality.

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Session 4.5: Challenging unconscious bias: Developing awareness and providing effective training regarding equality, diversity and inclusion in higher education

Stefanie Anyadi and Nicole Brown, University College London

Skills building for EDI change agents

Interactive breakout session, Room: Holyrood

In this interactive workshop, we present our approach to developing awareness of unconscious bias and providing training for equality, diversity and inclusion. Delegates will experience scenario-based learning to cover a range of different concerns and issues, such as those related to race, gender, class, disability and faith. After a brief introduction highlighting the issues with commonly applicable EDI training formats, delegates will work in groups discussing a selection of our scenarios. The subsequent plenary will have the dual purpose of talking through the individual scenarios used, and to reflect on the wider learning process and applicability of this approach.

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Session 5.1 Quantitative intersectionality, or: What does the language of Mathematics have to say about diverse lived experiences?

Dr Harriet Grigg, Newcastle University

[Bridging the gaps](#)

Interactive breakout session, Room: Dunedin 1

Summary abstract: The intersectional perspective has come to enjoy an increasing prominence in the critical and feminist discourse in recent years. Recent Advance HE guidance reflects these trends. On the other hand, relatively little attention has been given to date in terms of how to evaluate and present the data corresponding to these phenomena in the context of EDI. How can we make progress? We present a project that applies Advance HE recommendations to EDI data, focusing on the intersection of BME status and binary gender. Attention is given to addressing the problem of low declaration rates from a technical perspective. A range of solutions are benchmarked, and a first suggestion for "good practice" is made as a starting point for discussion, seeking consensus and improvement.

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Session 5.2: Embedding EDI

Dr Rachel Van Duyvenbode, The University of Sheffield; Zey Suka-Bill, London College of Communication; Professor David Webster, Dr Dom Jackson-Cole and Ben Mason SOAS, University of London; Dr Vanessa Mckean, Institute of Cancer Research; and Dr Graeme Pedlingham and Dr Katherine Kruger, University of Sussex

[Skills building for EDI change agents](#)

Panel session, Room: Dunedin 2

In this panel session we focus on initiatives that aim to embed EDI through a variety of approaches. We will hear about SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) programmes at The University of Sheffield and London College of Communication, where reflective learning and narrative approaches are key to EDI staff development; mandatory workshops at SOAS, University of London on inclusive teaching and assessment; research-driven approaches to culture change and embedding EDI at the Institute of Cancer Research; and the introduction of the Student Academic Success Advisor role at the University of Sussex where inclusivity and diversity are central to supporting student transitions to HE.

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Session 5.3: How are we doing and when will we know we are there? Indicators of EDI

Dr Caroline Wilson, Coventry University

[EDI and Leadership](#)

Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 1

Curriculum 2025 is a course enhancement team that works in collaboration with academic course teams to refresh the Coventry University offering to our students to ensure it is modern, robust, innovative, flexible and inclusive. This enhancement project has been initiated to ensure that all courses within the Coventry University Group can meet the changing needs and expectations of future students. At the time of this conference, Curriculum 2025 will be six months into its delivery phase. We'll have experience of what has worked and what is still challenging. We'd like to share with other institutions tackling similar themes both what we've learned and what we've still got to learn. One particular evaluation question is how to assess when such themes can be considered to be 'achieved'.

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Session 5.4: Earn as you learn: Widening participation through apprenticeships as debt-free degrees

Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Professor Sally Smith and Debbie Meharg, Edinburgh Napier University

[Thinking forward](#)

Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 2

Apprenticeship Degrees provide opportunities to study for a degree without incurring debt. Collaborations between employers and HEIs enable new or established employees to earn while they learn, with their fees paid. This facilitates people to study for a degree who could not have considered a traditional degree, especially due to

their job or financial outlook. Help us to explore strategies to realise this opportunity to widen participation. We present our research with apprentices in Scotland, sharing their perspectives and contexts. We will then facilitate discussions around challenges and strategies for involving more people, and supporting them to achieve good degrees.

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Session 5.5: There is a place for everyone... so long as everyone is kept in their place: Exploring belongingness in higher education.

Associate Professor Nick Gee and Dr Barbara Howard-Hunt, Birmingham City University

Belonging and safe place

Interactive breakout session, Room: Holyrood

This workshop will provide delegates with a safe space to discuss, debate and evaluate the challenging concept of belongingness, within higher education environments. In today's diverse and disparate communities of learning and practice there is a need to challenge taken-for-granted notions of inclusivity resulting in tokenism and marginalisation through unconscious bias. Issues to be explored include the language of equality, diversity and inclusivity. The phraseology, custom and practice commonly used in relation to inclusion, will be analysed to show how it often leads to practice which is disempowering, divisive and exclusive.

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Session 6.1a: The Curriculum Inclusivity Assessment Toolkit: Developing a comprehensive approach to EDI in HE

Dr Alys Einion-Waller, Swansea University

EDI and Leadership

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1

The CIAT directly and actively embeds equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) across all curricula and teaching and learning activities and resources. A comprehensive toolkit was developed with three levels of engagement and six domains of assessment, covering all nine protected characteristics and other aspects of diversity. CIAT is based on the concept of relational approaches to inclusive pedagogy. This presentation reviews the development and piloting of the CIAT in one institution and the challenges emerging from embedding EDI across the HE landscape.

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Session 6.1b: Athena SWAN: One for all and all for one?

Dr Ismini Vasileiou, De Montfort University

EDI and Leadership

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1

This presentation will look into HE organisations going through the Athena SWAN submission, the outcomes and the impact it has had. EDI aspects tend to sit separately from anything else across many HE institutions. Governance and responsibility are key aspects of any successful Athena SWAN application, its future and its impact.

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Session 6.1c: Closing the ethnicity attainment gap in higher education institutions: Courageous leadership in instigating and embedding institutional change

Dr Kenisha Linton, University of Greenwich

EDI and Leadership

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1

Closing the ethnicity attainment gap in UK Higher education institutions (HEIs) will require a variety of initiatives and approaches to address entrenched racial inequalities. Through a mixed-methods approach, the leadership practices of three UK higher education institutions are comparatively evaluated in this paper. The research provides evidence of courageous leadership through a range of initiatives in their institutions that have led to reductions in the ethnicity attainment gap. The paper suggests that, without courageous leadership and staff 'readiness' and commitment, institutional and environmental factors (e.g. policy or legislation) are limited in reducing the ethnicity attainment gap.

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Session 6.2a: Giving voice to, and institutional action derived from, the student narratives of navigating the perinatal period

Andrea Cameron, Abertay University

[Belonging and safe place](#)

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2

The dearth of literature that relates to 'pregnancy/maternity and the student' could suggest that this is an over-looked protected characteristic within the higher education landscape. Within the limited existing research a 'problematisation' of pregnancy dialogue appears. Students are not supported by the contractual requirements that come with being a university employee – yet, within a more diverse student community the requirements of this group need also to be heard and actioned. This session will explore the narratives that emerged when investigating the student experience of the perinatal period and how capturing this voice is informing one institution's skillsets, policy and practice.

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Session 6.2b: Bloody Big Project: Tackling period poverty with Design

Ruth Cochrane, Edinburgh Napier University

[Belonging and safe place](#)

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2

The Bloody Big Project used Design Thinking to tackle period poverty. In collaboration with industry partners, Hey Girls and Wire Media, Edinburgh Napier University created a range of work-based learning opportunities for students to respond to the Scottish Government initiative to provide free, accessible sanitary products for all girls and women in schools, colleges and universities. The project aimed to investigate how the government pledge was delivered and sustained, explore whether the initiative was reaching those in need and break the taboo around discussing menstruation.

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Session 6.2c: Talking Taboos: Menopause in the workplace

Dr Emma Watson and Victoria Murphy, Imperial College London

[Belonging and safe place](#)

Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2

Every woman will go through the menopause, and as the percentage of working women at menopausal age increases, the impacts can be felt not just by the individual but by the organisation. Of the women of menopausal age at Imperial College London, statistics predict that 20 per cent will take time off for symptoms, and 10 per cent will retire from work because of the menopause. How can we ensure inclusivity in higher education employment? What is the Department of Earth Science doing to support women to thrive? Discuss the impact of menopause in the workplace and ideas to support good practice.

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Session 6.3a: The 'Holistic' Student: Approaches to support mental health and increase resilience and life chances

Michelle Low and Gemma Reynolds, West Lothian College

[Bridging the gaps](#)

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1

Our Student Association award-winning Re-Charge initiative is a self-referral scheme open to all students. Students can self-refer to the Student Association for health and wellbeing support, including free personal care products; gym membership, hair and massage/beauty appointment and a guidance and self-support resource toolkit. The scheme considers the "holistic" student and the importance of looking after all aspects of the person in ensuring equal opportunities for success during their study. Warm in Winter involves the collection and distribution of donated warm coats, hats, scarves and gloves for students in need who may suffer in the colder weather.

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Session 6.3b: Black, depressed and on the brink of death

Lynette Nabbosa, Bloomsbury Institute London

[Bridging the gaps](#)

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1

Causes of the Black Attainment Gap are countless. Some barriers are systemic, while others play out as personal hidden challenges. Lynette Nabbosa, a Senior Lecturer and Chair of the Widening Participation Forum at Bloomsbury Institute London, will share her experience of balancing work, mental ill health and an illness which almost had catastrophic consequences, all while trying to keep up with the 'Russell Group' standard. This session aims to show how Lynette is using model leadership and the Widening Participation Forum as platforms for personal narrative to be used for change.

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Session 6.3c: Examining the intersection between sexual orientation and gender identity and LGBTQ mental health

Stuart McKenna, Manchester Metropolitan University

Bridging the gaps

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1

The intersection between sexual orientation and gender identity and mental health is well established. Evidence suggests people identifying as LGBT are at higher risk of experiencing poor mental health. The reasons for this link are complex and are related to a variety of factors such as internalised homophobia, bullying, harassment and discrimination (in particular, that which occurs within communities, both in LGBTQ spaces and online), addiction and the impact of hate crime. This presentation will examine some of the issues in this space and look at some strategies being employed to raise awareness and address the inequality.

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Session 6.4a: Quality management and gender equality in professorial recruitment: The case of a Swiss university

PD Dr. Nina jakoby, Office for Gender Equality and Diversity

Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2

The University of Zurich (Switzerland) works with the OTM-R toolkit which is a component of the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) issued by the European Commission (European Research Area, ERA) to increase the share of female professors. OTM-R is one of the pillars of the European Charter for Researchers and in particular of the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers, launched in 2005. The concept of OTM-R is based on the promotion of quality assurance, professionalisation and gender equality for all phases of the recruitment process. It also includes a shift towards a more qualitative assessment of merit in line with DORA. In this presentation, the implementation of OTM-R at the University of Zurich will be presented and discussed.

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Session 6.4b: Measuring and correcting inequality in opportunity in higher education: Insights from an equality audit of a single academic department

Professor Denise Hawkes, University of Greenwich

Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room Canongate 2

Challenging inequality of opportunity within academia is likely to be more effective if driven by individual Heads of Departments rather than through EDI strategies at university level. This presentation explores the journey of a collaboration between an academic department and the central university equality officer and HR, to identify the scale and scope of gender and race inequality within the department, attempt to identify the causes and plan a departmental response to support a change in culture so all can achieve their best. This presentation will share the highs and lows of this process and seek to inspire other HoDs to challenge and correct inequality within their own settings.

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Session 6.4c: How to create career ceilings: Conflicting logics and gender equality in the British and German public sector

Stuart McClure, Queen's University Belfast

Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2

In this presentation we will discuss how views and experience regarding gender and work affect the implementation of gender equality HRM in public sector organisations in Germany and the UK. We suggest that HR and line managers have some discretion when implementing HRM policies, and explore how they conceptualise, navigate and prioritise different, possibly conflicting, logics around gender and work when implementing gender equality policies. Using qualitative case study interview data, we found that women are still considered the primary carers and that the public sector offers opportunities to accommodate this, but that senior career jobs are excluded from such arrangements.

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Session 6.5a: Social Class: The elephant in the (class)room

Karen Arm, Solent University

Skills building for EDI change agents

Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

Whilst there has been a great deal of emphasis on getting individuals from lower social groups into university, less is known about how class shapes their experience once there. There is still an implicit assumption operating in HE, that students from different social backgrounds experience university on par. Yet research provides compelling evidence to the contrary. This session tackles the thorny issue of social class head-on; examining why we don't talk about class in learning and teaching and why we should.

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Session 6.5b: Tackling sexual violence - whole university approach

Ana Miguel Lazaro, University of the West of England

Skills building for EDI change agents

Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

This session will show the work that UWE has been doing around sexual violence. It has been a collaborative and creative problem solving to address the challenges students face in Bristol in relation to sexual and domestic violence. It will be evidence-based and it will provide some of the key tools about how to intervene using the bystander approach and the work that we have been doing with students' leaders. Our aim is to create an inclusive campus where diversity is celebrated, antisocial attitudes and behaviours are challenged and any type of harassment, assault and discrimination aren't acceptable.

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Session 6.5c: Exploring the academic resistance towards attempting to decolonise the curriculum

Danielle Chavrimootoo, Kingston University

Skills building for EDI change agents

Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

This presentation sheds light on the barriers and academic resistance towards attempts to decolonise the undergraduate History curriculum in one institution. The purpose of the research was to explore a number of discourses which construct how academics challenge and resist plans to attempt to decolonise the curriculum. The article has been written from an Academic Developer's perspective to further understanding around facilitating curriculum change and, considers the practicalities of attempting to decolonise the curriculum. The study employed mainly a qualitative research design which sought the perspectives of 27 academic staff through a self-completed online questionnaire complemented by one-to-one qualitative in-depth interviews with key personnel to provide insight on academic resistance.

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Session IG2a: Making the invisible visible: Stammering at university

Professor Deborah Johnston, SOAS University of London and Dr Naheem Bashir, British Stammering Association

Ignite session, Room: Dunedin

Stammering affects 3% of adults in the UK, equating to approximately 69,000 students and 12,000 staff in UK higher education. The experience of stammering at university can involve isolation, detachment, missed opportunities and minimal engagement due to environmental barriers which prevent fair and equal opportunity for people who stammer. In this session, participants will gain an understanding of the experience of stammering and its impact in the teaching and learning environment. Participants will be introduced to strategies to create a communication-friendly environment, of benefit to both staff and students who stammer and those with other types of invisible disability.

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Session IG2b: A Different Hue of Blue: Critical reflections of responsive interventions

Diana Ashley - Donaldson, UAL: CSM and LCF

Ignite session, Room: Dunedin

A Different Hue of Blue exposes the realities of embedding diversity and inclusivity within the curriculum from the perspective of an educator of colour. I use the curriculum and constructive alignment to instigate a deeper enquiry-based journey and questioning of perceived differences for the enhancement of students' academic, personal and professional development. My interventions begin in the classroom and become a pedagogic tool of great efficacy. Sharing the narratives encourages an open and truthful discussion with my students around sensitive subject matters related to race and stereotyping whilst tackling assumptions and fears. It provoked a sense of curiosity for 'other' diverse perspectives and motivated students to reflect critically on their own belief systems.

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Session IG2c: Measuring and correcting inequality in opportunity in higher education: Insights from an equality audit of a single academic department

Professor Denise Hawkes, University of Greenwich

Ignite session, Room: Dunedin

Challenging inequality of opportunity within academia is likely to be more effective if driven by individual Heads of Departments rather than through EDI strategies at university level. This presentation explores the journey of a collaboration between an academic department and the central university equality officer and HR, to identify the scale and scope of gender and race inequality within the department, attempt to identify the causes and plan departmental response to support a change in culture so all can achieve their best. This presentation will share the highs and lows of this process and seek to inspire other HoDs to challenge and correct inequality within their own settings.

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Session SB2a: What is a university education for?

Aranee Manoharan, Kingston University

Soapbox session, Room: Dunedin

This soapbox session will challenge delegates to consider what a university education is for in today's world. There is a lot of lamenting within HE about the move towards a focus on employability and outcomes, arguing that the value of learning is intrinsic. This session will make the case that this position illustrates the privilege found within the Academy and a lack of empathy with the increasingly diverse student population entering UK HE. It will encourage delegates to recognise the lived experiences of students from various backgrounds and ask themselves whether the move towards integrating employability within learning and teaching is such a dilemma.

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Session SB2b: Resistance, intolerance and privilege: The absence of Black staff in senior leadership in higher education

Annette Hay, Coventry University

Soapbox session, Room: Dunedin

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly recognising the importance, duty and responsibility for creating more inclusive working environments and practices, fit for the 21st Century and beyond. Even in institutions declaring successful widening participation programmes and high or increasing numbers of staff and students from BME backgrounds, there continues to be a complete and indefensible absence of Black staff in senior leadership positions. This session will provide an opportunity to discuss and analyse why Black staff remain excluded from 'the top', explore whether change should be 'evolutionary' or 'revolutionary' and identify what needs to be done to force change.

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Session SB2c: The Company: A student-staff partnership activity

Dr Eirini Bazaki and Reem Alasadi, University of Southampton

Soapbox session, Room: Dunedin

'The Company' is a student-staff partnership activity that aims to promote equality, diversity and democratisation of the higher education sector. The Company is a collaborative, cross-programme, cross-disciplinary activity that we have successfully run at the University of Southampton and gives staff and students a simulated experience of working in a real company environment. The session will a) discuss ways to create an empowering and engaging experiential learning environment, b) present 'The Company' example, c) identify key challenges along the way, d) share best practice, and e) develop the potential for future collaborations.

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Session SB2d: Black, depressed and on the brink of death

Lynette Nabbosa, Bloomsbury Institute London

Soapbox session, Room: Dunedin

Causes of the Black attainment gap are countless. Some barriers are systemic, while others play out as personal hidden challenges. Lynette Nabbosa, a Senior Lecturer and Chair of the Widening Participation Forum at Bloomsbury Institute London, will share her experience of balancing work, mental ill health and an illness which almost had catastrophic consequences, all while trying to keep up with the 'Russell Group' standard. This session aims to show how Lynette is using model leadership and the Widening Participation Forum as platforms for personal narrative to be used for change.

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