Advance HE EDI Conference 2021

Courageous conversations and adventurous approaches: Creative thinking in tackling inequality

17 March 2021

Live 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 3 (17 March 2021: 10.45 – 11.45)			
EDI and leadership	Belonging and safe space	Bridging the gaps	Thinking forward
3.1 Interactive breakout	3.2 Panel session	3.3 Interactive breakout	3.4 Interactive breakout
A taste of 'Fierce Conversations'	**Race equality**	**Courageous conversation and the ethnicity pay gap in higher education**	**Equity and diversity for students, by students**
Dr Naomi Irvine, People Development Associates	Kaushika Patel, Professor Richard Hall and Chris Hall, De Montfort University Dr Melanie Crofts, De Montfort University Khadija Mohammed, University of the West of Scotland	Dr Jenny Cook, Met Office Sanchia Alasia, Brunel University London Jill Scott, Inclusion Solutions	Dr Sammy Li, Peter Collins and Amira Ismail, University of Birmingham
Ignite and Soapbox session (17 March 2021: 13.00 – 13.45)			
IG2a: Making the invisible visible: Stammering at university, Professor Deborah Johnston, SOAS University of London and Dr Naheem Bashir British Stammering Association **IG2b: 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 **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			

Parallel session 4 (17 March 2021: 14.00 – 15.00)			
EDI and leadership	**Belonging and safe space**	**Bridging the gaps**	**Thinking forward**
4.1 Interactive breakout	4.2 Interactive breakout	4.3 Interactive breakout	4.4 Interactive breakout
Tackling racism on campus project	**Challenging unconscious bias; Developing awareness and providing effective training regarding equality, diversity and inclusion in higher education**	**How are we doing and when will we know we are there? Indicators of EDI**	**Earn as you learn: Widening participation through apprenticeship as debt-free degrees**
Dr Nighet Riaz, Programmes Adviser, Advance HE Sukhi Kainth, Knowledge, Innovation and Delivery Adviser, Advance HE Sharan Virdee, Equality and Diversity Partner, Herriot Watt University Adrian Lui, Equality, and Diversity Advisor, Glasgow Caledonian University	Stefanie Anyadi and Nicole Brown, University College London	Dr Caroline Wilson, Coventry University	Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Professor Sally Smith and Debbie Meharg, Edinburgh Napier University
Panel Session: Harassment, bullying and hate crime			
Dr Leah Burch, Professional Tutor, University of Leeds Professor Paul Weller, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University Maria McLeod, Solicitor, Scottish Women's Rights Centre Yasmeen Hussain, Strategic Alliances and Funding Partner, Scottish Association of Ethnic Minority Educators			

Session 3.1: A taste of 'Fierce Conversations'
Dr Naomi Irvine, People Development Associates
EDI and Leadership
Interactive breakout session
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 3.2: Race equality
Kaushika Patel, Dr Paris Connolly and Chris Hall, De Montfort University, and Dr Melanie Crofts, De Montfort University and Khadija Mohammed, University of the West of Scotland.
Belonging and safe place
Panel session
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 3.3: Courageous conversations and the ethnicity pay gap in higher education
Dr Jenny Cook and Sanchia Alasia, Brunel University London and Jill Scott, Inclusion Solutions
Bridging the gaps
Interactive breakout session
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 3.4: Equality and diversity for students, by students
Dr Sammy Li, Peter Collins and Amira Ismail, University of Birmingham
Thinking forward
Interactive breakout session
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 4.1 Tacking racism on campus project
Dr Nighet Riaz, Programmes Adviser, Advance HE
Sukhi Kainth, Knowledge, Innovation and Delivery Adviser, Advance HE
Sharan Virdee, Equality and Diversity Partner, Herriot Watt University
Adrian Lui, Equality, and Diversity Advisor, Glasgow Caledonian University
EDI and leadership

Interactive breakout session

This session will offer some background to the SFC-funded Tackling Racism on Campus Project and the work that has been completed over the past year. Led by an expert international steering group, this project has resulted in the production of a number of resources to raise awareness about racism on campus, along with a blended learning toolkit that supports staff and students to have confident conversations about race and racism. This session will offer the opportunity to explore these resources and discuss how they can assist you and your institution in tackling racism and racial harassment on campus.

Session 4.2: 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

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.

Session 4.3: How are we doing and when will we know we are there? Indicators of EDI

Dr Caroline Wilson, Coventry University

Bridging the gaps

Interactive breakout session

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'.

Session 4.4: 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

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.

Panel session: Harassment, bullying and hate crime

Dr Leah Burch, University of Leeds, Professor Paul Weller, Coventry University, Maria McLeod, Scottish Women's Rights Centre and Yasmeen Hussain, Scottish Association of Ethnic Minority Educators

Panel session

Drawing together expert researchers and practitioners, this panel session will discuss harassment, bullying and hate crime across the themes of gender, sexuality, religion, disability and race. We will consider the prevalence of these crimes on higher education campuses and the effect these have on individuals (both staff and students), the

impact the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has had upon these instances, and consider the best approaches to identifying, addressing and eradicating them across the board.

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
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.

Session IG2b: 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
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 settlings.

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.

Session SB2b: Resistance, intolerance and privilege: The absence of Black staff in senior leadership in higher education
Annette Hay, Coventry University
Soapbox session
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.

Session SB2c: The Company: A student-staff partnership activity
Dr Eirini Bazaki and Reem Alasadi, University of Southampton
Soapbox session

'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.