

Manifesto for BAME attainment at UCA

Introduction

In 2018 the University will introduce a new 10 Year Strategy setting out the high-level goals for the University, including a commitment to close equality gaps. The University measures 'attainment' as the percentage of students gaining 1st and 2:1 degrees. Attainment is also measured by the employment opportunities and salaries of graduates from data collected by the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education Survey (now the Graduate Outcomes Survey) and Longitudinal Employment Outcomes (using HMRC data). The BAME attainment gap at UCA is 12% in 17/18 (similar to the average for the sector) meaning there is a 12% fewer 1st and 2:1s received by BAME students against all students. This is consistent with previous years. There is also a 6% gap between the number of white students and the number of BAME students in the category of 'highly skilled employment' (as measured by the Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education Survey).

The Manifesto for BAME attainment is developed from research findings at UCA and the HE sector and it asks the whole academic community to sign up to the actions it sets out.

Professor Roni Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic, University for the Creative Arts

Key Findings

Key findings from research on the attainment gap* show the following to be the most influential factors in closing the gap:

- ***Frequent and meaningful conversations with tutors is the key contributing factor in BAME student success.***
- ***Formative assessment has gap-narrowing effects - lower performing students gain the most.***
- ***Interrogating course and unit level data can help you identify priority areas for interventions.***
- ***We are all ethnically and institutionally positioned - collaboration with students and colleagues can help us to address this in our work.***
- ***Curricula tend to accord with the social and cultural backgrounds of academics – addressing the balance of ethnic backgrounds and expertise in your course team and course content and materials can help narrow the attainment gap .***

UCA Course Leaders are committed to the following 16 actions and potential teaching practices to narrow the attainment gap:

Frequent and meaningful conversations are the key contributing factor in student success.

1. Ensure all your students are experiencing consistently good conversations about their work. Unconscious bias may mean that BAME students are not receiving equal entitlement for support.
2. Focus on mechanisms to improve student self-efficacy. If your BAME students believe in themselves, they are more likely to succeed.

Potential teaching practices to narrow the attainment gap:

Insist that all your team attend unconscious bias training.

Set up a peer mentoring scheme providing opportunities for your 2ND and 3rd year students to mentor 1st year students.

Build in a programme of personal tutorial times for all of your students (sign-up processes may not capture the very students that most need support).

Use best practice in Personal Tutoring material available on the CEN blog.

Ensure that discussion of work in progress is framed positively and constructively so that students always can see the positive in their achievements.

Ensure that all your course team are familiar with LSS 'When to Refer' guide, so they can advise students who are struggling with aspects of study or university life on where to go for support.

Formative assessment has gap-narrowing effects. Lower performing students gain the most.

3. Help all your students to develop an assessment literacy, so that they understand the assessment and feedback journey on their course.
4. Build in self and peer assessment opportunities for all your students.
5. Actively maintain students' intrinsic interests and ensure there is sufficient common ground between tutor and student to enable productive feedback.

Potential teaching practices to narrow the gap:

Invite your 1st year students to offer their own definitions of assessment and feedback to demystify the experiences they are about to embark upon on the course.

Use these definitions to put together an induction presentation on 'getting more out of your assessment and feedback experiences'

Enhance formative assessment practice by promoting these as key opportunities for student learning. If you encourage your students to keep a feedback journal, consider running a workshop on 'how to reflect'.

Check the CEN blog to find out how to build in self and peer assessment opportunities for all your students.

Interrogating course and unit level data can help you identify areas for interventions

6. Change the balance of images, texts, authors, places in course delivery and course documents to ensure BAME representation.

7. Change reading lists to include a more diverse range of influences, perspectives and critique
8. Develop students' critical thinking and awareness of different perspectives on issues relating to diversity in ethnicity, culture and nationality
9. Aim to deliver content that is interactive and designed to enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum.

Potential teaching practices to narrow the gap:

Put in place measurable goals for closing the BAME attainment gap in Course Annual Academic Monitoring and the Personal Development Reviews of staff.

Evaluate the success of interventions (eg through Unit evaluations, Student narratives).

Develop a course student engagement strategy that follows up those not attending or engaging. Keep this as a positive conversation.

Visit the CEN blog to find how to engage students in lecturers and to create a more inclusive reading list.

Create opportunities to discuss different perspectives within and outside the UK related to ethnic diversity in the creative arts.

Collaboration can help us to address the ways we are all positioned ethnically and institutionally.

10. Challenge your own discomfort with certain BAME-sensitive topics. Make the uncomfortable, comfortable, by reflecting on areas of challenge in your teaching.
11. Appoint a member of your team to lead on inclusive pedagogies and curricula.
12. Build-in more opportunities for student co-creation in teaching.
13. Embed academic skills, research and communication provision in the curriculum for all students

Potential teaching practices to narrow the gap:

Organise a student focus group to explore BAME experiences of learning and teaching on your course. Contact Simone Ziel simone.ziel.su@uca.ac.uk in the SU to see if the SU BAME Liberation group might be interested in facilitating the dialogue.

For UCA research and practice in this area, contact the BAME Special Interest Group.

BAME Special interest Group Members:

James Trafford (School of Communication Design)
Lynda Fitzwater (School of Fashion)
Steve Dixon-Smith (Learning Services)
Ugo Ejionye (Learning Services)
Kim Trogal (School of Architecture) Anna Holder (School of Architecture)
Nyawira Njiraini (Specialist Advisor/Gateway Services)
Mary-Lou Barratt (School of Fine Art and Photography)

Complete a peer supported review in the area of BAME attainment. Go to the CEN blog to find out what this involves.

Build in more student-centred collaborative approaches, like small group work and clicker technology, which allow BAME students to draw on their own experiences and perspectives.

Take steps to change the ethnic balance of your course team, this will build a more inclusive community of practice which benefits the teaching and learning experience for staff and students.

14. Actively address the ethnic diversity of your course team to foster a more inclusive curriculum and a more representative staff community.
15. Actively ensure that the industry practitioners and sessional lectures you seek out for Open Lectures and teaching opportunities reflect the diverse community in which we live and are representative of our student cohort. Use these opportunities to grow your BAME academic community.
16. Build in opportunities for your first year students to meet BAME 2nd and 3rd years.

Potential teaching practices to narrow the gap:

Advertise positions using 'The Other Box' and other forums that promote ethnic diversity in the arts (<http://www.theotherbox.org/workshops/>). This will help to ensure they reach an ethnically diverse audience of lecturers and practitioners in the creative arts.

Share practice on addressing inequalities in BAME attainment on the CEN blog, by filling out a CEN Case Study template.

Invite BAME teaching staff to contribute to the writing of briefs.

Invite BAME 2nd and 3rd year students in as part of induction experiences for all your first year students.

**Dr Duna Sabri, is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre for Public Policy Research, King's College London. Duna has just concluded a longitudinal study of students' experiences and identities which explores the causal mechanisms that underlie statistical differences in students' attainment outcomes.*