



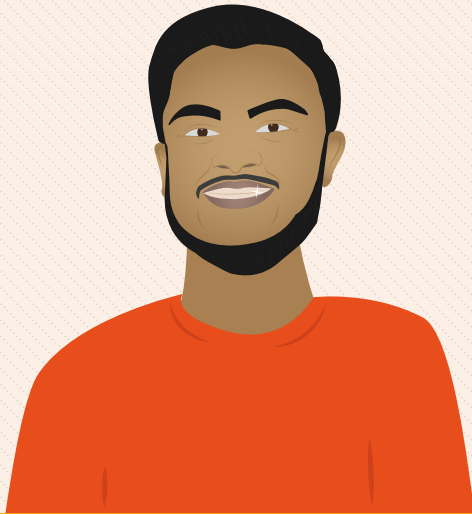
# WHY IS MY CURRICULUM WHITE?

Focusing on empowering students and staff with the practical skills and information to decolonise education.

FACT GUIDE CURATED BY ADNAN RAHMAN, EDUCATION OFFICER 2019-21, LEICESTER STUDENTS' UNION.

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 LEICESTER  
STUDENTS'  
UNION



# AN INTRODUCTION FROM

**ADNAN RAHMAN**

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“ A decolonised education and the eradication of awarding gaps is in everyone’s interest. If we rid the barriers to education and academic success for those most marginalised, then we rid the barriers that we all face. It is about time our academic experience encompasses all of our lived experiences, encourages us to be critical thinkers, provides us with practical transferable skills, and empowers us in our own way to change the world. ”

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

[leicesterunion.com/leicsdecolonise](https://leicesterunion.com/leicsdecolonise)

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM'?

To decolonise the curriculum is to enhance the way we learn and what we learn. It is to compliment what is already in our curriculum with a multiplicity of perspectives, traditions and approaches from different regions, historical contexts and academic disciplines. Fundamentally it seeks to challenge, compliment and critique the inherently euro-centric nature of our curriculum.



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The fundamental purpose of education is to enlighten us about the world, different lived experiences and use what we learn to influence society and the world at large. As it stands, the national curriculum at both further and higher education does not encompass enough of these lived experiences, transferable skills nor does it empower us to be independent and critical thinkers.

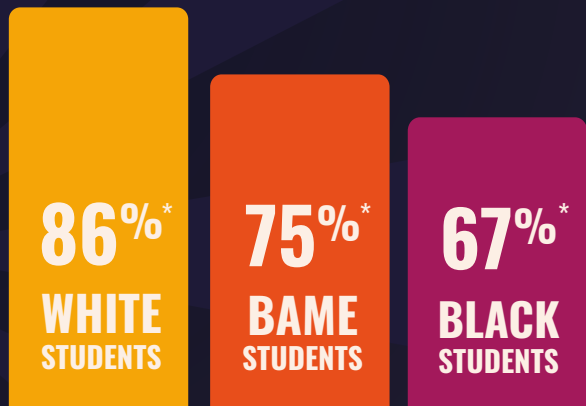


# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE BLACK, ASIAN & MINORITY ETHNIC (BAME) AWARDING GAP?

The Awarding or Attainment Gap refers to any significant and persistent disparity in the awarding of degrees between different groups of students.

In this case, it refers to the disparity in the awarding of a 2.1 or above between BAME students and White students.

As of 2019 nationally, 81% of White students are being awarded a 2.1 or above in their undergraduate degree. 68% of BAME students and 55% of Black students, meaning that the national BAME Awarding Gap stands at 13% whilst the Black Awarding Gap stands at 26%.



AWARDED A 2.1 OR ABOVE IN THEIR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE (AT LEICESTER AS OF 2019) \*APPROX FIGURES.

# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ALLEVIATE AWARDING GAPS?

Students are often told that University is the opportunity to grow and excel but what if there are barriers to excelling? The national trend is clear; students of colour, and Black students particularly are structurally put at a disadvantage in comparison to their White peers.

In the UK, Black students are 50% more likely than their White counterparts to drop out of University which emphasises the need for culturally competent pastoral support services to ensure a higher retention of Black students.



## WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE?

- + Request data on the awarding gap in your school with a breakdown of gaps between different ethnicities.
- + Regularly check what events and workshops are on the 'LeicsDecolonise' webpage on [leicesterunion.com](http://leicesterunion.com).

# WHAT SHOULD YOUR UNIVERSITY BE DOING?

- + Referring to the University's Awarding Gap Checklist.
- + Creating and implementing a sufficient plan of action.
- + Introducing sufficient 'unconscious bias' training for staff.
- + Referring to materials published by the University of the Leicester Learning Institute.
- + Engaging with the Students' Union and its Equality and Liberation Champions on campaigns around these issues, including inviting them to Student Staff Committees.
- + Ensuring there has been a recent audit of reading lists to show a diverse range of narratives and authors.
- + Work with the Leicester Institute for Inclusivity, Equality and Liberation Champions and #LeicsDecolonise campaigners to enact curriculum change.

## DID YOU KNOW...

At Leicester, the Vice-Chancellor has set a 2025 deadline to eliminate the awarding gap.





## RECOMMENDED READING

- 1** 'WHY I'M NO LONGER TALKING TO WHITE PEOPLE ABOUT RACE'  
BY RENI EDDO-LODGE
- 2** 'DECOLONISING THE UNIVERSITY'  
BY GURMINDER BHAMBRA, DALIA GEBRIAL AND KEREM NIŞANCIOĞLU
- 3** 'SUPERIOR: THE RETURN OF RACE SCIENCE'  
BY ANGELA SAINI
- 4** 'THE BLOOD NEVER DRIED'  
BY JOHN NEWSINGER
- 5** 'DISMANTLING RACE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: RACISM, WHITENESS  
AND DECOLONISING THE ACADEMY'  
BY JASON ARDAY AND HEIDI SAFIA MIRZA

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