

Strategy for Advancing Race Equality at ARU

2021

1. Background

- 1.1 This strategy has been built upon research and enquiry by ARU colleagues over the last five years, including knowledge exchanges with other institutions, conference attendance, involvement in external research projects and our own institutional activity.
- 1.2 In 2018, the Race Equality Advocates (previously called B.A.M.E. Advocates) carried out a survey into the experience of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students at all levels at ARU, the data from which provided the foundation for a research project led by Anglia Learning and Teaching in 2020. Key findings from that research indicated that our B.A.M.E. undergraduate students were not as confident as their white counterparts to achieve a 1st or 2:1, they had lower trust in assessment processes and were less likely to see themselves reflected in curricula or in role models across the university's staff.
- 1.3 Similar findings are widely reported across the sector, most recently by [NUS/UUK](#). Additionally, in 2019 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published their report [Tackling racial harassment: Universities challenged](#) followed in November 2020 by [UUK's response and recommendations](#). Charting the progress of this agenda through these reports, it is evident to see a shift in the call to action from sector bodies, from reducing the attainment gap towards tackling its underlying causes, namely structural and systemic racism, with Advance HE's February 2021 [Introduction to Understanding Racism in Higher Education](#) making this abundantly clear:
- 1.4 Many institutions are responding to this shift, most notably, all Scottish universities and colleges have signed up to a programme, funded by the Scottish Funding Council, to address racial discrimination.
- 1.5 These reports, coupled with the research undertaken at ARU and recent work with our consultant Dr Jason Arday, within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, have come together to underline the urgency to act to tackle racism within our society and our university.
- 1.6 This document sets out a cultural change approach to advancing race equality, built upon the [principles](#) set out by the Vice Chancellor in June 2020.

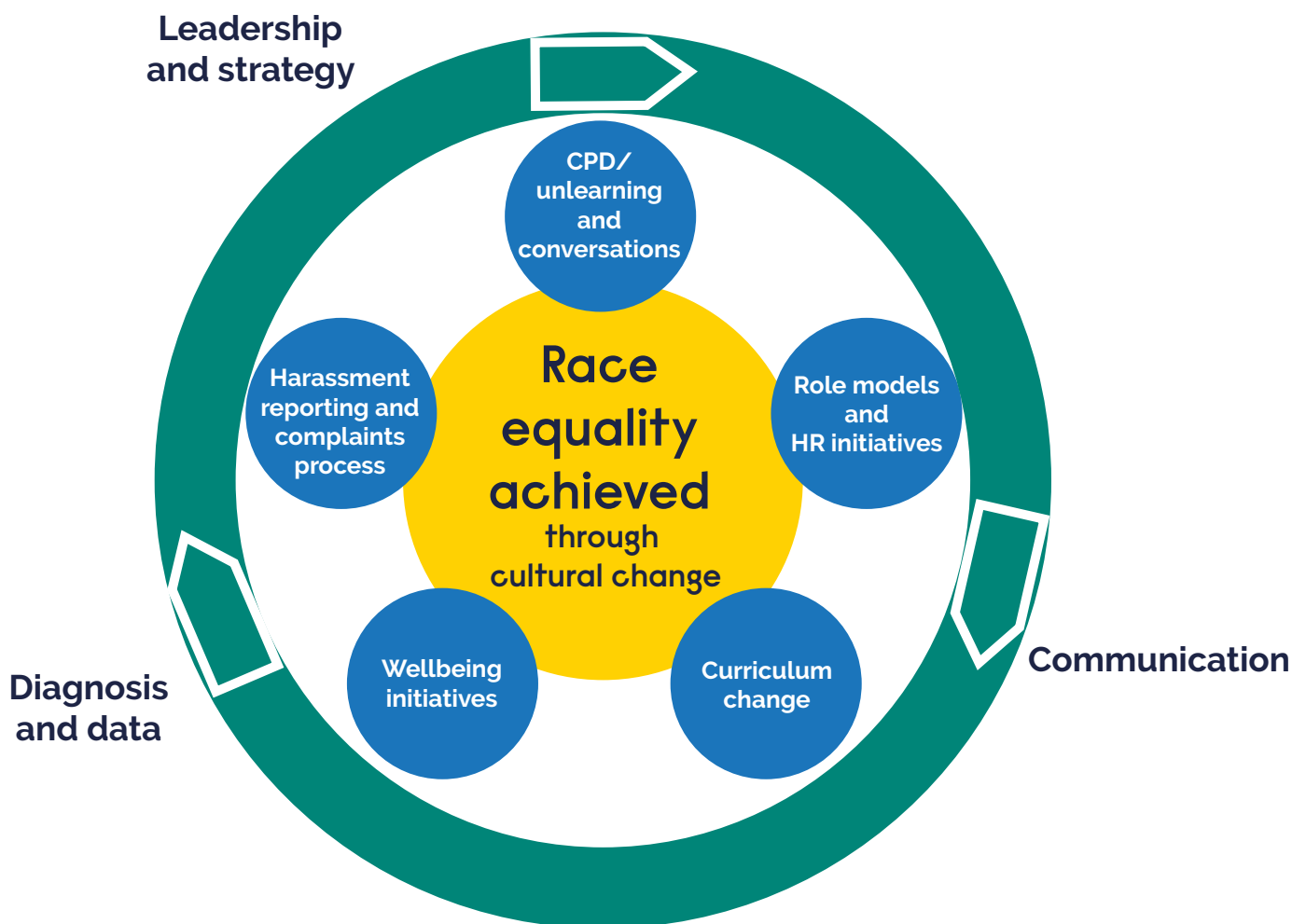
It aims to achieve equality of experience and outcomes for our Black, Asian and minority ethnic community through a process of cultural change.

Acknowledging structural racism and race inequality exists in the sector helps to explain the wide-ranging, persistent, and interconnected inequalities experienced by so many staff and students. (Page 8).

2. The strategy

The strategy consists of three interlinked foundations, denoted in the diagram as green arrows on a green band. These will need to be prioritised to establish and support the work across the five workstreams, denoted in blue individual circles. The yellow circle in the centre identifies the goal.

An outline of the activities required for each foundation and workstream are set out below.



3. Foundations

3.1 Foundation 1: Leadership and strategy

Goal:

**Clear stance that
*structural racism
exists at ARU* made
public, with long-term
commitment to, and
strategy for, advancing
race equality through
cultural change in place.**

What we need to do:

- Design and implement our race equality strategy, published and publicly launched by the VC with senior team in partnership with ARU-SU. Pushing key messages and verbalising a bold, long-term commitment to advancing race equality at ARU, such as this model: Racism exists on our campuses and in our society. *Call it what it is and reject it in all its forms. We stand united against racism*¹.



¹ Recently, the Scottish Funding Council has engaged with all Scottish universities and colleges in a project to address racism, including this declaration acknowledging and rejecting racism – see www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/critical-conversations-critical-action-we-stand-united-against-racism

3.2 Foundation 2: Communication

Goals:

Promote an open culture where race equality is discussed, encouraged and promoted by all members of our community.

Listen and offer opportunities to gather input from members of ARU's Black, Asian and minority ethnic community.

What we need to do:

- Implement an honest and impactful internal and external communications plan, including key messages, to demonstrate our commitment to race equality and our strategy goals, to gain buy-in from staff, students and the wider ARU community.
- Maximise existing communications channels to communicate the expectation and opportunities available for staff and students to have the conversation / educate themselves on race equality, white privilege and racial justice themes.
- Work with the SU to establish biannual B.A.M.E. Student Forum meetings for students to advise the university on any issues which they would like to see addressed.
- Work with the Race & Ethnic Equality Staff Network (REEN) to establish a greater sense of community and regular feedback mechanisms so the university can be informed of issues which they would like to see addressed.



3.2 Foundation 3: Diagnosis and data

Goal:

Further areas for improvement identified across a greater number of intersections through the interrogation of student and staff data.

What we need to do:

- Define scope of and carry out data analysis to understand how different characteristics intersect e.g. Black + Male / B.A.M.E. + Religion and Belief / B.A.M.E. + BTEC-entry, and their impact on differential outcomes.
- Undertake audits of data collected on service use across all services to analyse the ethnic make-up of the students and staff who use them and their reasons for doing so. Identify any trends which may be useful in improving the support we offer. Review annually.
- Carry out a review of recruitment, appraisal, promotion and regrading data with particular focus on the experience of staff from B.A.M.E. backgrounds. Complement with qualitative data gathered through staff surveys including the REC staff survey.



4. Workstreams

4.1 Workstream 1: CPD/ unlearning and conversations

Goal:

Extensive portfolio of innovative learning and development opportunities designed and available to all members of our ARU community to facilitate learning about race and increase racial and cultural competence.

What we need to do:

- Replace unconscious bias training for staff with a comprehensive offer of meaningful and challenging CPD exploring whiteness, privilege, structural racism, microaggressions, allyship etc. Race Equality Advocates to support development and facilitation.
- Develop further 'unlearning' opportunities for students including workshops, Ruskin modules, Advocate- and SU-led events and activities which explore whiteness, privilege, structural racism, microaggressions, allyship etc.
- Amplify the Race Equality Advocates programme through collaborative work with ARU SU as well as within and for faculties to enhance visibility and sense of belonging events celebrating student ethnic diversity, engaging not only students but also staff and other members of our community.



4.2 Workstream 2 – Role models and HR initiatives

Goal:

Greater visibility and presence of Black, Asian and minority ethnic members of the ARU community and at all levels of the institution.

What we need to do:

- Revisit the design of job descriptions, person specifications and advertising to ensure the use of positive action strategies that acknowledge the importance of diverse recruitment practices and specifically highlight our goal to achieve greater racial diversity at ARU.
- Educate recruitment committees and interview panels on the institution's goals for achieving race equality and explore establishing a requirement for interview panels to include Black Asian and minority ethnic students/alumni or staff.
- Set up a reverse-mentoring scheme for senior managers to work with Advocates and/or colleagues at lower grades to gain understanding of exclusionary factors that impact belonging.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with regional partners, including employers and in respect of degree apprenticeships, to support workforce diversification within the region.



4.3 Workstream 3 – Curriculum change

Goal:

Fairness in assessment assured, perceived unfairness addressed, and greater racial and cultural diversity present within curricula and learning resources.

What we need to do:

- Diversify curricula by integrating voices and perspectives from a range of ethnic backgrounds that reflect students' backgrounds and identities positively. Encourage teaching that explores diverse cultural, national and ethnic perspectives throughout the course and empower students to play an active role in curriculum design and feedback.
- Introduce a 0.5fte faculty-based race equality lead role that will work with the Advocates, colleagues, students and Faculty LTA leads to embed diversification of all aspects within the faculty structures, systems and curricula.
- Identify and address issues associated with the assessment of students' work that may contribute to differential outcomes for students from B.A.M.E. backgrounds.
- Further embed the use of learning, teaching and assessment tools developed by ARU, like the [Inclusive Curriculum Framework](#), the [Inclusive Teaching checklist](#), the GalA ('Good and Inclusive Assessment') tool².



² The Inclusive Curriculum Framework and GalA-2 are available on the AL&T website at aru.ac.uk/anglia-learning-and-teaching/good-teaching-practice-and-innovation/approaches-to-learning-and-teaching/inclusive-learning-and-teaching

4.4 Workstream 4 - Wellbeing initiatives

Goal:

Comprehensive range of strategies introduced to support the wellbeing and sense of belonging of Black, Asian and minority ethnic members of our community.

What we need to do:

- Introduce ethnicity-specific mental health support groups, led by B.A.M.E. facilitators with awareness of structural racism and its impact on the lives of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Introduce requirement for all line managers and personal development tutors to take part in CPD to increase understanding of racism, racial harassment and microaggressions and white privilege, through training that is developed from an anti-racist perspective³.
- Diversify recruitment of ARU Counselling and Wellbeing staff, promote additional channels of support, such as the chaplaincy, and introduce specific training for ARU counsellors on the mental health impact of racism, racial harassment and microaggressions.



³ Recommendation 6 from [UUK's 2020 report on tackling racial harassment in HE](#)

4.5 Workstream 5 - Harassment reporting and complaints processes

Goal:

Reporting tools, support and processes in place at ARU reviewed with reference to UUK's 2020 report on tackling racial harassment in HE.

What we need to do:

- With reference to the [November 2020 UUK report](#), review ARU procedures for handling racial harassment complaints, to ensure fair, transparent and equitable outcomes for all parties involved.
- Conduct an in-depth review of the [Unsilenced reporting tool](#), supporting information and accompanying processes to ensure efficiency. Make appropriate changes, establish trust in the tool amongst the student body, and promote usage more widely. Consider extending its usage to staff population.
- Establish a data monitoring system that will capture both formal and informal reports and complaints as well as anonymous and named, and ensure appropriate routes are identified to review through the university's committee structure.
- Review the online safety training and guidance currently in place at ARU and identify any necessary improvements. Ensure clear and direct communication of expected behaviours.



5. Evaluation

Each workstream will require appropriate evaluation mechanisms to enable progress and impact reporting to the relevant university committees (governance structure set out below). Thorough and in-depth impact analysis will recognise challenges, propose solutions and celebrate successes.

Crucially, instruments to analyse our success in achieving a progressive cultural shift across the institution will need to be designed in partnership with colleagues with expertise in this field. These will help us to identify which workstreams are having the greatest impact so that we can adjust as necessary as work progresses and develops.



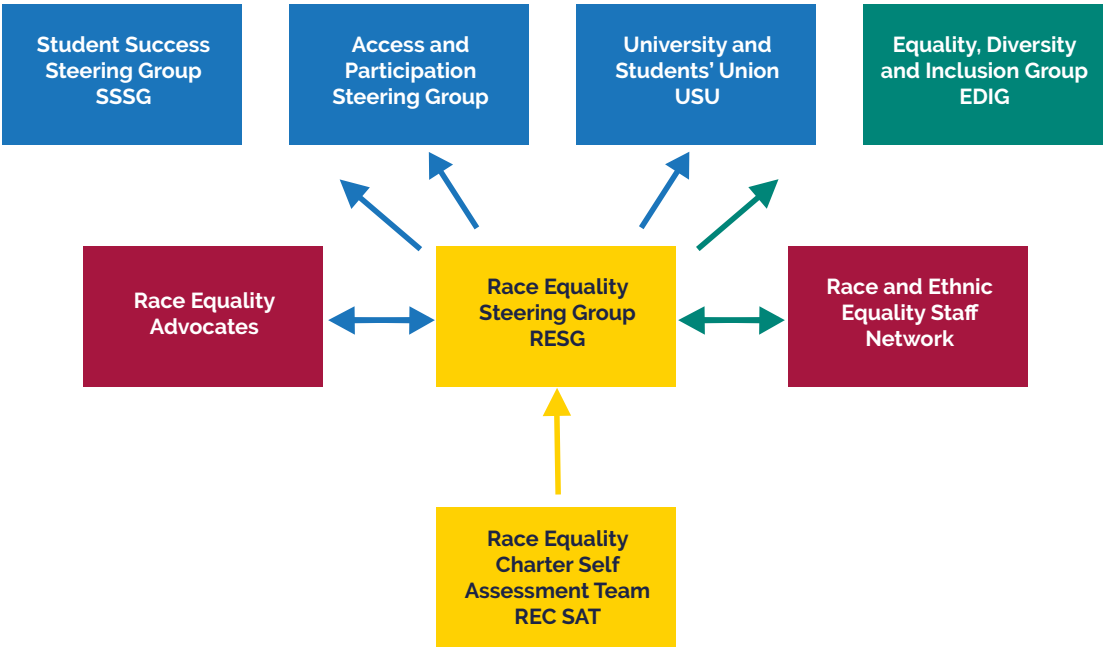
6. Governance for advancing race equality at ARU

All institutional race equality work will be overseen by the Race Equality Steering group (RESG) reporting into the Student Success Steering Group (SSSG), University Students' Union (USU), the Access and Participation Steering Group and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group (EDIG) as per the diagram below.

The S.U., Race Equality Advocates and the Race & Ethnic Equality Staff Network (REEN) will be key stakeholders in our race equality work. The REC Self-Assessment Team will also report progress into the RESG.

Further institutional oversight will be provided by regular, annual reports to Education Committee and Senate, as well as Student Matters, Finance Employment and General Purposes Committee (FE&GP) and the Board of Governors.

ARU Race Equality Governance Structure



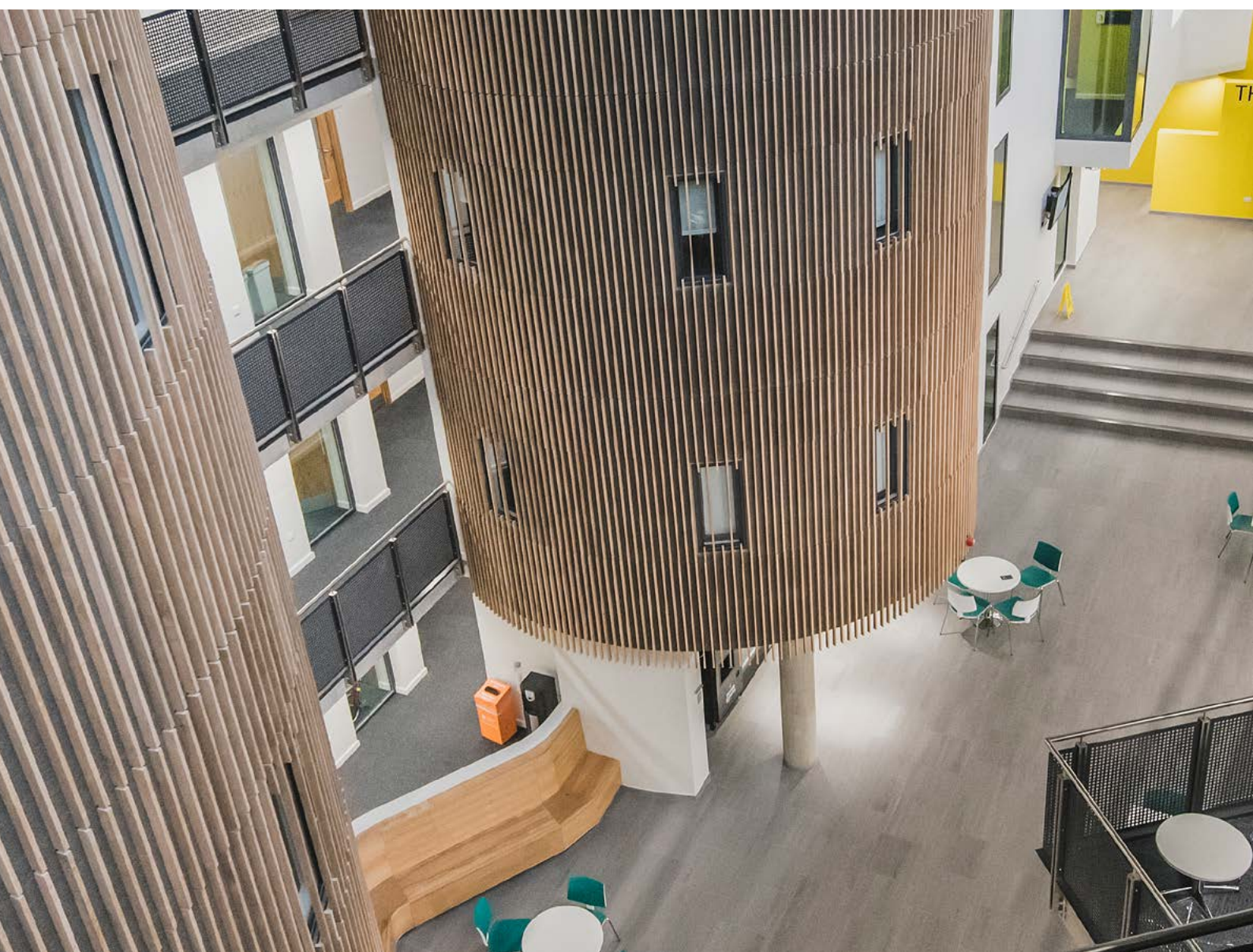
7. Resourcing

The human resource required to make significant impact will also require further funding, building on the investment in research and strategic development undertaken by Student Services and Anglia Learning & Teaching since AY 2018/19.

As noted, a lead for each Faculty will be appointed to lead both student- and staff-facing race equality work, in partnership with the other groups and bodies outlined in this strategy.

Student and Library Services, HRS and Anglia Learning & Teaching will continue to require the dedicated resource already in place to ensure delivery of this strategy and action plan.

Finally, resource from both Corporate and Student Comms will be increasingly called upon to expertly communicate our work in this area. This will become vital for us to have the impact we are aiming for to change our culture and become an antiracist institution.



Approved by the Board of Governors July 2021

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