

## 1 Situation

There are persistent ethnicity degree awarding gaps (EDAG), which are widening after COVID and are particularly pronounced across specific modules. 2021/22 data showed an EDAG of over 25% and a Black/white EDAG of over 33%. This sits alongside evidence that BTEC students have higher non-submission rates, and marginalised students (in particular Black and Asian students) have higher rates of academic misconduct. Through the institutional risk assessment, gaps between white-Black and white-Asian students have been identified as a priority (alongside intersectional considerations of FSM eligibility, being male and entering BCU with BTEC qualifications).

## 2 Aims

To reduce the awarding gaps between Black-white and Asian-white undergraduate students by 2027/28, through revising and implementing institutional policies and practices to enable:

- students to engage with their learning and assessment in good time, enabling them to better understand how to approach assessments, and to be able to translate this in practice through scaffolded learning
- staff to understand the barriers students face in engaging in teaching and learning, and how these relate to assessment, and for staff to address those barriers through changes in their assessment design, communications and marking practices

## 7 Inputs

## 5 Activities

## 6 Outputs

## 3 Outcomes

## 4 Impact

### Process

### Impact

**Staff:**

- Time
- Buy-in (including senior leadership)
- Anti-racism trainers
- Input from educational developers
- Input from Quality Assurance
- Verification panel

**Students:**

- Student time to engage with activities
- Reimbursement for peer navigators (ie mentors)
- Training for peer navigators
- Incentives for engagement

**Other:**

- Institutional data (eg learner analytics, module feedback, NSS etc.)
- Centrally accessible online repository to host all relevant resources
- Existing assessment frameworks/guidelines/policies
- Cadmus subscription

- Peer navigators from L5 & 6 support L4 students with assessment management using designated in-module sessions (e.g. assessment launch sessions)
- Provide anti-racism training workshops for staff, including interacting with Black students and implementing anti-racist pedagogies.
- Revise and implement assessment policies through:
  - Producing accessible principles of assessment
  - Creating course assessment roadmaps
  - Creating timely, consistent and clear assessment briefs for each module
  - Embedding applied modes of assessment
  - Applying marking criteria consistently
- Introduce assessment software for pilot modules in L4 to assist with assessment management and timely engagement
- Explore Black and Asian students' barriers to success through student analysis of existing quantitative institutional data as well as formal and informal student consultations

- Assessment launch sessions include peer navigators
- % of students attending launch sessions
- Students engage with peer navigators in launch sessions
- % staff attend anti-racism training
- # anti-racism trainings provided
- Accessible principles of assessment are produced and followed by all module leads
- Course assessment roadmaps are produced for all courses
- Assessment briefs are produced timely and in a consistent manner for all modules
- Principles, # roadmaps and # briefs hosted on online repository
- # of applied modes of assessment embedded in each course
- Marking criteria are applied consistently according to assessment verification panel
- 8 identified L4 modules deliver their assessment using Cadmus
- Reports are produced by disaggregated ethnicity, bringing together quant and qual evidence of what the barriers and facilitators for Black and Asian students are in their academic lifecycle (# of times reports are accessed)

**Students:**

- have increased understanding of what they need to do in assessments through their engagement with peer navigators and/or assessment briefs
- have increased understanding of their assessment elements across their course and can plan their time in advance using the roadmaps
- engage with assessment earlier
- have increased understanding of what the core elements in each module assessment are that they need to achieve good marks
- give better module feedback in relation to assessment components
- are more engaged and find accessing assessment easier, as it is more relevant to them.
- feel more heard and valued by the institution as they see their input reflected in their teaching and learning.
- rate their relationships with staff better.

**Staff:**

- have increased confidence in creating inclusive assessment (including clear briefs), applying the marking criteria consistently and translate these into practice
- have increased confidence on how to interact with Black and Asian students authentically and implement this in practice
- have increased understanding of what the barriers and facilitators for Black and Asian students are in their academic lifecycle and take these into consideration when design and implementing their teaching and assessment

- Culture of inclusive and accessible assessment practices at BCU
- Decrease in non-submission rates for Black and Asian students
- Increase in first-time assessment pass rates for Black and Asian students
- Reduction in academic misconduct cases for Black and Asian students,
- Increase in stage aggregate grades for Black and Asian students
- Better spread of grades given in assessment for all students that is persistent across time by staff
- Staff confidence in using the whole grade scale when assessing student work – particularly in the use of high grades (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> class)
- Reduce the overall ethnicity degree awarding gap, the Black/white awarding gap, and the Asian/white awarding gap by 2027-28.

## 8 Rationale & Assumptions

**Assumptions/rationale:**

- Institutional evidence suggests that these students do not engage timely with assessment, that assessment expectations are not clear to them, and that most of the assessments take place towards the end of the semester, which means that students do not have feedback available with which to learn from for subsequent assessments.
- Bespoke peer navigators engage students through similar lived experience (e.g. Worley et al., 2023)
- Anti-racism staff training is effective in improving staff understanding of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and in producing more authentic staff-student interactions
- Staff use guidelines to produce assessment that are more relevant to their students.
- Students engage more with applied modes of assessment
- Institutional evidence suggests that HE assessment and modular content raises unclear expectations of 'academic literacy' for students
- Institutional data from student feedback show evidence of overassessment, assessment miscommunication issues, & formative / summative feedback provided to students by staff is not meeting their expectations