



The IoPPN Race Discussions Toolkit: Let's Talk About Race

'As a premier learning institution, it is the IoPPN's duty to create an inclusive, diverse and supportive environment where our staff and students have the freedom to flourish'
Professor Ann McNeill, Vice Dean (Culture, Diversity & Inclusion)

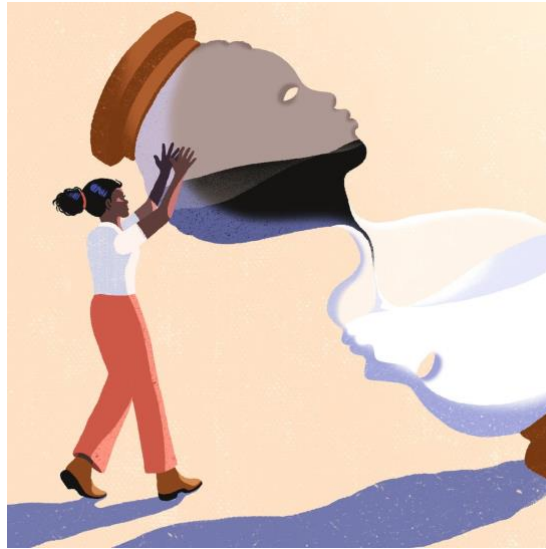
About

Advancing race equality is a priority at the IoPPN and at King's. Faculty-based student discussion groups in May 2018 highlighted the need for staff and students to be more informed about race equality issues and feel comfortable in discussing race. Students reported a lack of race-related dialogue (particularly from white individuals and staff) and noted it should not be the sole responsibility of BME people to initiate and participate in race-related discussions. They also expressed concerns about the lack of racial, ethnic and cultural diversity in the curriculum amongst other issues.

In response, the IoPPN Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Core Team, former Race Equality Co-Champions Dr Renee Romeo and Dr Sylvane Desrivieres and members of the Race Equality Working Group have developed this Race Discussion Toolkit to support members of the IoPPN and the larger King's Community to sensitively discuss issues around race, ethnicity and culture.

It aims to provide skills and knowledge that ensure staff and students of all races and ethnicities, at all levels, feel confident to engage in Race Discussions. The Race Discussions Toolkit provides guidance and explains why it is important to hold Race Discussions, recognising that although everyone has a race, the social construction has disproportionate impacts on people of colour. With practical advice and resources, we aspire to create a cultural change that facilitates learning, teaching and more broadly, an inclusive community. Networks and mentoring schemes have also been signposted at the end of this toolkit.

The development of this Race Discussion Toolkit is one of the actions on the IoPPN D&I 10-point Action Plan, developed in line with King's Race Equality Action Plan.



Why is it important to talk about race?

As part of a College-wide commitment to advance Race Equality at the IoPPN, it is critical that we talk about race within our departments, sections, lab and research groups and teams. All too often discussions about race are avoided, which means that implicit biases are reared, and inequities exacerbated. We understand that this isn't going to be easy. We understand that fear of saying something that might be construed as racist may hold you back. We understand that you might not get it right all of the time. But what is important is to try, be willing to make mistakes and for everyone to make an assumption of good intent. Making mistakes and learning from them is how we grow. The more you talk about it, the easier it gets.

We know from research that **companies with ethnically diverse workforces are 35% more likely to outperform companies with little ethnic diversity** ([McKinsey Report: Why Diversity Matters January 2015](#)). It is important for the IoPPN and King's to harness our diversity. This toolkit is a collection of useful practice to inform effective communications about race.

Avoiding talking about race sends the message of tacit acceptance of racial inequalities.

"To not have the conversations because they make you feel uncomfortable is the definition of privilege. Your comfort is not at the centre of this discussion" – Brene Brown

When to use the toolkit?

This Race Discussions Toolkit contains critical strategies, information and resources that advocates can use to support conversations and combat discrimination and exclusion based on race with the understanding that the messages must be customized based on audience, concern, the objective of the message and context.

How to use the toolkit?

The Race Discussions Toolkit provides guidance obtained from leading experts on social inclusion, messaging, higher education and framing. It is divided into sections on starting conversations, holding discussions and provides a glossary of terms.



Tips and tools to discuss race

Starting the conversation:

When discussing race and ethnicity, remember to set some ground rules. Examples of ground rules include:

- Safe space for people to ask difficult questions
- Confidentiality
- Assumption of good intent
- Be open-minded
- Challenge ideas/thoughts, not people
- Mutual respect
- Monitoring input – make sure everyone gets a voice and no one monopolises the conversation/discussion
- Accepted terms and definitions

Recognise the diversity of your audience:

- Who are you talking to?
- Where are they from?
- What different perspectives might they have?
- What issues might be raised? And how can you prepare for these

Correct misinformation and set standards

- As the facilitator, it is your role to be an ally and lead the discussion
- Reference relevant reading materials and course content
- Lead by example
- Provide reminders about respecting the right of others to have different opinions

Areas to steer clear of:

- Making a racial and ethnic minoritised person the expert on race issues without permission
- Point at a racial or ethnic minoritised person when raising the issue
- Put them on the spot when you feel uncertain by
- Looking at them
- Pointing at them or gesturing towards them
- Saying their name in that context
- Remember that individuals from racial and ethnic minority groups do not - and cannot - speak for all people from that same background – you'd never ask a white person what all white people think

Set a framework for the discussion:

- You can download an example slide pack here that can be used in a traditional presentation and adapted to your context.
- You may also like to consider using an anonymous poll to ascertain a base line to better frame and support future discussions. This method was trailed in SGDP in November 2019 and recognised as good practice in the [D&I Achievements Log](#). Information about how to use anonymous poll and example questions can be downloaded [here](#).

These are some possible situations that can be used to frame a formal discussion

- Call out inappropriate behaviours or language
- Supporting an individual
- Fostering engagement with an initiative
- Highlight inequality of outcomes
- Challenge a process or policy

When holding a discussion, you may want to adopt a three-step approach: affirm, counter and transform.

Affirm

Start by mentioning phrases, images, videos, data that speaks to audience's values. The key is to hook and engage your audience.

King's has a collection of voices from BME staff and students about their experience. The voices were collected for the 2015 Race Equality Charter submission. Although these are a few years old, discussion with IoPPN students in 2018 and anecdotal evidence suggest that these experiences are still relevant.

You can listen, share and discuss the voices here.

These voices highlight:

- Feelings of exclusion
- The need to adjust to fit in
- Stereotyping and biased expectations
- Isolation
- Worry about joining groups
- Biased curriculum
- Dehumanising of some communities

Counter

Here the approach is to lead the audience into the discussion of race with a brief snapshot of the context. This can involve giving a brief figure of the evidence on inequalities in pay, progression, arrests.

- Research consistently highlights the pervasiveness of institutional racism that works in overt and covert ways marginalising, excluding and reproducing university as an elite white space. This results in a significant underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minoritised individuals working in Higher Education.
- Despite some progress, the pace of change is slow. In 2015-16 (see full ECU statistical report [here](#)):
- 23.9% of professors were female, of which only 0.5% were Black
- 1.6% of UK heads of institutions (the highest contract level) were from a racial and ethnic minority, compared with 11.7% of simple task providers (the lowest contract level).

- 9.1% of those in professional occupations were BME with just 2.9% working as managers, directors and senior officials
- 15.1% of Chinese UK academics were professors compared with just 4.7% of Black UK academics
- 16.8% of UK BME and 22.9% of non-UK BME academics left in this period, compared with 15.1% of UK white and 18.3% of non-UK white academics.
- Summarise and reflect
- The approach here is to discuss with the audience ways of making progressing and countering the narratives. At the end of the session, remember to summarise the discussion, ask participants to reflect on what they have discussed. If participants in the discussion wish to write any anonymous notes about the session and hand them in, they are welcomed to do so.

This is no different at King's - Just 8% of King's professoriate are Black Minority Ethnic (BME). Of this group, 0.6% are Black. Only 6.8% of our most senior professional services colleagues are BME. The Equality Challenge Unit (now AdvanceHE)'s [Race Equality Charter](#) (REC) was fully launched in 2016 following six years of work evaluating initiatives, continued stakeholder engagement and trail with volunteer institutions in 2015. The REC is aimed at improving representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. There are currently 52 member institutions. AdvanceHE are due to undertake an evaluation of REC's impact in 2020.

See: "Gender over Race? Equity and inclusion in higher education"

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/equity-and-inclusion-in-higher-education/>

Glossary

It is important to use appropriate language when talking about race and to feel confident about that language. To support this, below is a list of terms and definitions that might arise when discussing race.

This list is not exhaustive, it does not cover everything, but it should provide some helpful guidance around the terms below and support you in discussing race. It also does not include a list of terms that should not be used. If you are still unsure about what language to use, listen to the language people around you tend to use. Read around the topic, follow activists and read their blogs and understand the reasons they choose the language they do.

It is also important to recognise that language develops and evolves and varies across countries and culture. What is acceptable in Australia now, may not be acceptable in England. What was considered a derogatory term 50 years ago, may now be the preferred term by that group.

Terms

This table has been supported by our work with [Challenge Consultancy](#) and [Equality & Diversity at the British Sociological Association](#) If you believe anything is inaccurate or incorrect please contact ioppn.inclusion@kcl.ac.uk

This table can also be used to initiate conversation – you can print a slightly abbreviated table here and ask people to match the terms with the meanings. You can also pick up a copy from the D&I Office at W1.17.

Black	Historically, the term has been used to encompass a broad range of non-European ethnic minority populations in Britain to imply solidarity against racism for those who have a shared history of European colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, ethnocentrism and racism. South Asian groups object to this term and the UK census now distinguishes between 'Black' and 'Asian'. There is also a different historical context in USA and its use of Black.
Black and Minority Ethnic	Is generally the umbrella term within the UK used in public policy and voluntary services. Minority ethnic places the emphasis on the minority status rather than the ethnicity. It is important to remember BME is are not a homogenous group. People from different ethnic backgrounds have different experiences of and outcomes from and within higher education. It is important we understand and consider this complexity when discussing race and ethnicity.
Coloured	This term is outdated and is generally viewed as offensive to many Black people. In the South African context, the term reflects issues of ethnic divide and apartheid and needs to be contextualised.
Culture	The system of information that codes the manner in which people in the organised group, society or nation interact with their social environment. The emphasis is on learnt, non-genetic characteristics. Encompasses social behaviour and norms within societies including knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities and habits of individuals in these groups. Culture is acquired through learning.
Diversity	Difference is recognised and emphasised, but not actively leveraged to drive organisational success. There is acknowledgement of the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making and the workforce being representative of the organisation's customers.
Ethnicity	A group a people who identify with each other usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry or on similarities such as language, dialect, history, society, cultural heritage, origin myth or homeland. Everyone has an ethnicity, including white people (i.e. Irish, Australian, Eastern European etc.). In England and Wales, the government recommends 18 ethnic groups for use grouped into 5 broad ethnic groups each with an 'other'.
Ethnocentric	A tendency to perceive the world from the point of view of one's own culture. Ethnocentrism can lead to racism when applied to issues of race.
Inclusion	Difference is seen as a benefit to use, and where perspectives and differences are shared, leading to better decisions. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels valued, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their potential, no matter their background,

		identity or circumstances. Essentially it enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.
Indigenous		Typically used to describe particular ethnic groups originating and remaining in particular region. The United Nations uses the idea of "indigenous groups" to obtain rights for native North Americans, Aborigines and other groups whose situation has suffered from invading colonists. Within the British context it would be difficult to identify the indigenous British in this sense.
Microaggressions	Micro-assaults	Conscious and intentional discriminatory actions: using racial epithets, displaying White supremacist symbols - swastikas, or preventing people from socialising with people from races other than their own.
	Micro-insults	Verbal, nonverbal, and environmental communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person's racial heritage or identity. An example is an employee who asks a colleague who is Black or minority ethnic how he/she got his/her job, implying he/she may have landed it through an affirmative action or quota system.
	Micro-invalidations	Communications that subtly exclude negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a Black or minority ethnic person. For instance, White people often ask BME people where they were born, conveying the message that they are perpetual foreigners in their own land.
Nationality		The official right to belong to a particular country, the legal status of being a citizen of a particular country or the passport you hold, not always based on the country of your birth.
Non-White		Problematic term because it groups and homogenises a large part of the world's population by what they are not. It also implies that "white" is the norm against which 'otherness' is measured.
People of Colour		This is often used in the USA as a form of self-reference for people who suffer from racisms and discrimination based on visible skin colour. The term 'Black' is often preferred in Britain.
Race		Originally associated with social Darwinism and eugenics. It is a social construct based on physical appearance. It was used to argue that there were distinct physical and genetic differences between groups that constituted humankind. Race is now seen as a dynamic social, historical and variable category which is constantly recreated and modified through human interaction. Generally there are four types of racialised groups referred to in UK: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White people of European descent • Black People of African descent • Asian People for Indian Sub-Continent • South East Asian & Chinese Remember that everyone has a race.

Racism	An ideology, structure and process in which inequalities inherent in the wider social structure are related in a deterministic way to biological and cultural factors attributed to those who are seen as a different "race" or ethnic group. Racism is created and reproduced out of a complex set of circumstances.
White	Most often used for people of European descent but depends on context, nationality and point of view.
Whiteness	Whiteness refers to a dominant but usually unquestioned cultural space that is neutral and normative. Whiteness, because it is an unnamed, hegemonic position of privilege and power, becomes the point of reference for measuring others, unlike "blackness" which has been the predominant term of racial signification

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is simply a prism for understanding certain types of problems. It was established 30 years ago by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender and other personal/individual characteristics intersect with one another and overlap. Professor Crenshaw's paper ['Demarginalising the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Anti-discrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics'](#) argued that by treating Black women as purely women or purely Black, the courts repeatedly ignored specific challenges that face Black women as a group.



IoPPN D&I work is undertaken through an intersectional lens. This toolkit focuses on talking about race and ethnicity, however, to improve race equality at the IoPPN, we also need to remember and consider the intersection of race and other protected characteristics (as set out in the UK Equality Act 2010 - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and individual characteristics (including but not limited to – class, immigration status, country of birth, nationality, language, income, wealth and financial stability, living situation, family status, mental health, heritage/history, ability, education, occupation, appearance).

Get involved - Networks

Being a part of a staff network can have transformative effects on our involvement with the organisation, as well as a great way to make friends and have participation in key decision making and strategic level processes.

There are several networks you can join to have a say in improving race equality at King's:

List of Networks

BAME in Psychiatry and Psychology

BAME In Psychiatry and Psychology was established by Keisha York in 2019 to address the underrepresentation of BAME groups, as well as diversity within psychology academia, which aims to prioritise and advance representation of BAME backgrounds within psychiatry and psychology professions through a series of panel discussions, talks, workshops, and/or presentations - delivered by psychiatrists, psychologists, and mental health practitioners – addressing the structural barriers in accessing careers in psychiatry and psychology; ethnocentrism in psychiatry and psychology; and the racial disparities experienced in mental health care in terms of access, experiences, and outcomes.

To get involved or find out more information contact Keisha York at keisha.york@kcl.ac.uk, or follow at @BIPPNetwork

IoPPN Race Equality Network (REN)

The REN was established in 2016 to raise awareness on Race Equality issues; facilitate compressive discussions and promote Race Equality within departments. The REN meets monthly and organises other events, such as Black History Month as an opportunity to promote discussions and progression on race equality. The meetings and events are a space for all to share thoughts and express opinions with respect to the opinions of others. The REN chair is a voluntary position and currently rotates every 3 months.

Supporting the REN, the Race Equality Working Group (RE WG) was formed in 2014 and is co-championed by Nora Thoeng and Dr June Peters. The WG meets every 6 weeks to discuss how best to improving the experience of minority ethnic staff and student.

Anyone interested in joining the network should email: ioppn_inclusion@kcl.ac.uk.

King's Race Equality Network

King's developed a Race Equality Network (REN) in 2019 to promote and advance race equality at King's. It aims to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students providing support for the personal and professional development of all members. King's REN seeks to create a space for identifying and tackling cultural & diversity issues around university policies and practices through supporting the implementation of Kings Race Equality Action Plan. King's REN values the importance of building a community that embraces relational power, transparency, knowledge sharing, respect and equality. The REN meets on the first Wednesday of every month at lunchtime. For more information, please visit [REN's CEC page.](#)

Black Students Network

Additional Resources and Support - External videos discussing race, ethnicity and culture

MTV – What it means to be white? - <http://www.lookdifferent.org/whitepeople>

What is Ethnicity? - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1AY95Z64gg>

Akala's Natives: Race & Class in the Ruins

of Empire - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0iiybe5-nA>

White Fragility in the Workplace - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPDpcYEdiOg>

Microaggressions – If Microaggressions happened to White People | Decoded

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPRA4g-3yEk>

TedTalk Intersectionality - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o>

You may also want to consider sharing and then discussing these videos.

Variations of 'Privilege Walk' around the world demonstrating intersectionality

- Australian - <https://www.buzzfeed.com/nicolaharvey/what-is-privilege>
- USA College - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZ670ooc6Qc>
- USA - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD5f8GuNuGQ>
- USA- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UmowwMivyU&list=RDhD5f8GuNuGQ&index=2>
- Britain - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnA-ioxc4OA>
- Ireland - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1a5hwggtYQ>
- Singapore - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2hvibGdg4w>
- Canada - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h938XCpl7U>
- Netherlands - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nE6PkhqPKk>
- Jamaica - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lAsQfC8maZI>