

EQUITY



For Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Students at UWE Bristol

A Year in Review 2018-2019

Equity: A Year in Review 2018-2019

Background

Equity is an innovative, positive-action talent programme developed in response to national labour market statistics which reveal disparities in the performance and experience of BAME students. Following the pilot year in Bristol Business School and Bristol Law School, Equity was extended across UWE Bristol's four faculties with events taking place on all of our campuses. A university wide Advisory Board was established to tailor activity to meet specific challenges and needs within different industries. We have also been greatly assisted by an active student committee which provides a constant feedback and feed forward loop.

The programme has four pillars: career mentoring, identity and leadership coaching, careers and enterprise workshops and large networking events featuring exceptional guest speakers who are pushing the conversation of race equality within their industries. In 2019-20 our intention is to grow the programme into new areas of activity, working closer with employers through internships and group mentoring.

We partnered with a number of external organisations and employers to trial activities at their offices and at different venues across the city, providing students with further opportunities to experience the world of work. These employer-based events also offer important opportunities for us to support organisations to develop their capacity to run positive action events, thereby promoting change across the city.

This year, with TLT solicitors, Equity ran a highly successful BAME Law student conference followed by a series of insight seminars at their Bristol offices. Other partnerships included Cables and Cameras which is a local collective of filmmakers seeking to support BAME representation in the industry as well as the Black Girl Convention and its DigiTech retreat.

This year 49 students received 1:1 mentoring from external professionals and over 200 students regularly engaged with other activities the programme. In total, the team organised over 24 development activities with off-site partnership events offered in addition to those which took place on campus.

Awards

Our highlights in 2018-2019 included two awards: a reflection of the innovation and progressive nature of Equity.

We received national recognition in April at the Guardian University Awards winning the category for Retention, Support and Student Outcomes. The awards were judged by a panel of vice-chancellors and university leaders. In May 2019, we collected the Bristol Diversity Award for the Education Sector receiving over 90% of the public vote in the category. Equity also received positive attention from both local and national press:

21/05/2019 Bristol Diversity Awards: BristolLive 'Who they are and why they won'

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/2019-bristol-diversity-awards-winners-2886073>

10/04/2019 Guardian Article on winning award 'Retention, support and student outcomes'

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/apr/10/retention-support-and-student-outcomes-award-winner-and-runners-up>

29/03/2019 Bristol 24/7 Article 'It's opened doors for a lot more students here'

<https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/features/its-opened-doors-for-a-lot-more-students-here/>

08/02/2019 Bristol 24/7 Equity Article 'UWE's Equity Programme is changing the racial narrative'

<https://www.bristol247.com/opinion/your-say/uwes-equity-programme-is-changing-the-racial-narrative/>

Both awards are a testament to the dedicated team who have been involved in developing and delivering the Equity Programme ever since our first pilot event in October 2016. Working with students, local employers and national diversity thought leaders, we have created something which the University can be proud of and which offers BAME students a chance to leverage leadership and enterprise skills as they embark upon their graduate careers.

National statistics on the performance and progression of ethnic minorities in the labour market, as highlighted by the MacGregor-Smith Race in the Workplace Review 2017, have to change and we are proud to be leading the way on the role universities can play in this regard.

Finally we want to thank every facilitator and external guest who attend Equity events and helped to enrich our student experience. If you are interested in supporting our programme going forward, the final pages of this review provide further information on how organisations can get involved.

1st October 2018

TLT BAME Conference

UWE Equity in collaboration with TLT LLP held a BAME legal conference.

The day opened with inspirational speeches from HHJ Mukherjee and Koser Shaheen, Chair of the Ethnic Minority Division Committee of TLS, sharing their personal experience of starting from humble beginnings and rising to prominence in their fields.

TLT partner Edmund Finnick provided practical advice on how students can use their diverse background as a benefit to promote themselves to prospective employers.

In-house Counsel and Director for Klarna Bank, Lara Oyesanya and Head of Restructuring Legal Team at Barclays Bank, Oli Gayle Head, delivered an insight to working as in-house Counsel. They discussed the opportunities of legal work outside of a courtroom or a law firm and the different experiences that it brought.

The conference closed with a panel question time where students were encouraged to pose practical questions in relation to how they can overcome and navigate obstacles they may face in their journey. The panel comprised of specialist speakers: West Midland Circuit Judge, HHJ Mukherjee; Master Governing Bench and international barrister, Dr Tunde Okewale MBE; Chair of the Ethnic Minority Division Committee of TLS, Koser Shaheen; and Vice-chair of the EMDC of TLS, Evelyn Ofori Koree.



The Link

24th October 2018

Our programme of activities began with the 3rd annual Link event. The event remains the largest BAME professional networking event in the South West, welcoming over 250 external professionals, staff and students for a day of workshops and evening networking activities. It enables students to meet authentic role models and practice their networking skills and enables external professionals in attendance to engage and grow their networks.





Student feedback following The Link event:

“Excellent event and was really eye opening.
Helpful for people that look like me to share
experiences they’ve gone through”

“Thank you for hosting this event and bringing
an open, welcoming and accessible opportunity
to discuss equity from a young perspective”

“Equity has given me an opportunity to not
only learn, but enjoy myself in an informal
yet stimulating environment”

Throughout the day students participated in an extended coaching session focussing on race, identity and career development. The session was facilitated by TedXBristol speaker, activist and coach Mena Fombo and she was joined by Daniel Edmund, Muneera Pilgrimme and Anira Khokhar who are all activists with specialism in minoritised identity.

The Link welcomed hip-hop artist and social commentator Akala for this year's annual address on Race, Class and Imperialism. Akala is the author of *Natives*, which provided a post-colonial critique on the role of Empire and its impact in modern Britain.





7th November 2018

Our first Equity city campus event took place on 7 November with the day focussing on supporting BAME creatives and the interplay between identity, history and creative practice.

The day time programme featured workshops from award winning poet Lawrence Hoo discussing creative practice and his exploration of his own mixed race identity and Bristol's history as well as UWE's Associate Professor of Lens Media Dr Shawn Sobers who shared his personal journey into filmmaking and academia.



The keynote address was provided by Brixton-born musician, artist and mental health advocate Gaika attended by over 100 guests. His recently exhibited artwork at the prestigious Somerset House Studios and debut album have been challenging the confines of British Black music with positive reviews from Financial Times, The Independent, The Guardian, Noise and Music OMH. The attendees listened to the challenges Gaika faced when creating this work, the people who influence him and how he has dealt with setbacks and personal circumstances.

28th November 2018

Mena Fombo kick-started the Equity session with self-identity coaching providing examples of BAME excellence that students can relate to and imparting tips on how to develop and utilise the positive assets of being a BAME student as a unique selling point.

This was followed by a choice of two workshops. The first, a panel discussion hosted by the Ethnic Minority Lawyers Division. Founded in 2011 with the aim of supporting BAME solicitors across different legal areas of practice, the panel speakers provided their own practical advice on breaking into the legal field. They discuss how to make the most of being a BAME professional and share real examples of their own journey with the audience.

The second workshop, a motivational speech titled 'From an E grade to a First Class' was delivered by Rahat Ahmed. Drawing from his personal journey, Rahat spoke about his journey from failing his A-levels to getting a First Class degree in Economics then successfully achieving a six-figure salary. Rahat explored the idea of how to deal with setbacks and identify personal barriers that act as limitations to success.

The key note address to conclude the event was delivered by broadcaster, former barrister, social commentator and critically acclaimed author Afua Hirsh. Her talk examined the themes from her book 'Brit(ish)' and considered the impact of having a Black identity in Britain, how it affected her experiences and questioned what it means to be bi-racial.



23rd January 2019

A new year meant looking forward to developing BAME talent, focussing on enterprise and graduate skills.

Mena Fombo introduced identity coaching offering UWE Bristol's BAME students bespoke group coaching combined with value-led leadership skills and talent development. The founder of The OJiJi Purple Project Ltd and South West Black Girl Convention, Mena included her experience when exploring personal values, race and identity in her session.

UWE Bristol alum Silas shared his journey from being a UWE student to co-founding a successful business and being listed as Forbes 30 Under 30 in Technology and Entrepreneurship in 2018. Co-Founder and CEO of Reach Robotics, Silas is a leading expert in the entertainment and engineering industry fusing robotics, augmented reality and video games. Under his guidance, Reach Robotics launched its inaugural product MekaMon with Apple.

Byron Cole, author, multi-award winning entrepreneur, business start-up expert and CEO of The BLC Group offered a practical workshop on finding funding and raising capital for a new start-up followed by a motivational keynote speech. With his proven track record in business and many success stories, Byron Cole spoke about his background and the road that led to building his award winning business.





20th February 2019

Mena Fombo continued the student development identity coaching series with this workshop focussing on investing in yourself as well as building confidence to go outside of comfort zones and take on placements.

The evening's keynote address was delivered by Dr. Zara Nanu, CEO and Co-Founder of Gapsquare. Gapsquare has developed an award-winning software to identify identity-based pay gaps. Zara, an expert on the impact of diversity and how inclusion can increase productivity as well as make teams more dynamic, discussed how she developed a values-led business. The speech titled "How to run a company that's changing the world" explored her belief that businesses can generate social impact alongside revenues and profits. As an entrepreneur, Zara shared her experience about how Gapsquare has helped support government policy to close the gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

21st February 2019

Taking on board student feedback from the previous year around BAME student experience whilst on placement, Mena Fombo ran a specific coaching session for placement students at Glenside

Campus. This session equipped students to build emotional resilience and handle micro-aggressions in work environments enabling students to excel on placement.



25th February 2019

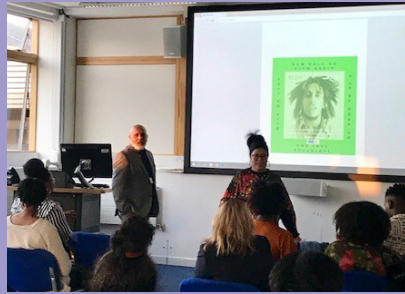
Following the success of the Building Emotional Resilience workshop, Equity ran a focussed panel discussion at the Arncliffe on Rethinking Mental Health, in collaboration with the University of Bristol Students' Union. The panel consisted of: host and chair, empowerment coach and Founding Director of Ojiji, Purple Project and Black Girl Convention, Mena Fombo; co-founder of men's wellbeing project 'Milk for Tea', TEDx speaker and entrepreneur

Daniel Edmund; founder of women empowerment against race, injustice, sexism and extremism initiative, 'WeRise' Aaliyah Hussain; founder of 'MANDEM', an award winning online media platform for young men of colour and filmmaker, Elias Williams; and elected Student Living Officer at the Bristol Students' Union Vanessa Wilson. The diverse panel of experts explored the ideas of race, self-care and masculinity.

27th February 2019

The Equity programme was welcomed back to Bower Ashton campus for its second event. Mena Fombo started the event with 1:1 student coaching sessions exploring the meaning of race and identity through creative practice.

The evening speaker event was delivered by Pat Hart CEO of Bristol Community FM and Ivan Jackson, producer at BCFM. During the interactive session, Pat and Ivan provided insight on how best to communicate ideas and guidance on improving personal business profiles with media. Pat has an established track record with over 20 plus years' experience in business and public relations and has been commissioned to deliver media training to a number of city council organisations.



20th March 2019

The keynote address delivered by Wendy Irwin at Glenside campus, Head of Equality and Diversity at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), explored how to navigate the spaces between education, training and work alongside the need to build competence and confidence in these spaces. Wendy began her speech by discussing her journey and experience of being the strategic and operational lead on equality and human rights for RCN in the UK. She is widely recognised as an equalities pioneer, highlighting workplace challenges, contributing to research and writing, equality and inclusion in the workplace.



27th March 2019

In preparation for student's summer assessments, Equity held a masterclass in Managing Stress with Mena Fombo. This masterclass prepared students with essential skills to identify and understand stress. The workshop equipped students with coping mechanisms and tactics for handling stress associated with deadlines and exams.

The evening's keynote address was delivered by Jessica Huie MBE, an entrepreneur and Author of 'Purpose'. Jessica shared her remarkable life story from being expelled from school with four GCSE's to launching 'Colour Blind Cards' an award winning multi-cultural greeting card, receiving an MBE and being labelled as one of Britain's Most Inspiring Entrepreneurs by the Evening Standard. Jessica's keynote focussed on themes from her book 'Purpose', exploring self-identity by reconnecting with personal beliefs underneath job roles and titles to determine whether a person was truly fulfilling their purpose.



10th April 2019

Equity won the Guardian award for retention, support and student outcomes recognising its hard work in developing skills workshops focussed on BAME talent to further their career. Equity has provided students with opportunities to network with professionals like David Lammy MP, Dr Tunde Okewale MBE, Jessica Huie MBE, Reni Eddo-Lodge and many others. This contributed to students being successful in achieving internships, work experiences and a network of professionals to assist them.

18th May 2019

'Agents of Change' was an innovative event designed by UWE Bristol Graphic Design alum Stacey Olika and sponsored by Equity. It offered an ambitious and inspiring programme for the city's enterprising BAME student creatives. The event comprised of speakers, panel discussions and interactive workshops. The day started with an introduction via video by Mayor Marvin Reeves and Stacey Olika. The keynote speech was from the co-founder of GUAP MAG, the world's first video magazine, discussing their creative journey on building a revolutionary youth platform. Jide Adetunji provided tips on how to build a brand that led to GUAP MAG being at the forefront of creating culture, discovering and showcasing emerging talent.

The event closed with a panel discussion titled 'The Creation of Creativity' comprised of influential BAME creatives including Abbi Bayliss, Adiba Iqbal and Parys Gardner.

12th June 2019

The final Equity event of the academic year was the keynote address by Tracey Jolliff, strategic lead for the NHS' Leadership Academy portfolio of work on inclusion. Tracey has been at the forefront of developing the Building Leadership for Inclusion workstream seeking to raise inclusion and quicken the pace of change. Tracey focussed on the development required in the industry and methods on how to be a positive disrupter of the status quo in order to effect change.

In the new academic year 2019-2020, we continue with the Equity Programme along with a series of speaker events showcasing the best of Britain's BAME talent. Details about each event will be available one month before each date on the UWE Bristol Events Diary.

Equity Speaker Series 2019-2020		
13/11/19	City Campus Bower	The Art of Creative Writing
20/11/19	Frenchay Campus	Writing about Race
22/01/20	Frenchay Campus	Global Majority Educators
30/01/20	Glenside Campus	Challenges for BAME Communities in Accessing Health Services
19/02/20	Frenchay Campus	Equity Presents: Black Females in Architecture
18/03/20	Frenchay Campus	Hair and Headscarves in celebration of International Womens Day
19/03/20	Glenside Campus	Equity Presents: Tracie Jolliff

For exhibitor stands, sponsorship or donation enquiries please e-mail:
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Join our mailing list to receive monthly event updates:
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