



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN STUDENTS' UNION
BAME Student Working Group

11am, 11th September 2020
Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present:

Name	Job Title
Georgia Petts (GP)	Vice President Education (Chair)
Abi Brown (AB)	Vice President Activities
Amina Akugri (AA)	Vice President International
James Brooks (JB)	Chief Executive
May Loonam (ML)	HR Co-ordinator
Gemma Smart (GS)	Assistant Marketing and Communications Manager
Simon Parkes (SP)	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Ben Anim-Darko Boakye (BA)	Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Sade Sekoni (SS)	BAME Officer
Shazeda Ahmed (SA)	ISA Officer
Rachel Gee (RG)	Jewish Society President
Shanna Limm (SLm)	Union Administrator (note taking)

Apologies for absence:

Neville Nyatondo (NN) ACS President (not present)

Item

Action

1. Welcome and Opening Business

- **Apologies for Absence**
- **Health and Safety**
- It was noted that no official apologies had been received for the session.
- No items were raised in regarding Health and Safety.

2. Update from the previous meeting

- **Minutes of the previous meeting**
- **Matters Arising**
- The minutes were agreed to be an accurate recording of the previous meeting.
- GP noted that the matters arising had been completed, with updates to be provided during the relevant agenda points.

3. Student Motion Action Plan

- **Decolonising the Curriculum**
- **Educational resources**
- **Attainment Gap**
- **Employability**
- **Reporting Framework**
- **Training**
- **Framework for Activism**
- GP noted that the Student Motion Action Plan contained a breakdown of requirements as part of the passed Referendum; it was agreed that the group would review each segment, with the relevant individual to provide an update of progress.

Decolonising the Curriculum/Educational resources:



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- AA noted that she was due to attend a University Committee meeting focussed on the decolonisation of the University curriculum, as well as additional educational resources on campus. It was noted that AA would provide a verbal update on progress during the following BAME Student Working Group.

AA

Attainment Gap:

- GP noted that she, AA, AB and JB were attendees of the University's LEAP (Lincoln Equality Attainment Project) committee, which worked upon matters surrounding Lincoln's attainment gap.
- It was added that the Attainment Gap had been a topic of discussion during the recent BAME Focus Groups, with GP and AB working alongside Rhianne Sterling-Morris (RSM) (Senior LEAP Research Officer) to implement feedback.

Employability/Training:

- JB noted that further communications were required in terms of the training available to both staff and students via the University; it was agreed that SP and BA would review the opportunities and update the group for the following BAME Working Group.
- The group agreed that once the information had been compiled, the Working Group would discuss the implementation of further opportunities.

SP/BA

4. Five Commitments Action Plan

- **Preliminary interviews for all BAME candidates**
- **An Independent BAME Complaints Officer**
- **The implementation of BAME Focus Groups**
- **The BAME Officer as a member of Board of Trustees**
- **Unconscious Bias and Race Equity training to all SU staff**
- ML provided the group with an overview of the work completed for each of the proposed commitments:

'We will offer all BAME candidates for student/career staff positions a guaranteed preliminary interview'

- A separate recruitment procedure had been created to ensure that a process was in place for all BAME candidates, with the SU website updated to also reflect this.
- It was noted that the action had been marked as complete.

'We will appoint a BAME independent Complaints Officer to review any complaints that are deemed to have a racist element.'

- The Complaints Policy had been reviewed and amended to implement the oversight of an independent Complaints Officer; with a role description also produced for the position.
- GP noted that BA had been appointed as the independent Complaints Officer and expressed her thanks to BA given his expertise within the field.
- It was added that the action had been marked as complete.

'We will hold focus groups with our BAME students to see how we can improve all of our services and activities.'

- Three focus groups had taken place thus far, with discussion points to be raised as part of agenda point 5.
- Action marked as complete.



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'The Chief Executive to recommend that the BAME Officer is a member of the Board of Trustees for a minimum of 12 months.'

- The action had been marked as complete with the BAME Officer invited to attend the next Board of Trustees meeting on Friday 2nd October.

'We will be introducing compulsory unconscious bias and race equity training for all staff in the SU. This is so that we can ensure that we are more sensitive and understanding of the issues and matters that affect our BAME students.'

- Race Equity training had been arranged for all Students' Union career staff on 15th September and was to be delivered by an external provider, The Diversity Trust. It was added that the proposed training would also be distributed to student staff, as well as Volunteer Officers to ensure that all facets of the Students' Union had been educated on the subject matter.
- ML noted that Unconscious Bias training was available online to both career and student staff.
- It was noted that the action was marked as ongoing.

5. Focus Group Feedback

- AB noted that the Focus Groups had been positively received and well attended thus far, with several one-to-one meetings also arranged with students who preferred to discuss matters outside of a group environment.
- It was added that a list of key themes had been compiled and presented to the group.
- It was noted that the use of 'BAME' as an overarching term had been discussed and noted as too broad, with the potential of dividing the current Campaigns Group into further representative areas received positively. AB added that feedback highlighted the BAME Campaigns Group had been predominantly associated with Black students, with the Officer and committee therefore finding it difficult to also represent Asian and Minority Ethnic students.
- SA agreed that the BAME title was too broad to effectively represent the experiences of all ethnicities; the group agreed that further student feedback would be required prior to the change in the name of the Campaigns Group and should the matter be supported change would likely take place for the following academic year.
- RG noted that feedback received from Jewish students indicated that individuals often did not recognise themselves as minority ethnic students.
- SA added that following the prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement, AME students did not want to encroach on the movement by involvement in the BAME Campaigns Group.
- AB noted that further training opportunities were to be made available to students, as well as compulsory training for the Campaigns Network.
- The focus groups also highlighted that the previous year's Black History Month was not as prominent as it should have been and therefore going forwards additional resources would support the planning of the event.
- As well as this, AB noted that feedback had been received regarding raising cultural awareness, with events such as Diwali for example requiring a multi-faith approach; RG suggested that the Holocaust Memorial Day be acknowledged further and included within the annual calendar.



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- GP noted that more work was planned towards the integration of further cultural events throughout the year, with AA in the process of creating a cultural events calendar.
- BA noted that he had been working alongside the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy to produce and facilitate a cultural diversity calendar, with the Students' Union recommended to collaborate further.
- SA noted that there was a lack of knowledge of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy's services and suggested that additional work go towards the promotion of Ramadan and bringing Muslim students together on campus whilst away from their families.
- AA noted that she planned to promote additional cultural days into the current calendar, which did not focus on faith alone, such as independence days which should allow students to celebrate with one another; it was added that this plan was planned for the following year.
- BA suggested that AA work alongside himself and the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy on further events to implement within the current calendar. BA/AA
- SA noted that this would also allow international students to feel recognised, with ISA to promote events alongside societies and the BAME Campaigns Group.

6. BAME Webpage

- GS shared the proposed webpage to the group and noted that there were plans to embed further video updates within the page in order to make the section more interactive. It was also added that the page referred directly to the BAME Campaigns Group who could support students with any further queries.
- SS noted that the webpage would create a positive impact and allow the BAME Campaigns Group to promote their work to greater levels.
- SA agreed that the changes would positively affect students, as it provided clarity on the work that had been completed and allow the Students' Union and University to showcase what opportunities were available.
- Further to this, RG agreed that the webpage allowed BAME students to feel connected and listened to to a greater extent.
- JB commended the student attendees for their feedback and added that additional communications were required to highlight the opportunities and support networks available to BAME students; as a result of this, it was agreed that GS would produce a communications plan which would be presented at the next working group. GS
- AB queried when the webpage was due to go live; it was noted that the work was due to be released as soon as practicable.

7. BHM Calendar

- It was noted that the Black History Month proposal had been presented to the Executive Committee who had commended SS for her work surrounding the project.
- SS provided the group with an overview of the month's plans which included a virtual and physical presence for students, with all physical events planned in line with Covid secure measures.
- It was noted that social media polls would be created to gauge student opinion on film screenings, as well as the celebration of Black British figures, a book club and the promotion of learning new languages.



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- A Facebook live had also been planned to discuss the BAME name alteration, as well as topics that directly affect Black students.
- SP queried the possibility of the event starting slightly later due to the impact of a later welcome week, in order to increase engagement levels; SS noted that the events had been planned to cater to students virtually and on campus, with the coinciding dates likely to give Black History Month more visibility and interaction.
- SS noted that there had been uncertainty on using physical spaces on campus to promote Black History Month; SP noted that this was possible and would be a positive way to approach the promotion of inclusivity on campus. It was agreed that a follow-up meeting would be arranged to discuss the matter further.
- SA queried the involvement of the Black Feminist Society who had also planned events; SS noted that she had been directly in contact with the committee alongside ACS.
- BA noted that the University were in the process of confirming their schedule for Black History Month, with SS, AB and AA due to attend a meeting following the BAME Student Working Group.

SP/SS

8. Any Other Business

- No items were raised for discussion.

Date of Next Meeting: 2pm, 12th November 2020

Chair

Signed

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