

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

**Race Equality Charter Mark Bronze**

**Submission Briefing**

1. **Introduction** 
   1. This briefing provides a summary of the key findings and actions of the University’s Bronze Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM) submission which was awarded in 2022.
2. **Background**
   1. The University was awarded a Bronze RECM in August 2022.
   2. This award is valid for a period of up to 5 years (until 2027) however universities who want to submit before this date, are able to submit after a period of 3 years (2025).
   3. The submission involved a rigorous evidence-based analysis of the student and staff lifecycles, to identify any barriers to race equity at the University and, an aligned five-year action plan, detailing how the University will address barriers identified and take forward its commitment to anti-racism.
   4. There are currently 97 RECM members, holding 29 awards between them. There are no Universities who currently hold a Silver award. We are 1 of only 9 Universities that have both RECM Bronze and Athena Swan Institutional Silver. We are 1 of only 4 Universities that have Athena Swan Institutional Silver, REC and Disability Confident Level 2 or higher.
3. **Key findings:** The following is a summary of the key issues which have been highlighted through the analysis undertaken in the University’s RECM.
   1. Student pipeline
      * **Admissions:** The level of applications from white students is decreasing, whilst minority ethnic student applications are increasing. This is not reflected by the offer rates, however, which sees 90% of white students being offered, compared to 70% of students from the category other ethnic.
      * **Continuation**: Whilst continuation rates for students from Asian and Chinese backgrounds are similar to white students (94%), students from mixed, Black and other ethnic backgrounds have a much lower continuation rate (89%).
      * **Awarding Gap:** Whilst the gap has improved (2.7% in 3 years) it still exits. RECM data showed an 8.7% gap (including non-UK).
      * **Postgraduate pipeline:** Whilst the representation of postgraduates from a minority ethnic is much higher than the sector average, further analysis needs to be undertaken at a College level. The RECM survey and Leicester Award completion rates evidence the need for enhanced support for postgraduates from minority ethnic backgrounds regarding career development and employability.
      * **Teaching and learning:** The RECM survey and NSS results show that students from a minority ethnic background are less satisfied with their experiences of studying. Particular areas for consideration are course content, teaching and learning within their course and low confidence in teaching staff in facilitating discussion around ethnicity and race.
   2. Staff pipeline
      * **Disclosure rates and the representation**: we need to improve disclosure and representation of minority ethnic staff (especially from Black and mixed ethnic backgrounds), particularly for UK academic staff. There are only 36.7 FPE Black academics in the University.
      * **Recruitment:** white applicants are more likely to be shortlisted and offered a role, whilst academic applicants from Black and other ethnic backgrounds are least likely to be shortlisted (particularly in CSE and CLS).
      * **Grade and contracts:** Whilst the representation of minority ethnic staff at higher grades is improving, the representation of specific minority ethnic groups within the broader minority ethnic group are low. Minority ethnic staff academic staff are more likely to be on a fixed term contract. Almost twice as many white academic staff worked part-time compared with minority ethnic academic staff.
      * **Career development:** There is no defined career development path for minority ethnic professional services staff. Promotions to Professor for those from minority ethnic backgrounds is very low. There were no applications from CLS despite having the largest minority ethnic representation. Whilst the conversion rate for minority ethnic applications for Associate Professor (AP) are higher, the number applying is still low. There are no applications to AP from Black staff over the 3 year period.
      * **University wide:** The minority ethnic representation of our Committees at University and College level needs to be improved. There is an evidenced concern regarding the experiences of racial harassment particularly in relation to the incidents which are not disclosed to the University.[[1]](#footnote-1) There were a disproportionally low proportion of staff from Asian backgrounds and minority ethnic female staff submitted as part of the University’s REF 2021 return. The Ethnicity pay gap is most significant between white and minority ethnic PS staff at grades 9 and 10. PS ethnicity pay gap is 14.7% and academic ethnicity pay gap is 10.7%.
4. **Commended**

**As part of its assessment, the RECM Review Panel commended the University in relation to the following:**

* + - * Composition and member engagement of groups which form our EDI governance structure.
      * Development and implementation of race related activity which has been recognised at a sector level- Vice Chancellor’s involvement externally, research on Decolonising the Curriculum, development of ULIIHE, guide to Race Related Terminology,
      * Candid approach to data analysis for staff and student pipelines.
      * Ethnicity pay gap reporting.
      * Positive Action in Recruitment toolkit.
      * Range of initiatives in place to embed EDI and race equity in course content, and, teaching and assessment.

1. **Action plan overview and delivery**
   1. There are currently 77 actions featured within our RECM action plan, which relate to 7 themes within the submission:
      * + The Self-Assessment Process (11 actions).
        + Staff profile (11 actions)
        + Academic Staff- Recruitment, Progression and Development (19 actions)
        + Professional and Support Staff- Recruitment, Progression and Development (4 actions)
        + Student Pipeline (17 actions)
        + Course Content/syllabus (15 actions)
   2. Below is an summary of the key actions:
      * 1. Student pipeline
      * **Admissions:** Narrow the gap in the application and offer rates for minority ethnic applicants through revising related strategies, processes and undertaking further qualitative analysis to better understand experiences and barriers.
      * **Continuation**: Better support our minority ethnic students to improve progression rates through developing and implementing School level initiatives and University level engagement and support activity.
      * **Awarding Gap:** Continue to develop and deliver on our mission to reduce the awarding gap and improve satisfaction for minority ethnic students through a series on University and School level initiatives and programmes.
      * **Postgraduate pipeline:** Develop and deliver a series of targeted interventions and initiatives, including- career coaches, work experience opportunities, career events, integrating the Leicester Award into undergraduate programmes.
      * **Teaching and learning:** Develop and provide an inclusive and accessible education for all students through a range of interventions including: Work with Schools to embed a Racial Inclusivity Toolkit and development of a Racial Inclusivity Action Plan; implement and monitor mechanisms to ensure race equity is integrated within all aspects of programme development delivery, assessment, approval and review; development of an inclusivity rubric for use by academic to diversify their teaching; promote training and learning relating to Black history and cultures; further engagement to identify causes for dissatisfaction at College and School level; tailored engagement activities through ULIIHE with the wider University.
        1. Staff pipeline
      * **Disclosure rates and the representation**: Improve disclosure rates particularly for leavers. Continue to monitor and report annually outcomes and representations in relation to all sections of the RECM.
      * **Recruitment:** Develop processes and initiatives to improve disclosure rates. Implement and further develop positive action recruitment practices at College and University level across the recruitment cycle, particularly in relation to Black applicants.
      * **Career development:** Implement a series of initiatives and actions to address the specific identified barriers for minority ethnic staff. Develop our academic promotions processes, including support and interventions for panellists and applicants.
      * **University wide (for students and staff):** To develop and implement the Together against Harassment campaign. Enhance teaching, learning and assessment processes and practices to consider and address the identified barriers to developing and delivering an inclusive curriculum and improved experiences for our students.
2. **Proposed approach**
   1. The University will continue to support progress of actions relating to the RECM through the Race Equality Action Group (REAG) who are also identified as the University’s Self-Assessment Team for the purposes of the RECM.
   2. The REAG meet termly and have specified within their objectives, a responsibility to maintain oversight and ensure progress in relation to the RECM and it will remain as a standard agenda item at every REAG meeting.
   3. A comprehensive oversight, development of our submission and delivery of our action plan will be led by our EDI Projects Manager (RECM Lead) who will work with the REAG and key stakeholders (including the Head of EDI Charters) to ensure progress and delivery of actions.
   4. The EDI Team will remain responsible for ensuring progress against actions and developing our submission and any related activities to ensure we are in a strong position to submit in 2027.
   5. To ensure progress in our commitment to eliminate racial inequities, the EDI Team will work with key stakeholders across the University to ensure a holistic and collaborative approach which considers the issues that are specific and significant for our University. This may include actions which fall outside the framework of the RECM and which are necessary to ensure real and sustainable change and progress is made for our community.
   6. With the support of the Head of Charters, the EDI Projects Manager will be developing and capturing information and evidence regarding our submission. This includes an annual data refresh for all sections of the submission and integrating new and relevant content for sections of the submission.

Humaa Noori, EDI Projects Manager and EDI Team Race Equity Lead

April 2023

1. A Catalyst for Change: Recognising and Responding to Students’ Experiences of Harassment (Centre for Hate Studies 2020), and, Tackling Racial Harassment in Higher Education (UUK, 2020) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)