

Planning an Anti-Racist Curriculum

This resource was developed by and for Scottish tertiary institutions as a sector-led and co-produced resource

It was written by working group members of the Curriculum Considerations working group of the Anti-Racist Curriculum (ARC) project

You just look like you've got a tan.
Do you have hair under your hijab?
Do people eat insects in your country?
I just don't see colour.
I don't think of you as black.

**Call it
racism.**

#CallItRacism

Introduction:



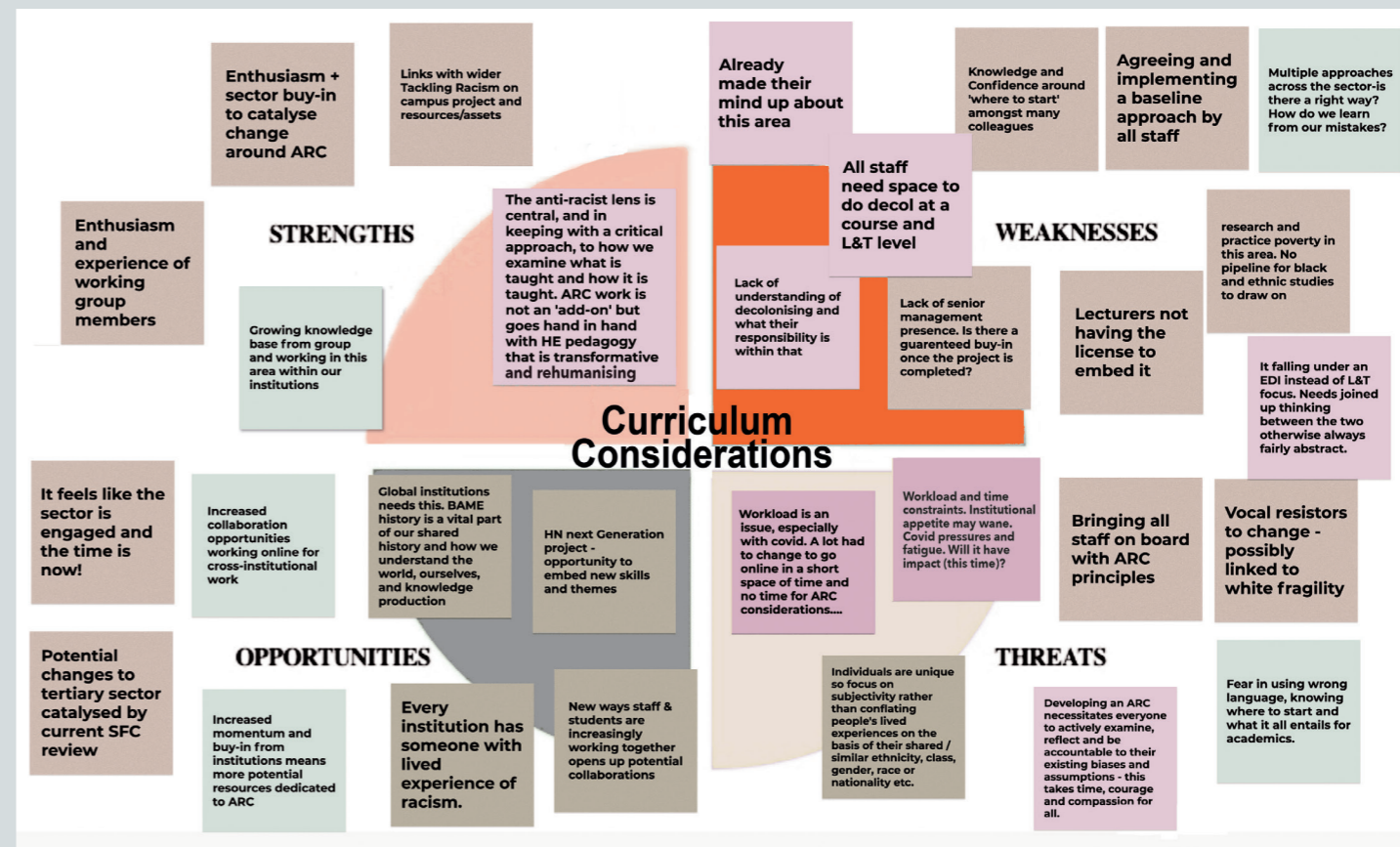
In order to facilitate action and solution focused approaches when planning anti-racist curriculum development, it is important to consider all angles including strategic and operational alongside learning and teaching. An authentic embedding of ARC will demand committed action at all levels of an organisation and its processes, recognising that nothing short of a complete culture change will (re)address this issue. To support colleagues to discuss and plan this process you may want to use the following two approaches. Both are very accessible, easy to use, democratic in approach and provide a focused framework to discuss a nuanced and multifaceted activity such as developing and embedding an ARC.



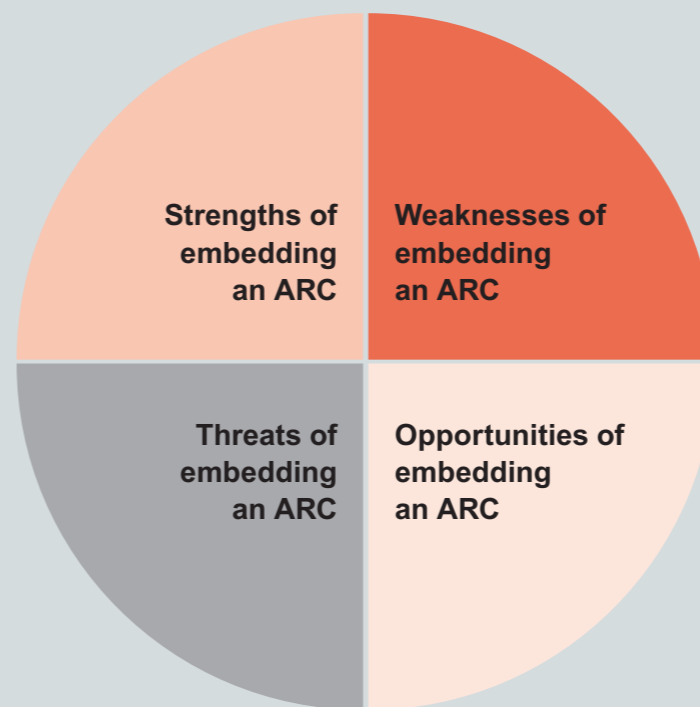
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1. SWOT analysis

Within the ARC Curriculum Considerations Working Group we discussed and then mapped the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities (SWOT) to embedding an ARC from the points of view of our respective organisations and professional roles. We used a Google jamboard which allowed multiple users at once (in real-time) and satisfied our interactive needs. Users can contribute in their own time or together in a group and respond directly to what is being 'said' while the 'conversation' trail is recorded via virtual 'post-its'. Our responses are detailed in the diagram above. We were struck with the commonalities within our comments across such a wide range of roles and locations. We share our SWOT activity as inspiration for your own.



▲ Developing an ARC: SWOT analysis undertaken by the ARC Curriculum Considerations working group. This image can be uploaded to Jamboard, Miro or another interactive tool as a conversation starter.



Why SWOT?

- An effective first-phase approach, facilitating discussions in a focused and thematic way
- A useful and simple tool of four questions to share with colleagues which they can engage with (literally) and which enables everyone to have their say
- Supports colleagues to think simultaneously about the challenges AND the opportunities, encouraging a growth mind-set
- A practice which pragmatically acknowledges the pressures and concerns but doesn't stop there
- Colleagues have time to reflect on the 'why' and the 'gains' which can often be overshadowed by the more difficult aspects at the planning stage which in turn can result in decreased momentum and enthusiasm
- Helps to combat the feeling of overwhelm that can often be felt when discussing ARC
- Takes a high-level approach and can be helpful in focusing minds on the 'bigger picture' at play – which in this case is ensuring our curricula is anti-racist
- Distils complex factors into one accessible image and remains a motivating touchstone throughout the embedding process



2. Intangible Assets (IA) analysis

To further develop planning conversations and actions around embedding ARC, we suggest using the Intangible Assets approach. IA was specifically created and developed as a way of exploring and understanding the value of a particular concept or idea which is complex and not easily defined, acknowledging the limitations of metrics. We have found understanding ARC as an IA (and utilising the IA framework) is a very helpful approach when discussing developing an ARC within FE and HE. You can further research this concept and approach via this [paper](#) by creators by Fiona Smart, Elizabeth Cleaver and Alistair Robertson and subsequent QAA collaborative cluster project Beyond the Metrics [paper and workbook](#). The template we are sharing below was redeveloped for online use by Amrit Dencer-Brown and Sarah Murray.

Our template operates at four different levels:

- **Micro:** Modules and Teams
- **Meso:** Programme Cluster/Service
- **Macro:** Institution/College/Faculty/School
- **Exo:** Government Policies/Laws/Norms/Cultures

And is divided into four areas:

- **Systems and Structures:** Strategies, Policies, Leadership Styles, Communications, Processes, Partnerships
- **Resources:** Time, Funding, Space Allocation, Spatial Design
- **Ethos, Cultures and Identities:** Values, Behaviours, Celebrations, Discourse, Relationships
- **Core Educational and Support Components:** Curricula, Pedagogical, Assessments, Support Services

We have adapted specific ARC questions for each level and area to kick-start discussions but each institution can adapt to their needs. This can be undertaken by specific departments or be a cross-organisation activity affording everyone to contribute within their specific remit and ultimately collating a 360 picture.

Why IA?

- Allows for a deeper and more holistic exploration of ARC
- It is flexible and can be adapted for any organisation or any stage of ARC development.
- Provides focused and challenging questions whose answers (and the reflection required to research and respond to each one) form a useful set of information to build upon
- The process allows for colleagues to collaborate at different levels of an institution and across disciplines and services, exemplifying the collaborative nature and joined-up approach that an ARC requires
- By the very nature of the questions, it looks at the physical, operational, cultural, and strategic conditions required to develop an ARC and builds realistic answers for that journey.

Systems & Structures

Questions for each level:

What **strategies and policies** are used to guide the development of ARC?

How is ARC embedded and evidenced by quality **processes**?

How is ARC reflected in **communications** (to staff, students and external stakeholders)?

How does the **leadership** team endorse and communicate the importance of ARC (to staff, students and external stakeholders)?

How is the importance of ARC embedded within **partnership** arrangements?

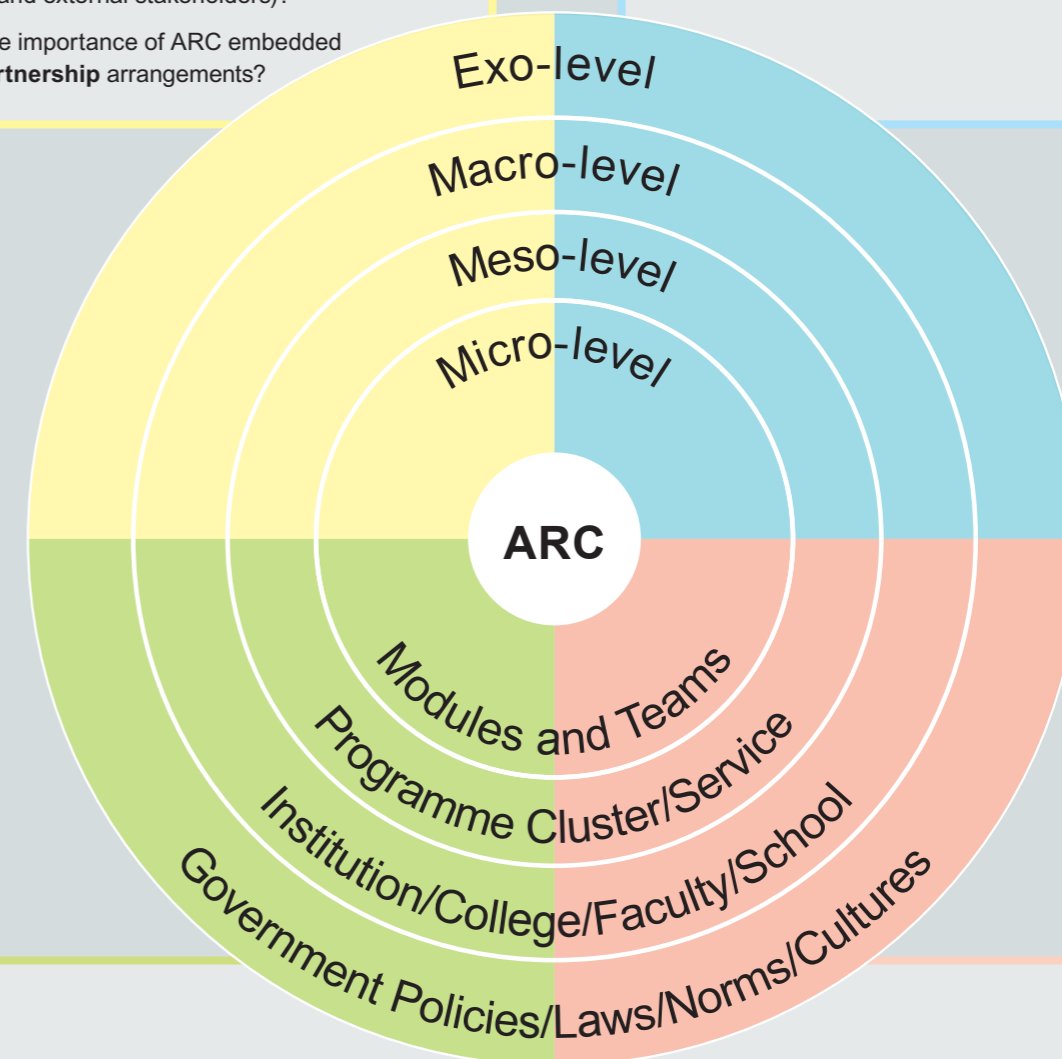
Resources

Questions for each level:

How are formal and informal **spaces and places** used to reflect, build and promote this ARC?

How much **time** is dedicated to the development and promotion of ARC (for staff, students and other stakeholders)?

What **funding** (internal/external) is available for projects and other activities that promote and embed ARC?



Ethos, Cultures and Identities

Questions for each level:

How do shared **values** reflect ARC?

How do expected and demonstrated **behaviours** reflect ARC?

How do local **celebrations** demonstrate the value and importance of ARC?

How do written and verbal **discourses** reflect and support ARC?

How do the ways in which we **build relationships and collaborate** reflect and support ARC?

Core Educational and Support Components

Questions for each level:

How is ARC promoted, built and/or reflected within the **curricula**?

How is ARC promoted, built and/or reflected through **pedagogies** and other academic practices?

How do **assessment** practices promote, build and/or reflect ARC?

How do **support services** build, promote and/or reflect the value of ARC?

AdvanceHE



QAA



Offensive questions, stereotypes and 'jokes' have a lasting impact on individuals, affecting their mental health, career progression and overall welfare at college or university.

It's time to stop sweeping these microaggressions under the rug.
Call racism out for what it is and challenge unacceptable behaviour.

It's time to take a stand.

#CallItRacism

Call it racism | Challenge racist behaviour | Change racist structures