

Embedding Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles into the Curriculum Lifecycle

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



This resource has been developed as a tool to identify opportunities to embed Anti-Racist Curriculum (ARC) principals into key stages of a curriculum lifecycle, namely **Curriculum Planning; Curriculum Approval; Curriculum Delivery; Assessment; and Quality Assurance (QA) & Quality Enhancement (QE)**.

We have considered the curriculum lifecycle from the perspective of four key stakeholder groups, and corresponding **key questions** and **ideas** have been included for each of these: **Students; Curriculum Leaders and Programme/Module Team members; Quality Leads and Team members; and Senior/Strategic Leaders**.

Useful Related Resources



We've also drawn particular inspiration from the following examples of good practice, and have therefore shared relevant links here with colleagues:




- Kingston University's [Inclusive Curriculum Framework](#) "Kingston University's Inclusive Curriculum Framework promotes a universal approach to course design intended to improve the experience, skills and attainment of all students. It encourages the development of courses that put the student at the centre – moving away from pedagogic practices that disadvantage some of our student groups. It is about thinking of the curriculum in a different way so that basic assumptions are challenged and changed."
- [Decolonising SOAS. Learning and Teaching Toolkit for Programme and Module Convenors](#) (pages 9-10 / 15-17 are particularly useful): "This toolkit is intended to act as a briefing for programme and module convenors, on what 'decolonising' learning and teaching might entail. At its root it is about making what we teach and how we teach it more responsive to the problems of colonial and racialised privilege and discrimination within our teaching practice."

- [Decolonising DMU](#) "Our previous work, through Freedom to Achieve, identified that a focus on the curriculum alone is too narrow and so we are taking a bold step in looking to engage in a broader process of Decolonisation across the whole institution. This demonstrates our commitment to directly tackling racial disadvantage and discrimination within the sector."
- **Race Equality Toolkit:** commissioned by Universities Scotland and produced by Rowena Arshad of the University of Edinburgh (original version 2006; revised 2010); no longer available online. "A resource for mainstreaming race equality into learning and teaching in higher education".
- [Equality and diversity in learning and teaching at Scotland's universities: Trends, perspectives and opportunities](#) (published 2015) Vicky Gunn, Jane Morrison and Pauline Hanesworth: "A desk-based analysis of engagement with equality and diversity in learning and teaching at Scotland's universities".

Equality Impact Assessment resources

[Strategic Equality Impact Assessment](#) "Practical guidance from Advance HE for Scottish colleges and universities on taking a strategic approach to equality impact assessment/equality analysis and developing genuinely inclusive strategy and policy. This guidance is the product of an SFC-funded project on conducting Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) at a strategic level, and provides a number of tools and resources to support the process."

	STUDENTS	CURRICULUM LEADERS AND PROGRAMME TEAM MEMBERS	QUALITY LEADS AND TEAM MEMBERS	SENIOR/STRATEGIC LEADERS
Curriculum Planning  	QUESTIONS: <i>How can I help ensure that students 'are reflected in' and 'can identify with' the curriculum?</i> <i>Does our Module Rep system include diverse representation? If no, would it make a difference if I volunteered for this role?</i>	QUESTIONS: <i>Have I discussed how to start embedding ARC into my module or programme with the rest of the team and my students?</i> <i>Have I reviewed my course content, activities and reading list(s) and included examples from around the world, women and minorities?</i>	QUESTIONS: <i>How do I ensure that a diverse range of stakeholders can participate in course design and development processes?</i> <i>What support and mechanisms are in place for them to do this?</i>	QUESTIONS: <i>Have I identified and consulted key stakeholders about embedding ARC into induction and curricula at our institution?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • EDI Leads/Colleagues • Academic Development team • Learning technologists and Library team • International office • Admissions and Careers teams • PSRBs/Royal Societies etc • Others?
	IDEAS: Join or establish a Race Equality Student group to inform induction, curricula, general institutional processes and approaches Caution: Don't overburden students (or staff) with lived experience – share the load with allies Co-create with students (both with and without lived experience) to identify where students see themselves represented in the curriculum content	IDEAS: Include Module Induction sessions to discuss ARC in timetable (see Curriculum Delivery section) Agree common ARC activities and ground-rules for the whole learning and teaching team Link Student Learning Contracts to policy around ARC and reporting racism Develop at least one ARC related Module learning outcome and map assessment tasks to this	IDEAS: Develop FAQ and Decision Tree resources that summarise steps involved in module/programme modifications (particularly in relation to which changes need formal approval – e.g. changes to learning outcomes or assessment) Offer workshops or drop-in clinics to discuss the impact of possible ARC related module/programme changes with colleagues Embed an ARC related agenda item into Staff/Student Liaison Committee agendas	IDEAS: Co-create (with staff and students both with and without lived experience) an agreed set of principles and ARC strategy for your institution Initiate meetings with Programme Leaders/ Heads of Department/equivalent roles to discuss expectation that ARC principles will be embedded into modules/programmes and staff behaviours Discuss options for embedding ARC into academic development programmes/CPD at your institution – e.g. PGCAP, learning and teaching enhancement events

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Curriculum Approval 	For completeness we have included this as a key step in the Curriculum Lifecycle, but we would strongly recommend consulting the Quality Team at your institution for advice about Curriculum Approval. QUESTIONS: <i>What internal guidance and external reference points does your institution use to inform course/module/programme approval? Do these support the development of anti-racist curricula?</i>			
Curriculum Delivery  	QUESTIONS: <i>Whose voice is represented in our current feedback and representation mechanisms?</i> <i>Can I positively influence this to encourage diverse representation across Class Reps, Sabbatical Officers and other student representation?</i>	QUESTIONS: <i>Have I asked each of my students what name they prefer to be called, and how to pronounce this correctly?</i> <i>How will I record this and share it with the rest of the module team for future sessions (e.g. students record a 30 sec vlog and upload it to VLE?)</i>	QUESTIONS: <i>How do I ensure that:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students have equal opportunities to develop academic and professional skills, including work-based learning where appropriate? • Assessment is fair, inclusive, and equitable? 	QUESTIONS: <i>How do I ensure that:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and teaching activities, and facilities and resources make the learning environment accessible, relevant and engaging to all students?
	IDEAS: Establish what ARC related structures and protocols are in place for students to report ARC related issues Agree the most effective locations (VLE, social media?) for hosting information about these structures/protocols Ask Programme/Module Leaders to include a specific ARC related question in their module feedback forms	IDEAS: Include ARC in Module Induction sessions: discuss and agree expectations and requirements with students from outset. Combine this with a Co-creation/Students as Partners session at the start of the module – frame as “This is your course, what do you want to see from it?” Develop curriculum activity for students to review reading list(s) then suggest and critique appropriate examples from around the world, women and minorities (and consult with Library team to assist)	IDEAS: Explicitly consider potential impacts on students with protected characteristics (including Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds) as part of existing Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes? Develop a user-friendly Equality Impact Assessment guide/template for your institution to assist colleagues with this (linking with EDI Leads to ensure a consistent institutional approach)	IDEAS: Develop or refine processes for concerns, complaints and appeals, and ensure that these are accessible, inclusive, and fair, and that those who engage with these processes are treated with dignity and respect

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Assessment	For completeness we have included this as a fundamental step in the Curriculum Lifecycle. Embedding ARC into institutional assessment strategies has huge potential for positive impact. However, this is a challenging and ambitious topic to address, so we intend to develop this further in subsequent phases of this ARC project.			
Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)	<p>QUESTIONS: <i>Is ARC embedded into current induction and training for Class Reps and Sabbatical Officers?</i></p> <p><i>If no, could I instigate a discussion with senior leaders to highlight this opportunity for positive change to them?</i></p>	<p>QUESTIONS: <i>What are the current QA/QE processes for my module/ programme and do they embed ARC principles?</i></p> <p><i>If no, could I instigate a discussion with senior leaders to highlight this opportunity for positive change to them?</i></p>	<p>QUESTIONS: <i>Do our current institutional QA/QE processes embed ARC principles?</i></p> <p><i>If no, how do I/we engage key stakeholders to develop a strategy for this?</i></p>	<p>QUESTIONS: <i>Is the ARC embedded into our institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategies and QA/QE processes?</i></p> <p><i>If no, how do I identify and engage key stakeholders in ARC to review our existing strategy?</i></p>
	<p>IDEA: Identify other QA and QE processes and structures at your institution that would benefit from embedding ARC principles</p>	<p>IDEAS: Review your institutions QA/QE framework to see how your module/ programme aligns with ARC principles from a quality angle</p> <p>Identify what positive changes you could make to your module/ programme and then establish what (if any) level of formal approval is required for this</p> <p>Use ARC project and other resources to inform these changes</p>	<p>IDEAS: Ensure that students from a diverse range of backgrounds are engaged in quality processes, and are supported to do so?</p> <p>Share examples of good ARC practice as part of your QE process – e.g. examples from around the world, representing all student voices, diversifying reading list, co-creation with students</p>	<p>IDEAS: Embed stakeholder identification analysis into ARC strategic planning</p> <p>Undertake an EIA of your institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategy and QA/QE framework across all protected characteristics (linking with EDI Leads to ensure a consistent institutional approach)</p> <p>Use EIA findings to inform strategy development in terms of ARC, inclusion, sense of belonging, innovation, and collaboration/co-creation</p> <p>Use EIA findings, ARC project resources and other institutional evidence to lobby and achieve 'buy-in' from other senior/executive leadership if necessary</p>



“
Ensuring our Black, Asian and minority ethnic students and staff see themselves reflected in the curriculum, not as an exception but a central and valued part of it.”

AdvanceHE



QAA



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba



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