

Race Equity career staff survey 2021

introduction

The Race Equity Staff Survey is a key element of the Race Equity Staff Project at Greenwich Students' Union (GSU). The survey is important for the following reasons:

- ◆ Raising awareness of racism, racial bias and microaggressions our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff have experience at GSU or within the wider Greenwich community.
- ◆ Understand how much understanding our White staff have around racial inequality and issues pertaining to race.
- ◆ Understanding how GSU can support White staff in their understanding, learning on racial inequality, allyship.
- ◆ Allowing BAME staff to share their thoughts on progression and engagement in comparison to their White colleagues.

The survey was limited to one response per person to prevent multiple posts and replies were anonymous to protect privacy.

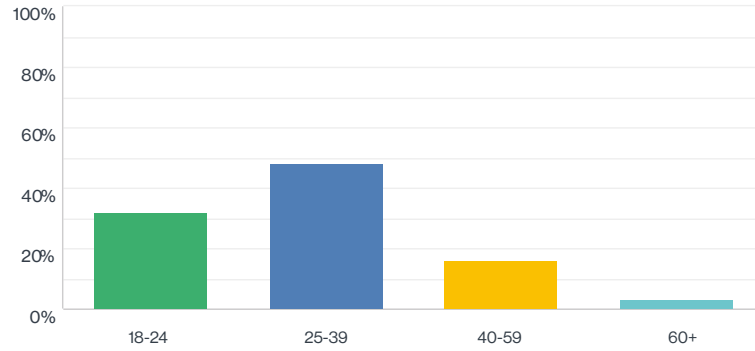
31 career staff (84%) participated in the survey.

All comments quoted in the report are taken directly from the survey entries.

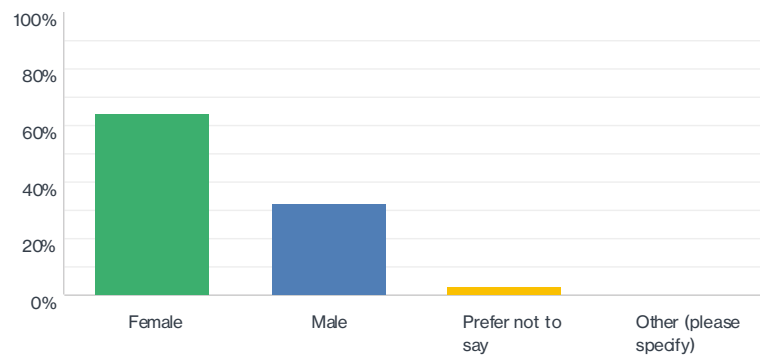
Participation details

All staff

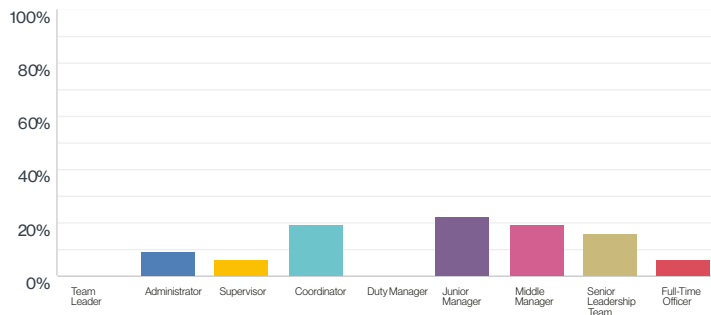
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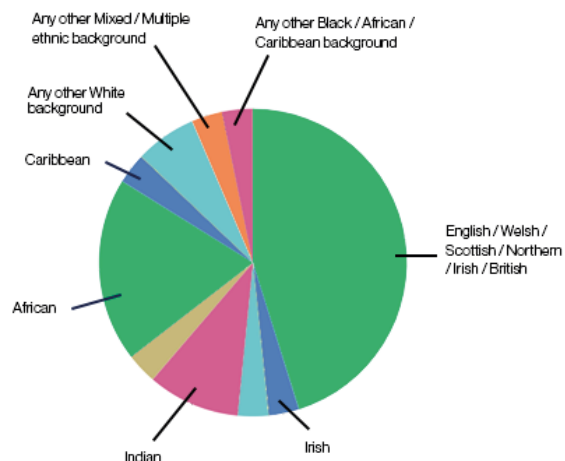
Gender:



Level:

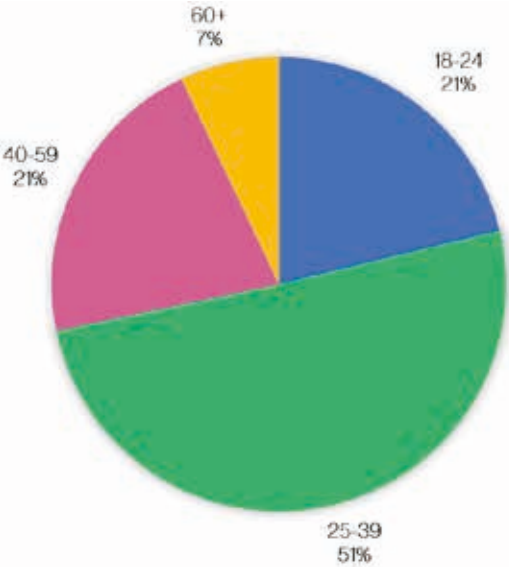


Ethnicity:

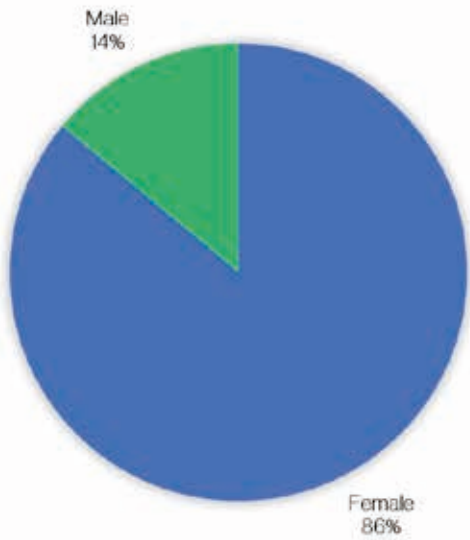


White staff

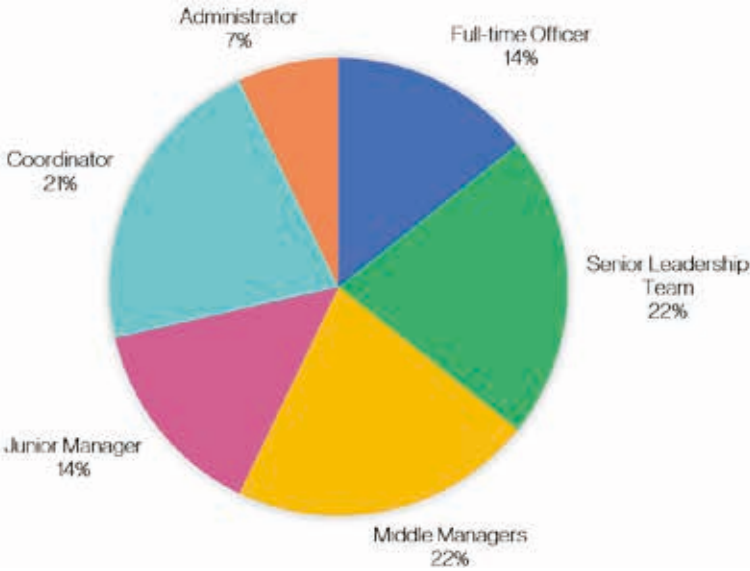
Age:



Gender:

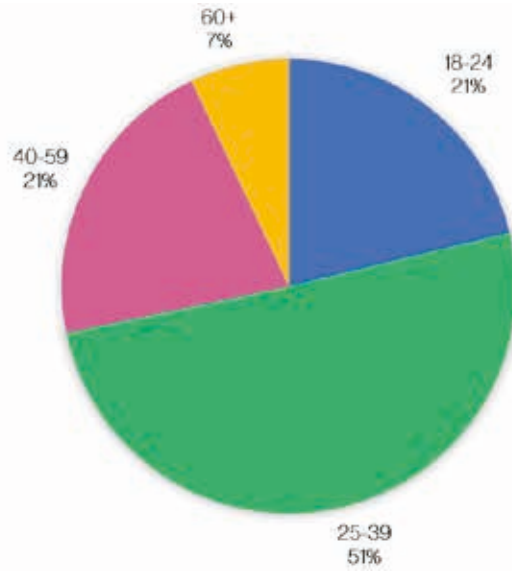


Level:

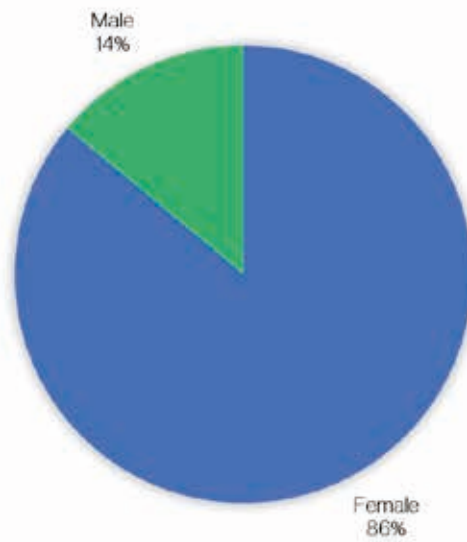


BAME staff

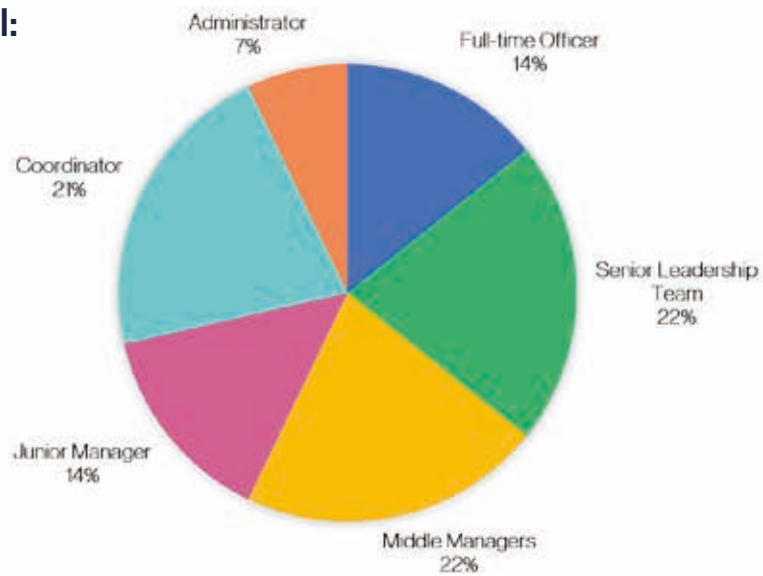
Age:



Gender:



Level:



White staff results

◆ = quotes from
survey feedback

abc = notes on
survey feedback

Belonging

Do you feel a sense of belonging at GSU?

Yes 71% **No** 29%

Describe what a sense of belonging at GSU means to you.

Themes	Number
Acceptance	29%
Inclusivity	43%
Valued	14%
Togetherness	21%
Relations with peers/colleagues	50%
Support	14%

On a scale of 1-5, how comfortable do you feel having conversations about racial inequality at GSU or in life?

Average = 3

Reporting

Are you aware of the process by which racism can be reported at GSU?

Yes 41% **No** 59%

57% of those who said they were aware of the process detailed the correct process

Is there a member of staff you would feel comfortable reporting racism to? If so, who?

SLT 24% **Line Manager** 47% **Peer** 29%

Experiences

Do you feel like you have been at an advantage due to your race?

Yes 24% **No** 76%

Please explain how you think you have been at an advantage due to your race at GSU

- ◆ Yes - It's important to note that white staff who didn't feel like that they had been at advantage due to their race still acknowledged topics such as unconscious bias, white privilege, structural inequalities and the day to day disadvantage BAME staff face such as mispronunciation or misspelling of names.
- ◆ I don't think I have been personally, but I am aware that internalised racism, structural inequalities, as well as white privilege could have affected my position in GSU.
- ◆ It's never come up as an issue or a question as part of my daily life. If I don't think about it then it must be an advantage.
- ◆ I've not had people question how to spell my name or how to pronounce it. Everything is in my first language.
- ◆ I don't feel I have been although maybe unconscious bias for being white/ white privilege makes me not realise that I have been.
- ◆ I don't feel like I have been at an advantage due to my race at GSU. I think there is diversity in the Senior Leadership Team and there was diversity demonstrated at my interview panel as well. However, I am white, so I admit there may be ways in which I've had an advantage unbeknown to me.
- ◆ Through working at GSU I have learnt about my white privilege and how my upbringing has benefited me. This has made me conscious of the decisions I make at GSU as a leader.
- ◆ I would say that although it is an advantage that I probably haven't noticed initially, I feel that my race has most likely benefitted me, especially in stakeholder management and when dealing with some students.
- ◆ As a white cis-man, I believe my skills are overrepresented in the eyes of others. Although I know I work hard, I still have the unlevel playing field to account for my progression. GSU recruitment is different to a lot of other institutions and it feels like we have begun to make good progress in this.

Do you think GSU practices are disadvantageous to BAME staff?

Yes 18% **No** 82%

Please explain how you think GSU practices are disadvantageous to BAME staff

Not:

- ◆ I think we are a very diverse team and that we are judged on our work. I personally haven't seen any biases.
- ◆ I'm not aware of it - we seem to be an organisation which does have a large number of BAME staff and in leadership positions too
- ◆ I don't think they are. We are an inclusive employer and focused on our teams development. We are proud of our staff's background and experiences. I think running bars may not attract some communities to want to work in that team.

Is disadvantageous:

- ◆ I think that the lack of education across the board on racial inequality in our workplace and how to support our BAME colleagues could be disadvantageous to BAME staff at GSU. From a junior position, I feel that the education around supporting BAME staff at GSU is left up to management, but more could be achieved in terms of eliminating racial inequality and creating a more supportive and advantageous

workplace and wider world for our BAME colleagues by educating all regardless of position in the organisation. In addition to this, I think that our recruitment process could be improved in relation to DEI.

- ◆ I have defaulted to yes as I believe societal pressures always influence institutions and practices and implementation of policy.

What support could GSU give you to ensure you are aware of racial inequality? i.e., training, workshops etc.

Main themes:

- ◆ ***Education: Workshops and training for whole organisation. Based on white privilege,***

- ◆ ***Resources for self-education***

- ◆ ***Lived experiences: conversations and real-life examples to provide context and more understanding***

- ◆ I absolutely think that workshops and training would be great. I know I have benefitted greatly from my studies being centred around inequalities, including racial inequalities, and knowledge around systemic racism can only be a good thing.

- ◆ Case studies and real-life examples of the impact of racial inequality. Conversations with those who have been affected.

- ◆ More training on how to spot/stop unconscious bias and best ways to report and approach the topic.

- ◆ It should be part of the induction.

- ◆ As someone coming from a different (and predominantly white) country, I often feel like I lack background knowledge and context when it comes to wider racial inequality issues. I'd say I find a lot of useful advice on how to be an ally on social media, but I would appreciate being a part of workshops or other more in-depth training.

- ◆ Better understanding of my privilege and how I need to advocate.

- ◆ I think that constantly having the conversation open at GSU would be a great start.

Training and workshops on challenging unconscious bias and recognising racial inequality would also be helpful. Although we all do an DEI online training when we join GSU, this training often feels like it is lacking something. I think a good robust workshop, with facts and activities that challenge and encourage learning and passion on this topic would be far more effective. We should also engage with data and the voices from within our organisation to understand how best to support our colleagues in addition to learning about the wider issues surrounding racial inequality and how to tackle it.

- ◆ I think training organisational wide regarding race equity should be delivered on a yearly basis. The video on micro-aggressions is an easy way to open staff eyes to the inequality that happens in day-to-day life.

- ◆ Workshops have been deeply useful and to hear about the experiences of peers is always appreciated. Race Equity library for SU staff could be good - GSU buys books and staff can borrow them to educate themselves. Talks and student liberation events open to all.

- ◆ Allyship in the workplace - raising concerns on behalf of others (best way to do this?) Training/workshops around recognising your white privilege and how to combat this (where you can within your role).

How can we help you feel confident and comfortable to have conversations pertaining to race?

- ◆ I think there needs to be a collective understanding of how, when, and where to speak about it. As a white person, I am happy to highlight bigoted and racist ideas as I am less likely to suffer consequences from calling it out. However, I would never speak about it as if I know more about it than PoC.
- ◆ Highlighting where issues in race inequality lie - what racial bias looks like and facilitating open conversations.
- ◆ By keeping up an open and honest dialogue
- ◆ Talk openly about it
- ◆ Make it a more common topic that's spoken about often
- ◆ There aren't really spaces to have those conversations, or they aren't being brought up enough in spaces that could have them
- ◆ I find it hard to start such conversations, because I'm not sure how much I can contribute, but I would be very open to listening and absorbing information.
- ◆ I think with education and raised awareness of this, conversations will become more comfortable. I think an understanding space educate oneself about racial inequality and working towards eliminating it would be good.
- ◆ More training and daily experiences would help me understand how to talk to colleagues about important matters. I want to talk freely with colleagues and try to help wherever possible.
- ◆ I do not think conversations about race need to be comfortable for white staff like me, self reflective exercises can help normalise and ease discussions
- ◆ Recognition of the emotional labour racial inequality conversations has on 'BAME' staff
- ◆ Workshop on accepting we all have bias and recognising this to then prevent situations that (unintentionally) cause harm

Any other suggestions?

- ◆ Maybe have some sessions on intersectionality and how race can intersect with other stratifications.
- ◆ More knowledge sharing of the different groupings under the 'BAME' title - all experiences for those under this title vary.

Any other comments?

- ◆ From GSU there has been little to nothing mentioned around the racism experienced by those from South East Asian ethnicity group due to Covid-19 - sadly Greenwich students have experienced racism due to the pandemic as well as seeing a rise in violence in the UK - we have not commented on it or assured students we stand against this, we need to do better.

BAME staff results

◆ = quotes from
survey feedback

abc = notes on
survey feedback

Belonging

Do you feel a sense of belonging at GSU?

Yes 86% **No** 14%

Describe what a sense of belonging at GSU means to you.

Themes	Number
Acceptance	29%
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Support	14%

On a scale of 1-5, how comfortable do you feel having conversations about racial inequality at GSU or in life?

Average = 4 *Majority of BAME staff feel comfortable having conversations about racial inequality*

Have you ever experienced racism whilst working at GSU?

Yes 57% **No** 43%

Experiences:

◆ *Feeling silenced* - There have been few occasions where I felt silenced, not given an opportunity to speak or be listened to and I find this very disempowering. Staff can be trained to be more conscious of the impact they have on others in the seemingly minutest of things.

◆ *Dismissive and micro aggressive behaviour* - I notice brief expressions of surprise, when I walk into university meetings and White senior staff can be dismissive of me. Once a dialogue or communication is exchanged, I am taken seriously. I have discussed these interactions with my Line Mangers, and they have been understanding and supportive.

◆ *Insensitive and inappropriate behaviour* - In my first few weeks at GSU, I was asked what my opinions were on the use of the N word within songs. I was the only black member of staff within this group so the question was targeted at myself.

◆ *Microaggression* - A FTO commented on my hair and likened the style to a movie character which was very insulting.

- ◆ **Microinvalidation** - In a meeting with university stakeholders, a comment was made towards me insinuating that the person was surprised of an achievement I made and didn't expect that of someone from my background. I did not report this to anyone as I am so use to comments like that at this point. But I do know that if I had, GSU would have acted to support me.
- ◆ **Microaggression** - Mispronunciation of my name by Uni staff. Uni staff verifying decisions by White staff in my team. Uni staff and externals preferring to talk to White male staff. Commercial student staff being rude and unhelpful, which is not something I see towards White staff.
- ◆ **Misidentification (microaggression)** - Staff mistaking me for another POC member of staff - on multiple occasions by different members of GSU and UoG staff.
- ◆ **Being overlooked and undervalued in favour of White/senior staff**- Feeling as though my input in a meeting is overlooked by White (and more senior) staff members or not taken as seriously.

Reporting

Are you aware of the process by which racism can be reported at GSU?

Yes 14% **No** 86%

100% of those that stated that they were aware of the process, detailed the correct process.

Is there a member of staff you would feel comfortable reporting racism to? If so, who?

SLT 57% **Line Manager** 21% **Peer** 21%

If you wouldn't feel comfortable reporting racism please briefly detail why.

Common themes:

- ◆ *Comfortability*
- ◆ *Lack of understanding*
- ◆ *Evidencing incidents of racism*

- ◆ There is no-one on a peer level or above I would feel comfortable to talk to about this
- ◆ I would go to staff who I know get it - I know that fellow officers have different experiences so they may not relate to everything I experience. I know that someone who has experience living in England, in the systems I have would get it. I would however be wary of offloading onto people who share the same struggles and I'm unsure if there's many spaces to have those casual venting conversations when wfh so I'd keep it to myself most likely.
- ◆ I feel sometimes politics gets in the way of how issues are addressed when it comes to calling out inappropriate behaviour. I also feel like when it is covert racism (e.g. micro-aggressions), it's much harder to prove that this is an issue - so most of the time I feel like joking it off or not saying anything is better.

Considering yourself as a BAME staff member do you feel that GSU has done enough to improve opportunities and outcomes for you as a staff member?

Yes 71% **Unclassified** 29%

- ◆ There has been a lot of focus on skill building within the job, however I don't feel enough has been done to improve opportunities and outcomes for us as officers. GSU is trying but more can be done.
- ◆ Yes, on the track to improving and making sure that BAME staff feel able to progress within the organisation.
- ◆ I think they try to be open and offer things, but I am not really educated on what development is good for me or what I can even ask for - it is not in my nature to take up opportunities or use people for their worth so I probably miss out on opportunities just cause it's not something I've learnt to seek, take, or expect. There is a wider thing to think about how feeling entitlement affects this - it may be easier for those who have always been told they can take what they need to actually get these opportunities.
- ◆ I have always felt my managers have made an effort to help me develop myself with training opportunities, mentoring etc. But as a staff member at GSU, I don't think enough has been done to provide opportunities for progression in-house.

Development

Do you feel like you have enough support for your personal and professional development? If yes, what support have you been given? If no, what support could be given to you?

Yes/No 7% **Yes** 57% **No** 14% **Unclassified** 21%

- ◆ We have support such as a leadership coach which is very much appreciated. In I believe some more personal and professional development support will do such as CV checks, identifying interests and giving platforms for these to be improved, opportunities for improving employability and skills set.
- ◆ Trainings are provided for me and paid for by GSU. Opportunities given to me to mentor staff thereby improving my mentor ship experience.
- ◆ Yes - training opportunities, more responsibility in role
- ◆ No, personal and professional development has not been discussed. Would be good to get some feedback and more support
- ◆ Mentoring and networking opportunities
- ◆ Yes - space to discuss is given however, I don't feel I have the time within my capacity to fully work on my development although I'm consistently told to make time but I'm not told what to compromise to do so.
- ◆ Yes. Ability to map my career development as well as taking the time to work on areas of my interest that will increase my broader knowledge and expertise.
- ◆ Yes I do have enough support available, but I haven't requested it really.
- ◆ Coaching and support from staff teams has been useful.
- ◆ It would be good to have training on how to sell myself and celebrate my

achievements.

It could also be useful to have a discussion to understand what professional development looks like and how to find opportunities/use my networks as it's really hard to come up with examples of things I could ask of someone.

◆ Time spent on development is stunted quite a bit due to the workload each staff member has. Delivery time at GSU is way too demanding to spend substantial time on development.

Do you think you have a fair chance of getting promoted if you meet objectives? If not, please explain

Yes 64% **No** 21% **Unclassified** 14%

- ◆ Yes - have to have lots of work, examples and support to demonstrate this though
- ◆ Yes I have been promoted. However, I have heard colleagues say that they think promotions weren't actually based on merit and ability.
- ◆ Yes, as I think the process of requesting an uplift letter is clearly stated out. Depends on the structure within the team too.
- ◆ No, because of my race.
- ◆ Promotion isn't an option in my role. I feel GSU is limited in how people can move within the structure, but they do encourage people to grow and take on new challenges that match their belief in staff's capabilities.
- ◆ No. I feel like I overachieve on my objectives and have been told about how much I've progressed but am not given any opportunities for promotion. Work that myself, and other staff, do to go above and beyond our roles is never taken into consideration or awarded by a promotion (financial promotion, change in job title, climbing the hierarchy etc.)

Do you ever feel you have been disadvantaged at GSU because of your race? If yes, please explain

Yes 7% **No** 79% **Unclassified** 14%

- ◆ I think the main disadvantage is that student and staff representation hasn't been the best - our staff we can obviously control more and it has got better over the last 5 years, however, our student roles whether they be representatives or group leaders could be more diverse. The reason I raise this is that GSU practices should be informed by a diverse group whether they are allies or live certain experiences, this would allow us to spot where we need to do better. If we can't get certain students into leadership positions then we need to evaluate our processes and the opportunities/responsibilities we give as important viewpoints are lost when we aren't able to facilitate people and their needs.
- ◆ Not necessarily because of my race but I do sometimes feel my race combined with my other demographics (female) has disadvantaged me. I feel my thoughts and opinions and my confidence is sometimes skewed because of this, as opposed to the same thoughts/opinions/confidence displayed by White male counterparts.

Experiences

If you could share one thing about your experiences with race, what would it be?

- ◆ At GSU? I definitely see how diverse it is compared to University. I am often the only woman and/or person of colour in the room in University settings.
- ◆ I'm proud that GSU has decided to do some work on race equity however, this should be across the organisation and shouldn't just fall on the shoulder of some individuals. I'm also proud that GSU has good diversity in their staff teams however, we need to consider how inclusive we are as an organisation.
- ◆ I like that being at GSU I am able to be unashamedly Black, and the organisation will discuss issues around race and equity in prominent spaces.
- ◆ My experiences with race have been fairly positive during my education and career for the most time, even though I have witnessed experiences others have faced. So a time that really stood out for me was in a networking meeting and I remember introducing myself to a peer at the same level at a different institution, who literally brushed past me to introduce himself to a member of my team who was a White male as he 'must' have been the manager.
- ◆ I wish people could understand that the battle for equality is not a competition and that the solutions are there, we just need support.
- ◆ Everyone's experiences are unique to them and not all BAME staff think the same so should not be treated as such. My experience is just as valid, even if it is a microaggression which is often difficult to explain to White staff who may think BAME staff are 'being over sensitive'.
- ◆ I am proud to be part of an organisation with BAME staff across the entire structure, not just on the ground. However, I've always felt self-conscious about my race whenever I walk into a room (both in and out of work) - especially when I don't see many other people that look like me. I am always second-guessing people's interactions with me (i.e. would they act the same way if I was White?) due to negative experiences in my past.
- ◆ I am grateful that we have access to technology that helps us raise awareness of injustices happening across the world and keep everyone informed. Although this can be very mentally draining to experience, I am glad to see my non-POC peers educating themselves on both historical and current issues around racism.

What do you think GSU's role is in supporting and educating White staff is?

- ◆ To provide a leaning platform for everyone to be educated and create a great place to work while everyone will feel welcoming .
- ◆ They give opportunity to every staff not just White staff
- ◆ Being aware of issues that might affect BAME staff and members, be willing to acknowledge them and talk about them, and support staff affected by them. This is something I feel GSU does already
- ◆ Providing the right tools to help educate staff
- ◆ As above and unconscious bias workshops, which GSU has done previously.
- ◆ Education on White privilege, bias, allyship. What racism and microaggressions are and how they affect other
- ◆ Teaching White staff how to be allies and how to be supporters of this work.
- ◆ GSU's role should be educate White staff in how to spot possible racist actions or microaggressions, and how to be advocates for their BAME colleagues. It is amazing

that I do not feel marginalised at GSU, but it is not always like that everywhere, so educating White staff to know that their BAME colleagues will need that support and won't always feel that level of security that is felt at GSU.

- ◆ To give more training, make awareness, make a house rules
- ◆ To ensure that they are able to ask questions of their/peers work that allow race to be considered and so that even without representation, we can trust that there was consideration for the diverse range of people we are here for.
- ◆ Providing professional training, having space to talk and challenge and Managers and SLT having a zero tolerance approach. Teams that are not diverse should be given a target and an action plan to support them in recruitment and induction. This proactively is needed
- ◆ GSU do have a responsibility to educate their staff on issues their colleagues are facing. I think GSU's senior leadership team need to stay up to date on what is happening around the world and closer to home which could be affecting BAME staff members and be confident enough to show their support and solidarity on the matter. NUS Equity training was quite useful in explaining allyship and the reality of social inequality. I think all staff should be made to do this training, and any others that are similar in nature.

Support

What support could GSU give you?

- ◆ I feel supported in that I am comfortable in challenging any discrimination but ensuring other BAME staff know they will be supported if they need to speak up an/or challenge.
- ◆ I feel as if there is no designated space for BAME staff and other marginalised groups in society to get together at GSU. I think we do need a forum/space for staff networks as you can only have conversations around opportunities/outcomes for yourself as a BAME staff if you are given that space by your manager which isn't guaranteed.
- ◆ Transparency- how to report racism and what support is given when someone reports racism.
- ◆ Making sure there is space to talk about these issues and ensuring that staff are able to honestly assess their own thoughts and feelings about race equity at GSU
- ◆ Just to advocate for me when i'm not in the room
- ◆ BAME staff's wellbeing as mentioned above and be more transparent with the processes we can use to report any racism in the workplace. At the moment, it feels like if we wanted to report something, we would need to do all the initiating of conversations which can be very hard.

Most common themes:

- ◆ *Transparent process to report racism (Most common)*
- ◆ *Personal and professional development*
- ◆ *Providing feedback*
- ◆ *Support for those who challenge discrimination any form of discrimination including racism*
- ◆ *Forum/Space for BAME staff*
- ◆ *Wellbeing support*

Terminology

Do you have any opinions on the use of the term 'BAME'? If so, please detail.

- ◆ I think people take it to mean just Black people, when it covers a range of ethnic minorities. I think the Asian and Minority bits sometimes get forgotten about.
- ◆ It's very generic and doesn't take all the differences of ethnic groups into consideration.
- ◆ There will never be a perfect term however, we need to recognise and acknowledge when certain aspects of inequality affects a particular group
- ◆ I personally find it offensive that all non-Whites are grouped under one umbrella.
- ◆ While there are some struggles that are shared, and that is mainly because of a similar negative response from the White community, and not our similarities; every ethnicity has its own struggles that is unique to them. We should all be given our space.
- ◆ I don't know what term to use to describe myself but this term isn't offensive to me - I don't know if there is a term made by BAME people to describe themselves but that would feel better than any term that was made by White people to call us 'not White'
- ◆ I don't mind the use of the term BAME, which to me, is similar to using POC. However, I think it is important that people recognise that there are a lot of subsections that come under BAME and therefore the term should be used appropriately. If an issue affects all POCs, then BAME can be used. However, some issues directly affect Black people or Asian people, for example - in these cases, BAME is too general and shouldn't be used.

Any other suggestions?

- ◆ Give White staff a safe space to ask the questions they have in the spirit of openness and education.
- ◆ I think there should be more awareness forums
- ◆ It's great that we are actually doing this work and that we are committed to making GSU a diverse workplace reflective of our students!

observations

- ◆ 86% of BAME staff have a sense of belonging in comparison to 71% of White staff.
- ◆ On average, BAME staff felt more comfortable having conversations about racial inequality than White staff.
- ◆ 41% of White staff are aware of which the process to which racism can be reported in comparison to only 14% of BAME staff.
- ◆ Majority of BAME staff felt comfortable reporting racism to SLT, whereas a majority of White staff felt more comfortable reporting to their line manager.
- ◆ 75% of experiences of racism were related to the University or with University stakeholders
- ◆ BAME staff not knowing the process of reporting racism
- ◆ It's important to note that BAME staff did not state that their personal or professional development was hinted due to their race. Their concerns were general organisational development issues.
- ◆ There was no real consensus on changing the use of the term 'BAME' however, it was clear that staff found this term to be problematic as it's offensive to group all non-white people in one umbrella.
- ◆ Many white staff who stated they haven't experienced being at advantage, acknowledge that it still happens and acknowledge some type of privilege in comparison to their BAME colleagues.
- ◆ Diversity was a theme from those who stated that GSU practices weren't disadvantageous to BAME staff. Diversity was stated as a reason to why White staff did think GSU practices weren't disadvantages to BAME staff. It is important to note that the diversity of an organisation is one step forward but in no way truly depicts how inclusive an organisation is and whether all their employees have equal opportunities, access to equal resources and/or if the organisation operates in an equitable nature.

recommendations

- ◆ Response to the results from CEO, Trustee Board and Officers to show real commitment and zero tolerance to any incidents of racism.
- ◆ There needs to be clear communication on how to report instances of racism and any form of discrimination. Only 14% of BAME staff were aware of how they would report any instances or incidents involving discrimination.
- ◆ Provide more education and awareness on the use of the term 'BAME' and the different ethnic groups under the term. If GSU continue to use the term, they must acknowledge that the term is problematic as the different ethnic groups identified under the term aren't one homogeneous group of people.
- ◆ GSU need to facilitate a discussion with the university's operational management team regarding a joint human resources reporting mechanism for any form of discrimination experienced in university forums and spaces. 75% of discriminatory experiences that our BAME staff experienced were in relation to University stakeholders.
- ◆ Provide a learning platform for everyone to be educated including educating white staff on how they can spot possible racist actions or microaggressions as well as how to be great allies for their colleagues.
- ◆ The diversity of the staff team needs to be reviewed as well as how GSU recruits their staff. Recruitment should be added to the race equity action plan and teams that aren't diverse should be given a target and an action plan to support them in recruitment.
- ◆ GSU's Senior Leadership Team should ensure they are up to date with current happenings in relation to race equity as well as being confident enough to show support and solidarity on any issues pertaining to race.
- ◆ Safe and protected spaces - have a space for BAME staff to share their experiences and network with peers, and a space for White staff to ask questions, be open about possible learning.