

Anti-Racism at Dixons

Racism is an everyday facet of UK society and it manifests itself in overt discrimination, institutional bias and in more subtle differences in actions and behaviours. Our approach at Dixons can be defined as anti-racist and this commits us to an active approach to making change. We believe that our policies on equality, diversity and inclusion are robust; however, we recognise the need to increase the pace of change around ethnicity and talent.

We use the term 'white privilege' in training and define it as perpetuating the marginalisation of ethnic minorities and, in particular, people of colour. Empathy and guilt do not change the narrative, but proactive anti-racism strategies can. We believe that, through recognising that everyday racism is a reality and training on unconscious bias and micro-aggression, we can develop a more diverse organisation. Racism does not necessarily manifest itself in the same way for all groups (e.g. gender, sexuality, social class, religion) and we recognise that our community is made up of individuals with multiple and interconnected identities.

We acknowledge that many of our students are not competing on a level-playing field. Our mission recognises that society remains unequal and this is something we challenge every day of the week. We do not accept the status quo and we will do whatever it takes to challenge educational and social disadvantage.

At Dixons, we fervently believe in social justice for all members of our community. We will always challenge prejudicial and discriminatory behaviour. We are committed to a vibrant and joyful community where all can belong. We actively encourage cognitive diversity and see it as an essential ingredient of an innovative and forward-thinking organisation.

We recognise that exacting institutional change takes time and that our improvement strategies are long-term; however, we are also committed to a zero-tolerance approach to racism every day of the week.

Why anti-racism?

- Our student population is predominantly from ethnic minority backgrounds and it is important that they have role-models who they can identify with.
- Our average student population is 92% ethnic minority: some academies are more ethnically mixed (DUA 45% ethnic minority); some are 100% ethnic minority (DMN); most are closer to the average.
- Representation of other minority groups, such as females, is very strong and, although we will continue to value all diversity (as our mission states), we need traction on our representation of ethnic minorities and we need to be absolutely clear what our approach is.
- This approach is not about compliance or virtue signalling, we want to be clear that we do not tolerate any racism.
- Research into inclusive HR practices indicates that focusing strategies on more than one group can water down impact.

We will:

- never accept prejudicial or discriminatory language; our approach is to sanction and to educate wherever this happens
- challenge each other on unconscious bias and micro-aggression
- always treat overt racism among staff as gross misconduct
- constantly challenge our thinking and actions to eliminate conscious and unconscious bias
- always find ways of accommodating individual's expression of faith
- ensure all our rules are about purpose not power
- always consider whether equity, as opposed to equality, is the correct option to level the playing field
- have uncomfortable conversations about power and race
- listen and take seriously any student or member of staff who feels they are being subjected to racism
- train staff and students on correct terminology and all aspects of structural and everyday racism
- ensure all staff are culturally sensitive and aware of the community that they serve
- teach our students that powerful knowledge is the most effective way of changing the world
- avoid tokenism and platitudes
- never be colour-blind

Ethnicity and staff representation at Dixons

Reflecting society, ethnic minorities tend to be over-represented in the lower pay scales, e.g. cleaners and catering staff (60% of SCP 13 are from ethnic minority backgrounds), and under represented the further up the associate staff pay scale (27% of SCP 37+ are from ethnic minority backgrounds). Our priority here needs to be offering and securing better opportunities for greater advancement for our lowest paid.

At M1-3 on the teachers' pay scale, our workforce tends to broadly reflect the community we serve with just over 50% of staff coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is significantly different to national, although it does vary across academies. Nationally, 14% of teachers come from ethnic minority backgrounds. We would, of course, expect this to be higher in Bradford and Leeds.

Representation is better at the teacher early career stage and is less so further up the scale, (M4-6 26% EM, UPS 33%); however, given we have not previously tracked this, we are unsure whether this is to do with attracting a more diverse workforce more recently, or whether we have a worse retention for minority ethnic staff. Going forward, we will have this data.

Over representation of White British and under representation of minority ethnic becomes more pronounced further up the pay scale and when we consider responsibility payments. 67% of TLRs are held by White British teachers. Only 11% of TLR holders at M1-3 are from minority ethnic backgrounds, whereas, at M1-3, 55% of teachers are from ethnic minority backgrounds. As iTrent allows us the ability to track applications, we will be able to find out more; interestingly, there is no ethnic gap at UPS for TLR holders. An untested hypothesis is that white staff have greater confidence to apply for promotion at an earlier stage, however, we would need data on who has applied and who has not to take this hypothesis further.

91% of senior leadership positions are occupied by White British. This is slightly better than national (96%), however, given the community we serve, we would expect more ethnic minority representation. At Principal and Executive level, it is 100% White British. Although this can be 'explained away' by the prevalence of internal promotion and arguably less diversity further up the scale, we do not believe that this is acceptable and it must be addressed. We are aware that we receive fewer applications from ethnic minorities for leadership roles, the last Principal role and Executive Principal role that was advertised externally, received only white applications.

In the 2011 Census, 10.8% of the overall population identified as from a black or Asian ethnic minority, significantly higher in the Bradford and Leeds District.

All research indicates that diversity does not just happen, it is best achieved by a dedicated strategy and transparent and specific goals led from the top.

Ethnicity and governor representation at Dixons

The ethnic composition of our Trust Board and local governing bodies does not reflect the community we serve, or the student population. One Trustee and local governing body Chair is from an ethnic minority background. Overall, 17.6% of local governors are from an ethnic minority background.

How we will create a workforce that challenges social disadvantage and better reflects the community we serve? (Who is responsible and accountable in brackets)

Listen as well as act (Executive and all senior leaders)

- We are entirely conscious that our strategy cannot be constructed from a (currently) all-white Executive.
- Our anti-racism cross-cutting team (all ethnic minority membership) is a hugely important part of our strategy.
- We will appoint a CCT Champion to work with the Executive.
- Through listening to our staff from ethnic minority backgrounds, we aim to find the answer to questions that we may not have thought to ask.
- In order to explore racial oppression, we accept that we must listen to the reality and narrative of those who have experienced it.
- Responsibility and accountability for improvement must sit entirely at the top of the organisation.
- Through our Citizens UK Listening Campaign, we will improve our community involvement.

Transparency and honesty (Executive and all Senior Leaders)

- We believe that the first step in improvement is recognising our current position.
- Transparency and honesty are identified as a strategy in diversity research and it is very much the 'Dixons way'.
- We will publish this report on our website, even though data on ethnicity and workforce composition is not a legal requirement.
- We are not complacent and we accept that things have to change for the better.



What gets measured matters – 3-year commitment (Executive and Principals)

- Research indicates that setting a few simple and aspirational outcomes can improve representation (note Gender Pay Gap).
- At the bottom of the report, we have 5 targets that reflect our honest commitment to challenge the composition and structure of our workforce.
- Although the targets are for a 3-year period, we will present a full report to our Trust Board on an annual basis and will give an update in the talent section at every meeting.
- We will report on progress towards targets and review our strategies in light of any new research.
- The outcomes listed are based on what we currently believe should be achievable given our current workforce profile at M1-3 and the actions in this report; however, some may be difficult to achieve if there is not more internal staff movement – we do not yet have that data.

Research-informed (Executive)

- Our talent vision is to be as nationally recognised for our employment brand as we are for our student outcomes.
- In order to meet this vision, we must become a diverse workforce that reflects the community that we serve.
- We will do this by continually seeking out the best evidence-informed practice from within and beyond the sector.
- We will carry out our own research and this will be driven by our Teaching Institute.

Differentiating initiatives (Executive)

- Whilst recognising the intersectionality of diversity, all evidence indicates that initiatives tend to have more impact when they focus on one social characteristic (e.g. ethnicity).
- As such, our gender and ethnicity initiatives are separate, although interlinked.
- In taking this approach, we are cautious of out-group homogeneity and stereotyping experience.

View all policies and practice through a critical lens (Executive)

- We must question our employee value proposition and whether what we are promoting is a brand that values diversity and allows all to feel true belonging.
- Do our policies celebrate diversity as well as emphasising commonality? Are they lived and breathed throughout the organisation?
- How much do we recognise unconscious bias, implicit stereotype, in-group favouritism and outgroup homogeneity bias in our recruitment strategy?
- While recognising the intersectionality of diversity and the importance of challenging group think in relation to all under-represented groups, all evidence indicates that initiatives tend to have more impact when they focus on one social characteristic.
- How much do we focus on the experience of the candidate at interview, particularly those who may already feel that they are an outsider?
- We need to ensure our understanding of cultural fit includes our value of diversity.

Train at all levels of the organisation (Executive)

- Re-invigorate our Trust Board to drive the case for improved diversity throughout the organisation.
- Re-train all staff and governors and further raise awareness of anti-racism.
- As a minimum, all staff must undertake a mandatory equality and diversity online module this year.
- All leaders at all levels will undertake training from the Executive, including how to accept feedback from ethnic minority staff.
- Fund two senior leaders on an annual basis to undertake a Masters study in race equality.
- Ensure all aspiring ethnic minority leaders are encouraged to attend the BAMEed conference.

Raise leadership awareness of the importance of championing those who may not, by disposition, come forward (Leaders at all levels)

- Set targets for all academies that are understood by middle and senior leaders.
- Ensure every line-manager understands their duty to actively support and encourage individuals from under-represented groups.
- Actively recruit senior leaders to act as coaches / mentors for other colleagues, e.g. ITT, NQT, RQT, to help them realise their ambition and consider practical strategies for removing external barriers.



- Train the anti-racism cross-cutting team on coaching strategies so that staff can come forward to discuss any concerns they may have.
- Work with our Teaching Institute in exploring the concept of 'reverse mentoring'.
- Research ways of creating and promoting equality staff networks across our Trust.

Analyse all workforce data in relation to gender and ethnicity (Executive and HR Manager)

- Raise the profile of valid workforce data on iTrent.
- Ensure workforce engagement surveys maintain anonymity and consider analysing responses by gender and ethnicity.
- Use iTrent Business Objects to analysis all aspect of HR e.g. long-range and short-range mobility, retention.
- Ensure no member of staff from an ethnic minority leaves the organisation without an exit-interview conducted by a member of the Executive.
- Track recruitment data from application to appointment.
- Maintain retention figures in relation to ethnicity.

Re-launch our website and recruitment materials (Executive and Communications Manager)

- Ensure at least one ethnic minority member of staff sits on every senior leader recruitment process.
- Use strategies from the Behavioural Insights Team to test out different adverts.
- Ensure our website and all recruitment materials promote our genuine commitment to valuing diversity and inclusion.
- Research the use of LinkedIn and targeted job referrals from people of colour.

Powerful knowledge (Executive, all Leaders, all Staff)

- Make sure that all teaching staff understand that, through teaching powerful knowledge to our young people, we are able to develop critical thinking and challenge the status quo.
- Constantly reiterate that there is no contradiction in teaching powerful knowledge and encouraging students to consider 'whose knowledge', indeed the former predicates the latter.
- Celebrate the culture of others whilst recognising that, to change the world, certain knowledge and cultural capital must be acquired.
- Ensure that knowledge and learning are at the heart of every classroom and that routines are a means to an end.

Relationships at the heart of all we do (all staff)

- Ensure relationships are at the heart of all that we do.
- Over-explain to children the purpose of all rules.
- Review all routines for learning and conduct rules to ensure they are about purpose not power.

How will we be accountable for change?

Trustees and local governing bodies

- Hold the Executive to account for reporting on talent at every meeting with an emphasis on progress in this area.
- The Trust Board will work with the Executive in order to ensure greater diversity is a priority for governor recruitment.
- Local governing bodies will hold Principals to account for the data in their academies through the staffing section of the Principals' briefing.

Executive

- Supported by the HR Manager, will drive the actions forward, keep this agenda as a talent priority and ensure a member of the Executive is responsible for the actions.

Principals

- Held to account by their Executive Principal to improve representation in their own academy through equality objectives and implementing the actions identified in this report.

Operations and Business Managers

- Held to account by the Executive, will hold their Principal/s to account for all aspects of the recruitment process and will be the champions for inclusive HR.



All staff

- One member of staff will attend the anti-racism cross-cutting team and will work with the Principal and staff in understanding the agenda.
- Expected to adhere to the principles in this plan and support all initiatives.

Where we are now	Intended outcome by 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9% of senior leaders are from ethnic minority backgrounds and 100% of the Executive are from a White British background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No less than 40% of our senior leaders from ethnic minority backgrounds and at least 1 Principal or member of the Executive from an ethnic minority background
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 67% of TLR holders are White British	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% of TLR holders from an ethnic minority background
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historically, retention data is unknown, but will be known going forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No retention gap between ethnicities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17.6% of local governing bodies and 11% of Trust Board from ethnic minority backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governor ethnic composition is more reflective of the community that we serve (Leeds Bradford) i.e. 50% white and ethnic minority
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11% of M1-3 TLR holders are from an ethnic minority background (currently 50% of M1-3 are from an ethnic minority background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethnic minority staff progress at the same rate as white staff

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