

Action Plan to Improve Equity of Access and Inclusion for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Entrants to Clinical Psychology Training

This action plan forms part of Health Education England's plans for delivering:

- The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health's commitment to improve Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people's experiences of mental health care¹
- The NHS Long Term Plan's commitment to respect, equality and diversity across the NHS workforce²

The delivery of the plan will be overseen by the Health Education England Mental Health Workforce Delivery Board, advised by the Equality and Diversity Subgroup of this Board.

The action plan is intended to increase fairness and equity of access to, and inclusion in, clinical psychology training for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates³, to be implemented collaboratively by universities, placement providers, the British Psychological Society as the course accrediting body, and Health Education England. These are equitable actions designed to achieve greater equality of outcomes. It is recognised that implementing these actions and delivering sustainable change will require proper resourcing by all stakeholders. Courses are expected to implement these actions and will be accountable to HEE commissioners on delivering these. Detail of local implementation will require consultation and widespread engagement with local stakeholders. These actions should sit alongside a broader programme that ensures fair access to training across the protected characteristics and recognises the impact of socioeconomic status as an intersectional disadvantage.

¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf>

² <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/nhs-long-term-plan-version-1.2.pdf>

³ Whilst this action plan uses the phrasing of "Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic" as opposed to alternatives such as People of Colour or Black and Brown people, it is acknowledged that this phrasing choice has many shortcomings, including treating people of many different races and ethnicities as a homogenous group. It is expected that those implementing the action plan will also be cognizant of these shortcomings.

Each University provider of clinical psychology training will negotiate a set of locally defined targets and will report quarterly to their regional HEE commissioners demonstrating progress with each action and to provide data in relation to the Equality Act (2010) protected characteristics (including but not limited to applicants, recruitment, enrolment, progression and graduation), this will be stipulated within the contractual obligations and as a key performance indicator. This information will be then be collated to provide a national report, with specific follow up for providers who are not adequately progressing. Future commissioning of programmes will define specific action to be taken, and again will form part of the contractual obligations of providers.

Goal: Sustained, effective action on inclusion and anti-racism before, during and after training. This action will lead to an increase in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic recruitment to clinical psychology training so that the ethnic diversity within trainee cohorts increasingly reflects the ethnic diversity of the population.

ACTIONS:

1. Leadership Commitment

Leadership at all levels within the training organisations and their partners will evidence continuous commitment to delivering this plan, demonstrating transparency about existing problems and the necessary steps to rectify these problems. Leaders will recognise their positions of power in organisations, paying particular attention to a race, culture and ethnicity perspective, which will inform specific, concrete steps to address racial and ethnic disparities in leadership recruitment and representation.

2. Anti-racist Education for Course Staff and Supervisors

An ability to discuss racism and ethnic discrimination, at both an individual and systemic level, and engage in anti-racism will be treated as a meta-competency for all course staff and supervisors. Courses will be able to evidence development of this meta-competency through an effective programme that is mandatory for all course staff and supervisors. This programme will ensure awareness of race, ethnicity, racism and ethnic discrimination and robustly challenge and remove racism and ethnic discrimination within course and supervision delivery. Unconscious bias training is not seen as fit for this purpose. Training and development will be ongoing and supervisors and course providers will be supported to reflect on race, ethnicity and difference and how this can be engaged with constructively.

3. Curriculum Review

A thorough review of all University Clinical Psychology Curricula, across all aspects of training, to decolonise the curriculum and ensure racism, ethnic discrimination and other forms of discrimination are addressed and content changed as necessary. This review will involve a wide and inclusive range of experts, including Experts by Experience.

4. Support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Trainees

A robust and varied support programme should be available to every Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic trainee and evidence presented that this programme is effective and valued by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic trainees. This support will be co-produced and a variety of choices will be offered, including informal peer support alongside more formalised course support, in order to create a diversity of spaces where Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic trainees can share their experiences. There will also be a variety of formal and informal routes for raising complaints of racism and ethnic discrimination that are embedded in course policy and procedures.

5. Introduction of Contextual and Anti-Racist Recruitment Processes

Courses should demonstrate that they have taken effective action to:

- a. Address race and ethnic discrimination in recruitment, with an awareness of how other protected characteristics and socio-economic status may intersect with race and ethnicity and how this may affect recruitment.
- b. Introduce appropriately sophisticated and evidence-based systems of contextual recruitment that ensure selection criteria are applied in light of objective contextual factors that may have impacted on attainment of qualifications or experience that discriminate for course entry. These processes will be designed to reduce the impact of systemic obstacles to attainment that correlate with race and ethnicity.
- c. Evaluate current selection criteria to ensure they do not replicate racial and ethnic disparities at other stages in an applicant's training journey.

6. Reporting of Student Recruitment and Retention Data by Ethnicity

Each course will routinely and transparently report and publish age, gender and ethnicity data for recruitment and retention each year, including differential success rates by race and ethnicity. This data will then be used by courses to identify areas for equitable improvement.

7. Positive Action Initiatives

Courses will demonstrate positive action, informed by local data about barriers to entry, under the below sections of the Equality Act (2010). Section 149 of the Equality Act also outlines the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

- a. Section 149: Courses will update their Equality Objectives to reflect the required changes in this Action Plan.
- b. Section 158: Engage in positive action through outreach activities including open days, career talks and mentoring schemes, with a particular emphasis on reaching those at earlier stages of their career journey.

- c. Section 159: Undertake direct action at the points of shortlisting and interview on the basis of key protected characteristics, where there is evidence of under-representation in relation to that protected characteristic *and* two candidates are of equal merit.

8. Establishing Racially and Ethnically Representative Selection Processes

Courses should demonstrate action and progress towards establishing racially and ethnically representative selection processes against a target timeframe of no more than one year. The goal will be to align each recruitment process to represent the England population, or the local population if more diverse. This should be embedded as part of a wider commitment to employing more racially and ethnically diverse staff across all levels and sectors of the institution.

9. Improving Equity of Access to Experience

Courses will collaborate with employers to develop, recognise and support schemes that enable more aspiring psychologists to gain relevant experience in paid work, and undertake and evaluate other action to remove cumulative advantage gained by those able to access certain work and experience. As part of this, courses will value a wide range of both professional and personal experience during the application process.