

## OfS webinar: Supporting BAME Students during the Coronavirus pandemic

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### Key Points:

1. OfS has permitted re-purposing of funding for activity which is no longer deliverable (e.g. outreach) to support vulnerable students during the pandemic. HEIs must still make progress and take all reasonable steps to deliver APP commitments. 293 targets addressing ethnic gaps in the 200 approved APPS, of these 112 are for attainment. 'Many APPs commit to strategic measures around inclusive curriculum and pedagogy. 'It remains critical that these commitments are met'. 'OfS will look for evidence that this is happening and will be monitoring and asking questions'.
2. Student input is vital and lack of student voice in planning for 2020/21 entry is concerning. We should not assume we know how students use technology, or what their needs and problems are. Need a conversation to find out how students use tech. Co-producing with students is best practice. Graduating students struggling to find employment could be employed on a short internship as mentors for new entrants.
3. C19 impact varies – BAME is not a homogeneous group. Home may not be a safe/more comfortable place (especially for LGBT+ students). Risk from C19 is higher for BAME. Add in context of current heightened tensions around issues of racial equality. Think about comms and messaging. Look at wellbeing issues and community response to BAME students returning to Uni.
4. Online – safe space online as well as physically safe space. What protections are there? Visible reporting mechanism for racial/hate crime incidents, and visible action taken as a result of reporting. Small group working recommended. Advantaged students are more likely to cope well and set up their own groups/ways of working – which is potentially exclusive.
5. Sense of belonging – determinant of success. Induction – student societies, events are heavily dependent on the physical. Fewer international students likely to mean fewer 'people like me' on campus which increases the challenge of inclusion. Embed E&D, reporting of racism in induction materials. Follow up non-engagement at induction.
6. Can we take advantage of changes we've been forced to make to the curriculum, to work more flexibly and introduce change more quickly? Keep the 'good bits' and build on them to make curriculum more inclusive. Don't just translate current curriculum to online, redesigning curriculum based on past and own experience. Being forced to consider different ways to teach and assess could lead to better choice of method of teaching and method of assessment. Suggestion of offering choice to students within a framework rather than a blanket approach.
7. Open up the race conversation. Leadership work with SU, academics, student engagement team. Coventry taking an E&D council approach rather than through the committee structure. Equality work needs to be mainstream and Equality Impact assessments to be meaningful.