Advancing
Equality Diversity Inclusion

Imperial College London

Exploring race, racism and race equity at Imperial College London

December 2019

Contents

Background

Introduction

Imperial College London is a member of the national Race Equality Charter (REC). As part of the REC self-assessment, surveys were run with staff and students in early 2019 to explore their experiences of race, racism and race equity at the College. Following the analysis of those surveys, Advancing-EDI was commissioned to explore the findings in more depth through qualitative interviews and focus groups. This report is a summary of that research.

Methodology

Separate discussion guides were developed for staff and students, based on the survey findings (Annex 1). They were a guide only, and the discussions took a more fluid approach, allowing participants to focus on other areas they felt were important, whilst also covering the main themes identified by the surveys.

Four dates were advertised throughout October and November 2019 covering the South Kensington Campus (two days), Hammersmith Campus (one day) and St Mary's Campus (one day). On each day there was an option to participate in a:

- Staff focus group
- Student focus group
- Face-to-face interview
- Telephone interview

The Imperial College EDI Team had previously consulted with staff and students and agreed that the focus groups should be open to anyone, regardless of their ethnicity. They wanted white staff and students to be involved in the debate, both to understand their perspectives, and to be involved in implementing solutions.

The interviews provided a mechanism for participating anonymously. They were 1-2-1, and either face-to-face with just the participant and the interviewer, or over the telephone with just the participant and the interviewer.

Participants

A total of 45 people were involved in the research, comprising:

- Six students: four undergraduate students and two PhD students, all from a minority ethnic background, and five women, one man.
- 39 staff members
    - o 27 professional services:

- 17 women of colour
- 6 white women
- 2 men of colour
- 2 white men
  - 12 academics
    - 6 women of colour
    - 2 white women
    - 2 men of colour
    - 2 white men

We had significantly more involvement from women than men, and more involvement from professional services staff than academics.

All participants were asked to complete a confidentiality agreement (attached at Annex 2), and will be sent a copy of this report.

Findings

Sense of belonging

"It's superficially inclusive. Everything personal is shut away, you don't bring yourself to work…you come in as a human but you're dehumanised when you're here."

"Academia is narrated by western society…the culture, language, behaviours. You have to join with it to fit in"

Lack of diversity

One of the overwhelming issues raised was representation:

"I have an ongoing joke with my husband about how many Black people I've seen [that day]"

Participants noted that Imperial seems diverse when you look at it as a whole, but actually:

- There is a lack of understanding that 'BME' is an umbrella term, and just because you have a lot of, for example, people of Indian heritage, does not mean you have a lot of people from Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage, and within those communities there is also a lot of diversity that may not be reflected in the College.

- There are a lot of international staff and students, but not as much diversity amongst UK staff and students. One participant highlighted that the College's outreach activities exacerbate this, and there is a lack of focus on improving ethnic diversity, and there is a need to consider Black communities in particular.

Participants consistently highlighted the paucity of Black students and Black academics. One student commented on being "shocked" when they started their course. Another said:

"I thought I'd be one of the few, but I didn't expect to be the only one [on their course]"

More than one Black student participant specifically stated they had researched the African and Caribbean Society in advance of starting, knowing they would need to find a place to fit in. Ultimately, they want to see Black academics and more Black students.

Another student said:

"I was naïve. I thought it would be a microcosm of the real world, but it's not. It's a microcosm of academia"

Staff too mentioned a sense of isolation. Where they were working in primarily white teams, participants mentioned feeling lonely. One participant was able to cope due to coming from a predominantly white environment, but they still said:

"The environment is quite intense and homogenous"

Physical environment

One participant commented that a display was created in the South Kensington campus to celebrate women at the College, but the only women included were white women, which was alienating for women of colour.

Another participant mentioned that the College induction includes a quiz on famous people from Imperial, but again, they are all white.

It was also noted that the very name 'Imperial' is problematic as it is rooted in empire and colonialism. Another example provided was a student society which is apparently still named after a slave owner.

The College needs to embed ethnic diversity and intersectionality into the fabric of the College so that events, communications and images are more inclusive.

Community, networking and events

A sense of community, or lack thereof, was raised consistently by staff and students. Participants referred to a culture where

"it doesn't have a family or community feel about it…there's lots of good work being done but…bringing people together is missing"

In the student focus group, it was noted that:

"This is a place to work, I'm happy to go home at the end of the day"

Another student said:

"It doesn't have the social life of other universities – it doesn't have the bustling uni life"

It was consistently noted that:

- there is a lack of communal spaces
- team working is not necessarily encouraged, with some participants suggesting they would benefit just from having straight forward team meetings.

Participants described a general culture across the College which would benefit from a greater sense of community and belonging. This culture is then exacerbated for people of colour.

Multi-campus events

Where events are organised, there needs to be consideration of the different Imperial campuses. Events tend to be in South Kensington, and even the EDI team being based only in South Kensington creates a bias. The College needs an EDI team/presence on each campus.

Events also need to be accessible, with consideration of the day of the week/time of day. Consider using technology more so people can join remotely.

Networking

Participants highlighted the importance of being able to network in a safe space. There was a mixed response to the BAME Staff Network, some people had heard of it, but others had not. This needs more momentum and resource to ensure it can provide support, and a sense of catharsis and belonging to staff of colour.

One staff member highlighted how fortunate the students were to have all of the cultural societies. They wanted staff to have access to a similar level of support, or for the student societies to consider organising some events with staff.

Arts and humanities

Several participants mentioned the impact of Imperial having a STEMM focus without any arts and humanities. They suggested this led to a different culture on campus, and a different level of engagement and discussion around issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, and in the general culture of events.

They suggested the College look to integrate a wider range of disciplines through events generally, which may lead to wider engagement, and a more nuanced understanding of race and race equity.

"No-one knows anything about anything that's not science-based. How can you therefore talk about important things like race"

One student mentioned Horizons courses and suggested these could be useful to the College, but they should also consider decolonising the content.

Proactively making people welcome

One participant described their surprise as a recent starter that there was no EDI training, no induction and a cold welcome from their team. The experience has knocked their professional confidence. The intersection of race, class and being a member of professional services (rather than an academic) has left them feeling isolated and vulnerable.

One participant highlighted the Imperial culture that very little would be done for staff, as the focus is on students:

> *"Students come first"*

Senior management commitment

Lack of progress

Participants consistently highlighted that research and reports like this have been commissioned previously, but nothing has been done and no change has been seen. Participants were therefore sceptical that their participation in this research would lead to anything more than box-ticking.

On a positive note, they have taken part regardless, highlighting their commitment to the College and their hope that there could be commitment to advancing race equality.

Participants (including white participants) consistently reported inappropriate behaviour and comments from their colleagues, and sometimes from students. But they also highlighted the difficulty they face in challenging the behaviour, or where they have challenged things, not wanting to always be the one doing the challenging. One participant commented:

> *"There are staff who have been here 20 years….how do you change them?"*

Participants want to see a clear race equality strategy developed, with genuine institutional commitment demonstrated through the resourcing of an ambitious action plan underpinning the strategy.

Many participants highlighted that progress has been made on gender. They want to see the same progress made in race.

Ivory tower

Participants consistently described senior managers as sitting separately, with no real dialogue with the wider staffing body:

> *"Senior managers are so distant…they are literally up there!"*

One focus group expressed concern that senior managers would not know how to interpret this report:

"When you don't look like us, you don't know how difficult it is…they don't understand what it's like"

They noted that change had been made with gender, but the same effort has not been evidenced in tackling racial inequalities. It was also noted that other London universities had progressed more in race equality, and Imperial was falling behind.

Participants consistently mentioned the whiteness of the senior team. One participant said

"Statistically, how can the senior team still be entirely white? It doesn't make sense. There are talented people that could be promoted…it must be by design."

One focus group wanted the opportunity to speak directly with senior managers. They want more open communication and more genuine commitment and willingness to improve the representation and progression of staff of colour.

Participants suggested that

- senior managers need more communication with the BAME Staff Network
- there should be a call out asking for volunteers to speak with senior managers about race and racism directly
- any conversation needs participants from across all campuses.

Need for a strategy and accountability framework

There needs to be an ambitious College-wide strategy to tackle racial inequalities. BAME staff need to be included, but without being over-burdened, or expected to lead the work, on top of their day job.

The College needs someone whose role it is to follow-up and do something proactively. Participants suggested there is a culture of dancing around the subject:

"the aim is not to offend anyone, but you're not really addressing it in anyway. It needs to be about impact, not intent."

Equality and diversity

Participants noted that there used to be face-to-face equity, diversity and inclusion training, but this had all moved online.

Participants commented that the EDI team was too small for the size of the College and more resource was needed for EDI as a whole. Some participants suggested there should be an EDI presence on each Imperial campus to help provide consistency.

One of the focus groups highlighted that some divisional EDI committees do exist, but they are not consistent. More support and accountability are needed to ensure departments are taking race equality more seriously.

Recruitment and selection

It was consistently noted that:

- some roles are not advertised and/or they have been ringfenced for particular individuals:

> *"You can't have people just appearing in jobs!"*

- nepotism is inherent in the recruitment process

One participant described the recruitment process as "broken". To the point that people were beginning to test the system by sending in CVs with fake, traditionally Anglo-Saxon names to see if they would be shortlisted.

Another described seeing role descriptions manipulated to ensure specific individuals were not qualified to apply and/or to ensure someone else can apply, and is the strongest applicant for the job.

Interview panels

Interview panels were often problematic as the people making the decisions are all white. Several participants highlighted that if you walk into an interview and the whole panel is white, it highlights that the decision makers and those that hold the power within the university are white.

One participant described an interview they had following a telephone interview:

"You walk into the room and there's a fleeting moment when you're not what they expected. The voice doesn't match the colour of my skin…and then you have to prove yourself all over again."

It was also noted that:

- There is no mandatory training for recruitment panellists
- HR are not involved in recruitment panels; the process is devolved entirely to departments.

Positive action and data monitoring

There was a mixed response to the idea of positive action. One focus group in particular expressed cynicism over the use of data monitoring and why the College collected the information. Several participants of colour said they did not complete the information because they wanted to know, and for their colleagues to know, that they had got the job on merit, and not "because of the colour of my skin".

If the College is planning any form of positive action (and other participants were supportive of this), it needs to be implemented and communicated carefully. There needs to be a distinction between positive action and positive discrimination, and it needs to be made clear that all appointments are based on merit.

These conversations also suggested the College may have a high rate of staff not sharing their ethnic background. It may be worth:

- having a communications campaign around data monitoring
- confirming how the information is stored, shared and accessed
- providing examples of how monitoring data has led to change within the College

Career development

> *"It's one thing getting through the door, it's another to exist and thrive"*

Participants noted that the numbers of staff of colour dwindle quickly along the pipeline. Significant effort is needed in getting people in, retaining them and ensuring they can progress.

"Too many colleagues [of colour] leave because they know if they stay, they won't progress"

Line management

Some participants mentioned the importance of line managers for staff progression, and the need for the College to emphasise their importance, and the need for managers to take the role seriously.

Participants suggested face-to-face training would be useful for line managers to build their confidence and capability. Particularly around development conversations with staff and development reviews.

In addition, it was suggested that line managers need to have race equality training, which should include training on racial microaggressions, using real examples from staff and students at Imperial.

Progression

"Some staff [talented staff of colour] have been here 10 years and not progressed"

"You're allowed to get so far…[and then people of colour are blocked]"

It was noted that often you cannot move up unless you have specific types of experience, which are difficult to gain in your current role. It would be beneficial to formalise methods for people to go on secondments, and temporary promotions, so they are able to gain those skills. It was noted that this is particularly important for professional services staff, who need more opportunities to move about and to develop transferable skills.

One participant noted that many positions specifically state that 'women are particularly welcome to apply' but there is nothing about people of colour.

Participants noted that the College often moves straight to external recruitment, before considering whether there are internal people who could be promoted and/or developed and promoted. This is demoralising for internal staff who feel overlooked, and potentially a missed opportunity for the College.

Make it standard practice that before external recruitment is approved, there must have been consideration of internal candidates.

Training

Participants spoke of knowing some people who are told there is no budget for training, while others (usually white colleagues) are sent on expensive development programmes.

A contributing factor to the above was the approach some managers took to only allowing (some) staff to attend training that is directly related to their current job. It limits people's ability to acquire the skills they need for their next role.

One participant highlighted a situation where a competitive development course was advertised by email mid-week. There were no selection criteria, it was allocated on a first come first served basis, which made it reliant on word of mouth to know in advance that the course was going to be advertised that day. It disadvantaged anyone who did not have a particular type of network or grapevine, as well as anyone who was out of the office on the day it was advertised.

Other participants described internal courses as condescending:

"it's not what I would call development"

Another commented:

"I don't need to go on a Word or Excel course. I need to get the skills for the next rung up the ladder…Grade 4 is the glass ceiling. Grade 4 is difficult, 5 is incredibly difficult, 6 is unheard of [for a person of colour]…it's not a supportive place."

One participant had been on Impact, a training programme specifically for BAME staff, but they had felt frustrated by it. One of the main drawbacks was the mentoring (described in the next section), but they also felt the mainstream leadership programme would be better, as it was accredited.

Mentoring

Participant awareness of mentoring varied, and it was suggested that it could be better advertised.

Other issues included:

-   the ethnicity of the mentors.

It was highlighted that there is a paucity of mentors of colour, and as a consequence staff often have to have a white mentor. One participant described this as encouraging a "slave master mentality".

They also highlighted the issue with not being able to discuss race equality with their mentor. They cannot seek advice on how to overcome racial inequalities from someone who has never experienced them.

There is a need to have someone to have an informal conversation with and discuss the issues experienced, whether that is a mentor or through another channel.

-   The need to have a sponsor

One participant highlighted that they did not feel they needed a mentor, but would benefit from having someone who could assist them through sponsorship. Which might be a model the College could consider.

Student experience

Outreach

Some participants suggested the College could improve outreach activities, both in relation to who/which schools are targeted, and in improving the outreach itself.

As mentioned above, the Black students involved cited their reliance on the African Caribbean Society, and research participants highlighted the need for prospective students to be able to imagine themselves within the College.

Another student participant also cited their own experience where they found the presence of students reassuring, and it was actually the factor that made them choose Imperial over a competing institution.

Student presence, and ethnically diverse student presence could be beneficial.

Teaching and learning

Student participants differed about the relevance of decolonising the curriculum for Imperial, due to its STEMM nature.

However, multiple examples were given by both staff and students of inappropriate case studies, examples and general comments from lecturers which highlight that work is needed in diversifying pedagogy and curricula.

Some students highlighted relevant examples within STEMM where decolonisation was relevant, and were keen for that to be progressed. It was suggested that student induction might be a good time to discuss equality, diversity and inclusion with students, and make them more aware. The importance of race equity, and ethnically diverse research teams could also be built into modules on ethics, which should be mandatory.

Role models

All of the students highlighted the lack of diversity in academic staff, and particularly the paucity of Black academics.

One student said:

> *"I spend a lot of time on placement and last year met a Black woman consultant – we gasped…it was life-changing"*

Another student cited two recent race equality events they had attended which had gone some way to compensating for the lack of academic diversity. They had been able to see successful, ethnically diverse people on campus, talking to them, and it had given them "a boost".

Socialising

In general students were happy and got on well with their course mates, but the idea of needing common ground with people came up.

One student suggested there was also a class element to some of this, they gave the example of the College having a shooting club and one of their peers owning a horse. Both of these things were a long way from their own hobbies and interests. They said:

"making friends is easy, making good friends is hard"

This resonated with another student who described their 'go to' group of friends.

In the section below on everyday racism there are example of students saying inappropriate things to students of colour, indicating that race is a significant factor in the way students of colour socialise, and all students would benefit from race equality training, perhaps as part of their induction.

Everyday racism

Participants highlighted many examples of everyday racism, or racial microaggressions. These included:

- a staff member being asked to use an abbreviated version of their name, because their actual name was deemed to be too long;
- a line manager having a long conversation with a staff member incorrectly thinking they were another staff member of colour;
- exceptions and opportunities being made available for some staff (usually white) over others.
- A Chinese colleague was asked if they knew how to use a knife and fork
- One Black student had experienced other students constantly wanted to touch their hair and a second had been asked if they wash their hair
- A student hearing in a conversation "I'm just not that into Black girls"
- A student hearing another student referring to the Black people on their course as "The NBA players"

Challenging everyday racism

"If you raise your head above the parapet, you are going to get it hacked off"

"You don't want to be angry because they probably don't know…but its not our role to educate them…and you still want to be friends with them"

Participants highlighted the double-edged sword of discussing and vocalising these issues:

- a safe space is usually with other BAME people who understand and offer support, but while this provides catharsis, it does not challenge or change the behaviour.
- Participants' experiences of challenging the behaviour has invariably ended badly, by being told "you're too sensitive" or "they didn't mean it like that".

"No way to challenge it without putting myself at a disadvantage"

One participant commented:

"it doesn't feel worth fighting that battle...even if I do it in a kind, gentle way people will be like "he's such a nice guy...he's not bad....he just says inappropriate things sometimes""

Another commented:

" You try and involve white people in this process and even the ones with the best intentions...you get push back, "I'm not like that", or they use buzz words and key phrases and claim to be allies, but that can be worse."

"It's a lot worse to bring it up than just accept it and move on"

One participant, who has challenged colleagues previously commented:

"I look at the person and decide if it's worth it"

Another said:

"I will stop anyone and say "let's have a conversation about what you've just said and how it's been received"

Coping strategies limit development opportunities

Both PhD students had faced inappropriate comments and behaviours. One said:

"You're Black but you're also a woman...you feel like people underestimate you. People explain things that don't need explaining. That can happen with other students as well."

Both individuals (who took part on separate days) had employed the same strategy of avoiding particular individuals to avoid uncomfortable situations. However, both acknowledged that this was potentially going to hold them back, as they were avoiding some of the people who could help with their development and progression.

Instigating discussions and solutions in a supportive environment

When asked about how to go about challenging everyday racism, one focus group highlighted:

"Why should we [staff of colour] come up with the solutions? Get a group of 'the fragile'...white people. Ask them what would make them feel able to have conversations [and be challenged]"

It is important to also note that two participants of colour had also specifically taken part in the research to highlight that they had not faced any racial discrimination while working at the College. The point was raised that any work that does happen needs to be implemented in a supportive environment without alienating anyone.

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Reporting incidents

In general participants did not know how to report a racist incident. Some participants said they would report an incident (assuming they could find out how) but there was general scepticism that anything would be done as a result:

"These things don't really get resolved…it's hard and people don't really know what to do, so they say they've done what they can."

Where participants knew of the process, or knew of people who had made a complaint, it had not been well handled. One example was given of a colleague of colour who was forced to leave after making a complaint, and anecdotally participants suggested that incidents do not get to the complaints stage, as they are hushed up and brushed under the carpet.

In relation to everyday racism it was highlighted that it is very difficult to prove and to report. Formal reporting mechanisms are unlikely to capture these issues, despite them being frequent and widespread.

Involving more white staff and students in race equality work

It is positive that white staff did attend focus groups and interviews. There is a willingness from some white staff to engage and an acknowledgement that there are issues which need to be addressed.

In addition, one participant emphasised the importance for them, as a white academic, of better understanding race and race equity to ensure their research is as relevant as possible. They highlighted the importance of diverse research teams and teams with knowledge and understanding of race equity, and suggested this be flagged across the College.

Based on the feedback from staff of colour it is apparent that the majority of white staff (and students) are not engaged and are very unclear about the racial inequalities which exist, racial microaggressions and their own white privilege.

Several participants mentioned that where events are organised, very few white people attend, and the events end up 'preaching to the converted'. It was also noted that senior managers are very rarely seen at equality and diversity events, which sets a tone for the College. During the dates for this research the College hosted an event with the MP David Lammy, and participants were surprised that the event was not more popular.

Two focus groups suggested having another focus group with white people to find out more about what makes them nervous when talking about race, and managing staff of colour. If the College is more aware of what is preventing the conversation, they can help overcome the barriers.

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In support of this, one participant highlighted that their manager made a real effort to celebrate the diversity of the team, to be interested in people's background, and made them feel comfortable to talk about their culture in the workplace. If more managers felt comfortable with this, they could create a better team environment.

One white participant who was comfortable talking about race highlighted their shock at some of their colleagues:

"[they have a] lack of knowledge that what they're saying is offensive"

They also highlighted a significant issue, that often EDI committees lack diversity, which limits their engagement with, and effectiveness in advancing race equity. They concluded that:

"There are so many things that could be done, but so little is being done. If I were staff of colour, I would feel really sad"

Recommendations

Training

Various types of training were suggested, but all were caveated with the need for them to be high quality, mandatory and regularly refreshed, rather than one-off training packages:

- Allies training
- Unconscious bias training
- Active bystander training
- Line manager training
- Face-to-face EDI training

Some Universities are beginning to implement 1-day face-to-face race equality training, which might be useful. It can cover language, terminology, microaggressions, white privilege and allyship. It might also be worth holding a focus group specifically with white people to discuss this, and what they would find useful to include in the training.

Additionally, it was suggested that unconscious bias prompts could be used to remind people, for example through screen savers.

Additionally, consider including race equality within student induction, and the importance of ethnically diverse research and research teams within the ethics module.

Microaggressions

Raising awareness of, and challenging everyday microaggressions is challenging, but would be a useful aim for the College. It was apparent that (like a lot of organisations) the majority of white people do not know what everyday racism is, they perhaps have a view of racism being one-off overt events, caused by a few 'bad people'.

It was suggested that the College create a bank of examples and case studies from real life Imperial staff and students which could be used in training and to highlight the lived experience for staff and students of colour.

Line managers

As the gate keepers to training and development, ensuring line managers are well-trained and aware of race equity is crucial.

It was suggested that people could have a secondary line manager, in the same way PhD students have a secondary supervisor.

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Mentoring

- Consider the ethnic diversity of the current pool of mentors, and ensure staff of colour are able to access a mentor of colour.
- Ensure training for mentors and mentees, and consider having a matching process to improve the chances of the relationship working
- Consider introducing a sponsorship scheme in addition to mentoring so staff of colour can have a (potentially white) sponsor who can help open up opportunities for them.

Outreach

- Could the African Caribbean Society and other cultural societies (if they agree) be funded to get more involved with outreach activities. It could be a way of diversifying those involved, and they perhaps could provide positive role models for prospective students.

Recruitment

- There needs to be greater accountability and transparency in recruitment and selection.
- Recruitment panels need to be ethnically diverse, without over-relying on the same people all the time. It may be worth looking at how UCL have achieved this with their Fair Recruitment Specialists.
- The Student Union has successfully changed the profile of their staff through recruitment and selection training, diverse interview panels and anonymous shortlisting, from which the College may want to learn.

Development

- The College should implement a training and development policy across the College.
- Each department should have a training and development panel for transparency and consistency, which happens in some departments already. The panels should be ethnically diverse and gender balanced, trained, and there should be clear guidance on what type of courses can be funded, and what evidence to provide of need. It provides an independent voice and a collective decision, rather than relying only on line managers.

Induction

- Consider greater emphasis on local level induction, so new starters are not reliant on waiting for corporate induction. Emphasise the need to foster a sense of belonging.

Team Building

- Encourage managers to have regular team meetings, and to emphasise team building.

Events

- Consider the forthcoming programme of events at the College and whether there is scope to consider how they will bring people together and create a sense of community for staff and students across all campuses.
- Consider how the arts and humanities can be further utilised and embedded within the College.
- Ensure consideration is given to all of the College campuses

Physical environment

- Conduct an imagery audit of the College, including physical imagery on campuses (pictures, building names etc..), the website, publications and the prospectus
- Consider what communal spaces are available for staff to interact and whether that can be improved.
- Reflect on the name Imperial College, not to necessarily change the name, but to acknowledge the historical context and the different impact of the name on people of colour, compared with white people.

Intersectionality

- Consider offering race equality training to Athena SWAN SATS to enable them to consider intersectionality within their gender discussions.
- One participant suggested the College could usefully engage with this: https://leanin.org/women-in-the-workplace-2019?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=wiw

Further engagement

- Ensure staff and students of colour are able to scrutinise the REC action plan and are involved in the development of the actions.
- Do a call for participants to speak directly with senior managers about the severity of racial inequalities within the College.
- Ensure the BAME staff network is funded and supported administratively to be as effective as possible in providing a forum, and collective voice for staff of colour.
- Involve relevant student societies in the development of the REC action plan.

Annex 1: Discussion areas

Discussion areas for staff

The areas outlined below have been raised through the recent REC survey. They are a guide only, they are not intended to constrain the conversation. If there is something relevant that is not covered, then please do bring it up.

Diversity of the workforce

What can Imperial do to diversify its workforce?

What should Imperial be aiming to achieve?

Are there any role-specific issues which need to be tackled?

How can recruitment and selection processes be as effective as possible?

Staff progression

How does race impact on staff relationships with line managers?

How can line managers be most effective in supporting BAME staff?

How can development opportunities, for example, training, conferences, collaborations, temporary promotions, be allocated transparently?

How can transparency be assured in promotions?

Sense of belonging

Can the physical environment be improved? For example, the diversity of imagery, names of buildings and rooms, catering?

Can the working culture at Imperial be improved?

What can be done to make BAME staff and students feel a greater sense of belonging?

Can the process for reporting racial discrimination be improved?

Talking about race

How can conversations of race and racial inequalities be opened up within Imperial?

How can subtle, everyday racial microaggressions be tackled?

Discussion areas for students

The areas outlined below have been raised through the recent REC survey. They are a guide only, they are not intended to constrain the conversation. If there is something relevant that is not covered, then please do bring it up.

Diversity of Imperial and surrounding area

What impact does the diversity of the staff and student body have on your experiences?

Is Imperial as diverse as you expected/more diverse than you expected it to be?

Do you feel comfortable in the surrounding areas and/or on campus?

Sense of belonging

Can the physical environment be improved? For example, the diversity of imagery, names of buildings and rooms, catering?

What can be done to make BAME staff and students feel a greater sense of belonging?

Can the process for reporting racial discrimination be improved?

How can the Students' Union further consider advancing race equality?

How inclusive are student events?

Teaching and learning

Can more be done to diversify what is taught, how it is taught and how it is assessed?

If so, what?

Do you have a good relationship with your teaching staff and personal tutor?

Are you happy with the quality and quantity of feedback you receive on your work?

Talking about race

How can conversations of race and racial inequalities be opened up within Imperial?

How can subtle, everyday racial microaggressions be tackled?

Annex 2: Confidentiality agreement

This provides an agreement between you and the researcher to confirm that you understand the aims of the interviews/focus groups and you are happy for the information you provide to be used in the ways discussed above.

Our pledge to you:

- Nothing that identifies you will be shared or passed on to anyone at Imperial
- You can withdraw from the interview/focus group at any time.
- An anonymised summary of the key themes and recommendations will be shared with all participants, and the REC self-assessment Team, so that actions can be developed and implemented.
- Any hand-written notes taken during the interviews/focus groups will be shredded once the findings have been consolidated.
- The participant lists will be deleted after the interviews/focus groups, we will only share the overall number of participants, the months and years of the interviews/focus groups, and the overall anonymised summary notes.
- We may use the findings and key quotes in other research to advance equality, diversity and inclusion, but it will never be possible to identify you as an individual.

Your pledge to us:

- You will take part in the focus groups/interviews with a view to assisting the institution with the aims set out above.
- You will respect the other focus group participants, giving everyone a chance to participate.
- Following the session, you will not disclose details of the other focus group participants, or the discussions that take place
- You know that you can withdraw from the interview or focus group at any time.

Please put an 'X' in this box to confirm you understand and agree to the ☐ above:

Please type your name below, with the date, and return it to Claire Herbert: claire@advancing-EDI.com .

NAME:

DATE: