



Senate

Paper Title	Are promotion policy and procedure impacting staff from minorities adversely?
Outcome requested	An equalities review of QMUL’s promotion policy and procedure conducted through ethnic minority staff (PhDs, ECRs, Ls, SLs, Readers, Professors), trade unions and student union, with Principal as key stakeholder.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>While students of colour collectively make up the majority of students at QM (over 60%), staff structures fail to mirror this diversity with senior management, senior academics and senior administrative staff lacking racial diversity. The importance of BME role models for BME students has an important developmental role; it can help progress relevant pedagogy and lead to better learning outcomes for BME students. Further, the lack of career progression for BME staff can negatively impact staff morale, heighten stress and lead to BME staff leaving the institution or sector altogether sustaining the gap between BME student numbers and staff ratio, particularly at professorial levels.</p> <p>Racial inequality in QMUL is documented and published. At the lower rungs of the paygrade, we find people of colour in the majority – 55% workers of colour occupy paygrade 1, representing many of our cleaners (mostly black women) and security staff. As we move up the pay scale to Lecturer entry-level point 5, that figure drops to 23% and then nosedives to 8.96% at paygrade 8 that represents Professors. Looking further upwards, executive management does not employ a single person of colour in the position of Head of School or Institute, VC, Dean, Principal (QMUL Equalities Data, 2017). As a result, the panels which make promotions are white and diversity only comes through observers who may not be in an empowered position to make interventions and recommendations to a panel with senior management roles. This may render they role as onlookers against the dominance of a White panel with leadership roles.</p> <p>The EDI group as part of QMUL HR acknowledges these problematic statistics and has introduced some initiatives to address institutional racial discrimination including: targeted mentoring (B-Mentor), addressing cultural barriers (Let’s Talk About Race events) and introducing new policy (Dignity at Work policy currently being drafted). But these fail to adequately address structural impediments which sustain low promotion prospects for BME staff.</p> <p>Despite equalities work introduced by HR, uptake of these initiatives by academics of colour is either poor (e.g. Let’s Talk About Race) or due to our very low numbers of academics of colour occupying grade 8 and above, lacks Professors of colour</p>

	<p>involvement (e.g. B-Mentor). Notwithstanding the challenges about opening up conversations about racial inequality in QMUL, there is, I propose, an area of institutional practice that has so far been overlooked as potentially contributing to discrimination and inequality: our promotion policy and procedure. Given QMUL's decreasing representation of academics of colour as paygrade increases, reviewing promotion policy is key to equalising racial representation across paygrades and simultaneously offers QMUL a material and sound practice, that if reviewed and revised, may have the power to positively impact the careers of academics of colour with immediate effect.</p> <p>Athena Swan accreditation spearheaded an engagement with understanding gender and how gender inequality materialises in institutional practice and policy. Race is unlike gender and requires specific and nuanced analyses that integrate the experiences of academics of colour as well as reflecting recent studies that show us how and where racial discrimination occurs. While academics of colour wait for QMUL to kickstart its involvement with the Race Equality Charter Mark accreditation, their careers, development and retention in QMUL continues to suffer and is potentially being undermined by inequitable promotion policies. Initiating an Academics of Colour (AoC) led working group on promotions will enable QMUL to pilot race-equality policy reviews in our university and also provide a forum for AoC to be part of changes that might impact their careers in positive ways.</p>
<p>Questions for Senate to consider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can we start a review of the promotions policy and procedure that is evidence-based and led by academics of colour working group? i.e. to understand the extent and reasons for the lack of progression for BME academics. - If agreed, can we expect that the review and recommendations be time-bound and that proposed changes to policy are implemented in time for the next round of promotions? (This may require phasing in changes over a short period of time)
<p>Regulatory/statutory reference points</p>	<p>Equalities Act 2010, Race Equality Charter Mark</p>
<p>Strategy and risk</p>	<p>8-month strategy</p> <p>Month 1 – Recruit academics of colour to form working group with remit to conduct review of promotions policy and procedure. Ensure representation of paygrades, gender identity, U.K and overseas staff and ethnicities. Define inequalities (and racial inequality) and equalities work (and racial equality).</p> <p>Month 2 – Set parameters and scope of review. Set time-bound actions tied to a methodology. Metrics/data to be determined: e.g. numbers of BME staff who apply for a promotion; who are interviewed; who are awarded a promotion. Numbers of BME staff who are awarded conference funding; career development roles (e.g. PhD students; international officer; research director; exam officer). Numbers of BME staff who are on interview panels, who are on promotion panels. Qualitative focus groups and interviews with a cross-section of staff.</p> <p>Month 3&4 – Data collection, analyses and formulate recommendations.</p>

	<p>Month 5 – Refine recommendations and present findings to unions, QMSE and HR.</p> <p>Month 6 – Review recommendations in light of feedback.</p> <p>Month 7 – Finalise recommendations and implementation strategy.</p> <p>Month 8 – Training, communications and support to implement new policy and procedure.</p> <p>Risks include:</p> <p>Risk 1: Race being a taboo subject and AoCs not feeling safe coming forward; AoCs being unable or unwilling to participate. These risks may be addressed by the Principal giving an explicit and consistent message to all staff that racial inequality exists and that QM is dedicated to finding out why it exists and addressing it.</p> <p>Risk 2: The working group not representing ethnic and racial intersectionality. This risk may be addressed by a) advertising and active campaigning that encourages BME staff to join the working group, b) awarding some resource to the working group (e.g. a number of workload hours, providing administrative support), c) using established networks among AoCs that may be informal, but can be harnessed to form a working group.</p>
Reporting/ consideration route for the paper	Given the sensitive nature of the issues, the working group should report directly to the Principal.
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