

ST GEORGE'S UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

ANTI RACISM STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Statement is to raise awareness of racism in the context of power, oppression and privilege and how this leads to institutional racism
- 1.2 The statement also lays out the commitment of St George's, University of London (SGUL) to dismantling institutional racism, where it exists, to work towards providing a work and study environment that is anti-racist, culturally inclusive and free from racial discrimination and harassment.
- 1.3 This statement of intent is to complement the current [SGUL Strategy 2017-2022](#). It is anticipated that it will be integrated in the strategy beyond 2022
- 1.4 This statement applies to all staff members, students, people seeking to work or study at SGUL, volunteers, placement providers, service providers, contractors, customers/clients and visitors.
- 1.5 It is intended that all SGUL policies align to this Statement, embedding the University's anti-racism commitment within them.

SECTION 2 - BACKGROUND

2.1 - The United Kingdom is a multi-ethnic nation and SGUL is embedded in an inner-London suburb with a diverse community. The student population at SGUL also reflects this diversity.

2.2 - Historically the ideology of racism was devised and used to legitimise the atrocities meted out to Black and Indigenous peoples during the period of the Atlantic Slave Trade and European colonization which still has an impact on many countries today. In the UK, the perception of a superior race has resulted in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people being discriminated against, disenfranchised, underrepresented and undervalued in private and public spheres.

2.3 – SGUL acknowledges that racism exists across the world, particularly in post-colonial societies with large white populations made up predominantly of settlers from Europe. SGUL also acknowledges that as recently as the late 1980's the medical school was actively discriminating on the basis of race (Commission for Racial Equality 1988). Therefore, racism still exists in society and at SGUL.

SECTION 3 – GLOSSARY

3.1 - For the purposes of this Statement of commitment:

- I. **Racism** – Racism is an ideology based on the erroneously perceived or desired superiority of a race and has as a goal that through implementation; social, political and economic advantage is derived for the benefit of the oppressive race. Racism is usually manifested as a system of injustices supported by institutional authority and power that re-enforce the belief of inequality by the marginalisation of the other race(s). Race, under this system, refers to skin colour and other physical features; these are used to rank the status of human beings (Janice Howard and Tafawa Williams, 2020)¹.
- II. **Racial discrimination** - refers to a person or group being treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation because of their race, colour, ethnic or

¹ This definition comes out of extensive research and has been used due to the limited provision of existing definitions in recognising the true reality of racism.

national origins whether directly or indirectly because of operation of any practice, criterion or provision. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination Article 1 Part 1 states it is: “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms; in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” The [Equality Act 2010](#) makes it unlawful to discriminate against others, based on these protected characteristics (direct, indirect or by perception or association)

III. **Victimisation** occurs when a person is put at a disadvantage or suffers reprisal for making, in good faith, a complaint of bullying or harassment, or for supporting someone else who has made a complaint. Victimisation could result in disciplinary action, regardless of the outcome of the original complaint.

3.2 - Racism can be both (i) personal and (ii) institutional. Racism can also be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional.

i. **Personal racism:** These forms of racism can either be direct and identifiable and manifested through harassment and offensive behaviour or can be subtle and covert that operate through microaggressions.

The following provide some examples of **Direct and identifiable** forms of racism (NB this is not an exhaustive list)

- a. Physical assault against a person or group due to their race, colour, ethnic or national origins;
- b. Derogatory name calling, insults, ridiculing and racist jokes;
- c. Racist graffiti;
- d. Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia;
- e. Verbal abuse and threats related to race;
- f. Incitement of others to behave in a racist way;
- g. Racist comments within the context of meetings, teaching sessions.
- h. Racist comments online and in social media posts

The following provide some examples of **indirect and subtle (microaggressions)** forms of racism (NB this is not an exhaustive list)

- a. Assuming someone of colour is in a lower paid job
- b. Regularly mispronouncing someone’s name (that is not the dominant culture/language)
- c. Communications that subtly exclude thoughts, experiences or feelings of someone of colour (e.g. not show eye contact, move to the next person)
- d. Hair touching.
- e. Asking where someone is from implying that they are foreigners.

ii. **Institutional racism:**

- a. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) defines institutional racism as: “The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.” It is further defined as “the differential access to the goods and services and opportunities of society by race... codified in our institutions of custom, practice, and law... Institutionalised racism manifests itself both in material conditions and in access to power.” (Jones, 2000) It includes informal systems, rules and actions that result in “racially inequitable outcomes”. (Flynn et al., 2017)

- b. Racist behaviour is a form of bullying. If the individual racist behaviour is treated in isolation without taking into consideration the wider issues and effects of racism, this can be described as institutional racism.
- c. Institutional racism can also be covert and indirect and therefore difficult to identify and address. It is often evident in the common assumptions, beliefs and values that are held in the workplace, that affect people's instinctive responses. It can be demonstrated subconsciously in subtle ways. For instance, comments such as 'that's how it's always done here' or allowing certain behaviours to continue because they have not been challenged before.

SECTION 4 – COMMITMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 SGUL is committed to providing and supporting a work and study environment that:

- i. is inclusive of staff and students from different races, which include not only their background but also family, culture, history and beliefs;
- ii. recognises and embraces the value and benefits of cultural diversity;
- iii. promotes respect and fair and equitable treatment for all staff, students and others associated with the University; and
- iv. is free from unlawful discrimination.

4.2 SGUL is committed to promoting equal opportunity, anti-discrimination, cultural awareness and appropriate conduct for everyone participating in our activities including staff and students through its policies, information resources, recruitment processes, induction/orientation activities, training programmes and support services.

4.3 SGUL is committed to investigating all elements of the student experience including examining and incorporating racial sensitivity and cultural inclusivity; removing bias and racially oppressive resources and/or references and providing a holistic experience that is representative of our whole community

4.4 SGUL is committed to working in partnership with the SGUL Student Union to ensure that these commitments are implemented in all aspects of student experience.

4.5 SGUL is committed to encouraging research and community service activities that raise awareness of and promote cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

4.6 SGUL is committed to decolonising the curriculum, across all courses and programmes. Working collaboratively with students, SGUL will work to ensure our curricula reflects our diverse society and the experiences and histories of those within it.

4.7 SGUL is committed to not tolerating direct and indirect racial discrimination, harassment and/or vilification under any circumstances.

4.8 SGUL is committed to ensuring that regular data analysis of staff and students by race/ethnicity is undertaken and that all data analysis activities disaggregate by race/ethnicity where feasible.

4.9 SGUL is committed to diversifying our staff body, particularly at the senior levels, in relation to both academic and professional services and support roles. Recruitment data will be collected annually and disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Data on staff by ethnicity by seniority and pay grade is also collected annually. These data will inform the continuation of this commitment to diversify our staff body.

4.10 SGUL has a responsibility to raise awareness and develop racial sensitivity and cultural inclusivity through anti-racism training

- 4.11** SGUL will investigate complaints from staff and students, and take appropriate action to ensure that the work and study environments are free from racial discrimination and harassment.
- 4.12** Managers and academic staff are accountable for:
- i. ensuring that their work and/or study environments are culturally inclusive and free from racial discrimination and harassment;
 - ii. supporting and encouraging staff and students to develop cultural sensitivity and inclusivity through appropriate development opportunities and resources;
 - iii. monitoring and ensuring that appropriate conduct and practices are modelled and observed at all times in their work and/or study environments;
 - iv. taking appropriate action if they observe or receive a report of racial discrimination, harassment or vilification; and
 - v. report allegations of racial discrimination, harassment or vilification, and follow recommendations to resolve the matter.
- 4.13** All staff, students and other members of the University community have a responsibility to uphold and act in accordance with the principles of this commitment, promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness, including identifying and bringing attention to acts of racism.
- 4.14** This Statement will be reviewed periodically by [the new race equality group], who will report to Executive Board, at 3-month intervals to ensure it remains relevant, impactful and adhered to.

SECTION 5 – LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND COMPLAINTS

5.1 Related policies at SGUL are:

- i. [Staff recruitment and selection policy](#)
- ii. [Admissions policy](#)
- iii. [Dignity at Work and Study policy](#)
- iv. [Student Concerns and Complaints procedure](#)
- v. [Staff Grievance procedure](#)
- vi. [Student Disciplinary policy](#)
- vii. [Staff Disciplinary procedure](#)
- viii. [Whistle Blowing Policy](#)

- 5.2** Staff and students who experience either racial discrimination or harassment or wish to raise a concern about personal racism are encouraged to report it and seek assistance formally, in accordance with the [Staff Grievance procedure](#) or [Student Concerns and Complaints procedure](#)
- 5.3** Staff and students who wish to raise a concern about institutional racism are encouraged to report it and seek assistance formally via Executive Board - staff/students may report their concerns to any member of Executive Board who would ensure that the issue is taken forward. The Executive Board would review and respond to the issues raised. If staff/students are not satisfied that the issue has been resolved, they are subsequently able to report the issue to SGUL Council, who will expect to see Executive Board's initial response. As a final resort, if a complaint uncovers institutional or systemic racism, the matter may be referred to the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- 5.4** Managers and academic staff handling equity-related complaints are strongly advised to consult the Dignity at Work and Study Policy for advice and assistance on legislation and policy requirements.
- 5.5** Students with equity-related concerns are advised to contact the Students Union for advice and assistance on legislation and relevant policy
- 5.6** Complainants should make their case according to the guidance in the relevant procedure

- 5.7** The investigation will be conducted in accordance with the relevant policy stages and timescales
- 5.8** If staff or students experience racial discrimination while carrying out SGUL related work or study in other organisations, the University will assist them to assert their rights as required. To this end, SGUL will work jointly with the other organisation to investigate the complaint and develop strategies to prevent it from recurring.
- 5.9** The complainant may also be informed of the outcome of the complaint, acknowledging that respect for confidentiality must also be considered.
- 5.10** Complaints of racism will be monitored and outcomes reported periodically to Executive Board.

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