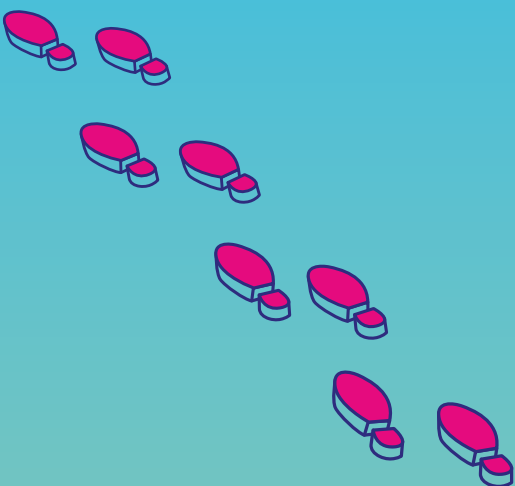




Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Practitioner Toolkit



Background

Go Higher West Yorkshire commissioned Cosmos Engagement Ltd to complete a research investigation into the experiences and challenges of **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)** learners in West Yorkshire, to identify any areas for support they may have and how these may be addressed.

We spoke to **37 BAME learners** (including KS4 and FE learners) **across 5 Ethnicity Segments** via a number of online interviews and discussion groups.



Key Insights

Experiences of Education

BAME participants we spoke to generally expressed **high levels of motivation and engagement with education**, but are impacted by negative experiences around discrimination, racism, and (a lack of) representation. **Black Caribbean, Black African, and Mixed Heritage participants were the most frequent victims of these negative experiences.**

There is often a **tendency towards self segregation** or grouping of participants of similar ethnic backgrounds who feel a connection with one another.

Relationships with teachers are mixed, however Black and Mixed Heritage participants often reported being victims of **unfair stereotyping, labelling and punishment.**

Racism & Diversity

Participants reported experiencing racism in a variety of forms from staff and students, ranging from subtle 'microaggressions' to overt racist slurs.

BAME participants typically pointed to a lack of positive representation of their ethnicity in the media and education.

Diversity of staff was something that BAME participants consistently said was lacking in their schools and something that they wanted more of.

Parental Influence

Parents are often a significant influence in BAME participants' education. While they don't necessarily 'decide' their children's options and pathways, they often have considerable influence.

Parents may not necessarily be fully informed about the structure and options in education in the UK (this was particularly mentioned by Polish participants), particularly those who have moved from overseas and or experience language barriers.

Progression & Support

Participants pointed to a lack of diversity of content when it came to progression support (e.g. the subjects and pathways promoted to them) as well as in the curriculum itself.

In spite of many challenges experienced, BAME participants we spoke to typically hold positive perceptions and intentions toward Higher Education (university specifically).

Diversity of staff was something that BAME participants consistently said was lacking in their schools and something that they wanted more of. BAME participants want to be able to see and seek advice from role models from similar backgrounds that they can relate to.



How To Use The Toolkit

The Toolkit contains guidance and considerations for practitioners when engaging with learners from each of the five ethnicity segments included in our research, based on key insights and recommendations from our discussions with those learners.

The Toolkit highlights some of the key concerns, questions and priorities for learners that are common within specific ethnicity segments and how they are likely to differ between segments, as well as considerations and recommendations for practitioners pre, during and post-engagement.

The Toolkit does not imply that members of specific ethnicities all have the same needs. All individual learners are unique and should always be treated as such. However, these recommendations are based on common educational experiences, cultural factors, priorities and concerns described by learners from those segments.

The Toolkit **does not** specify a limited focus of support for any ethnicity. It also **does not** ask that practitioners fundamentally alter the content being delivered. It simply highlights elements of support or content that may require increased focus, in order to better provide the support that learners are likely to need.




Do...

- Use the Toolkit to better understand the common challenges, concerns and priorities for learners from specific ethnic backgrounds
- Refer to the Toolkit before an engagement as a prompt to increase the focus on key questions for your audience
- Refer to the Toolkit after an engagement to help guide any follow-up actions or check-ins with students
- Treat learners as individuals and tailor your support as far as possible



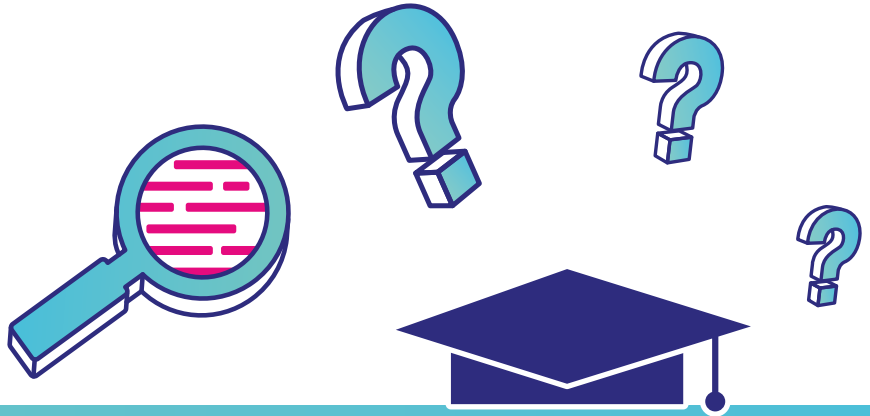
Please do not...

- Assume that learners from any group have the exact same challenges or needs
- Fundamentally change or omit elements of your content or delivery. Learners of different backgrounds are likely to need much of the same information or support (e.g. around university options, student finance, accommodation etc) – these are simply likely to be more or less of a priority for different groups.



It is hoped that by using the recommendations within this Toolkit, practitioners will be better equipped to provide the support that is often needed among learners of various ethnic backgrounds, to support them with their progression.

Black African Learners



KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS learners might have:

I am likely to **put lots of pressure on myself**, how do I manage this... what can I do to manage pressure and stress?

Where are all the **students that look like me?**

How can I make my **personal statement stand out & how do I apply** to university?

Can you **work with my parents as they influence my decision** - they only want me to **study traditional and professional subjects** and careers?

CONSIDERATIONS Prior to event:

I'm likely to be **motivated and engaged in education**. I have **positive perceptions and intentions towards HE** (and particularly University)

Least likely segment to seek progression support from teachers, depending instead on advice from parent

WAYS TO ENGAGE

Activities, content & message:

- **University visits** are the most impactful & **positive activity** for me.
- I am already **positive and motivated towards HE**. Focus any activity on more practical steps. For example, start by focusing on careers (inc. advice) and make links with subject choices
- Showcase a **wider range of progression support** (subjects & pathways) within delivery inc. **non-traditional subjects & careers**
 - I am likely to be already aware of 'traditional' subjects and courses. Show me 'non-traditional' courses and careers - **help me know what's right for me**
- This segment would also benefit from specific guidance around the **application process and pathways to future careers**

CELEBRATING SUCCESS:



- Allow learners to **reflect on themselves, their achievements and the positive aspects** of what they are achieving.
- Getting learners to **understand what 'pressure' is, how it works and how to manage it**, will help at key crucial points of the year (academic pinch points). This segment is likely to apply pressure on themselves to do well.
- **Focus on confidence.** This segment often experiences negative stereotyping and labelling. Encourage students to **feel good about themselves.**

ROLE MODELS:



Please consider the following questions for this segment;

- 1.** Do you have **staff or student ambassadors** who fit this **profile** and can work with these young people?
- 2.** Do you have **staff** in the **wider organisation** (support or lecturing staff) who can **deliver a relevant session / workshop**?
- 3.** Where do these students see **'people like me'** when they work with you?

AREAS OF PRIORITY SUPPORT

for this segment:



- I am likely to highly value **academic success** and **professional careers**
- I am likely to **have a strong vision for the future** and I'm **highly motivated**, my **support should focus on careers and future**, more **specifically the practical steps I need to take** to get there



Key questions and considerations:

- **Diversity of staff** was something BAME learners consistently said was **lacking in their schools** and something that they **wanted more of** – how can you help with supporting this via follow up activity in schools / colleges?
- Follow up work: **inspirational speakers – role models in schools.** Can you think about incorporating elements of this in your **face-to-face work or delivery online**
- **Parental influence is high** for this group, is there some further parental information learners can take away; **focused on less traditional careers?** **What other options are there?**
- Unlikely to have close relationships with teachers so would benefit from seeking **advice from 'other' staff or mentors**, can you **identify who that could be?**

How else to support this segment after the event

Black Caribbean Learners



KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS

learners might have:

I am likely to have **experienced a lot of racism**. Will this be the same at university?

Where are all the **students that look like me**?

I have some **concerns about student finance**. Can you help?

I see a lot of pictures of black students in university materials, this **doesn't feel authentic** to me

CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to event:

I'm **motivated and engaged** in education. I have **positive perceptions and intentions** towards HE (Uni)

I am likely to be aware of racial challenges. **Be honest about diversity** and any related challenges in HE

Teachers & students may have **put me down**. Show me you believe in me and that **I can achieve**

WAYS TO ENGAGE

Activities, content & message:

- **University visits** are the most impactful & positive activity for me. Visits are really important for this segment and will help them to feel more **comfortable in a HE setting**
- This segment is likely to be **positive about their goals and motivated towards HE**
- This segment **feels others have low expectations for them**. They would **benefit from support to build their confidence & in helping them to achieve their goals**
- This group is most likely to be **negatively affected by racism**



BE HONEST with me

- **Authenticity is really important** for these learners – a photograph of a diverse student group doesn't necessarily feel authentic.

Show me where and how I will fit in to university life

ROLE MODELS:



Please consider the following questions for this segment;

1. Do you have **staff or student ambassadors** who fit this **profile** and can work with these young people?
2. Do you have **staff** in the **wider organisation** (support or lecturing staff) who can **deliver a relevant session / workshop**?
3. Where do these students see **'people like me'** when they work with you?

AREAS OF PRIORITY SUPPORT for this segment:



- What does an **inclusive university look like**?
How would learners know it's an inclusive university?
How will they know they'll fit in?
- **What specific support do universities have for students** to support them with aspects of racism, dealing with challenges and student concerns?
- **How do learners link a career to a subject** they enjoy?



NEXT STEPS

Key questions and considerations:

- **Diversity of staff** was something BAME learners consistently said was **lacking in their schools** and something that they **wanted more of** – how can you help with supporting this via follow up activity in schools / colleges?
- Follow up work: **inspirational speakers - role models in schools**. Can you think about incorporating elements of this in your **face-to-face work or delivery online**
- **Parental influence** is present, they input and want the best for children and tend to have views on subject choices but are not forced. Is there some further parental information learners can take away?

How else to support this segment after the event

Mixed Heritage Learners



KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS

learners might have:

I'm likely to **find it hard to fit in**

I see a lot of pictures of black students in university materials, this **doesn't feel authentic** to me

Where are all the **students that look like me?**

I'm likely to **worry about moving away** from home and **can I keep up** with the workload

CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to event:

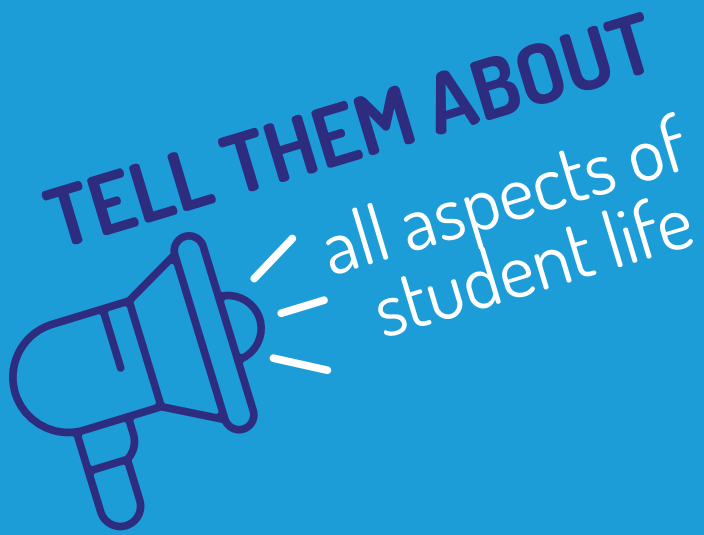
I'm likely to be **motivated and engaged** in education. I **have positive perceptions and intentions** towards HE (Uni)

I'm likely to be very aware of racial challenges. **Be honest about diversity** and any related challenges in HE

WAYS TO ENGAGE

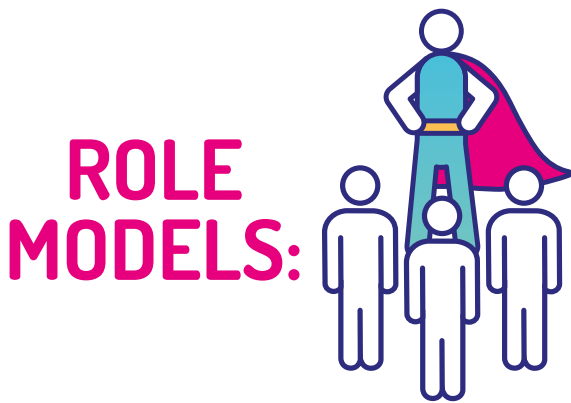
Activities, content & message:

- ➔ **University visits** are the most impactful & positive activity for me. Visits are very important for this group, as they help them to feel a sense of belonging. Being **able to see diversity on campus** in a real and authentic way is **key for this segment**
- I'm **likely to already be positive and motivated** towards HE, but **need to see authenticity and diversity**
- Consider planning **icebreaker / introduction activities** to help these students fit in, with a **focus on inclusion**
- These learners can be open to frank and **honest conversations**, and **different perspectives** - they can however be more likely to **struggle fitting in**
- ➔ What activities do you deliver that encourage open dialogue and debate?
- ➔ **Can you plan any group tasks** that leave time to include feedback? Feedback is important for this group as they value others' perspectives



- Give them as much information as possible as they value different perspectives, they are more likely to be autonomous and often make up their own mind

- ➔ What are the options for university accommodation, as this group worry about moving away from home
- ➔ Can you give them an idea of what the workload is like?
- ➔ Can you share aspects of what the social life is like at university?



Please consider the following questions for this segment;

1. Do you have staff or student ambassadors who fit this profile and can work with these young people?
2. Do you have staff in the wider organisation (support or lecturing staff) who can deliver a relevant session / workshop?
3. Where do these students see 'people like me' when they work with you?



- This segment is more likely to have feelings of isolation and the need to feel like they belong
- This segment generally has a strong understanding of self and diversity is key for this group



Key questions and considerations:

- Diversity of staff was something BAME learners consistently said was lacking in their schools and something that they wanted more of – how can you help with supporting this via follow up activity in schools / colleges?
- Follow up work: inspirational speakers – role models in schools. Can you think about incorporating elements of this in your face-to-face work or delivery online

How else to support this segment after the event

Polish Learners



KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS

learners might have:

How can my parents support me if **they don't understand the UK education system?**

Can you **work with my parents** as they are likely to not understand the UK education system and **language can be a barrier?**

I have some **concerns over workload, finance and travel**

CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to event:

I'm likely to be **motivated and engaged** in education. I have **positive perceptions and intentions** towards HE (Uni)

➔ **To accommodate these learners think about** re-working content and streamlining activities, changing delivery format and / or reviewing language ahead of the day?

WAYS TO ENGAGE

Activities, content & message:

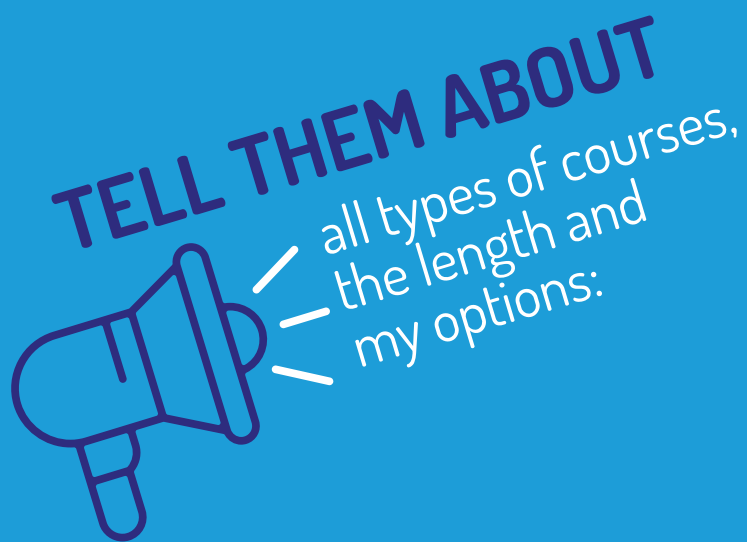
- **University visits** are the most impactful & positive activity for me. This group is likely to really value the UK education system
- **Already positive and motivated towards HE**, these learners are likely to be more **focused on enjoyment**

LANGUAGE MAY BE A

BARRIER

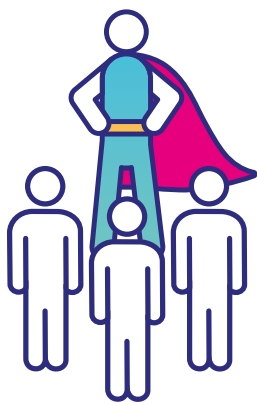
for me

1. How have you considered the way you use language in explaining activities or concepts?
2. Have you reworked content to make key pieces of information clear & understandable?
3. How else can you do this? Can this be streamlined, delivered in another format or delivered in a **practical way to help embed learning?**



- This segment is likely to be concerned with **subject & course choice**
- They are more likely to worry about **choosing a course for approx. 3+ years** and what their options are when **changing course**
- **Activities on choosing a course**, the different **types and formats of courses** would be helpful for this segment
- The **key consideration** for this segment is they still **want to enjoy the course**

ROLE MODELS:



Please consider the following questions for this segment;

1. Do you have **staff or student ambassadors** who fit this **profile** and can work with these young people?
2. Do you have **staff** in the **wider organisation** (support or lecturing staff) who can **deliver a relevant session / workshop**?

AREAS OF PRIORITY SUPPORT for this segment:



- **Choosing a course and making the right choice.**
What if I change my mind? I want to enjoy the subject and course
- **Language is a key consideration** if learners were born in Poland. How **does university accommodate** for this?
Will I cope with the academic language?
- I am likely to **worry about bullying and fitting in** rather than direct racism

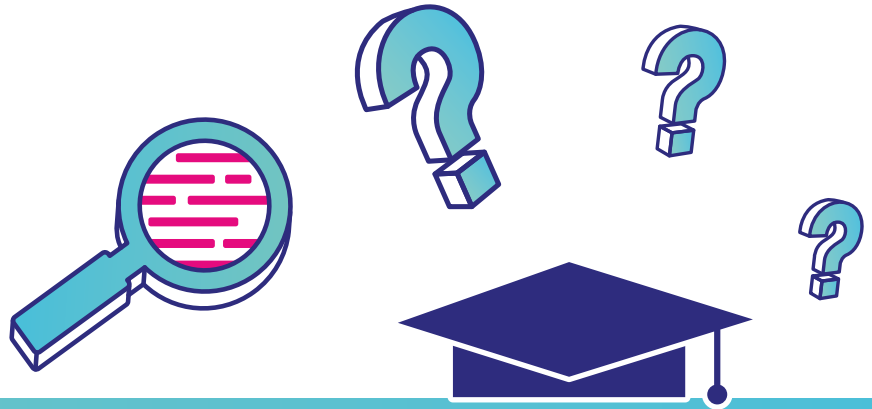


Key questions and considerations:

- **Diversity of staff** was something BAME learners consistently said was **lacking in their schools** and something that they **wanted more of** – how can you help with supporting this via follow up activity in schools / colleges?
- Follow up work: **inspirational speakers - role models in schools.**
Can you think about incorporating elements of this in your **face-to-face work or delivery online**
- **Parents may struggle to support these learners** as they are not always aware of the structures and options in UK education – there are also language barriers to consider. Is there some further parental information learners can take away?

How else to support this segment after the event

South Asian Learners



KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS

learners might have:

Where are all the **students that look like me?**

Can you **work with my parents as they influence my decision** – they may be more likely to want me to study **traditional and professional subjects** and careers?

What else can I do at university **apart from partying/drinking**. Are there other ways I can socialise?

I am likely to have some **positive perceptions** of my educational ability, 'I Work Hard'

I **might be interested in non-traditional subjects** but don't know if I can get a job in that area – **show me and my parents the benefits** / career outcomes

CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to event:

I'm likely to be **motivated and engaged** in education. I have **positive perceptions and intentions** towards HE (Uni)

- This segment is likely to have **had good experiences with teachers & students** and **less likely to have experienced racism within educational settings** (compared to Black and Mixed Heritage segments). They may have **different cultural values** than White students and **want to enjoy university in their own way**

WAYS TO ENGAGE

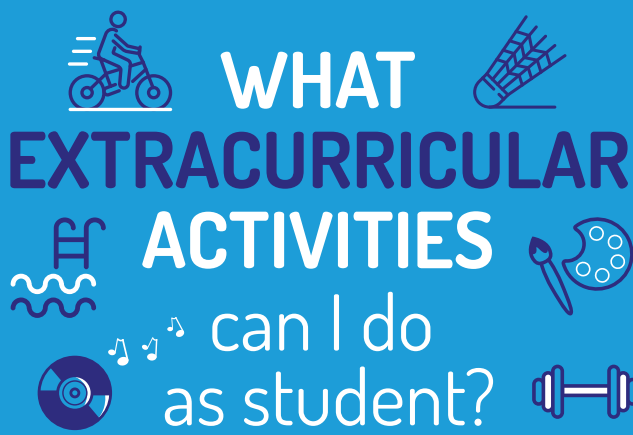
Activities, content & message:

- University visits** are the most impactful & positive activity for me.
- I am likely to **already be positive and motivated** towards HE, but I may also feel **some pressure from my parents** as they widely talk to the community about how their children are doing in education

AREAS OF PRIORITY SUPPORT


for this segment:

- Academic success** and **professional careers** are highly valued
- I am likely to have a **strong vision for the future** and be highly motivated, **focus my support on careers and my future**



WHAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES can I do as student?

1. Show learners the **diversity of activities you can do** as a student at university
2. **What activities**/events do universities do that are **inclusive and culturally sensitive**?
3. Is university all about alcohol/partying, or are there **other social activities** I can get involved in?
4. How are you going to explain this to learners? How will you engage learners in this and what does that activity / workshop look like?



MAKING INFORMED CHOICES


- They are likely to be **confident and positive about education** – some focused work on **making informed decisions** around **course and career path/s** would be helpful for this segment
 - **Reflection task:** why am I choosing this course, is it for the right reasons, who and what is influencing my decision to choose this university / course?
- ➔ This segment is likely to be influenced by their parents/wider family members, giving them **time and space to reflect** on their decision would be beneficial for this segment

ROLE MODELS:



Please consider the following questions for this segment;

1. Do you have **staff or student ambassadors** who fit this **profile** and can work with these young people?
2. Do you have **staff** in the **wider organisation** (support or lecturing staff) who can **deliver a relevant session / workshop**?
3. Where do these students see **'people like me'** when they work with you?



NEXT STEPS

How else to support this segment after the event

Key questions and considerations:

- **Diversity of staff** was something BAME learners consistently said was **lacking in their schools** and something that they **wanted more of** – how can you help with supporting this via follow up activity in schools / colleges?
- Follow up work: **inspirational speakers – role models in schools.** Can you think about incorporating elements of this in your **face-to-face work or delivery online**
- **Parental influence is likely to be high** for this group, is there some further parental information learners can take away? Focus on less traditional careers and the career progression within them. What other options are there? How can I succeed?



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