

Imperial College London – Race Equality Charter application summary

November 2021

Contents

1. About this Summary	1
2. Background to the REC Application	1
3. Process, surveys and focus groups	3
4. Data analysis	4
5. Priorities for the Action Plan.....	5
6. Concluding remarks	6
Appendix 1 – The REC Application form.....	8
Appendix 2 – Data Snapshots from the REC Application	9

Please note: this six-page summary should take less than 10 min to read. The appendices provide additional detail on some of the key data insights arising from the REC application.

About this summary

To address racial inequalities at Imperial, the College is using the framework provided by the Race Equality Charter (REC). This requires us to take a long, hard look at the demographics and experiences at the College of staff and students from ethnic minorities and to produce a report which is assessed externally by Advance HE. This report, essentially an extensive application form, runs to over 200 pages. It contains a huge amount of information and – critically – an action plan detailing how the College will tackle the issues that have been raised in our data analysis. It will be published on the College website once a GDPR compliant version is ready.

This summary aims to provide a brief account of the REC application process, highlighting the key findings and outlining the action plan, which describes the College’s commitment to advancing race equality in the next three years. We want to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of this work because it will only succeed through the joint efforts of staff and students.

1. Background to the REC application and race equality at Imperial

The Race Equality Charter (REC) is a UK-wide scheme, designed and run by [Advance HE](#) along the same lines as the Athena Swan Charter. It provides “a framework through which institutions work to identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and students.”

The College became a member of the Charter in 2018. This committed us to applying for a REC award¹ within three years. We had originally been aiming to submit our application in July 2020 but the complexities of the data gathering and Covid-19 necessitated a delay.

Imperial's commitment to the REC forms part of its determination, articulated in the College [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategy](#) published in 2018, to make promotion of all aspects of EDI part of our core mission. This reflects broader moves across the HE sector to tackle cultural concerns within what is often perceived as a hyper-competitive working environment.

Work on the REC was supported by the appointment in May 2018 of a REC Coordinator (Sally Parekh) and by the formation of the self-assessment team (SAT), which met for the first time later that year. The members of the SAT were chosen following wide consultation to include academic and PTO staff from different grades, career points, areas of College, and students. The current membership is listed on the [REC webpage](#).

The SAT has met regularly since November 2018 and is co-chaired by Stephen Curry, Assistant Provost (EDI) and Anique Varleigh, Head of Exams & Assessment in the Business School. The SAT has digested and discussed student and staff data (gathered with the help of HR, Strategic Planning, and the Registry) and analysed the results of the REC surveys and focus groups.

In parallel with the work of the REC SAT, we have endeavoured to raise awareness about race and racism through various initiatives, including:

- Talks and events about the issue of racism and understanding BAME experiences. For example:
 - Talks by Chi Onwurah MP (October 2018), and authors Angela Saini (October 2019) and Adam Rutherford (February 2020)
 - An event discussing the Windrush scandal (June 2020)
 - A workshop on Building Alliances in the face of Atrocity (August 2020)
 - Imperial hosting the 4th National Conference for BAME Early Career Researchers (September 2020).
- The development by the EDI Centre a new online [EDI at Imperial training course](#) that specifically includes material on racism and race inequality (launched October 2020).
- The [Report and Support tool](#) provides a new College-wide portal for reporting bullying and harassment (including racial harassment) and offering information and support to victims. A soft launch for staff and students will be followed by a concerted communications campaign starting in Autumn 2021.
- The EDI Seed Fund has supported several ground-level initiatives; *e.g.* student-led workshop for BAME UG and PG students considering a research career; the [Shifting the Lens](#) project, which was conceived by a group undertaking the [IMPACT programme](#) for BAME staff, is a highly visible celebration of staff and students from ethnic minority backgrounds at Imperial.
- A [pilot reverse mentoring scheme](#) is giving members of the senior leadership team first-person insights into the experiences of minoritized staff.
- Introduction of Imperial as One's [Belonging](#) series of candid video interviews with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, academics and professionals sharing their experiences of College life.

¹ The term 'award' is potentially problematic in this context. The College and the Self-Assessment Team have been adamant throughout that the value of the REC process lies in its ability to bring about changes that positively impact the lives of staff and students.

The work on the REC was given a strong sense of urgency in 2020 because of the response among our community to the Black Lives Matter protests. This brought a renewed focus on racial inequality in the UK and our shared responsibility to tackle it. The College responded across a number of fronts:

- The Communications team has been proactive in using social media and [video content](#) to stimulate discussion around issues of race and racism.
- Establishment of a [History Group](#) to report on the present understanding and reception of the College's legacy and heritage and an [Artworks Group](#) to propose ways in which its diverse community can be celebrated by means of images and depictions of alumni, staff and students.
- Launch of a fund to provide a [Presidential Scholarship for Black Students](#). This has been boosted substantially by the [commitment](#) of £10m for new scholarships and studentships for Black students and others from underrepresented groups or those facing financial barriers, and to further diversity our international student intake.
- The College's EDI webpages now provide information on [how to be a White Ally](#).
- A new *Let's talk about race* workshop has been piloted in the Department of Earth Sciences and Engineering (led by Melanie Lee, Organisational Development Consultant, POD). This aims to facilitate difficult discussions about experiences and perceptions of race and racism. This two-hour long workshop is currently being offered to every department in the Faculty of Engineering.
- The Faculty of Engineering launched a training video on [Microaggressions](#) (November 2020).

Our task now is to ensure that the growing pressure for change is channelled effectively. The REC is a valuable instrument for coordinating College-wide action, though we must remain alert to demands and initiatives arising at ground level.

2. Process, surveys and focus groups

The REC application is made at institutional level only, though for some sections data have to be analysed at faculty level.

The application form has 10 sections (see [Appendix 1](#)) and requires in-depth analysis of all aspects of College life. For many sections (especially 4, 5, 6 & 7) detailed quantitative data are required. These are supplemented by information from REC-specific staff and student surveys and focus groups and the College-wide staff survey. Analysis of these data and other contextual information [e.g. on the College's local context (section 3), on our approach to teaching and learning (section 8)] is incorporated into the narrative of the application. The main challenges identified in the narrative informed the creation of an Action Plan which was developed in collaboration with the action owners and refined in discussions at Provost's Board, President's Board, and the College Council.

The REC survey and focus groups were completed in 2019 and the results reported on the [College's REC consultation webpage](#). We achieved very good engagement of staff with the survey – over 1,500 respondents; however, student engagement was much lower, with only about 200 students responding.

We would encourage you to read the original reports in full since they contain first-person accounts of the experiences of BAME staff and students at the College. But briefly, the key issues for staff are:

- Lack of BAME representation in leadership positions
- Experiences of minoritisation (e.g. micro-aggressions) among BAME staff and students

- Experiences of racial discrimination and lack of confidence in College response to these
- Need for greater awareness of the issues of race and racism – general conversations as well as specific training for staff and students
- Desire for greater transparency around recruitment, promotion, appraisals and pay award processes, reflecting a perception that these may be unfair and that there is a lack of support for career progression of BAME staff
- Support for mentoring and sponsorship schemes for BAME staff

The key issues for students are:

- Lack of BAME representation – especially too few Black students and academics – leading to feelings of being excluded from the main student body; this requires constant navigation of the sense of standing out but not belonging
- Experiences of racism (and class-based elitism) on campus, on GP placements and in local areas
- Lack of awareness of procedures for reporting racial harassment
- Lack of support for mental well-being (especially for BAME students)
- Sense that courses are very Western-based and that lecturers are not trained to talk about race; demand for placing the STEM curriculum in a proper historical context and seeking out contributions from under-represented scientists, engineers, etc.
- Sense that the Union may not be doing enough to combat racist incidents in some student societies

It is worth noting that there was also some limited resistance to the REC expressed in the staff and student surveys. Some respondents felt that there is in fact positive discrimination for minorities; others that racism issues are imaginary or exaggerated. This mirrors some of the reactions to the College's responses to the Black Lives Matters protest. We will need to address such responses in our work to tackle race inequality at the College.

3. Data analysis

The data demands of the REC application form ([Appendix 1](#)) are voluminous. Typically, data for the last three years are required, analysed by ethnicity, by UK/Non-UK citizenship, and by faculty. We have aimed to be as transparent as possible in telling the story of Imperial. While the application needs to include a great deal of tabulated data, we have used charts as much as possible to show the most important trends. Moreover, because the survey data report different experiences and impressions of College life from different ethnic groups, we have attempted where possible to report at a granular level, separating out staff and students in the following groups (in alphabetical order): Asian, Black, Chinese, Mixed Race, Other Ethnicity and White, rather than defaulting to comparing BAME vs White.

Some of the most striking findings are:

- There are fewer than five² Black academic staff at Imperial (not including teaching fellows).
- For academic and PTO staff, there are marked declines in BAME representation at higher grades.
- As a result, there is a lack of BAME representation at College-level decision-making committees.
- Recruitment: there is a possible indication of racial bias at the short-listing stage for academic and PTO staff.

² To comply with GDPR requirements and ensure that individuals cannot be identified from data analyses, numbers less than five cannot be published.

- The UG student body is steadily increasing in ethnic diversity. Faculty of Natural Sciences is the least diverse faculty.
- UG degree award gap: there are only small variations in levels of award of 'good' degrees (1st or 2:1) between students from different ethnic groups; however, Black students are significantly less likely to be awarded a 1st class degree.
- The PG student body is steadily increasing in ethnic diversity. As with UG students, Faculty of Natural Sciences is the least diverse faculty.
- Strikingly, the proportion of Black home students on PGT courses (~7%) exceeds that on UG courses (~4%). However, there is less ethnic diversity among PhD students.

For a more detailed snapshot of the application data, please consult [Appendix 2](#).

4. Priorities for the Action Plan

Much of the information gathered for the REC points to significant challenges ahead, which will make demands on time and money. The work we have already embarked on is addressing some of the issues that have been raised (e.g. training and awareness-raising; improvements to UG admissions), but to properly address race inequalities at Imperial we need to be honest, ambitious and committed as an institution.

The Action Plan is organised thematically into three sections – (i) Organisation and Culture; (ii) Staff Pipeline and Experience; and (iii) Student Pipeline and Experience. To facilitate delivery, each section has been split into sets of Priority and Additional Actions and the scheduling and resourcing of each action has been agreed with the owner.

The full Action Plan [[LINK](#)] is available on the College website but the priority actions are listed below:

1. Organisation and Culture

- 1.1 Publish an annual Ethnicity Pay Gap report and action plan.
- 1.2 Monitor and publish information to managers and EDI Strategy Group showing (i) Ethnicity of staff disciplinaries, grievances and tribunal cases, Report and Support usage and outcomes; and (ii) Stages of the recruitment journey
- 1.3 Conduct an annual review of all EDI related activity, with concise report against targets agreed with the EDI Strategy Group. Each department to set annual priority targets on race equality (e.g. actions on recruitment, promotion, career support, student admissions and attainment)
- 1.4 Ensure comprehensive and appropriate reporting (including Report and Support tool), and a supportive approach, for racial harassment and discrimination is in place and used.
- 1.5 Review EDI e-learning to ensure it adequately covers and introduces the College stance on anti-discrimination and anti-institutional racism. Update content as appropriate. Include in mandatory Imperial Essentials induction training. Develop new training offerings for managers and other prioritised staff groups to include anti-racism content. Increase the reach of 'Let's Talk about Race' sessions.

2. Staff Pipeline and experience

- 2.1. Increase BAME representation on College Council. Appoint an EDI champion within College Council
- 2.2. Boost recruitment of under-represented academic staff by (i) Funding 4 appointments by 2025 at reader/professor level targeted at female/Black academics; and (ii) Creating a visiting professor

programme for short-term appointments (2 per year for 6-12 months) aimed at increasing diversity, focussing initially on female/Black academic staff.

- 2.3. Increase the ethnic diversity of appointment panels (especially for senior academic and PTO roles). HR to help accessing panel members from external networks and to research solutions implemented by other universities for creating diverse recruitment panels (e.g. UCL).
- 2.4. All recruitment panel members to have completed related EDI, Recruitment & Selection, and Unconscious Bias training before being involved in the recruitment process, (or to have received refresher training in the last 3 years).
- 2.5. Develop and implement a proactively inclusive 'Know your Pool' recruitment process. This is a multi-step action including (i) improved adverts/job descriptions; (ii) targeting of under-represented groups; (iii) proactive candidate search & encouragement; (iv) setting appropriate targets (e.g. to match underlying pool); (v) pre-application support.
- 2.6. Investigate why more BAME applicants are not progressing to shortlisting and being offered positions.
- 2.7. Improve communication through EDIC committees about the provision of qualifications available through the apprenticeships programme. Incorporate inclusive leadership as part of management and leadership development activities. Increase and improve communication about the central provision available to all staff on developing their careers at Imperial. Update central development support for new and existing managers with focussed support on how to effectively guide the career development of PTO and Academic staff.
- 2.8. Establish a BAME mentoring programme focused on preparing staff for senior roles. Review existing mentoring processes across Faculties and Directorates. Recommend and highlight (through comms) the focussed career mentoring available for mid-career BAME staff.
- 2.9. Reform of the Personal Review and Development Plan (PRDP) process to ensure it is valued by staff, and easy to monitor. This is a multi-step action: (i) Ensure the process is tailored to the needs of reviewers & reviewed; (ii) Include a question on how staff take responsibility for EDI; (iii) Revise PRDP training for line managers; and (iv) create a streamlined process to record PRDP completion

3. Student pipeline and experience

- 3.1 Develop a College-wide strategic plan to increase scholarship support for UG and PG students from under-represented ethnic groups (especially Black British students).
- 3.2 Create anti-racism training materials for students. To include: (i) Information packs/slide decks that can be incorporated into freshers' inductions; (ii) Online resources/training on racism awareness (available year-round); (iii) 'Let's talk about race (LTAR)' workshops (adapted from workshops already developed for staff) to provide safe for students to undertake difficult discussions about race/racism).
- 3.3 Work with students to ensure that curriculum and assessment are fully inclusive of ethnicity. In particular: (i) Review assessment procedures to ensure that they are inclusive and authentic; and (ii) further develop our support and training to provide specific support to ensure our curricula incorporate awareness of the social and historical impacts of racism that have shaped STEMM subjects.
- 3.4 Commission a research study into the degree awarding gap at Imperial (which also draws on existing research in the sector).
- 3.5 Create a cross-departmental mentoring scheme for PhD students from ethnic minorities (but with a focus on Black students). The scheme will aim to match PhD students with mentors from similar cultural frames of reference (drawn from staff and alumni). Mentoring will typically be one-to-one over a 6-month period but supplemented by small-group and cohort events to build knowledge, skills and support networks).

5. What happens now?

The work to prepare the REC application has given us a clearer picture of race inequalities at Imperial than we have ever had before and will be invaluable in guiding execution of the Action Plan. It has been a tremendously important, and sometime painful, learning experience for the institution. However, the sheer volume of data that has to be processed and digested can be blinding. It is important to keep the bigger picture in sight. Far more than words, it is our actions that will count.

There is much that we have already done to foster a diverse and inclusive environment at the College, but as the REC process has revealed, there is much still to do. The development of the REC application is an important step on that journey, but it is not an end in itself. The key to progress will be delivery of the action plan. Each action has an agreed owner and timeline. In the months and years to come, the EDI Strategy Group, which is chaired by the Provost, will take responsibility for ensuring that we deliver on our commitments.

We will continue to communicate as we do so – to keep people in the picture. At the same time, we will continue to listen and to learn. We need to keep hearing the testimony of minoritized staff and students who daily feel the sharp effects of being judged on the colour of their skin. We need to keep deepening our understanding of the structures and processes that maintain race inequality if we are to dismantle them.

Our commitment to race equality, as with our commitment to the College EDI strategy, is born of the need to ensure that Imperial remains vigorous and relevant in an increasingly diverse world. To help us succeed in this endeavour, we ask the whole College community to be proactive in holding us to our commitment to promote race equality.

Appendix 1 – The REC application form

1. Letter of endorsement from vice-chancellor/principal
2. The self-assessment process
 - 2a Description of the self-assessment team
 - 2b The self-assessment process
 - 2c Involvement, consultation and communication
 - 2d Future of the self-assessment team
3. Institution and local context
 - 3a Overview of your institution
 - 3b Overview of the local population and context
4. Staff profile
 - 4a Academic staff
 - 4b Professional and support staff
 - 4c Grievances and disciplinarys
 - 4d Decision-making boards and committees
 - 4e Equal pay
5. Academic staff: recruitment, progression and development
 - 5a Academic recruitment
 - 5b Training
 - 5c Appraisal/development review
 - 5d Academic promotion
 - 5e Research Excellence Framework (REF)
 - 5f Support given to early career researchers
 - 5g Profile-raising opportunities
6. Professional and support staff: recruitment, progression and development
 - 6a Professional and support staff recruitment
 - 6b Training
 - 6c Appraisal/development review
 - 6d Professional and support staff promotions
7. Student pipeline
 - 7a Admissions
 - 7b Undergraduate student body
 - 7c Course progression
 - 7d Attainment
 - 7e Postgraduate pipeline
 - 7f Postgraduate employment
8. Teaching and learning
 - 8a Course content/syllabus
 - 8b Teaching and assessment methods
 - 8c Academic confidence
9. Any other information
10. Action plan

Appendix 2 – Data snapshots from the REC application

This summary is structured in the same way as the full REC application and aims to highlight the key findings that have informed the construction of the action plan.

1. Letters of endorsement

The submitted application was accompanied by letters of endorsement from the President and Provost, the Faculty Deans and one co-signed by the Director of HR, the Director of Academic Services and the Chief Financial Officer on behalf of the College's Professional, Technical and Operational Staff (PTO) Departments. This reflects the close involvement of the senior leadership team in discussing the lessons learned from our data about racial inequalities at the College and in agreeing to resource and support the prioritised action plan.

2. The self-assessment process

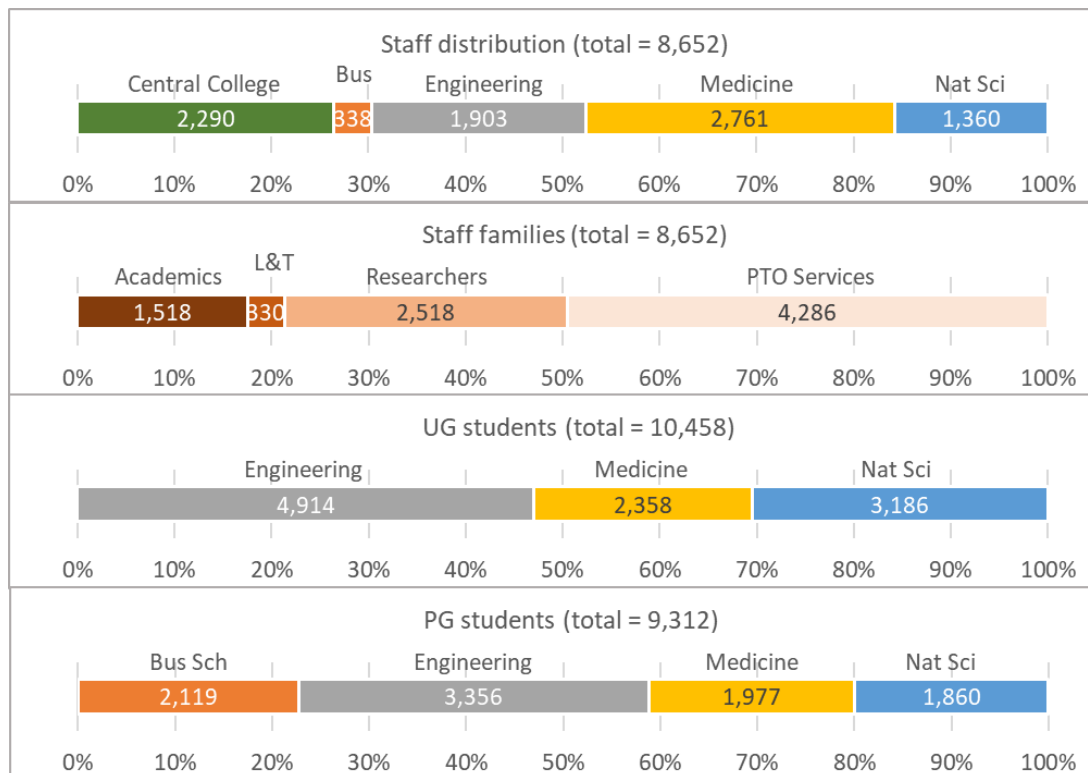
The REC Self-Assessment Team, which has met regularly since late 2018, had a key role in analysing and discussing the data that had to be included in the application and in formulating the Action Plan. The application and Action Plan were also developed with significant input from the senior leadership team, the College Council and action owners who are distributed across many different areas of the College. Throughout the process efforts were made to communicate the work of the REC SAT with the wider College community and these need to continue as delivery of the action plan commences.

The EDI Strategy Group which is chaired by the Provost and meets three times a year has taken charge of ensuring that progress against the action plan is made in a timely fashion. The SAT will continue to meet to review progress on the action plan, provide advice, and flag concerns to the EDI Strategy Group.

3. The institution and local context

This section of the application gives an overview of the geography and demography of the College, together with an account of our growing interactions with local communities, led by the Societal Engagement team.

Figure 1: Number of staff and students at Imperial – 2019-20



Imperial's story begins with the Great Exhibition of 1851 making the College very much a product and an instrument of the British Empire. While Imperial has emerged in the latter part of the 20th Century as a modern, outward-looking university of global stature, we remain alive to the legacy of Empire, a subject that is being freshly examined by the [College's History Group](#).

Today Imperial is a world-renowned, research-intensive university with a faculty structure reflecting our research interests: Engineering, Medicine, Natural Sciences, and Business. The College has ~8,500 staff and ~20,000 students, almost half of them postgraduates (Figure 1).

Though a London-based university, we recruit globally. In 2020 applicants for staff positions came from 138 countries – 47% from outside the UK. Over 50% of our UG and PG students come from overseas.

Figure 2: Imperial 2019 staff demographics compared to the UK - 2011 census and 2018/19 HESA data.

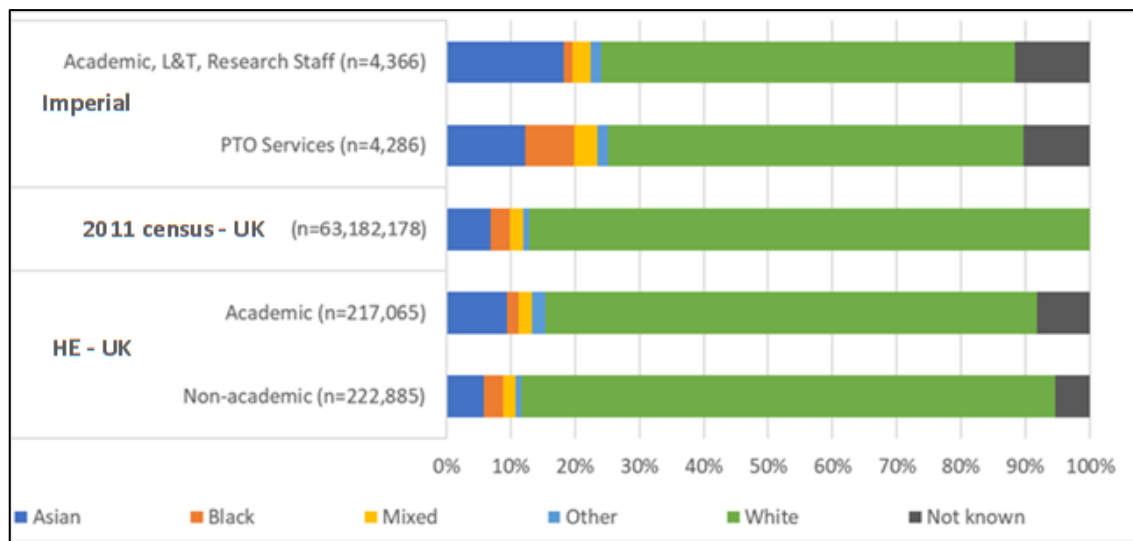
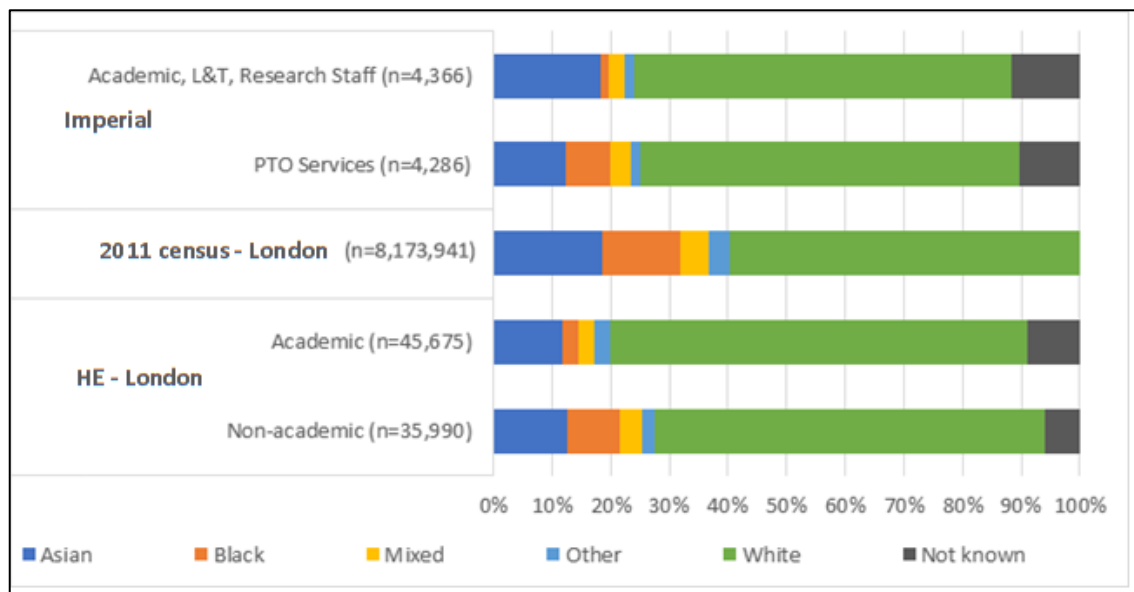


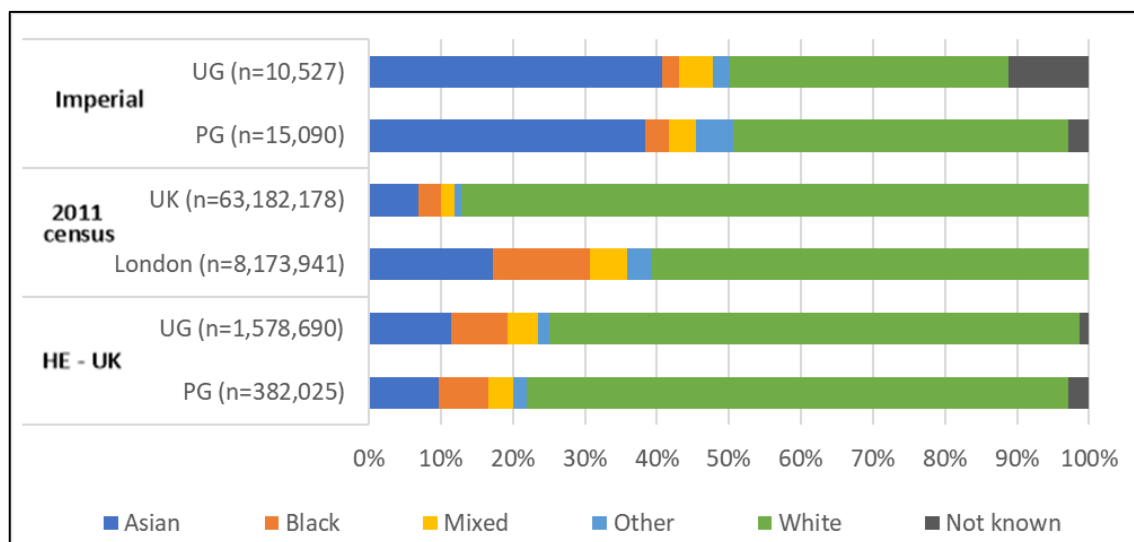
Figure 3: Imperial 2019 staff demographics compared to London - 2011 census and 2018/19 HESA data.



The overall ethnic diversity of our staff is greater than the UK population and is comparable to other London universities, but significantly lower than the diversity of the general London population (compare Figure 2 and Figure 3).

Our student body is much more ethnically diverse, with a significant proportion of Asian students (Figure 4). More detailed information on staff and student demographics is given later (and in the full application).

Figure 4: Imperial 2019 student demographics compared to 2011 UK census. Note the 2018/19 HESA data are for UK domiciled students only



The College’s Societal Engagement team is building on existing STEM-focused engagement and outreach work across London and the UK that aims to bolster the diversity of our student body (in line with our [Access and Participation Plan](#)). It is working particularly hard to forge links, with the communities in North Kensington close to our White City/Hammersmith campuses. They are supporting a wide range of educational, enterprise and community support activities.

Figure 5: Imperial's societal engagement strategy



Figure 6: Examples of current community engagement activities

- Working with the local Interfaith Forum to run Q&A sessions on vaccine concerns for religious/BAME groups, to help increase take-up.
- Weekly 'What the Tech?' drop-in sessions (moved online due to Covid-19) provide local elderly residents with free digital tech support.
- Visiting community events and spaces to talk about our initiatives and directly sign people up (including prioritising people from low socio-economic groups).
- Collaborations with the Anti-Tribalism Movement, a community organisation working to tackle tribalism and inequalities, particularly within the West London Somali Community.
- Work with local charity NOVA to help minority ethnic groups, migrant & refugee communities develop skills, confidence & employability
- Offering our community newsletter in different languages.



4. Staff profile

5. Academic staff: recruitment, progression & development

6. PTO staff: recruitment, progression & development

Sections 4-6, which occupy over 100 pages of the full application, provide a detailed breakdown of the ethnicities of academic, professional, technical, and operational staff. They give insights into our current demographics and how these arise from the inequalities in our processes for recruiting staff and developing their careers.

We provide here snapshots of the most salient findings. Several of the charts also include comments from participants in our focus groups, which show how the numbers impact daily experiences of racially minoritized staff at Imperial.

The charts below give the faculty breakdown for Academic (Figure 7), Research (Figure 9) and Learning & Teaching staff (Figure 10), the College populations of which are around 1,500, 2,500 and 330 respectively – (Figure 1). Our Academic staff population is less ethnically diverse than the Researchers or Learning & Teaching staff groups. A particular concern is the extremely low number of Black Academics – just 0.3% of our total Academic Staff – well below the UK benchmark of 1.9% for Black Teaching and Research staff (Figure 8). This was one of the most shocking and galvanising findings from our data analysis.

There are also some significant differences between faculties in the ethnic make-up of their academic staff. To some extent, these reflect differences seen across the UK Higher Education Sector (Figure 8, though please note that the benchmark data here combine the Academic, Researcher and L&T staff groups). At Imperial and at universities across the UK, the Natural Sciences are the least ethnically diverse disciplines.

Figure 7: Academic staff by faculty (compared to UK and London populations)

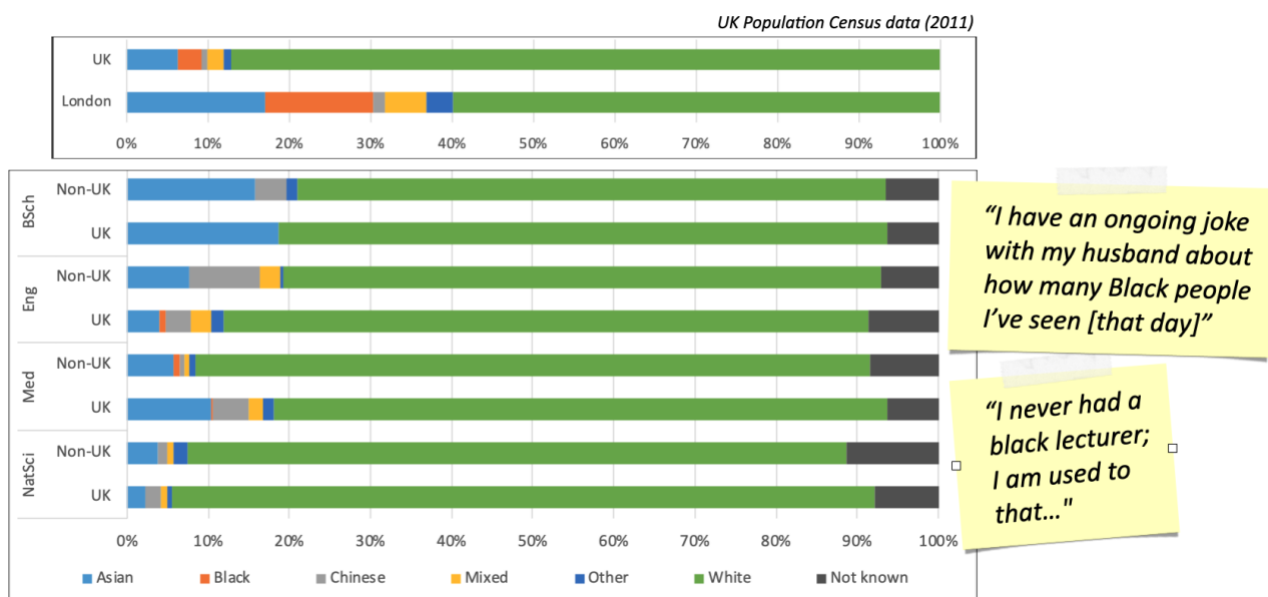


Figure 8: UK HE sector (HESA data) - Academic, Research and L&T staff 2019-20

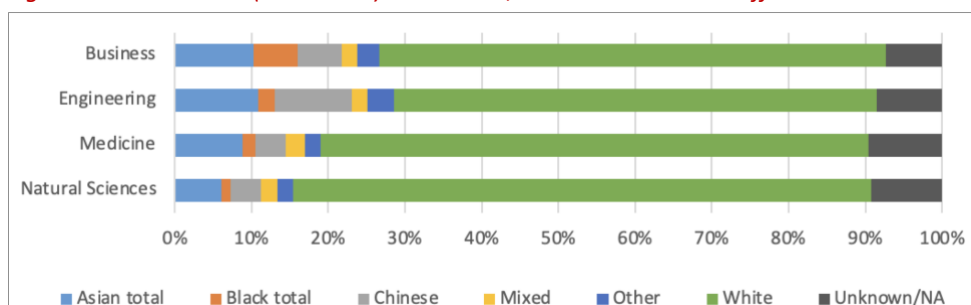


Figure 9: Research staff by faculty

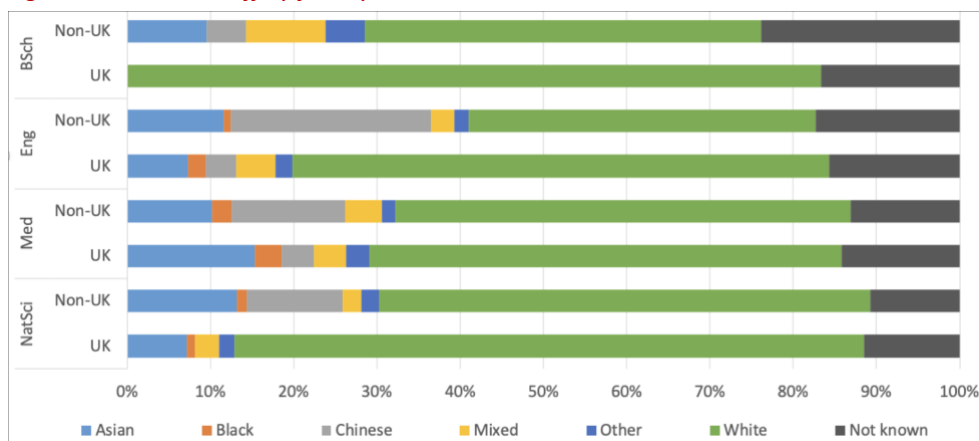
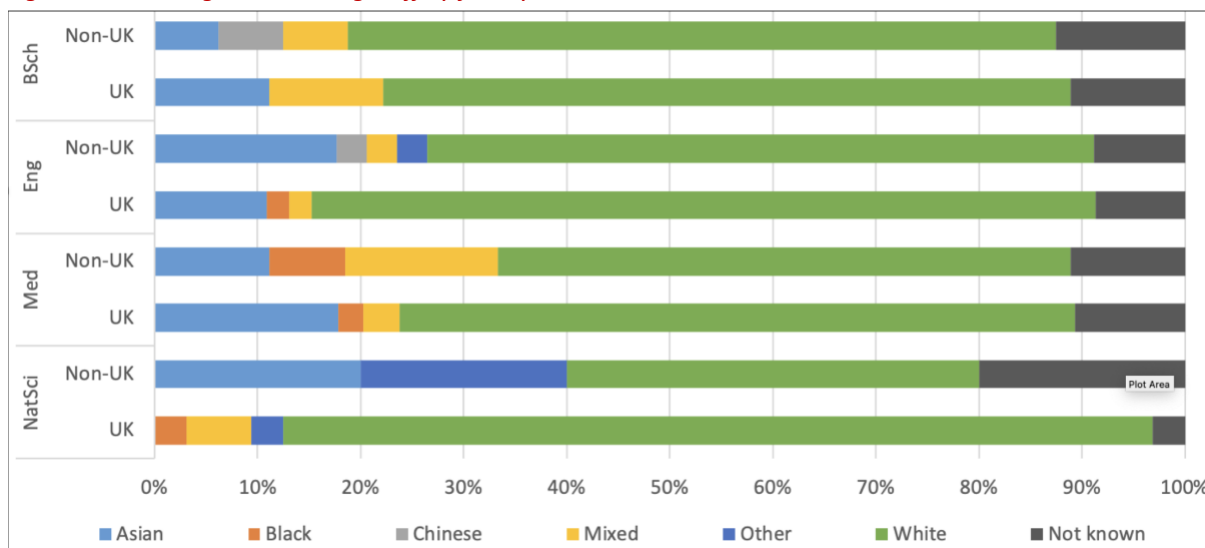
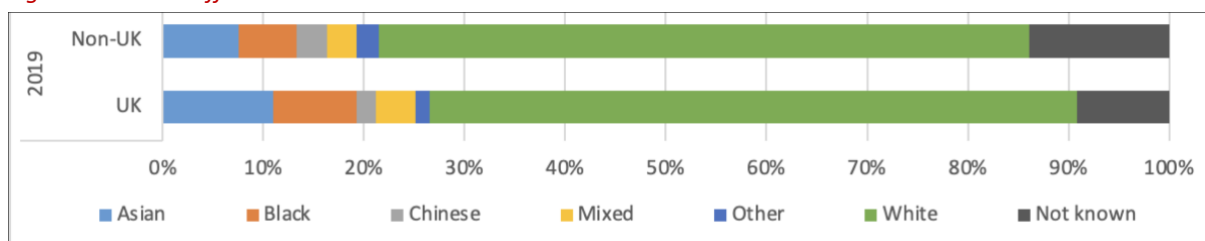


Figure 10: Learning and Teaching staff by faculty



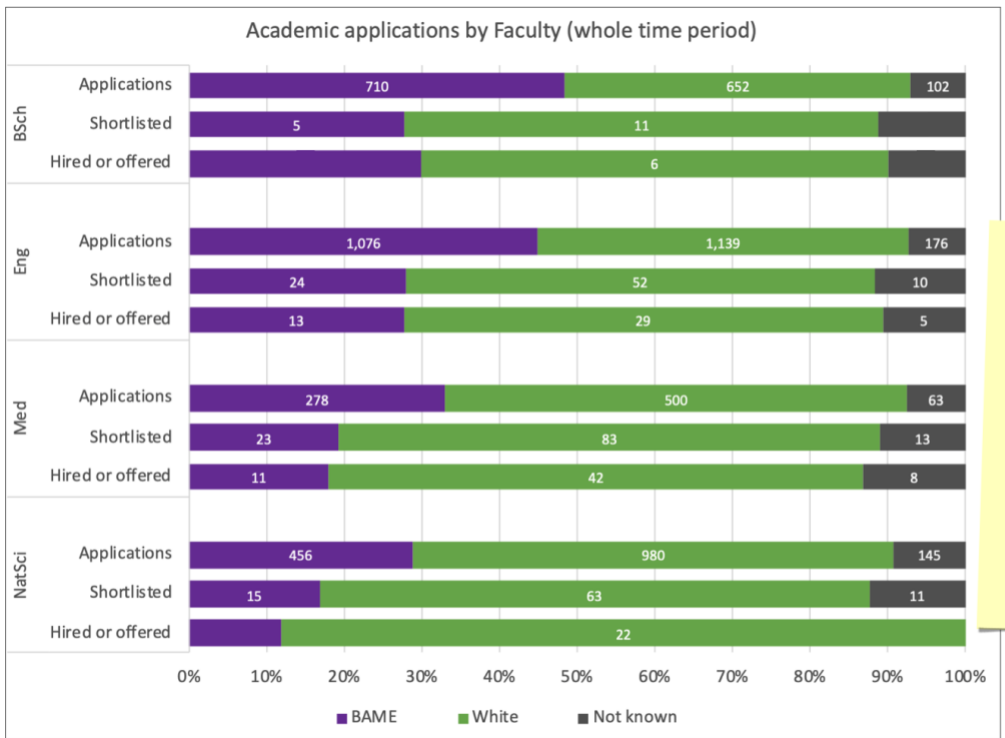
Our PTO staff, 93% of whom are recruited from the UK, are more ethnically diverse than the academic staff population (Figure 11). The mix of ethnic groups is closer in composition to the diversity of the London population, though the overall proportion of BAME staff is less (25% vs 40% for the capital – see Figure 3).

Figure 11: PTO Staff



Our relative lack of ethnic diversity appears to be due at least in part to issues arising during recruitment. The data in Figure 12 show that BAME applicants for academic positions are significantly less likely to be shortlisted than their White peers. However, once shortlisted, BAME and White applicants have broadly equal chances of being offered the position.

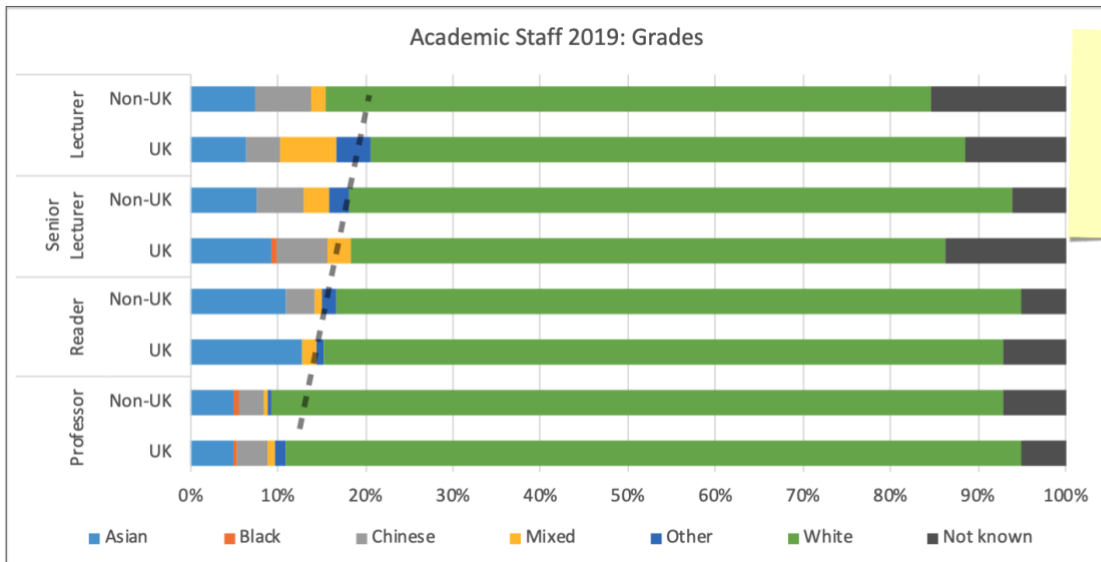
Figure 12: Academic recruitment by Faculty (2017-2019)



“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.”

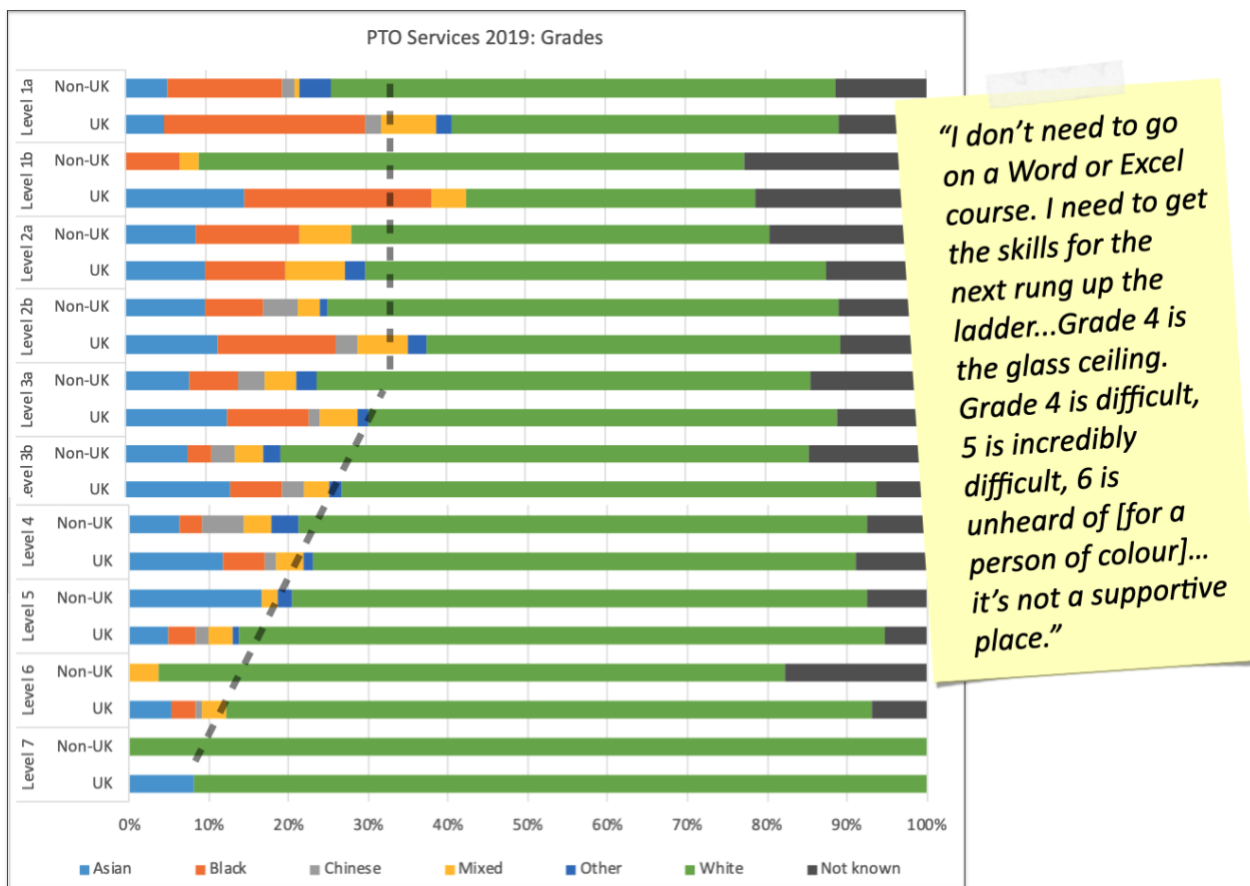
For both academic and PTO staff groups, we see a fall-off in ethnic diversity at higher grades (Figure 13 and Figure 14). In addition to challenges for recruitment, we face issues in ensuring that our efforts to foster career progression are working for all staff.

Figure 13: Academic staff – by grade



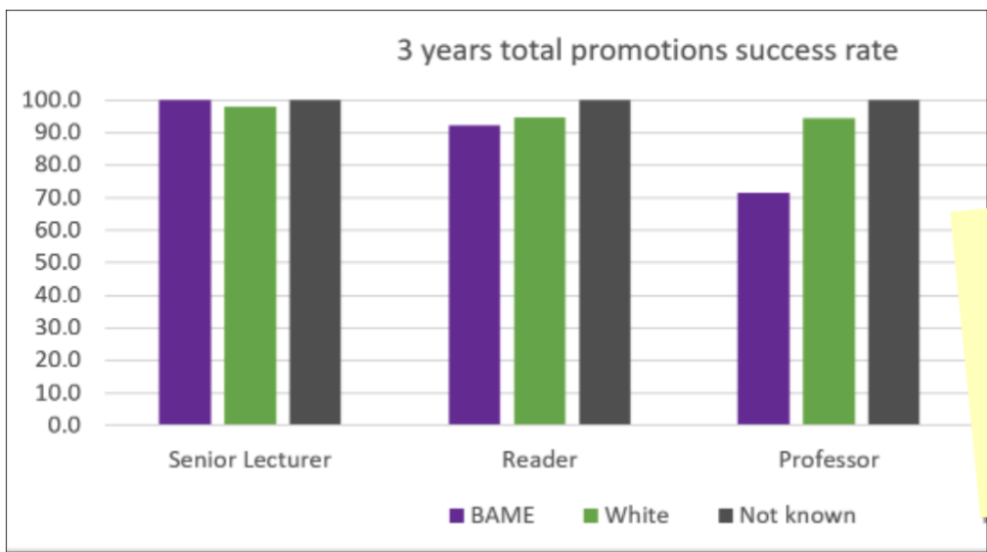
“It’s one thing getting through the door, it’s another to exist and thrive.”

Figure 14: PTO staff – by grade



For Academics, the leaky pipeline evident in Figure 13 above may in part be related to bias in the promotions process. However, analysis of the aggregated data for the past three years shows no difference in success rates for White and BAME staff applying for promotion to Senior Lecturer or Reader. The data do show that BAME staff are less likely to success in applications for promotion to Professor but it should be borne in mind that the numbers here are small – the ~70% success rate for BAME staff in Figure 15 represented 10 successes out of 14 applications. Nevertheless, this is an issue that warranted closer monitoring. We also need to ensure that White and BAME staff are equally likely to be supported to apply for promotion in the first place.

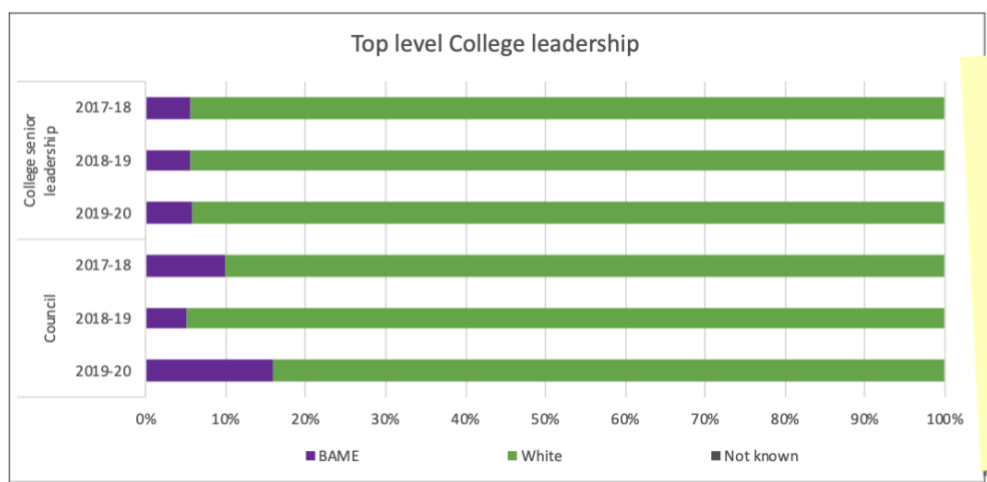
Figure 15: Academic promotion success rates (2017-2019)



“My black professor was asked by the staff in the café if he was there to fix the air conditioning.”

The general lack of progression of BAME staff to higher grades in the Academic and PTO job families is also reflected in the ethnic composition of the College leadership (namely, the members of President’s and Provost’s Boards and their direct reports) and of our governing body, the College Council (Figure 16). Action on recruitment and career progression will be needed to address this.

Figure 16: Imperial senior leadership and Council.



“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.”

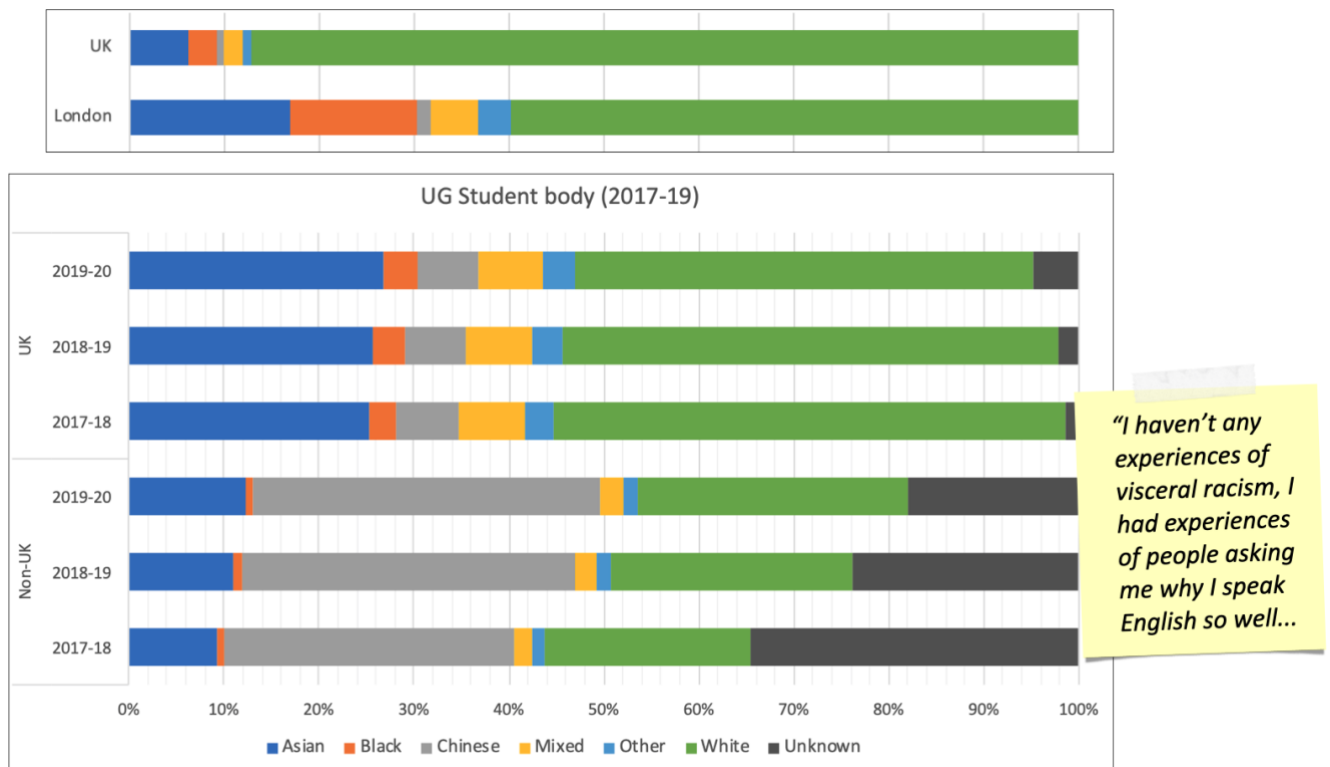
7. Student pipeline

The REC application also requires us to take a close look at our student data.

Overall, the ethnic diversity of our UG student body is increasing (Figure 17). Indeed, it has a higher proportion of BAME students than the UK or London populations, although there are clear differences between ethnic groups. By comparison to the London population³, we have more Asian and Chinese students but Black students are significantly under-represented.

Our largest group of non-UK students comes from China. By contrast, we recruit very few Black students from overseas.

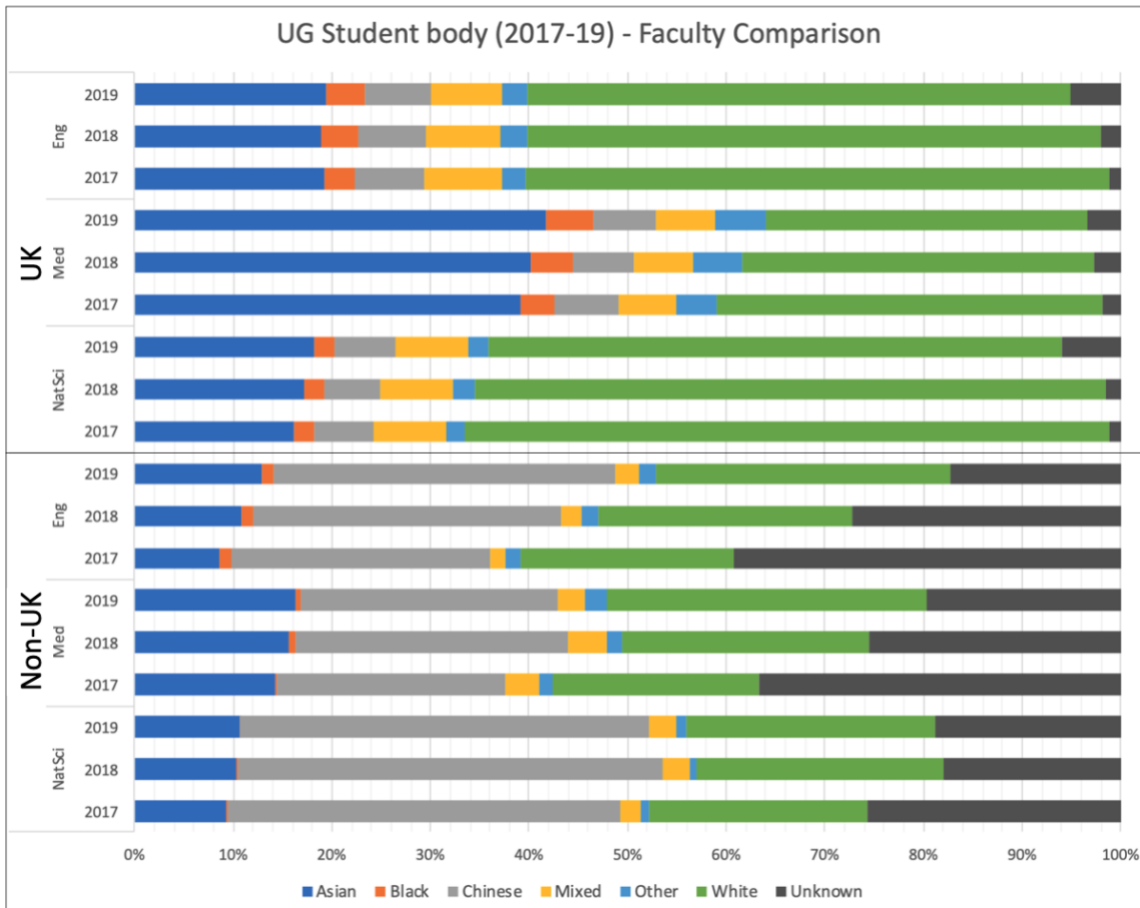
Figure 17: Imperial's UG student population (2017-19) compared to UK and London



³ Although Imperial is located in London, the London population is used here as an arbitrary benchmark. Given that about half our students come from outside the UK, we do not have targets for a particular ethnic composition.

As with staff demographics, there are significant differences in the ethnic make-up of students in the faculties of Engineering, Medicine and Natural Sciences⁴ (Figure 18). The Faculty of Natural Sciences is the least ethnically diverse, while the Faculty of Medicine currently admits more British Asian than White students. We suspect this partly reflects the strong tradition of medical practice among some Asian communities, but also some impacts of socioeconomic disadvantage, which we are addressing through the College [Access and Participation Plan](#).

Figure 18: Imperial's UG student population by faculty (2017-19)

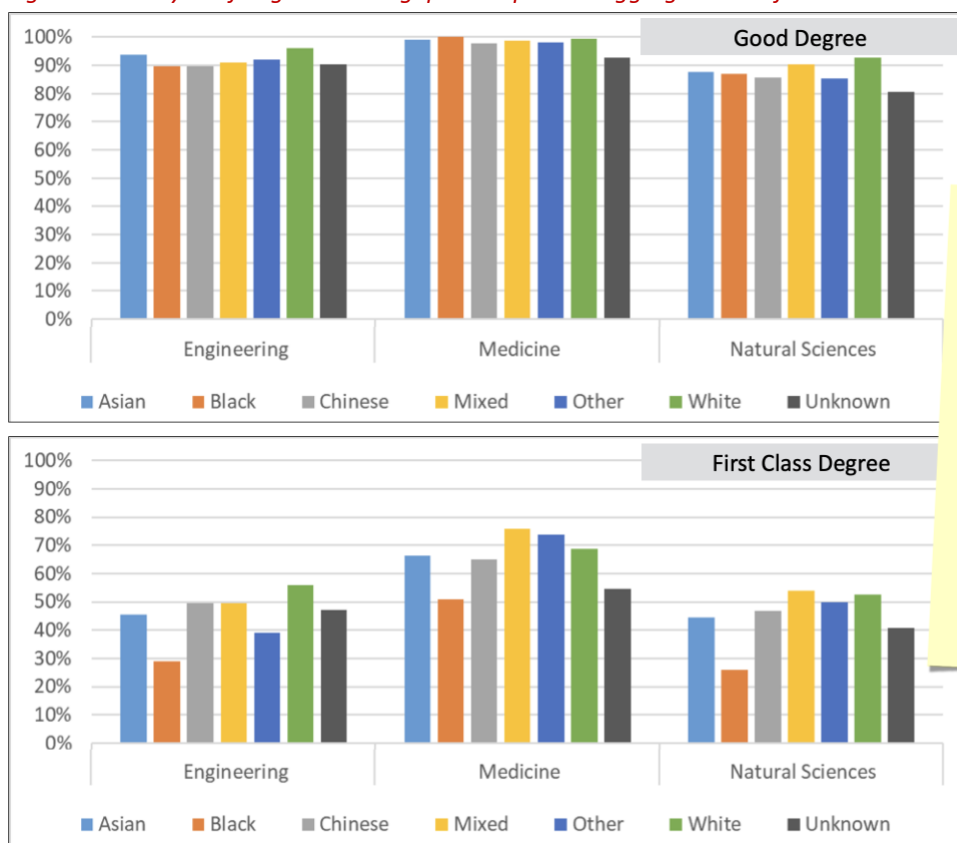


⁴ The Business school does not currently offer UG degree programmes.

Rates of achievement of good degrees (at least an upper second-class honours) are very high for students from all ethnic groups at Imperial, typically ranging from 80-100%. Data for the Faculty of Engineering are shown in Figure 19; the data for the faculties of Medicine and Natural Sciences are comparable.

However, differences emerge when one focuses on award rates of first-class degrees (lower panel of Figure 19). Black students are awarded first-class degrees at lower rates; White, Chinese and Mixed students tend to enjoy higher award rates. This requires further investigation but is likely linked to the relatively low numbers of Black students at Imperial: as reported in our REC focus groups, experiences of isolation or racism affect learning. To help departments track the impact of their actions making make their pedagogy more inclusive, we have established dashboard tools for departments detailing degree award rates by ethnicity and other EDI characteristics.

Figure 19: Analysis of degree award gaps at Imperial – aggregate data for AYs 2018-2020



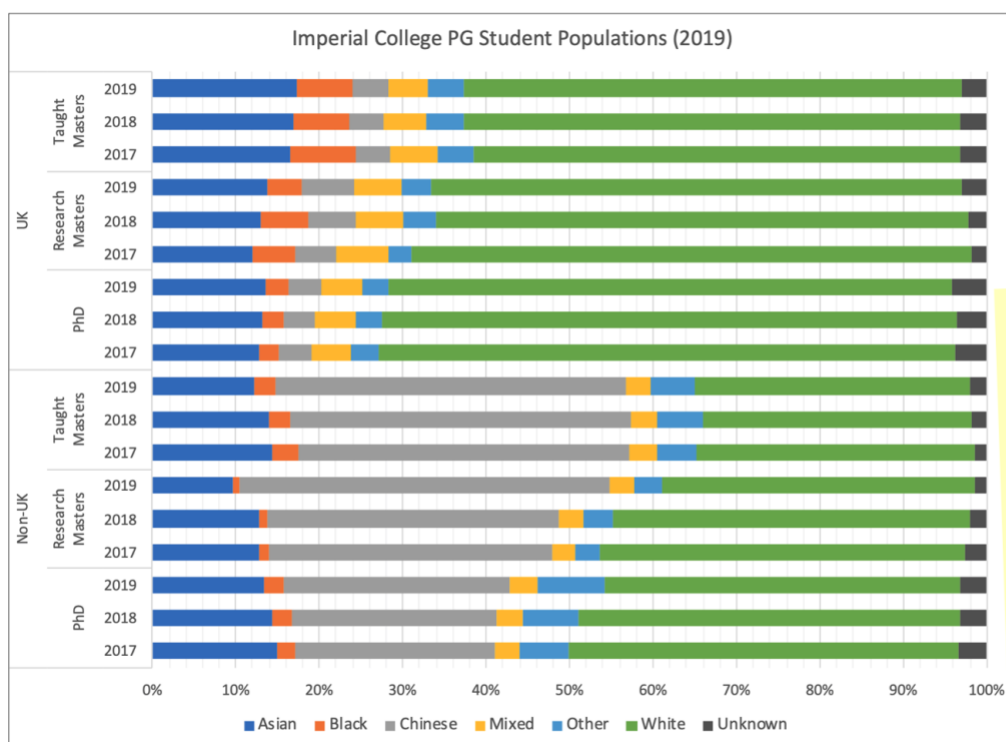
“One student thought it was acceptable to call me the ‘N’ word. There was an altercation, when it was passed on to a member of staff it was not treated seriously.”

Looking at the PG student population, there is a general trend of increasing numbers and proportions of BAME students, except for UK taught Masters students, where numbers are stable (Figure 20).

Notably, the College recruits significantly higher proportions of UK Black students to Taught and Research Masters programmes (around 7% and 5% respectively). The proportions of Black students on our Masters programmes are higher than for our UG programmes (3-4% - see Figure 17).

There is a smaller proportion of BAME UK students studying for research degrees (MRes or PhD) than for taught masters. This difference is most marked for Black UK students, indicating a troubling and significant drop-off in progression for this group. Focus group work with Black students identified lack of funding for scholarships and UG research opportunities as key barriers.

Figure 20: Imperial's PG student population (2017-19) by degree programme type

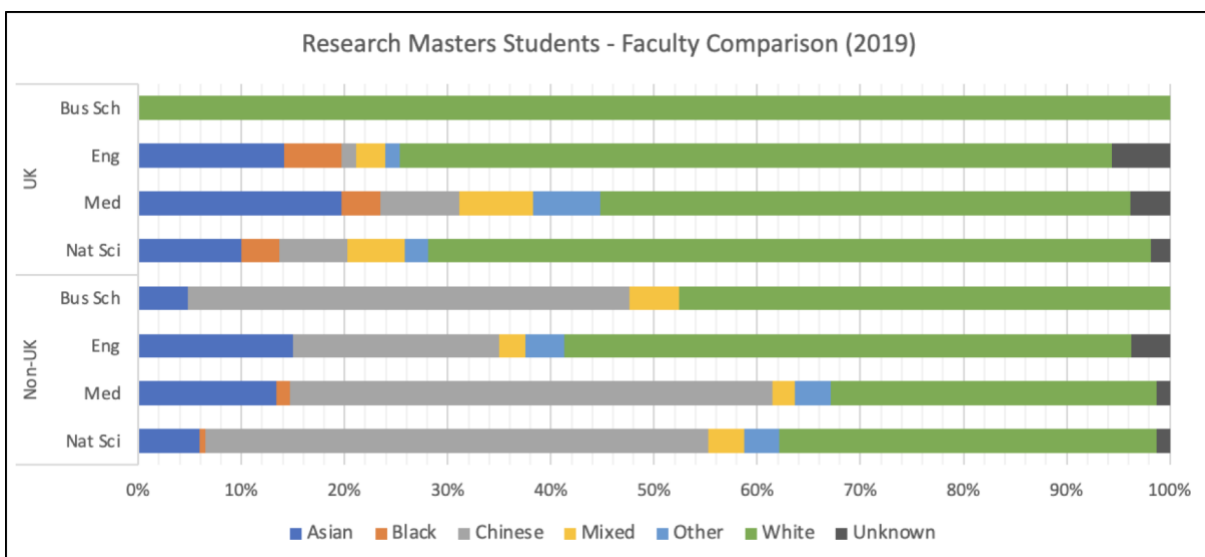
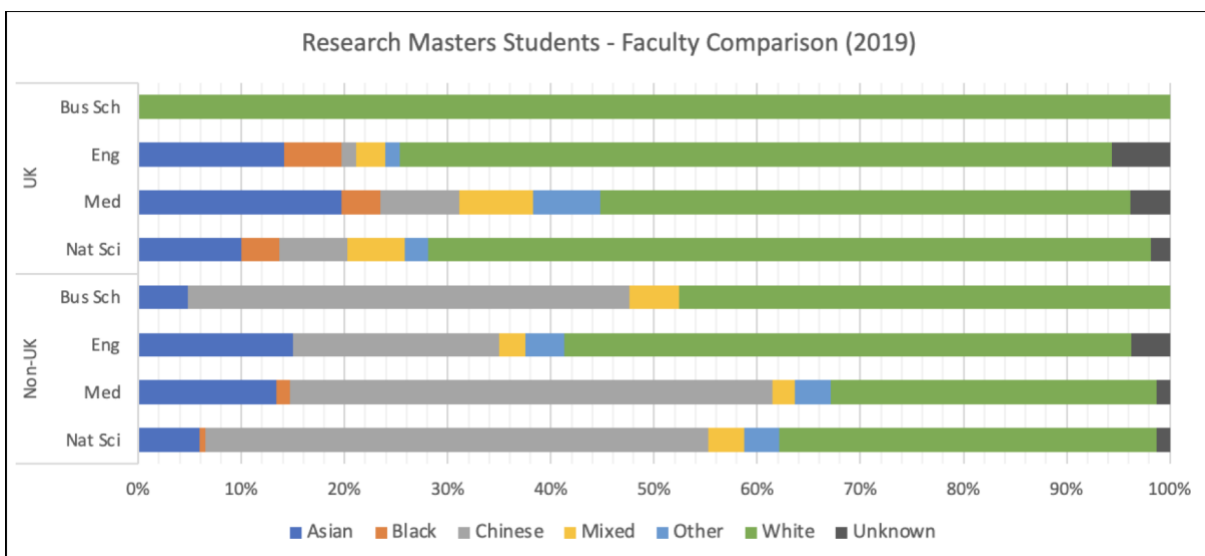
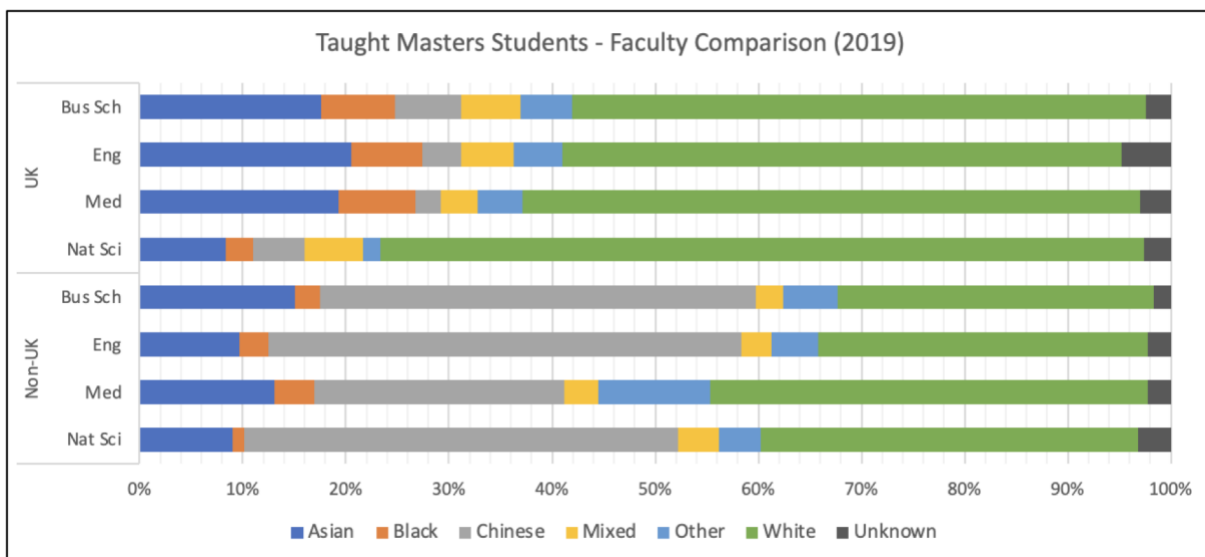


PhD student:
"You're Black but you're also a woman... you feel like people underestimate you. People explain things that don't need explaining."

When comparing the PG student populations across faculties, the picture is relatively complex. For UK PG students, the differences between faculties are marked (Figure 21), although for the most part our ethnic diversity exceeds sector benchmarks⁵. Medicine is the most diverse across the board; in contrast, Natural Sciences is the least diverse, extending a pattern observed for UGs. While the Business School has very low diversity among Research Masters and PhDs, that is because of the very low student numbers on these programmes; it has good levels of diversity among its Taught Masters students. Engineering has reasonable ethnic diversity in Taught Masters programmes, but there is a significant fall-off among its Research Masters and PhD students.

⁵ See full application for details.

Figure 21: Taught Masters, Research Masters and PhD students by Faculty - 2019



8. Teaching and learning

This section of the application provides a description of how we consider race equality within course content, in our approach to teaching and assessment, and in how we help to ensure that our teaching staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider race equality in their teaching and course development.

The framework to Imperial's approach to teaching and assessment is define in the College's 2017 Learning and Teaching Strategy, which has as one of its four main pillars the aim to foster "an inclusive community to prepare students for an increasingly diverse work environment." Full implementation of the strategy is still in progress but is supported by a wide range of staff and student-led project work, research by members of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship (CHERS) and the Educational Development Unit (EDU), and departmental initiatives (Figure 22).

A striking example of the latter is the Business School's new 'Working in Diverse Organisations' module which was undertaken by 70% of its students last year. The module equips students with the self-knowledge, people skills, and context awareness to work effectively in organisations that have increasingly diverse workforces. It has four main components: (i) understanding bias; (ii) cultural fluency; (iii) bystander intervention techniques; and (iv) understanding systemic racism. The course was very positively received and will become mandatory from 2022-23.

Please see the full application for more details.

Figure 22: Research work undertaken by CHERS and elsewhere that impacts race equality

The screenshot displays the website of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship. The main article featured is 'Cultivating belonging in a competitive environment: A look at 'sense of belonging' across multiple sectors' by Murray MacKay, dated 03 June 2019. The article discusses the importance of a sense of belonging (SOB) in various sectors and the role of community frameworks. Other visible articles include 'Decolonization in a higher education STEM institution – is 'epistemic fragility' a barrier?' by Mark Skopec et al., and 'Prize-winning students share learning and teaching research' by Sarah Saxton, dated 24 March 2021. The website also features a sidebar with navigation options and social media sharing buttons.

9. Additional information

None added.

10. Action Plan

Priority actions summarised above. Full action plan can be [downloaded from the College website](#).