

Let's Talk About Race And Racism: An Anti-Racist Toolkit For Students

Introduction

Recent tragic events in the US and [#BlackLivesMatter](#) movement has brought to the fore issues of systemic racism ever-prevalent in society and nations, including in the UK. More than ever, now is the time to shape a strong anti-racist foundation on which we build an equal and just system and provide opportunities and address longstanding discrimination faced by Black people, and other People of Colour (POC). This is even more relevant for UCL, which is a global hub bringing the most talented students from across the world together.

UCL has always aimed to change the world for the better. To begin with, read [UCL's statement on race](#). Recognizing that pockets of racism and racially discriminatory practices remain within its departments, UCL started the 'Full Stop' campaign back in 2019, to challenge and resolve any form of unacceptable behaviour, including racial harassment and discrimination. For most people, UCL is a great place to work or study, yet where unacceptable behaviour does exist, it can have a real impact and it can be difficult to know how to challenge it. This campaign asks all of us to come together and say Full Stop to such behaviour.

This toolkit is a part of the Full Stop sub-campaign 'Let's talk about Race' that focuses exclusively on racism-awareness and anti-racist measures within the UCL environment. This toolkit equips you with a know-how of the context, definitions, issues at play, and measures/tactics at hand, to build an anti-racist University.

In order to understand how racial harassment manifests, we must unpack race and racism, before going on to discussing the role we all must play, in shaping a new narrative. So, let's talk about race.

What is racism?

Racism, like sexism or ableism or classism, is systemic and structural inequality, based on vague or unscientific/pseudo-scientific perception of race and/or race differences. It is a deeply entrenched system that marginalises, discriminates against and often fatally harms those seen as 'racialised others'.

Popular perception of racism is that it is intentional, discriminatory, or prejudicial actions by one person towards a person of colour. However, racism is not simply a series of individual instances of dislike towards an individual. Rather, it is group prejudice backed by institutional power, manifesting in disadvantage through the lived realities of racialised others - in schooling, healthcare, pay-gap, awarding gap, and so on. This can also be defined as 'Institutional racism'.

Racism exists within our history. It is entrenched in political structures, social systems and in human behaviour. Racism exists at UCL. In the UK, race is variably (and confusingly!) understood as your colour, or nationality. It can also mean your ethnic, national, or linguistic group. Often, as it is in real life scenarios, multiple marginalisation's work with each other to produce conjugated disadvantage - for example, a first generation Black, LGBT+ female student can face multiple disadvantages produced by systemic racism, class inequality, sexism and heteronormativity and the gender binary. Or an international disabled student from, say, Taiwan is prone to facing marginalisation based on their race/ ethnicity, disability, as well as linguistic bigotry, if their first language is not English.

Prejudice and xenophobia often come together in the package of racism. Prejudice is to have preconceived opinion about something or someone, which is not based on reason or experience. However, xenophobia goes further. It is understood as an extreme dislike, or fear of foreigners including foreign customs, languages, and belief systems. More info about xenophobia can be found on the [Very Well Mind Website](#) . We are all capable of prejudice, as everyone has their own biases. But what we can influence in building an anti-racist environment is our ability to confront our own assumptions and reflect that in our behaviour towards others.

Harvard University has developed a [helpful tool to understand Implicit Bias Association](#) for a range of traits that we could be implicitly biased against, including race.

Are racial harassment and racism the same?

The individual racist behaviour we are often led to believe is racism, is in fact racial harassment. We can visualise it as the tip of the 'racism iceberg'.

Image of an iceberg with instances of overt racism above the water and instances of covert racism below the water



Picture courtesy: The Earth Institute, Columbia University.

Racial harassment may or may not be intentional.

In the UK, racial harassment is covered under the Equalities Act (2010). It is defined as, 'unwanted conduct, based on race or ethnicity, which violates a person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone'.

Racial harassment can be intentional, or unintentional and can occur in person or online, in writing and/or through electronic means.

UCL, unfortunately, is not free of instances of racial harassment- whether based on someone's colour, or nationality/ethnicity, and even language/ English linguistic skills. It makes UCL an inhospitable space for work or study and contributes to not only marginalisation of affected students/staff but also poorer mental health, and well-being. Due to the entrenched system of taking racial harassment as 'banter' or as a 'joke', a lot of affected students/staff find it difficult to speak up and call it out. It exists, even if we ourselves might not have witnessed or experienced it.

Hear from three UCL students on their experiences of being Black and British in this [UCL podcast](#).

Racism at UCL and the steps we have taken

Eugenics

Unfortunately, UCL has had a troubled history with eugenics. Not only was UCL associated with early proponents of eugenic ideals like Francis Galton, Karl Pearson, among others, but was also implicit in upholding those ideals in uncritical celebration of spaces and ethos modelled after them, over the years.

While UCL does not stand by any of the eugenic ideologies, we were unfortunate that closed conferences on eugenic ideals were held without authorisation on our premises, just a few years ago.

In 2018, the President and Provost, Prof. Michael Arthur, established a high-level Commission of Inquiry to address UCL's history with the concept and promotion, knowingly or unknowingly. The Commission of Inquiry, chaired by an external academic, Prof. Iyiola Solanke, reported in early 2020 on UCL's racist, ableist and classist links to eugenics research and the impact an uncritical celebration of the proponents and their ideals on University buildings and lecture theatres has had on students and staff of colour. UCL has begun acting on recommendations produced by the Commission and the MORE group of Commissioners, starting with the de-naming of buildings associated with eugenicists.

UCL acknowledges that de-naming is not enough on its own. Our history must be told as it is, and hence, we aim to build a critical narrative of the eugenicists associated with UCL around de-named buildings.

Phineas mascot, Students' Union UCL

The Students' Union UCL is the principal body of students and is led by UCL students and works closely with UCL administration, at all levels, to embed student vision at the core of UCL functioning. The Students' Union, UCL is unique in the sense it is the sole body that steers all clubs, societies and sports activities and groups at UCL.

Since its inception, the Students' Union has been led under the banner of Phineas Maclino - our mascot.

Yet, the story of how it came to be the Union mascot is steeped in the celebration of a British victory in the Boer War, which led to unprecedented repression, violence and looting in South Africa.

British colonialism and the imperial subjugation of people in Africa (and elsewhere) is nothing to be proud of.

The Students' Union started an active consultation to gauge the opinion on our mascot's suitability in 2019 and after hearing student voices, decided to drop Phineas as our mascot, to start a new chapter that does not glorify British colonialism and aims to build a critical understanding of what we celebrate and what this signifies for us, as the 'London's Global University'.

How does racial harassment manifest in daily lives?

Most students and staff can identify extreme/explicit examples of racial harassment (e.g. physical or verbal acts of violence/abuse). However, implicit, or subtle behaviour can be more difficult to identify and address. These are racial micro-aggressions, which are brief and everyday slights, insults, indignities and demoralising messages directed at People of Colour.

Just because the behaviour is not overt, doesn't mean it is without negative impact. Micro-aggressions are often dismissed as 'petty' but continuous micro-level behaviour can have a very damaging effect. Often, People of Colour are pressured into denying, or downplaying these forms of discrimination, dismissing incidents as merely "banter" or "jokes".

Still unsure how micro aggressions impact people? Watch [this](#) video which compares micro aggressions to mosquitos!

Micro-aggressions arise from micro-inequalities. As defined [by Mary Rowe, MIT](#), micro-inequalities refer to ways in which people can be overlooked, singled out, ignored, or discounted on the basis of an unchangeable characteristic, such as race.

Micro inequalities can have a harmful impact on people and the cumulative effect can stack up to bullying or harassment.

Micro aggressions and inequalities can manifest in different ways, and include:

- Using derogatory racist slurs, or labels.
- Verbal and non-verbal communication that may demean a person's identity, or racial heritage.
- Communications that exclude, or negate the status of a person of colour. (e.g.

excluding someone in classroom discussions, or social spaces or interactions because 'their name is too difficult to pronounce' or asking a person of colour where they are really from, even when they have explicitly said they are British).

- Race-role presumption (e.g. presuming that if you've a question about race, it is always ok to approach a Black or PoC student/staff member, as they would know about it because they are Black/PoC; or forming groups or assigning people to certain task, due to presumption of their race.

University Of Salford's Students Union has made [this Facebook video explaining some common micro-aggressions](#) faced on a daily basis by students of Colour.

UCL holds a bronze award in striving towards race equality as part of a UK wide [Race Equality Charter \(REC\)](#). Here are some anonymised quotes from the surveys and group discussions for the REC, depicting how micro-inequalities play out at UCL and negatively impact staff and students:

"I didn't think it would matter if there wasn't much diversity in my course at just generally around university but I've found that it's left me feeling quite isolated - somehow as if I'm both an insider and outsider. There isn't explicit racial divisions but it's clear, at least in my course, that inevitably I'll always feel like a foreigner on my course. Something I've not felt in any of my academic life [so far]. It's not necessarily bad but it can be quite isolating."

"Having a diverse range of students allows a sharing of perspectives and understanding of other people. Being a British Asian, having people from similar backgrounds to me provides a sense of community at an institution that is so huge. I feel as though being a global university is really emphasised with UCL's tagline but a lot of this is down to money that the university receives from international students as opposed to a genuine desire for a diverse student body."

"Giving a choice and being aware of racist terminology and curriculum, we still discuss colonisation with no respect or remorse, just a British perspective... There are tutors and students who are aware of philosophy of race and the importance of racial issues. However, the subject remains mainly the study of the thought of white people!"

"From blatant comments to a lot of micro aggression and subtle racism from peers. None

gets addressed because majority of the lecturers and seminar tutors are also white. Therefore, either unable to recognise it or have an unwillingness to do so.”

Micro-inequalities, like micro-aggressions, are not always obvious to the actor (person engaging) and possibly even to the target who may feel upset, insulted, or angry but not sure why. These stem from longstanding prejudicial stereotypes, or misconceptions we learn while growing up, or as a part of a racist society. That is why these are much more difficult to challenge openly and rectify. Always remember, if your behaviour/actions make someone feel humiliated, due to one of their protected characteristics (like race), it is harassment, even if that was not your intention.

Micro-inequalities are a by-product of a social power structure built on racist notions of ‘White superiority’ or ‘White supremacy’. While White supremacy continues to be thought of as an ideology only followed by extremist groups, we can have internalised White supremacist notions, irrespective of our race.

[Here is an interesting blog that lists out some of the internalised White supremacist ideals/presumptions](#) we might be holding. If you find yourself holding some of these beliefs, it will not be easy to confront them and do the right things, but we hope you would try, nonetheless. Building an anti-racist self is all about leaving your comfort zone on the topic of race and racism. Getting uncomfortable, yet inquisitive and open to reason, is a sign of positive engagement with anti-racist ethos. One of the most uncomfortable topics in understanding of race, especially from a White-person’s perspective is the concept of White privilege and White fragility.

‘Privilege is invisible to those who have it’.

White privilege, as Peggy McIntosh describes, ‘is an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank-checks’.

Read the [White Privilege Checklist](#) to find out how many or how few you have!

White privilege is often a touchy topic for White people, especially when brought up in conversations concerning race-equity, as people will tend to take it personally with arguments ranging from ‘I/we are not racists’, ‘how can you say I/we have White privilege?’, or, ‘I/we have faced so many challenges, I did not have any of the privilege you are talking

about' to even 'the X or Y community is also racist, how can you say White-privilege is causing race-inequality?'

Introspection, the first step, is always the hardest. The discomfort, or denial of White privilege is the major block in confronting racism, and stems from White fragility.

DiAngelo coined the term "White fragility" in 2011 to describe the disbelieving defensiveness that White people exhibit when their ideas about race and racism are challenged—and particularly when they feel implicated in White supremacy.

Since racism systematically gives advantage to White people, they will rarely, if ever, experience any ill-effects from it. Thus, they cannot see, or feel, or understand what it is to be Black, or a Person of Colour.

The claim that 'we don't see colour' is a statement of privilege coming (most likely) from a White person, with the option to not see colour because they are racialised as White and therefore do not need to view their world through the lens of their skin tone.

A Black person does not have the privilege of being able to ignore their marginalisation, due to their race, in their lived experiences. A lot of People of Colour are prepared, through harsh experiences or socialisation, to confront or find tactics to manage the racism they encounter, which is entirely lacking if you have never experienced it.

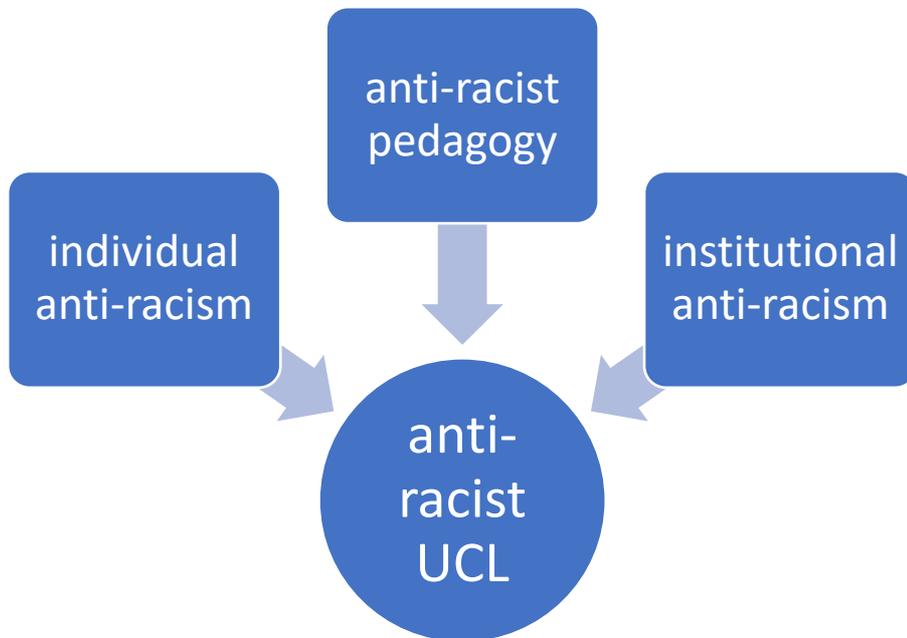
Thus, race becomes an unfamiliar and uncomfortable topic for White people to discuss. This fragility leads to avoiding the topic of race and thus, contributes to the perpetuation of racism and racist structures. By disregarding the notions of White superiority and White privilege, racism will continue its hold on society.

It is time we change this.

So, what can I do about it?

For a problem as deeply entrenched as racism, there are still many steps we can take at different levels to be anti-racist. Anti-racism involves challenging the racist foundation of our societal and power structures and subverting systemic inequalities to provide an equitable and just platform, where all people have the opportunity to perform well and prosper, irrespective of their racial identity.

There is no set route to starting your journey to be anti-racist, whether you start at challenging the racist assumptions/ideals within yourself, your classroom, or the wider world. What is important is you start. Below are a few levels of engagement, where you could make a positive difference:



Picture description: Chart diagram of different levels of anti-racist actions leading to an anti-racist UCL: individual anti-racism; anti-racist pedagogy; institutional anti-racism.

A. Individual level

The journey to anti-racism begins with each individual taking steps to recognise, confront and challenge racism and racial harassment in our daily lives, within and outside of the University. Here is a non-exhaustive list of things you can do and encourage your friends and family to do, to contribute to an anti-racist momentum:

i. Critical Self-reflection and introspection:

Questions to ask yourself/ self-reflection:

* What is your lived experience of privilege and disadvantage? Can you think of any instance, or parts of your identity that you took for granted while someone of colour was questioned/discouraged/singled out for having/doing the same? [Hint: hairstyle, dressing, speech and grammar, career/subject choices, decision to go to the University, etc.]

*How would you describe your identity? Why?

* How would you describe the context of your lived experience? What obstacles did you have to face to reach where you are - was race ever an issue? If yes, why, if no, why not?

- * What are my 'hidden preferences'? For example, what does my friendship circle look like - if I would want to expand it, can I easily do so? Or, what type of 'team-mates' do I want when assigned to classroom group-projects? What does it say about my biases?
- * Does mention of White fragility/privilege make you defensive? Is your first reaction to instantly deny it? If so, examine why?
- * Where do you position yourself on an anti-racist framework? Do you think you are comfortable taking an active anti-racist position? Why/Why not?

ii. Education and awareness

- Learn about the complex history of race and racism from this short but useful introduction [A History: The Construction of Race and Racism](#). Race is a human construct and not part of the natural world and the racism we understand today, is the result of a historical progression several hundred years old. It has helped justify oppression, colonialism and imperialism and is intimately connected to the [construction of Whiteness](#) and White superiority.
- Reni Eddo-Lodge in her book, [Why I'm no Longer Talking to White People about Race](#), provides a good introduction to racism in the UK within a historical context.
- Read the article: [The way you define racism, may stop you from seeing it](#) and reflect on your understanding of race and racism. Ask yourself: what definition do you hold?
- Learn to recognise and understand racism as a system that we are all part of, and watch Robin Di Angelo's [Deconstructing White Privilege video](#) discussing racism as a system and White privilege.
- Establish reading groups and share the resources below and throughout the toolkit with peers and colleagues relating to understanding race and racial harassment.

Additional resources

Books

Cousins, Susan (2019) - *Overcoming Everyday Racism: Building Resilience and Wellbeing in the Face of Discrimination and Microaggressions*

DiAngelo, Robin (2019) - *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*

Eddo-Lodge, Reni (2017) - *Why I'm no longer talking to White people about race*

Oluo, Ijeoma (2019) - *So You Want to Talk About Race*

Trepagnier, Barbara (2017) - *Silent Racism: How Well-Meaning White People Perpetuate the Racial Divide*

Nikesh Shukla (2016), *The Good Immigrant*

Yassmin Abdel-Magied (2019), *You Must be Layla*

TED Talks

[The danger of the single story – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#)

Author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie discusses how she found her authentic culture voice, and warns that if we hear on a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding.

[How to deconstruct racism one headline at a time – Baratunde Thurston](#)

Baratunde Thurston explores 'living while Black' narratives through news headlines. In this through-provoking and often hilarious talk, he reveals the power of language to change stories of trauma into store of healing.

[How Racial bias Works and How to Disrupt it](#) by Dr. Jennifer Eberhardt, Dept. of Psychology, Stanford University. In this talk, Jennifer L. Eberhardt explores how our biases unfairly target Black people at all levels of society -- from schools and social media to policing and criminal justice -- and discusses how creating points of friction can help us actively interrupt and address this troubling problem.

[How to overcome our biases, walk boldly towards them – Verna Myers](#)

Our biases can be dangerous, even deadly — as we've seen in the cases of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner, in Staten Island, New York. Diversity advocate Vernā Myers looks closely at some of the subconscious attitudes we hold toward out-groups. She makes a plea to all people: Acknowledge your biases. Then move toward, not away from, the groups that make you uncomfortable. In a funny, impassioned, important talk, she shows us how.

[To be colour blind, or colour brave – Mellody Hobson](#)

The subject of race can be very touchy. As finance executive Mellody Hobson says, it's a "conversational third rail." But, she says, that's exactly why we need to start talking about it. In this engaging, persuasive talk, Hobson makes the case that speaking openly about race — and particularly about diversity in hiring -- makes for better businesses and a better society.

[YouTube Resources](#)

[Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility' - 1.23:30](#)

University of Washington professor Dr. Robin DiAngelo reads from her book "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism," explains the phenomenon, and discusses how White people can develop their capacity to engage more constructively across race.

[Deconstructing White Privilege with Dr. Robin DiAngelo - 22:05](#)

Dr. Robin DiAngelo is the author of "What Does it Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy" and has been an anti-racist educator and has heard justifications of racism by White men and women in her workshops for over two decades. This justification, which she calls "White fragility," is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviours such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation.

iii. [Initiate and sustain an active anti-racist conversation](#)

- Join the social media conversation and share #letstalkaboutrace. Feed into the EDI 'let's talk about race' campaign with your ideas and experiences to spread it across the student body.
- Speak with a peer or colleague about micro-inequalities, or behaviour that appears to be racial harassment. How do they identify it? What do they do to challenge it?
- Practice mindfulness when talking to fellow students or staff about lived experiences of racism and do not single out only the Black and minority ethnic community students/staff for these conversations. Race is not a topic to be discussed, or heard from just the Black and minority communities'. Everyone has a role in it.
- Think about a lecturer or professional staff, or even another student who

demonstrates positive and inclusive behaviour and helps shape a positive learning environment. Hold conversations with them on best practice and celebrate their efforts.

- Reach out to the [Race Matters group](#) or [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team](#) to find out how you can talk about race with friends, family and colleagues

iv. Intervene and escalate

If you witness racial harassment, or have experienced it yourself, know that there is support available at UCL. If you see one of your peers, or friends falling victim to racial harassment - whether online or in-person, you could intervene in a safe manner, or [report it](#) on their behalf.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of tactics to intervene safely and where you can seek support to help build an anti-racist UCL.

Be an Ally

Allies understand their privilege and use it for a greater good. If you hold race privilege, and want to contribute to anti-racism, become an ally. A White ally understands, challenges and confronts notions of White superiority within themselves and within society. They amplify the voices of communities of colour in their struggle against racism, without taking the centre stage. Here is a [brief guide on how to become an active White ally](#).

UCL strongly encourages its staff and students to become allies, in whichever position of privilege they have. For staff, UCL runs an [Inclusive Advocacy](#) Programme to amplify the voices of its BAME staff. We are also piloting a Race Allies training for all staff. More information on that will be available as soon as it is launched.

As a student, you can benefit from several social and intellectual events focussing on allyship organised by different clubs and societies at the Students' Union, UCL. Here is [their calendar of events](#).

Active bystander

An active bystander intervenes when they see something problematic happening, instead of just mutely watching a problematic event. If you see someone receiving racially motivated hate, discrimination, or abusive behaviour, practice safe intervention by following the four D's of being an active bystander (see below).

Students Union, UCL provides Active Bystander training to students through their departments at the start of term. The time to enrol onto one of these training sessions has now passed for this academic year, but you can ask your dept. to ensure they sign up to the training next year, if they already don't.

What are the four Ds of being an active bystander?

Direct Action

As a bystander, you can directly intervene when you see a situation of street harassment by confronting the situation head on. For example, you can ask the harasser to stop bothering the person they are targeting.

Distraction

As a bystander can take an indirect approach to intervening. For example, if you notice someone being harassed, you can approach them to ask for directions, greet them or check a meeting time or location, thus de-escalating that situation.

Delegation

This is when you seek outside assistance to intervene in the situation. For example, a bystander can seek help or assistance from the police, a public transport worker, or another party such as a line manager, personal tutor, HR or the Students Union. For example, the Students' Union UCL will remove perpetrators from their events.

Delay

This is when you wait for the situation to pass, and you check in with the person who was targeted to make sure they are okay. Even if you were unable to intervene at the time, checking in later makes a difference to the person who was harassed. Remember, the delay tactic is an important step when witnessing any unacceptable behaviour, and it important to do, to ensure the person targeted understands the support options available to them.

Report and support

If you have been a target of any problematic behaviour based on your race (and any other protected characteristic), whether that behaviour was explicit racism or a micro-aggression, you can log these on **'Report and Support'**- an online platform used by UCL to monitor instances of bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct and provide support to affected staff or students.

You can either contact an advisor and discuss in detail the kind of support that would empower you the most, or report the instance anonymously, if you are not comfortable sharing your details, or are reporting on behalf of a third person who does not want to share their details. You can also contact your preferred [Dignity Advisors](#) through the R&S to get advice on your situation. [This short video](#) gives a walk-through of the Report and Support platform if you wish to use it for reporting or seeking support.

[The R&S website](#) contains detailed information on UCL's understanding of Bullying, Harassment and Sexual misconduct, the campaigns we have launched to tackle these and support available. It is centrally managed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team and all the data submitted is confidential.

The EDI team also publishes regular reports that offer insights into each faculty and department. It uses the anonymous data to pro-actively lead on interventions and possibly environmental investigations, if required, in departments demonstrating multiple reports of a similar nature.

Through Report and Support, UCL aims to say 'Full Stop' to Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct. It can only become possible when staff and students feel empowered to use the support it provides and trust they can report any problematic behaviour, without facing repercussions or stigma.

[SU Advice and Hate crime reporting centre](#)

The Students' Union, UCL runs an Advice Centre, which is also a Hate Crime reporting centre. If you or someone you know have been impacted by any form of harassment, including racial abuse, harassment, or discrimination, they will provide impartial advice, independent of (any influence from) UCL. [Access this service here.](#)

Other support services:

UCL offers several support services for students, like, [Student Support and Wellbeing](#) (SSW), [Student Psychological and Counselling Services](#) (SPCS), [Crime-prevention and Personal Safety advisor](#), [UCL wardens](#).

More information on [internal and external support providers here.](#)

v. Organise

- Join a Union. Unions exist to advocate for and uphold the rights of their membership through a collective voice. UCL staff and students have access to membership of various unions, like [Students' Union, UCL](#) (for UCL students, all students automatically become members), [National Union of Students \(NUS\)](#), [UCU-UCL](#) (for PhD students, postdoctoral researchers and other UCL staff), [UNISON](#) (all working staff, including outsourced and zero-hour workers; officially recognized by UCL), [IWGB](#) (all working staff- claims having most People of Colour (PoC) representation; not officially recognized by UCL). If you work in an industry outside of UCL there may be other unions, you can join, relevant to your workplace.
- Students' Union, UCL exists to serve you as its membership. Seven students among yourselves are elected each year to serve full-time to raise issues and work with UCL to promote student rights and well-being. Several hundred other students serve as departmental representatives, and committee members in more than 300 clubs and societies. Stand to be elected as representative if you can and want to. Even if not, liaise actively with student representatives and sabbatical officers to make your voice heard at the highest UCL levels. Access more information on the [Students' Union, UCL website](#).
- If you are a member of an SU UCL club or society, hold anti-racist educational and social events by getting in touch with your club/society's committee or welfare officer. Encourage the SU to publicise among students, their anti-racist initiatives and commitment to anti-racism.
- Take part in intersectional anti-racist events that many clubs and societies routinely organise, even if you are not a member of those.
- Become a member of the [UCL students' BME network](#) for a sense of community and basepoint of anti-racist student activism at UCL, if you identify as a person of colour. SU, UCL has a full-time BME students' officer, who can be reached through the SU website.
- UCL has several equality networks, largely for staff, which encourage student reach-out. Some relevant networks active in anti-racist initiatives are [RaceMatters@UCL](#), [Race Equality Steering Group \(RESG\)](#) and Race Allies who you could get in touch with

either for getting involved, or reaching out to seek support in the face of racial harassment.

- If you feel comfortable and it is safe to do so, take part in race equality rallies, demonstrations, or protests if they are organised in your vicinity. Always know anti-racist activism is not only through going to a protest, or demonstration and every individual can contribute in their own unique way. If you are taking part/organising a protest, always risk-assess the scenarios and take help of the organising committee/unions/relevant people to ensure safety of participants.
- Practice self-care to avoid burnout. It is easy to extend yourself so fully into anti-racism activity, that you no longer have boundaries between being an anti-racist and your personal self, if you are passionate about race equality, or have had experience of racism. While it is not necessarily anything to cause concern, take care to debrief and switch off at the end of an intense involvement. If you are new to anti-racism, compassion towards yourself is equally important, as challenging some of the implicit biases you, or your family/friends hold. These can lead to complex emotions, ranging from anger, denial, self-hate, to distress. Speak to the support services at UCL, Students' Union UCL, or external service providers, if you are feeling intense unresolved emotions due to taking part in any anti-racist measures listed above.

B. Department/faculty level

i. Demand for an anti-racist pedagogy

An anti-racist pedagogy has three components ([Kishimoto, 2016](#)):

- 1) Incorporating the topics of race and inequality into course content,
- 2) Teaching from an anti-racist pedagogical approach, and
- 3) Anti-racist organising within the campus and linking to efforts in the surrounding community.

In other words, anti-racist pedagogy is an organising effort for institutional and social change that is much broader than just teaching in the classroom. Demand an anti-racist pedagogy from your course leads/ department heads, and initiate conversations on how applying this to courses makes teaching and learning more

holistic. Raise questions if your curriculum completely glosses over the contributions of People of Colour (especially women of colour) and gives you an uncritically 'White' education. Ask your lecturers to begin/continue critical self-reflection in order to effectively implement anti-racist pedagogy.

Ask your department to facilitate an active and inclusive space where matters on racism and racial harassment can be discussed openly and fairly, if there isn't such space(s) already.

Establish reading groups/ student groups and encourage your department to share your learnings department wide through newsletters, events, etc.

Liaise with your department/faculty EDI coordinator/EDI committee or race equity group, if your department/faculty has one, to learn more about resources available and things you can do to sustain an anti-racist momentum in your field. If your department/faculty does not have an EDI lead or co-ordinator, flag this up to the department head and encourage them to appoint one.

Demand that your department provide regular communications about diversity and inclusion initiatives and highlight department-specific progress made on race equality.

C. Institutional level

- Acquaint yourself with and encourage your peers to go through the policies. UCL has a duty to prevent bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct.
- UCL EDI publishes [regular reports on data gathered from Report and Support](#). Write to the team to hold them accountable and discuss the results and actions taken against racial harassment.
- Hold the University accountable by demanding institutional updates and events on how UCL has been tackling racism and race-marginalisation, whether in admissions and awarding gap, or the fair recruitment of staff, community initiatives, or whatever you think has been lagging at UCL.
- [Write to UCL EDI](#) if you feel there is more UCL could be doing in our efforts to tackle racial harassment and end systemic racism within UCL. It could be about an initiative we must take, or lack of appropriate support, or anything else. Nothing is petty or too small when it comes to tackling racism.

Key Messages

- Racial harassment is never acceptable at UCL. Yet, it is part of the everyday lives of

many students and staff of colour. This is unacceptable and UCL is committed to end this.

- Consider how you would know if your behaviour is appropriate - reflect on the impact on the recipient of that behaviour. If it is negative, yet you do not think 'you did anything wrong', question the privilege that prevents you from seeing why, what you said/did negatively impacted another person. The impact of a behaviour is measured by what the recipient felt and experienced, not what someone 'thought' while perpetuating that behaviour.
- If you have experienced racial harassment or racism at UCL and want to understand your options, contact an Advisor through ['Report + Support'](#).
- Racial harassment and micro-aggressions can have a profound impact on individuals, departments and the institution. We must all call out and challenge this behaviour, where possible.
- Sometimes, it can be difficult to confirm and therefore call out racial harassment, especially in the form of racialised micro-aggressions. If you've been impacted but are not sure if it is racial harassment, contact a dignity advisor or ask for support through ['Report + Support'](#).
- It is never too late to disclose, or report an incident. To find out more about UCL support, or to report, please visit ['Report + Support'](#)
- Be an active bystander if you see someone being victimised for their race, or any other protected characteristics. Practice the four D's - Direct, Distract, Delegate and Delay. Find out more about how you can be an active bystander on Report + Support.
- Follow and contribute to [#letstalkaboutrace campaign](#) to end all forms of racial harassment at UCL.

Frequently asked questions

Where can I report issues of racial harassment?

Further information can be found on the [Report + Support site](#), including all relevant/associated policies and procedures for students and staff.

What can I do if I witness unacceptable behaviour?

An active bystander is someone who not only witnesses unacceptable behaviour, but who chooses to act and challenge that behaviour, in order to disrupt a potentially problematic situation, or keep it from escalating. A bystander can prevent, as well as deal with a potential situation. As a student, you can participate in the [Active Bystander program](#) delivered by the Students' Union UCL, through your department.

You should only challenge behaviour if you feel safe to do so. If it is an emergency call 999 (or 112 from a mobile). If there is no immediate danger, you can report it. The training would provide you further with detailed reporting contacts.

I have been a victim of/have witnessed racial harassment or racial abuse. Should I involve police?

The decision to report racial abuse/harassment to the police is entirely your own choice. If you experience a hate-crime on the UCL- campus, or UCL accommodation, you can report it to your immediate support-provider, like the wardens in UCL accommodation, or module leaders/personal tutors in your department, or the Hate Crime reporting centre at Students' Union UCL. You can also log it on [Report and support](#) to get a more centrally located support though it can take up to five working days to get a response. If you, or someone else is in immediate danger, please always reach out to the police by dialling 999.

I have experienced online abuse and harassment around my race on some social platforms frequented by UCL students. Is there support available?

UCL is committed to safeguard its students and staff against online hate and abuse, as much as it is committed to ensure a safe in- person environment for everyone. You can report any instances of online harassment in the same way as you would an in-person incident. You can reach out either via [Report & Support](#), or contact your departmental tutors, or your line-manager/supervisor. You can also seek support from Students Union advice centre and Student Support and Well-being.

I live in the UCL halls. Do I have any immediate support available in case of racial harassment at my residence?

Every UCL hall of accommodation has a dedicated team of Student Resident Advisors (SRAs) and a warden to provide support and maintain harmony and order within the halls. If you have faced any racially motivated hate, or abuse, or if you are concerned about behaviour of your fellow hall-mates, please get in touch with the warden or SRAs. Find more details on your [hall warden and SRAs here](#).

Where can I find more information on UCL policies on race equity?

The [UCL website](#) holds information on various institutional policies and initiatives. Your department website can inform you of local policies and measures. You can also follow [UCL EDI webpage](#) and/or [sign up to EDI newsletter](#) to keep updated on all race equity initiatives.

Has UCL taken any positive actions to remedy race-inequity in accessing higher education?

UCL has recently introduced a number of Research Opportunity Scholarships (ROS) for students from the most marginalised UK BAME communities, who want to pursue a doctoral degree at UCL. More information can be found on the [Research Opportunities Scholarship webpage](#).

Who should I write to if I want to get involved with race-equity action at UCL?

[Write to the UCL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team](#) by getting in touch with one of us.

You can also [sign up to EDI newsletter](#) to keep updated on our programmes and events for advancing race equity and other inclusion campaigns.

Terms to know

Bias

Bias is a disproportionate weight in favour or against something, an idea, belief, person, group or any trait. When it comes to racial bias, most of the biases people hold, either in favour or against a particular race, are learnt through socialisation. These are not innate. Biases can have a very damaging effect on those at the receiving end of the bias. When a negative bias comes from people in positions of power, it can prevent those targeted from career and life progression, equal healthcare and life opportunities and their well-being.

Stereotype

A stereotype is a widely held but oversimplified and generalized belief about people, or a category of people. Stereotypes often sweep the diversity of a particular group, or religion, or ethnicity with a broad brush. Racial stereotypes can range from being annoying, to becoming extremely dangerous to the recipient's well-being. Stereotypes feed into prejudice and xenophobia and reduce an entire people to generic opinions, like 'all South Asians smell like curry', or 'Black people are loud', etc. Stereotyping a group of people is the foundation of 'othering' on which racism is built.

Discrimination

Discrimination is unjust treatment or prejudice against certain people, or groups of people based on one or more of their characteristics like race, gender, age, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, religion, etc. It prevents people who are discriminated against from enjoying rights and opportunities on an equal basis to those not sharing that characteristic. [In the UK, discriminatory behaviour against 'protected characteristics' is punishable by law.](#)

Allyship

Allyship is the practice of emphasising and actively contributing to equity and justice by members of a privileged group, who are known as allies. An ally uses their position of privilege to lend solidarity and amplify the voices of people from a non-privileged group, to demand an equitable playing field for everyone. It is a lifelong process of learning, building relationships of trust, accountability and solidarity with people who experience injustice from unequal power hierarchies, be it race, gender, sexuality, ableism or any other marginalisation, which puts certain people in privileged positions to others.

BAME

Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic. It is the most widely used umbrella term to refer to communities of colour and who are under-represented in positions of power and privilege in the UK, due to structural racism. It is not a problem-free term and many scholars have questioned its usage as representative of all communities of colour. The diversity of 'BAME' communities, results in the term being used as a politically correct way of 'othering' while glossing over inter- BAME community differences and experiences.

PoC

People of Colour, an American term used to describe communities marginalised due to their race (or colour). Again, it can be (mis)used in a sense of erasing the racialised identity of White people, where White is treated as the norm, or a 'non-colour'.

R&S

Report and Support. It is a platform used by several Universities, including UCL that provides one stop to report and seek support against bullying, Harassment and Sexual misconduct.