Unblocking the Pipeline: Supporting the Retention, Progression and Promotion of Black Early-Career Academics

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Contents

Foreword

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In an era where diversity and inclusion are not just ideals but essentials, the academic community faces a significant challenge: the under-representation of Black academics, particularly in senior positions. In recent years the higher education sector has recognised and committed to addressing the under-representation at every stage of the career ladder, from access at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, into PhD study and through to leadership roles, including professorships. But is this enough? This is a key question in this research series, and specifically this report, *Unblocking the Pipeline: Supporting the Retention, Progression and Promotion of Black Early-Career Academics*, which seeks to illuminate these challenges and offer strategies to address them.

The journey of Black early-career academics (ECAs) is often fraught with unique obstacles, from systemic bias to inadequate support. As a female Black academic, I identify with the experiences of the Black ECAs participating in this study. Although numbers are increasing, I am one of only 210 Black professors in the UK in 2023.[1] We represent less than 1% of all professors in the UK. I am also one of an even smaller number of Black female professors across the sector. There are too few of us and this needs to change. This cannot happen unless we unblock the academic pipeline.

The work carried out for this ECA-focused study contributes to a growing body of literature which is giving a voice to and illuminating the lived experiences of Black academics. The insights contained in this report are crucial not only for individual institutions but for the broader academic landscape. It highlights the persistent structural issues that Black ECAs still face, including promotion processes, access to support for career progression and continued direct and indirect racism, resulting in a lack of a sense of community and belonging. As a result of a lack of representation, small numbers of Black academics are frequently required to demonstrate diversity by taking on additional tasks such as sitting on recruitment panels, and being stereotyped into equality, diversity and inclusion roles. The resulting burden of emotional labour is largely ignored in workloads and, at the same time, staff are often not being taken seriously as academics.

So how do we bring about the change that is needed? This study enables us to begin to identify and examine which strategies deliver the greatest impact by listening to Black ECAs to understand what has made the biggest difference to them.

Positive action is critical, whether in terms of ringfenced PhD places, targeted support or recognition of additional workloads. But more than this, we need to address the systemic nature of disadvantage and discrimination that continues to block the pipeline for Black academics. Developing the cultural capabilities of university staff at all levels is key to addressing the unconscious bias, microaggressions and discrimination minoritised staff experience on a day-to-day basis. This includes understanding the intersectional experiences of Black academics, whether in relation, for example, to gender, disability, sexuality, international versus UK or cultural heritage.

As this study demonstrates, moving to transformational diversity requires that Black academics are given a voice, are listened to and empowered to be part of decision-making processes. Only by taking heed of what our Black colleagues tell us can we take appropriate action for change. This research series is important in helping us to move things forward. In particular, it outlines practical strategies for institutions to adopt, aimed at creating an environment where Black academics can thrive and advance.

The significance of this work cannot be overstated. As university senior leaders and policymakers, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that the pathways to academic success are open and accessible to all. By implementing the recommendations presented in this report, we can begin to dismantle the systemic barriers that impede the progress of Black academics and cultivate an academic culture that truly values and supports diversity.

I commend the authors of this report for their comprehensive and thoughtful analysis. Their work not only highlights the urgency of addressing these issues but also provides a clear roadmap for action. It is my hope that this report will inspire and guide meaningful change across institutions, paving the way for a more equitable and inclusive academic future. Our diversity enhances the quality of research and teaching, broadening the scope of inquiry and understanding.

We need to continue to support research that demonstrates why and how inequality and disadvantage can be overcome. Our universities need to listen and lead from the top.

The progress that has been made gives me hope, as does this research series. Our journey continues.

Executive Summary

This report explores the experiences of Black early-career academics (ECAs) in higher education. Based on a survey of nearly 100 Black ECAs and 24 interviews with staff working on initiatives to support them, this report examines the challenges faced by Black ECAs in securing a post and advancing their careers. By evaluating the initiatives currently implemented, this report then investigates how higher education institutions can effectively support Black ECAs.

In our discussion of the challenges faced by Black ECAs, we find that:

- Most survey respondents feel they have good relationships with their colleagues (68%), but only a minority feel their pay is fair (32%), their workplace is inclusive (34%) and they are supported with their mental and physical wellbeing (38%).
- The biggest barriers to career progression identified by respondents are unconscious bias, a lack of community and a lack of clarity around promotion criteria.
- Black ECAs often feel 'invisible', in that they are passed over for promotion or not acknowledged for the work they do. But they are also expected to do more additional work, such as sitting on interview panels and mentoring colleagues.
- They also feel distanced from conversations around promotion and progression, which may partly be because Black staff are often poorly represented at the top levels of university leadership. They particularly value mentorship as a way of advancing their careers.

In our exploration of the initiatives used to support Black ECAs, we find that:

- Less than two-fifths of survey respondents (38%) would feel comfortable reporting bullying or harassment to their institution, and a quarter (27%) feel race is a taboo topic where they work.
- The interventions seen as most effective are the active recruitment of Black academics and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training. Survey respondents also wanted more targeted grants to fund PhD places for Black candidates.

- The most effective strategies were not just about supporting candidates to find a post; they also involved providing support for Black ECAs throughout their roles.

We recommend that higher education institutions looking to support their Black ECAs formalise existing informal processes around promotion and mentorship, which have patchy availability and are of inconsistent quality.

Higher education institutions should:

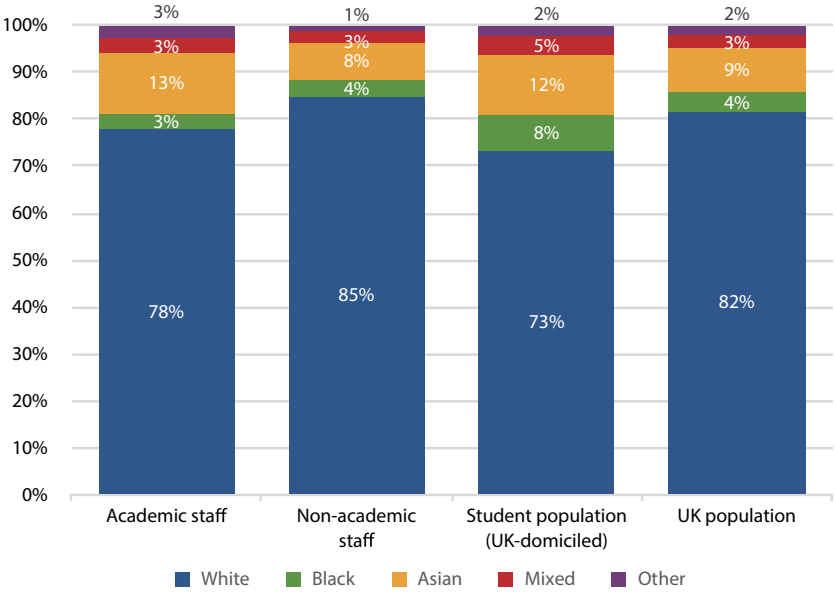
- Provide mentorship programmes for ECAs of all ethnicities, standardised across the institution. Mentors should receive training and be recognised for this work when allocating workloads and considering promotion prospects.
- Provide studentships and scholarships targeted at candidates who face disadvantages developing their careers in higher education, coupled with ongoing support for those candidates throughout their period of work.
- Show leadership on this issue by sharing best practice, following through on interventions and rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives.

A checklist for institutions is also provided in Appendix A.

Introduction

People of Black ethnicity face great challenges advancing their academic careers.[2] Black students now participate in UK higher education in record numbers: in the 2021/22 academic year, Black students made up 8.5% of the student cohort entering undergraduate education and 6.6% of those entering postgraduate study, both significantly above the 4% of the UK population who are Black.[3] But Black academics make up just 3.4% of the UK academic workforce, including those recruited from overseas.[i] Some 3.7% of non-academic staff are Black.

Figure 1 Those working and studying in higher education, by ethnicity



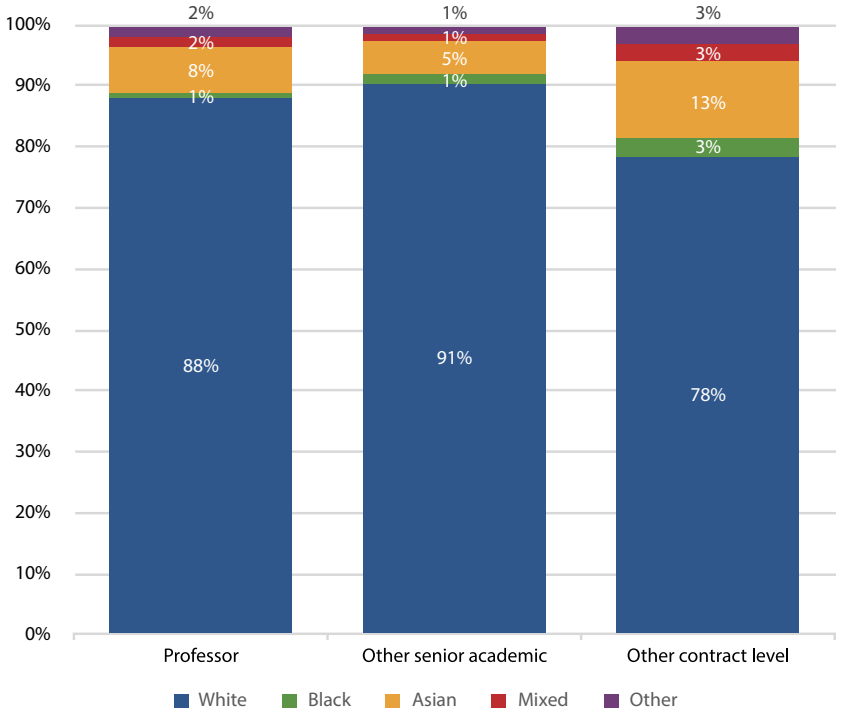
Source: HESA. Data for staff are from the 2022/23 academic year; data for students are from the 2021/22 academic year. Those whose ethnicity is unknown are excluded.[4]

The problem is particularly noticeable at more senior levels. In the 2020/21 academic year, there were just 165 Black professors in the UK,

i Though the term 'Black academics' has been criticised for perpetuating stereotypes, we use the term for clarity to refer to academics of Black ethnicity.

representing only 0.8% of the more than 23,500 professors nationally.[5] Data obtained through Freedom of Information requests sent by the Society of Black Academics (SBA) to higher education institutions show that some institutions do not have a single Black professor despite having hundreds of professors overall.

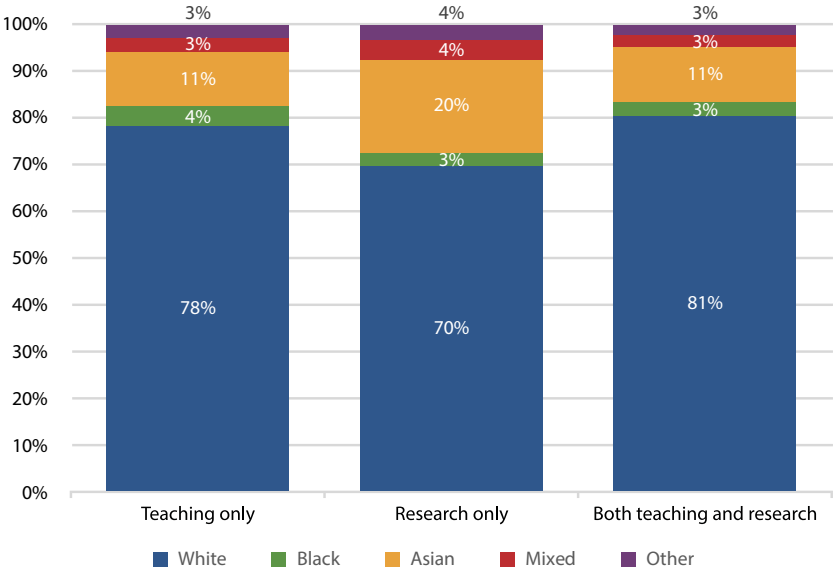
Figure 2 Academic staff by role



Source: HESA. Data from the 2020/21 academic year. Those whose ethnicity is unknown are excluded.[6]

Additionally, Black academics are more highly concentrated in teaching than in research, making up 4.3% of academic staff with a solely teaching role but just 2.9% of those with a solely research role.

Figure 3 Academic staff by area of work



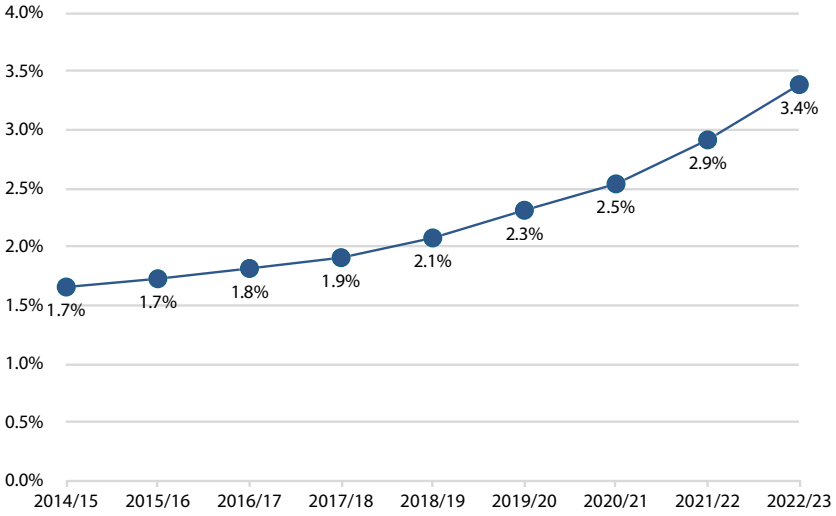
Source: HESA. Those whose ethnicity is unknown are excluded.[7]

The 'pipeline' from student to early-career academic to professor is blocked for many. This problem is not just one of representation. A higher proportion of Black academics (40%) are on insecure fixed-term contracts than the UK higher education sector as a whole (32%).[8] Others have highlighted the mental health challenges and racism Black academics face.[9] In a 2022 HEPI blog, Dr Blessing Marandure, a Senior Lecturer at De Montfort University, highlighted the micro-aggressions, 'everyday slights and degradations' faced by Black academics as a result of racial stereotypes held by their colleagues. In one example – which indicates the pervasiveness of these biases – a Black female professor was mistaken for catering staff serving coffee at a convening of professors.[10]

In recent years, the higher education sector has increasingly recognised and responded to the issue. Organisations such as the Society of Black Academics and Black British Academics have helped to build thriving networks for academics across a range of disciplines. Institutions have

deployed a whole range of initiatives and programmes designed to support and promote minoritised staff. Partly as a result of these efforts, the proportion of academics who are Black has doubled from 1.7% to 3.4% since 2014/15.[11]

Figure 4 Proportion of academic staff who are Black



Source: HESA.[12]

With institutions now implementing an exciting and diverse range of initiatives, it is important to understand what works and has the greatest impact. This research project, jointly conducted by GatenbySanderson, the SBA and HEPI, seeks to examine these initiatives, gauge their efficacy and make recommendations on programmes, initiatives and interventions which can support the retention, progression and promotion of Black academics in the UK.

It is challenging to conduct research in this area. The Black experience of higher education and academic employment is not homogenous and is affected by many factors. Our research is a snapshot at one moment and the challenges facing Black academics will shift over time. The challenges faced by those entering academic career pathways are different from those

later in their careers and all of our data are based on self-reporting by institutions.

As such, this project will be broken down into several focused reports. This report focuses specifically on the challenges faced by, and initiatives aimed at, early-career academics (ECAs). In this report, ECA includes PhD candidates and those in junior academic appointments. Our research topic is the body of initiatives that are designed to support individuals at this stage in their careers. In future work, we hope to focus on the transition from senior lecturer or researcher to professor and the transition from these roles into academic leadership.

This work also focuses specifically on the experiences of Black academics rather than all those minoritised groups included in the broader acronyms BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) or BME (Black and minority ethnic), which include a number of other ethnic backgrounds.[ii] As the above data show, Black academics continue to be one of the most under-represented groups in UK higher education; it is important to understand why that is and how they can be best supported. We also expect that the challenges and barriers faced by Black academics are unique from those faced by other minoritised or under-represented groups. The term 'minoritised' is used throughout this report to emphasise the minoritised group's status, as opposed to their ethnicity.[13]

Overview

This report has three goals, which have one chapter each:

1. To understand the challenges and barriers faced by Black ECAs, discussed in Chapter 1.
2. To understand what universities are doing to facilitate their progression and the efficacy of these initiatives, discussed in Chapter 2.
3. To make ambitious recommendations as to how higher education institutions can support their retention and progression, discussed in Chapter 3.

As the higher education sector is facing far-reaching financial challenges,

ii By minoritised, we refer to a group of people treated as or made to feel like a minority.

these recommendations are meant to be low-cost, easy to implement, impactful and, perhaps most importantly, informed by the needs and wishes of Black academics.

Methods

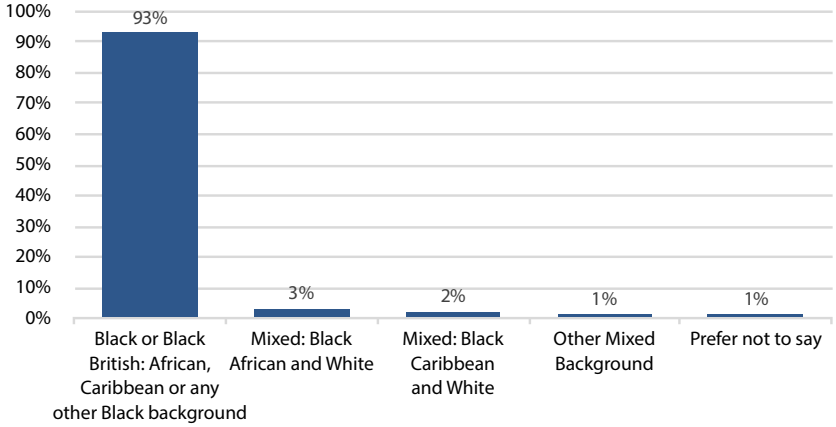
This report draws on two sources of original research: a survey distributed to early-career Black academics and interviews with university staff.

To understand the barriers and challenges faced by Black academics, this work sought to gain their perspectives directly. We distributed a survey of 13 questions (see Appendix B) using social media and email channels. Anyone describing themselves as a PhD candidate, postdoc, research fellow, research assistant, lecturer or visiting lecturer of Black ethnicity was eligible to participate. A small number who have recently left these academic roles were also included.

The survey was advertised to SBA members initially, who shared it more widely, and some paid-for targeted advertising was also used to broaden the sample. Due to this use of snowball sampling, a method where existing study subjects recruit further subjects from among their contacts, the sample is unlikely to be representative of the national population of Black academics. But having collated the views of many Black academics, it is likely to be broadly indicative of the attitudes and experiences of Black ECAs in higher education.

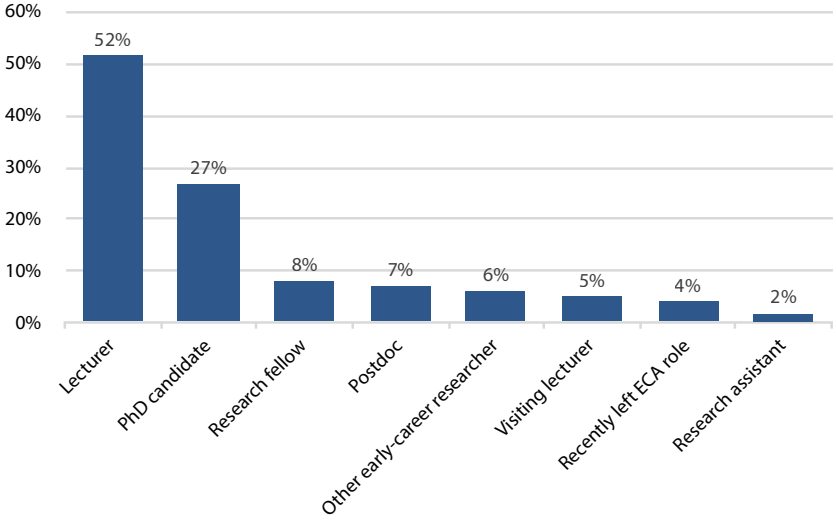
The survey was open for six weeks between 5 February and 18 March 2024. A total of 171 individuals started the survey and 97 completed it fully. To ensure we used reliable data, we have only reported on the results from those 97 who fully completed the survey. Of these, 90 identify as Black or Black British, five as mixed Black and White and one as having another Mixed background (see Figure 5). One did not say.

Figure 5 Ethnicity of survey respondents



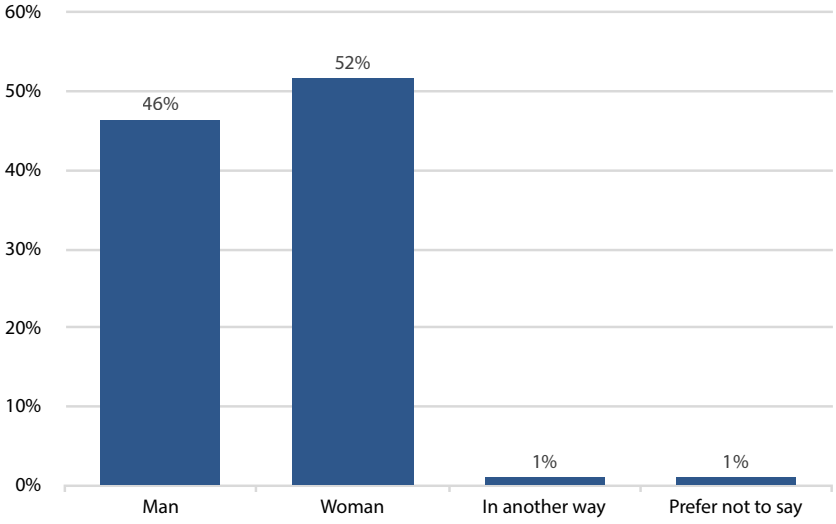
Just over half of those who completed the survey (50 people, 52%) are lecturers; a further quarter (26 people or 27%) are PhD students.

Figure 6 Job role of respondents



We also asked respondents for their gender. Just over half (50) identify as women, 45 as men and one in another way; one did not say.

Figure 7 Gender of respondents



Alongside the survey, we identified 54 target institutions with which to organise semi-structured interviews to understand their approach. Our focus was on identifying those institutions likely to have good practice supporting Black ECAs. The target institutions were chosen based on several criteria, including the following:

- their reputation with the SBA for good practice in supporting Black academics;
- having majority BAME student cohorts (typically at undergraduate level); or
- having a vice-chancellor from an ethnically minoritised group.

We also sought a broad geographic spread in the institutions we approached, including institutions that are urban or regionally-based and institutions in every region of the UK, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Participant institutions also cut across university

associations and categories including being a member of the Russell Group, 'post-92s' and institutions that are research-intensive or teaching-focused.

At each of the 54 institutions, we identified and contacted staff in four roles: Deputy Vice-Chancellors; Directors of Human Resources or Chief People Officers (the most senior human resources-focused person at each institution); Directors or Deans of Doctoral Colleges; and institutional EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) leads. We emailed these individuals directly to seek their participation and included some basic details about the project. Overall, 24 semi-structured interviews were held with staff from 21 universities and two regional Doctoral Training Programmes (DTPs). Most interviews were held with multiple stakeholders across the target participant group. Each interview lasted 45 to 90 minutes and was conducted by Dr Becca Franssen with support from Dr Ade Oyedijo.

1. The challenges faced by Black early-career academics

In this chapter, we draw on the results of the survey and our interviews with university staff to build a picture of the challenges currently faced by Black ECAs.

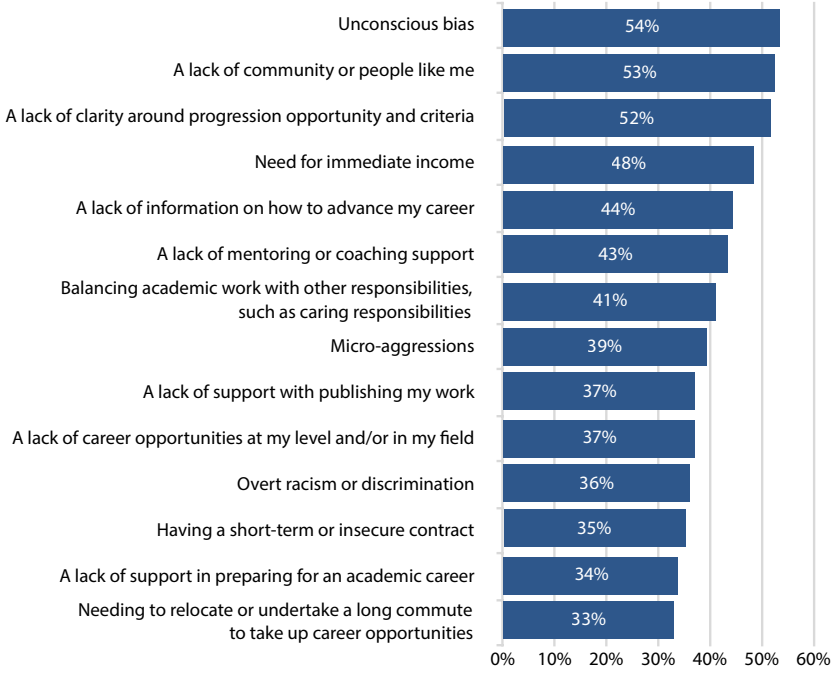
Survey results

We first asked respondents some general questions about their experience of working in academia. Encouragingly, most of those responding feel they have good relationships with their colleagues (68%). However, they rate their pay poorly, with a third considering it fair (32%). Only a small proportion feel their workplace is inclusive (34%) or feel supported with their mental and physical wellbeing (38%).

Figure 8 Proportion agreeing that…

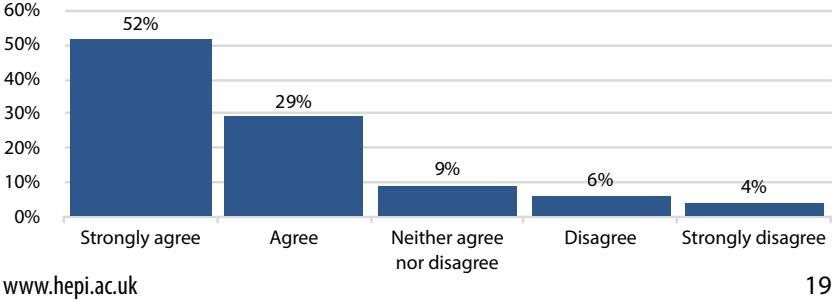
We then asked respondents what challenges they face in their careers. The issues most often experienced by participants are unconscious bias (54%), a lack of community or people like them (52%) and low clarity around progression (52%). By contrast, fewer highlighted long commuting times (33%), poor support for career progression (34%) and insecure contracts (35%).

Figure 9 Which of the following challenges have significantly affected your career in academia?



A total of 81% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed they face particular challenges as a Black academic. Just 10 respondents (10%) disagreed.

Figure 10 As a Black academic I face unique challenges in pursuing a career in academia



Interviews and analysis

All university staff interviewed for this project agreed there is a critical under-representation of Black academics at every level. But our discussions with university staff illustrate how Black academics have a varied range of experiences in higher education. This section discusses these experiences, alongside some comments in the survey, along six themes as follows:

- community;
- invisibility;
- hypervisibility;
- intersectionality;
- coaching, mentoring and implicit support; and
- priority and institutional buy-in.

We noticed particular variation in the experiences of Black British academics compared with those of other nationalities. One interview participant working at Brunel University London noted her experience as a Black early-career academic is informed by her upbringing in an African country. Therefore, she felt that some barriers to pursuing an academic career faced by her colleagues were less present for her. She felt she had more support from her family and greater latitude when it came to choosing a career path.

This highlighted the issue that many universities do not have enough Black students or staff to disaggregate their data beyond the very broad categorisation of BAME and certainly to the level of Black British, Black African or Black Caribbean, even though the challenges facing these groups may be different.

Our survey also did not disaggregate to this level and so may miss some distinctions between the experiences of these groups. It was only through conducting this research, and noting that some felt their experience was different because they were not from British backgrounds, that we came to understand the importance of doing so.

Community

The most consistent theme across the interviews and survey was the discussion of belonging or community.

All interviewees highlighted the importance of building a sense of belonging among Black staff. Interpretations of 'belonging' varied, but the most common theme was the importance of having more senior Black academics within the institution to act as role models and to build aspiration. However, some interviewees also noted the importance of having a community both within and outside of the university. One interviewee highlighted that there is no Black or Afro-Caribbean community local to their university and there is nowhere in the city with the expertise to cut and style Afro-Caribbean hair. In this case, the absence of an external community impeded that institution's ability to recruit Black staff.

Survey participants responded similarly, with 'a lack of community or people like me' as the second most common challenge (51%) affecting their academic career. While participants were given the opportunity to expand further on the challenges they felt affected their careers, none made additional comments relating to the community or a sense of belonging. We hope that further research can better understand why the sense of community is lacking for so many Black academics.

Invisibility

Through both interviews and the survey, two contrasting yet complementary themes emerged: invisibility and hypervisibility. Black ECAs feel both conspicuous and simultaneously overlooked because of their ethnicity. In comments on the survey, Black ECAs described feeling they must constantly prove themselves:

> *I am not well placed and recognised despite my demonstrated ability and skills.*
>
> *I often feel like I have to work twice as hard to achieve similar recognition to colleagues of a different ethnicity.*
>
> *It feels I am expected to do more to prove myself.*

> *There is a huge pressure on me as a Black academic. I feel I have to do more and work twice as hard to be recognised and get the promotion which I deserve. There is an invisible barrier that I face as a Black academic.*[14]

This sense of invisibility was compounded by examples of being regularly passed over for promotion, especially in favour of White colleagues:

> *Discriminated against for promotion whilst colleagues with less profile ... publications and research grants have been promoted over me. The promotion criteria is not being applied fairly.*

> *I feel I'm looked down upon when it comes to promotion, opportunities and pay whereas some of my peers who aren't Black seem to get opportunities handed to them and much lighter work loads.*

Hypervisibility

Although seemingly contradictory, these feelings of invisibility sat alongside feelings of being highly visible or 'hypervisibility' – of being conspicuous in predominantly White spaces because they are Black.

> *I dread having to be the tutor or lecturer in a class where all students are White or Asian.*

> *Harsher evaluations. Less places that foster belonging. Not seeing representation and feeling I am in the wrong space because of this being pushed to be a part of EDI among other responsibilities. I am struggling with the fear of making mistakes and it being attributed to my race or faith.*

The theme of hypervisibility was raised by both survey and university participants, but the emphasis of this visibility changed depending on the participant. ECAs tended to focus on feelings of dislocation or feeling out of place, but also of being leaned on because of their ethnicity to perform duties outside of their day jobs. Similarly, university participants often described how Black staff are frequently called upon to be visible and represent the Black identity of the institution. This can include sitting on interview panels, joining photo opportunities for the wider university or participating in discussions on race.

Other examples of hypervisibility include:

- One interviewee noted the embarrassing moment a vice-chancellor and another senior figure 'beelined' for the only Black academic at a PhD reception, despite not having spoken to any other candidates.
- Another described how in a previous role at a European research institute, the only Black female researcher was pulled into every possible photo opportunity for the organisation, even when the subject was unrelated to her own.

All university interviewees acknowledged that while they would like to have diverse interview panels, their staff are not sufficiently diverse. The few Black staff they have are disproportionately asked to participate.

Several university participants who are Black noted they are more often asked for support by other minoritised groups, which can include additional, informal coaching, mentoring and emotional support. One noted it is not only Black colleagues who seek her out, but also other racially minoritised groups and White working-class ECAs. She noted that this additional labour is not recognised by her institution and results in recognised or mandatory work falling by the wayside.

Interestingly, when probed further, all university interviewees noted that while involvement in affinity groups, interview panels and diversity initiatives is 'valued' by the institution, no institutions include participation in these activities in their calculations of workload. Such activities also do not sit equally alongside other esteem indicators like delivering conference keynote speeches or other invited talks. Support for, and participation in, EDI initiatives may be considered as part of a 'citizenship' bucket in promotion criteria, but it does not carry the same weight as more traditional indicators of academic esteem such as publication record or grant capture.

Those asked or expected to participate in diversity initiatives, and who often do so at the expense of their research and teaching time, are therefore not fully valued for the work they do. This is a concern because these duties fall disproportionately on Black staff. These staff are then deprioritised for promotion.

Some 52% of survey respondents also felt that there is 'a lack of clarity around progression opportunity and criteria'. Clearly, greater clarity, consistency and fairness are required.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to the complex way multiple forms of discrimination – such as sexism, racism and classism – can combine. Survey respondents highlighted the intersectional challenges facing Black ECAs.[15] More than a third of survey respondents said they were significantly affected by 'the need for immediate income', 'balancing academic work with other responsibilities such as caring' and 'having a short-term or insecure contract'. Others wrote:

> *No matter how hard you try, you hardly get recognised or promoted. No one cares or consider[s] the caring responsibilities.*
>
> *Societal and personal issues have made it almost impossible for me to find work in academia. Academia is rigged against Black scholars in the UK.*
>
> *The opportunities that are presented are better suited to someone who has a strong financial background.*

These wider contextual and intersectional challenges are important. One university interviewee highlighted that, while they have struggled to develop scholarship programmes to specifically reach Black PhD students (primarily due to concerns around positive discrimination), they have been hugely successful with scholarships that focus on reaching those with multiple indices of deprivation, the majority of whom are Black.

Coaching, mentoring and implicit support

Both senior staff and ECAs noted the importance of mentoring, coaching and representation at the highest levels, although again for different reasons.

Some survey participants noted the absence of Black leaders in their institutions:

> *Although D&I [Diversity and Inclusion] is very widely spoken about, which has brought about increased awareness, there are still few*

Blacks at the leadership level. This is a challenge that cuts across all industries. There are not as many Black academics in my field.

There is a lack of representation when it comes to senior academics in my field and my university does not have a Black professor in any field.

In senior leadership within my workplace there is no Black academic.

Additionally, there is a lack of representation of Black academics in higher education, particularly in positions of leadership and influence. This lack of representation can lead to feelings of isolation and a lack of support, which can impact career progression and success.

Survey respondents tended to attribute this absence of Black leadership to opaque promotion processes and the lack of EDI initiatives and programmes tailored to Black ECAs.

In 21 of the 24 interviews, university interviewees acknowledged poor representation across all levels and the lack of Black leaders is a barrier for Black ECAs. They felt this was damaging as Black ECAs would lack the role models to aspire to. Survey respondents also noted low levels of representation, but considered it problematic because it was a missed opportunity for Black leaders to provide advice and guidance based on their lived experience. This lived experience can also help diversity initiatives be relevant to the needs of Black ECAs.

Interestingly, those participant institutions with racially minoritised leaders said it was easier to secure buy-in across their institutions for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives and that these programmes were more quickly adopted across the university. Moreover, these participants feel that having a leader from a minoritised background, even if not a racially minoritised background, demonstrates to potential students and staff that the institution takes EDI seriously, making it easier to recruit more staff from racially minoritised backgrounds.

Both university and survey participants emphasised the value of mentors and / or coaches in supporting the progression of Black ECAs. Participants in our research tended to distinguish between mentors on the one hand and coaches on the other:

- Mentors have a typically informal relationship with their mentees; they may often have a career or disciplinary alignment but may give advice and guidance on a range of topics.
- By contrast, coaches may be professional career coaches or colleagues and have a more formal relationship with the coachee. Coaching tends to be focused on achieving goals and outcomes through the training of specific skills.

Interestingly, in our discussions, universities emphasised that coaches and mentors should share an ethnic background with their mentees so that mentors could understand the specific racialised or intersectional context of their mentees. One respondent also highlighted the importance of having a mentor who has specific experience in supporting the Black experience:

> *There are no straightforward paths and supports systems for people of colour. It is tough to find a mentor who understands your unique challenges.*

But most survey respondents did not feel strongly that they should share an ethnic background with their mentor. ECAs wanted support to demystify academic pathways and progression opportunities but generally expressed no preferences about who should provide that support. Instead, the focus was on filling a knowledge gap their peers seem not to have:

> *I [could have] done with a mentor at the early stage of my career.*
>
> *I currently am working on my PhD, but have no line management support to aid me in progressing my career.*
>
> *Compared to my peers, I am not invited to collaborate with other faculty members on research, or offered job opportunities [at the same rate].*
>
> *I have experienced systemic exclusion from opportunities that have been given to fellow White counterparts.*
>
> *I feel that my White counterparts are supported with mentorship opportunities, particularly informal ones that help them navigate [their] career.*

> *I feel I do put in much more than others and receive less returns. Also, I see most of my colleagues received more support from senior academics – no equal accessibility to mentorship.*

Some even noted that other Black academics had acted as 'gatekeepers', failing to provide the support they needed to progress their careers.

The importance of mentorship and career support was further highlighted by a participant university that is a member of the WHEN (Women's Higher Education Network) 100 Black Women Professors initiative (100BWP). As part of the initiative, WHEN has facilitated career coaches for their PhD candidates and ECAs on the 100BWP programme. Alongside this, the participating university has facilitated mentors for each candidate. These mentors are candidate-nominated and university-facilitated. While all of the programme-selected coaches are Black women (and do not share disciplinary expertise with the candidates), only one of the candidate-nominated mentors is from a racially minoritised background and is not Black. In this case, PhD candidates focused more on selecting mentors with expertise in their discipline.

University leaders appear to overestimate the importance of mentors and mentees sharing an ethnicity. PhD candidates themselves seem more focused on gaining insight into their discipline and career progression than racial affinity. Universities might do more to establish mentorship programmes that do not rely on ethnic similarities and instead focus more on demystifying academic progression pathways.

Priority and institutional buy-in

University interviewees stressed the importance of a specific and public commitment to diversity and inclusion from the leadership of the university. Several university staff underscored that this leadership can increase both organisational buy-in and the prioritisation and allocation of resources for diversity-focused initiatives. By making strong statements and setting specific objectives on diversity within university strategies, leadership teams can send a clear message to the wider community that diversity is an institutional priority.

An organisational commitment to EDI and a willingness to invest time, effort and resources as a strategic priority can lead to new opportunities

for Black academics to lead strategic initiatives and research agendas. This creates a virtuous circle by forming routes for Black academics to use their lived experiences to shape institutional policy and research priority areas. It also creates space where the status quo can more readily be challenged without fear of reprisals. A participant from the University of Liverpool noted that when the University made a strong, strategic commitment to diversifying the curriculum, only then did students in the Medical School request that the models used in simulation suites have varied skin colours. The commitment to a diverse curriculum alone was enough to empower some students to come forward.

2. Initiatives, programmes and pilots

In this chapter, we consider the strategies currently being deployed by institutions to support Black ECAs and evaluate how effective they have been in supporting their careers. We first discuss the quantitative survey results before considering the interviews and free text survey comments.

An impressive range of strategies to recruit and support Black ECAs have been deployed by institutions. Many strategies have helped cement important progress and may be responsible for many of the gains discussed in the Introduction. But staff also know there is much more to do to address the ongoing challenges in this area.

The research was somewhat hampered by issues of data availability. Interventions are often at an early stage, making it challenging to assess their efficacy. Also, at many institutions, the small number of Black staff means staff would be easily identifiable if data were disaggregated into more specific categories than BAME, even in university-wide staff satisfaction surveys. As a result, most institutions do not disaggregate the BAME category. This means most institutions have little quantitative data specifically for their Black staff. Some institutions do not even ask for ethnicity on staff surveys.

This lack of data can cause other problems. In several cases, university staff mentioned initiatives that had been tried and swiftly discarded. In evidence-focused environments like universities, poor data availability can lead to support or funding for initiatives being quickly withdrawn before there is evidence of their efficacy. To ensure they can be fully evaluated, it is important to implement diversity initiatives over a long period rather than in a piecemeal or scattergun way.

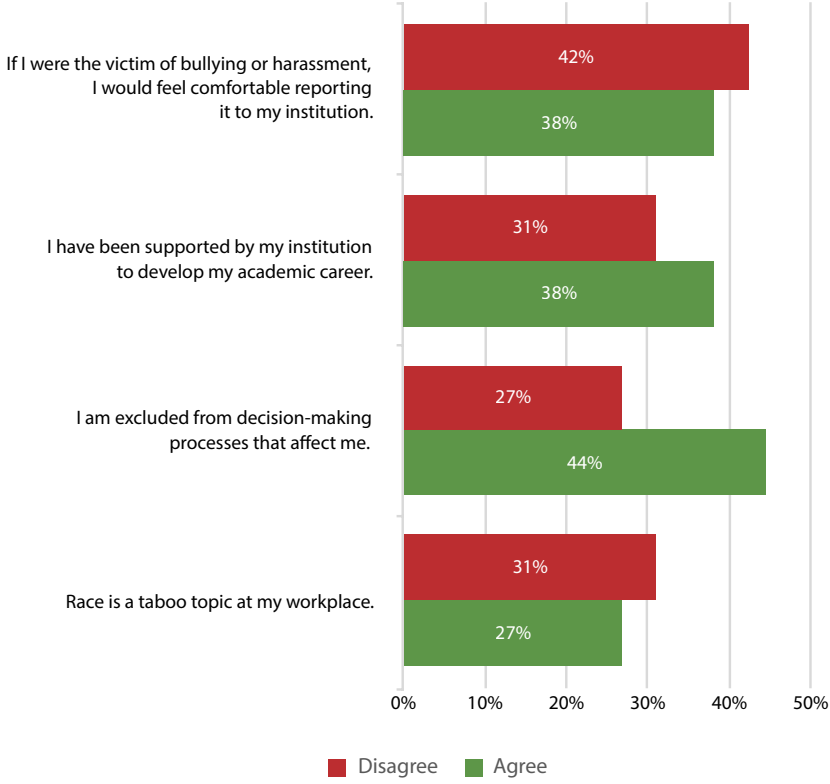
Survey results

To better understand Black ECAs' relationships with their institutions, we asked survey respondents to tell us how they feel about the support they have already received, if any.

The answers were mixed. ECAs feel strongly that they are excluded from decision-making processes that have an impact on them (44% agree versus just 27% who disagree). And a worryingly high proportion (42%) would be

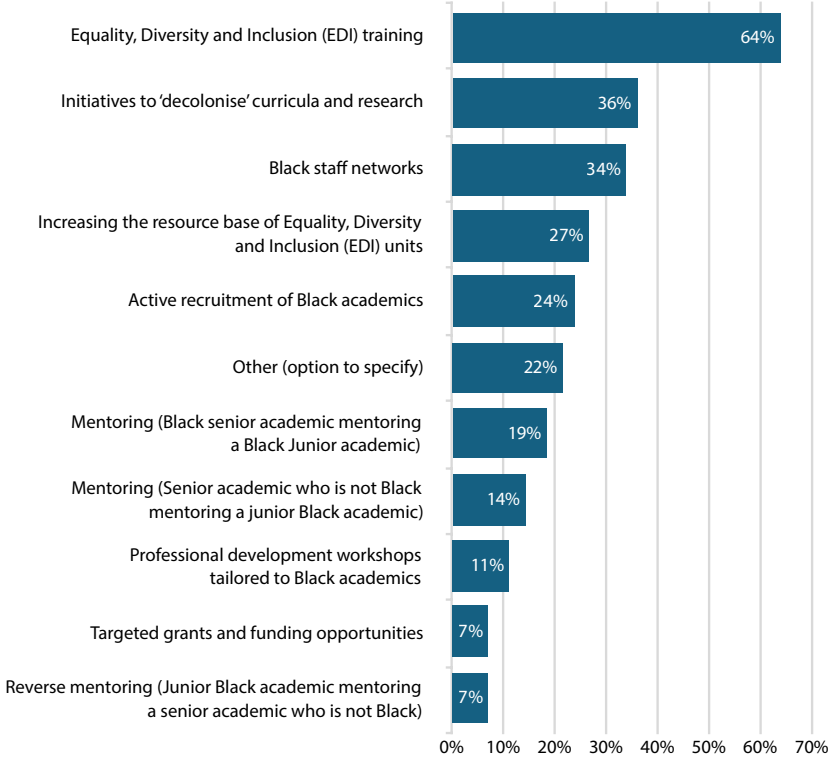
uncomfortable reporting bullying or harassment to their institution. But more feel supported to develop their career than not (38% versus 31%).

Figure 11 Proportion agreeing and disagreeing that…



We then invited survey respondents to indicate which strategies their institution already adopts. Overwhelmingly the most common is EDI training, selected by nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents. Initiatives to 'decolonise' curricula and Black staff networks are also common. By contrast, 'reverse mentoring' (the mentoring of senior staff by junior staff) and targeted grants are rare (each 7%).

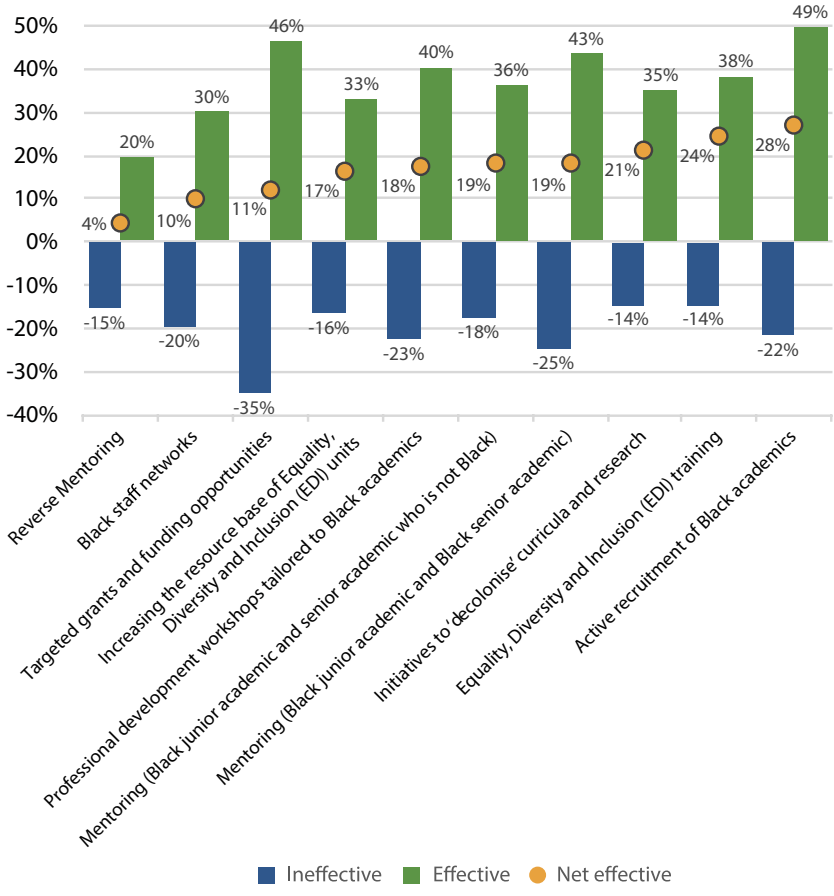
Figure 12 Interventions already implemented at respondents' current institution (or previous institution, for recent leavers)



Note: Respondents could choose multiple options.

We then asked respondents which of these, if any, are effective. Encouragingly, on net (the percentage saying an intervention is effective minus the percentage saying it is not effective) all the listed interventions are seen as more effective than not. The interventions regarded as most effective are actively encouraging applications from Black academics (28% net effectiveness), EDI training (24%) and decolonising curricula (21%).

Figure 13 Interventions ranked by net effectiveness

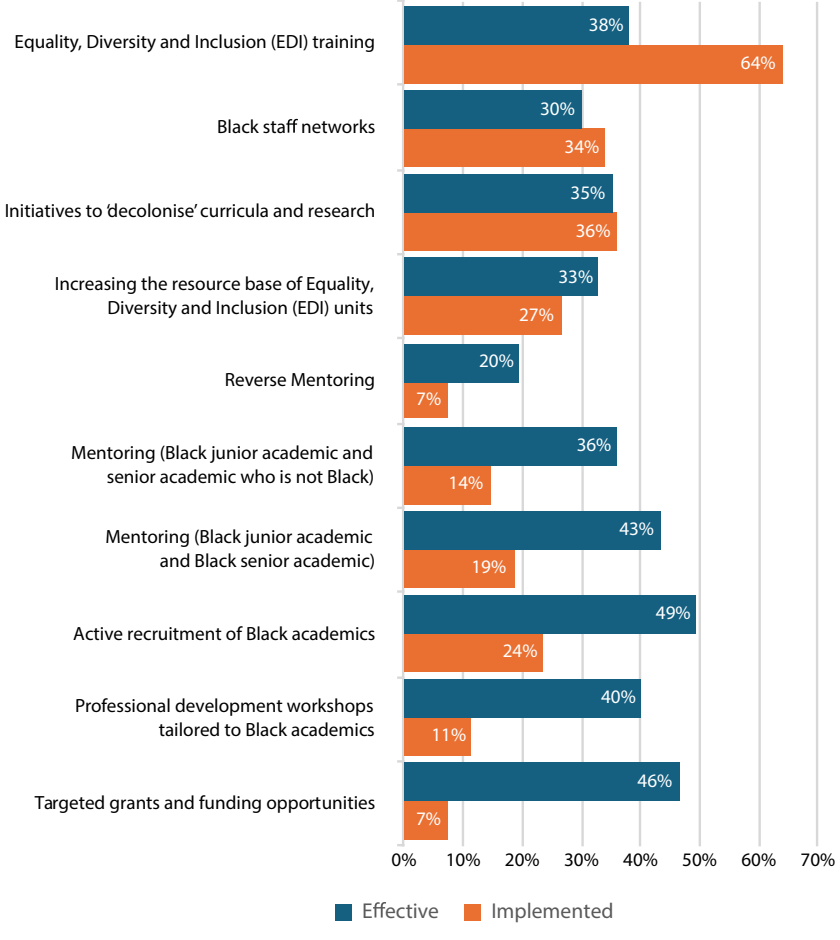


Note: Net effective is equal to the proportion saying 'Effective' minus the proportion saying 'Ineffective'. Sums may not add up due to rounding. Neutral responses and those saying 'Don't know' were excluded.

With only 4% net effectiveness, reverse mentoring was seen as the least effective. We found this surprising, as existing studies around the strategy suggest it has benefits for all participants.[16] The low score, and the high numbers answering 'Don't know', may be because the strategy is not widely used by institutions and few have seen it in action.

We can also compare the proportion calling a strategy effective with the proportion saying their institution implements it (or their most recent institution does). At one extreme, a majority of respondents are aware of EDI training being implemented but only 38% say it is effective. At the other, only 7% say targeted grants are being used but 46% consider them effective.

Figure 14 Interventions implemented and interventions considered effective



Entry pathways

Most universities interviewed have adopted initiatives focused on diversifying and supporting their early-career academic cohorts, especially PhD cohorts. This typically takes the form of 'growing their own' and facilitating pathways for Black PhD candidates to address some of the barriers discussed in Chapter 1. Some institutions use scholarships (financial support for students recognising academic excellence, leadership potential or specific talents) or studentships (primarily focused on supporting specific research or academic work) targeted at those who identify as Black.

One problem in this area, identified by Brunel University London and the University of Westminster, is ensuring support is intersectional. The primary barrier to diversity and pathways to academia is often socio-economic. Because 'being poor is not a protected characteristic', it is difficult to take 'positive action' approaches to reduce the disadvantage a group faces.[17] For these reasons, the University of Westminster has ringfenced studentships for candidates with backgrounds which cut across indices of multiple deprivation (IMDs – datasets used to understand relative deprivation and poverty in small areas of the UK). By using IMDs as a basis for outreach, Westminster is focusing on reaching the PhD applicants facing the greatest deprivation. This programme helped them significantly increase their proportion of Black PhD students and those from Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds. Several years into this programme, it has been 'transformational' for the PhD programmes across the university.

However, programmes like this appear rare. Only one institution disaggregated its data between Black home and Black international PhD candidates, who are likely to face very different patterns of advantage and disadvantage. Instead, most institutions only sought to increase the overall representation of Black candidates. While still commendable, programmes which focus on reaching Black PhD candidates regardless of background (nationality or otherwise) disregard specific challenges faced by some Black British candidates and may alienate Black candidates from applying or feeling fully supported in their studies.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has developed a series of Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs). DTPs are block grants awarded to individuals, research organisations or groups of research organisations designed

to support the training of the next generation of researchers. They are regionally or institutionally based and are focused on building collaboration within and across disciplines and emphasising wider skills development for students. Because some DTPs sit across multiple institutions, this has enabled the sharing of good practice, helping some institutions to put greater emphasis on diversity and supporting the progression of Black ECAs.

Although not specifically focused on the progression of Black ECAs, some participant institutions are working within the framework of the DTPs to create more equitable pathways. We spoke to representatives from institutions in the Midlands Graduate School DTP and the Nottingham Biotechnology and Biological Sciences DTP.[18] Their initiatives include anonymising applications, directed statements – where applicants are asked to answer specific questions, rather than provide a generic 'personal statement' – and changing the marking system from focusing primarily on 'first class degrees from good institutions' to a more holistic evaluation of applicant experience (including transferrable skills and work experience).[19] As Black students are less likely to have first-class degrees and / or degrees from Russell Group or selective universities, basing admissions decisions on this alone unfairly affects them.[20] While anecdotally these initiatives have helped increase diversity, data tracking is difficult as students are spread across institutions and only one of the DTPs tracks their progress. This is under review, however, and members of both DTPs are looking to establish alumni groups to better track data.

Interviewees in the Nottingham DTP felt however that one of the most effective tools has been having PhD applications reviewed by PhD candidates already enrolled in the programme. DTP reviewers or mentors – who are PhD candidates themselves and remunerated for their participation – work with applicants and provide a 'get to know you' session, an application writing session, interview preparation and a session for reflection. This mentorship saw a significant increase in applications from racially minoritised candidates. At the end of the programme, more than one-in-six of those applying (18%) were of Black ethnicity.[21]

Promotion and progression

Most universities we interviewed are focusing their diversification efforts at

the recruitment stage, but some are also supporting the further progression of Black ECAs. The University of Warwick's PATHWAY programme, for example, 'will address issues along the entire career pathway, from undergraduates to postdocs, to early-career researchers and professors'.[22] While still small-scale, the programme ringfences three PhD studentships, two early career fellowships and a career development grant for post-doctoral researchers (to support development activities like applications for independent research fellowships or travel to networking events). The Midlands and Nottingham DTPs also provide some professional development support, including an overseas institutional visit and writing retreats.

Sector-wide, many institutions are participating in Advance HE's Race Equality Charter (REC), which 'aims to help universities and research institutes in their work to improve their representation, progression and success of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people in higher education'.[23] The REC provides a framework for institutions to:

> *self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of minority ethnic staff and students and have their commitment to and progress in removing these barriers recognised.*

Institutions may then receive a Gold, Silver or Bronze award in recognition of their work. At the time of writing, some 47 institutions have achieved Bronze but only three UK universities, De Montfort, Manchester and the University of East London, have received a Silver award and none have received Gold.[24]

When interviewed, many participant institutions were in the process of submitting their REC award application, which recognises the steps the institution has taken toward supporting racially minoritised staff.[25] As a result of the REC, many institutions have recently undertaken audits of their EDI initiatives and institutional processes. This has usefully encouraged institutions to investigate the scale and urgency of the problem. However, the outcomes of most initiatives are not yet sufficiently clear to support REC applications. Further research is needed to determine whether the REC has encouraged institutions to change their behaviour significantly.

Most institutions have reviewed their processes around promotion and progression for academics and sought to embed EDI principles in them. Updates to these processes include: unconscious bias training; the standardisation of promotion processes and criteria; and embedding a commitment to EDI, such as by expecting staff to demonstrate a personal commitment to EDI principles. There is only limited evidence of the efficacy of some of these strategies, however.[26] Some institutions have gone so far as to offer workshops ahead of rounds of promotion to answer questions and provide support for those interested in progressing. However, in most cases, these workshops were not well-attended, meaning their impact is limited.

In terms of external recruitment, institutions have also sought to embed diversity considerations, some have implemented a 'Rooney Rule' (minimum targets for under-represented groups) and others have sought to ensure ethnic and gender diversity on interview panels.[27] However, the benefits of these initiatives are contested. Initiatives focusing on minimum quotas for minoritised candidates have led to accusations of tokenism, when organisations bring forward candidates who are not qualified for a role, and who are therefore highly unlikely to receive an offer, to make up mandatory numbers.

The University of Exeter and London Metropolitan University highlighted the importance of properly supporting Black ECAs beyond entry pathways. The University of Exeter has built up a programme of support which emphasises 'mentorship, career coaching, action learning … networking, master classes … and profile-raising opportunities'.[28] A participant at Exeter also noted that many programmes are focused on getting Black academics into the university, but do not provide support once they arrive. Both institutions emphasised the importance of supporting ECAs at both the application stage and once they arrive, such as with visa applications, travel costs and childcare.

Discord and disconnect

In the final survey question, respondents were asked for any final comments they had on their experience of being a Black ECA, the support they had received from their institution and initiatives they believe would help them. Around half of respondents added further information, commonly

along two themes. The first was specific interventions focusing on Black academics:

> *In my opinion Anti-Black racism in my institution has increased with the overt statement of commitment to EDI principles. Somehow this EDI agenda has diluted and deflected the focus on creating an anti-racist organisation.*
>
> *The lip service to diversity is simply wrong. Working with the framework of BAME allow[s] institutions to get away with the lack of inclusion of Black academics. For example, my institution employs Asian people, masking the fact that Black academics are excluded from higher institutions.*
>
> *I think that they are no specific structure for Black academics.*
>
> *Creating more academic spaces for Black scholars to meet … If I did not have Black academics also doing a PhD in the UK, I would have dropped out. However, I've made friends who have had similar challenges … Such meaningful relationships have kept me going and without it, I'm quite sure I would've dropped out!*

The second and most prominent theme was raised by 55% of those who commented. These respondents emphasised mentorship and sponsorship:

> *I feel the positive impact of my PhD supervisor. A leader among leaders. Without her, I think I [would] have given up already.*
>
> *Having a great mentor helps a lot as they will introduce you to the right contacts to grow your knowledge base.*
>
> *Mentoring would definitely help, and educating non-Black senior staff.*
>
> *It would be really helpful to have mentor schemes. Sometimes navigating UK HE as a Black early career academic feels like flying blind.*

Respondents repeatedly emphasised the view that their non-Black colleagues are involved in conversations they are not, putting Black ECAs at a career disadvantage:

Navigating the funding sphere has also been quite challenging.

It would be nice to have Black academic mentorship. I have had to find my own way in the last two years trying to figure out what is needed, and still unsure if I am on track with anything.

There is very little support given to Black ECRs particularly during the transitioning phase from full-time study to the world of work. Sometimes, even your own supervisors seem to just leave you to it without any guidance to support you through that transition.

Many Black academics struggle to get the deserved promotion from their institutions because their managers (HODs [Heads of Department], Deans, and PVCs [Pro Vice-Chancellors]) don't have a clue about the invisible problems that their staff face. Therefore, there is a strong need for people in leadership positions to get educated about what challenges Black staff in their universities face, and be proactive to solving the issues by being involved in the solutions.

Some of my senior colleagues [have] picked interest in supporting and mentoring me, [for] which I am grateful. They [are] all informal mentors.

More access to mentors much earlier on and information about academic development.

Finally, some respondents expanded further on the support they wish they had received:

Shadowing or secondment opportunities would be useful. As would home based roles targeted at academics who happen to be single parents.

Very limited tailored support has been provided. Extremely limited options for career progression.

There are some good initiatives to offer PhD opportunities to Black Academics however ... the road is littered with obstacles because the gatekeepers don't share the same ethos.

Black early-career academics are promised so much and given too

little. Even the few who, out of luck, appear to have received support, are left alone [to] their own devices. It is a lonely journey travelled at a great personal cost, and its toll can be felt and seen.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

We were pleased to speak to institutions displaying inspiring examples of leadership in an area where making progress is difficult. Some institutions are turning the dial in areas like recruitment, mentoring and all-round support. But it is striking how the same issues – a lack of community, invisibility, insufficient information and a need for personalised support – came up again and again, even at very different institutions with different contexts.

Before we make recommendations, we note two things. First, our findings chime with those of others who have addressed the same challenges. In research by Generation Delta, which works to increase the number of BAME female professors, participants highlighted their feelings of poor preparedness and emphasised the value of targeted initiatives such as mentorship and active recruitment in helping them progress their careers.[29] We hope this work will join a growing body of literature providing a space for Black ECAs to voice the challenges they face.

Secondly, interventions such as those recommended below are likely to have wider benefits. For example, recommendations in the recent HEPI report *Show me the money – an exploration of the gender pay gap in higher education* include having gender-diverse panels when recruiting, anonymous job applications, equitable metrics for research and facilitating flexible working.[30] All of these sit well with our suggestions here and we suggest that a supportive, equitable environment for Black ECAs will often benefit staff of other ethnicities and backgrounds too.

Our recommendations, set out below, are also available as a short checklist for institutions in Appendix A.

Open-source diversity data

Because of the small number of Black ECAs and concerns about data protection and identification, it may be challenging to collect quantitative data on their experiences. **Institutions should address this problem by aggregating their data with other institutions into larger datasets where individuals would not be identified.** This might be beneficial for institutions in the same local context, such as those situated in the

same city, or those with a similar student demographic, as well as other institutions within a mission group or of a similar entry tariff.

This approach, though simple, should be valuable. Even the small dataset obtained for this report yielded rich data and demonstrated similarities in experience across institutions. It may be led by individual institutions or mission groups.

Alongside this approach, institutions should not underestimate the value of qualitative data and personal interactions. Our findings show Black staff feel distanced from institutional leadership. Many Black ECAs feel neither in control of the decisions that affect them nor that senior staff understand the challenges they face.

University managers and leaders should take time to get to know their Black ECAs. These staff should have frequent and meaningful opportunities to raise concerns and be empowered to participate fully in decisions that affect them.

Wider networks of support

The staff we spoke to value their support networks highly. **Institutions should facilitate stronger connections among Black ECAs.** Initiatives may target Black ECAs in the same discipline or at similar stages in their career. They can be formal or informal and may manifest as small-scale support groups or large-scale institutional, regional or national networks. They may be led by institutions, disciplines or sector organisations like the Society of Black Academics (SBA).

Mentoring, sponsorship and explicit conversations

This report shows staff feel strongly about the benefits of mentorship and sponsorship. **Mentorship and sponsorship can play a huge role in clarifying the pathways to progression which are currently unclear to many Black ECAs.** The information ECAs receive should also be of consistent quality and quantity regardless of their ethnicity.

Currently, these conversations may be formal or informal and may concern upcoming promotion rounds, conference or funding opportunities or research collaborations, all areas related to academic success.

However, to ensure the quality of these relationships, the mentor / mentee relationship should be standardised and organisationally led. When matching mentors and mentees, mentees should develop a list of potential mentors, with the matching facilitated by institutions accounting for capacity, interests, specialisms and so on.

Training should be provided for all mentors, outlining the scope of their role and the support they are expected to provide. It should be mandatory and annual, so new policies and practices can be put in place. It should also cover racism, bias and intersectionality, as well as managing students with specific needs and challenges, including financial challenges, part-time study, caring responsibilities or disabilities.

Mentoring is a time-intensive task, and so taking on this responsibility should feed directly into performance monitoring and workload modelling. Universities should seek feedback from mentors and mentees. If a relationship is not conducive for either party, there should be a process for changing mentors. Mentors should also be asked to complete a standardised self-assessment on their workload and commitment, to be read against the mentee statements, to ensure all mentees receive enough support and to balance workload among mentors evenly.

Recognition of workload

As mentoring involves a heavy workload, so too does student support, participation in affinity groups and involvement in recruitment panels, all of which are tasks that disproportionally fall on Black academics. Participation in these schemes should either be recognised and considered in workload planning and promotion criteria or accounted for when determining remuneration.[31]

Beyond this, many survey participants feel workload is disproportionately allocated to them and this should be reviewed annually within departments. **Departments should frequently assess workload across their ECA cohorts and consider carefully whether it is equitably distributed.**

Scholarships and studentships

We found that PhD studentships are the main way for universities to support the recruitment of Black ECAs. Most institutions interviewed have set aside funding specifically for these groups. Studentships are considered

effective by Black ECAs themselves, so such initiatives are welcome. But it is important to look not only at Black ECAs' experiences of recruitment but also at their experiences once they arrive at an institution.

Respondents highlighted feelings of isolation and dislocation once they started their studies, so universities may need to do more to support PhD candidates once they arrive. This should include wider institutional and administrative support. Most participant institutions provide a stipend for living expenses as part of the studentship, but not all do and the value of the stipend can vary greatly. **Studentships should include living expenses stipends as standard and these should be tied to the living wage in the area.**

Furthermore, the studentship should not be limited to financial support but should include mentorship and / or coaching, a clear syllabus of support to demystify the academic career route and membership in a network of other ECAs, possibly across different institutions.

Clarity on promotion criteria

Participants often consider promotion criteria unclear and progression pathways can be smoother for some non-Black colleagues due to their connections. **Universities should make promotion opportunities and criteria clear and publicly available.**

Non-remunerated voluntary tasks sit disproportionately with already marginalised groups, so mentorship, coaching, student support, affinity group leadership, active participation and institutional volunteer work should be their own category in promotion criteria, rather than sitting in a citizenship bucket, and be given equal weighting to teaching and research outputs.[32] All staff at a certain level should be offered training sessions for promotion. Training sessions should be evaluated for efficacy and the delivery of outstanding mentorship sessions should be considered when making decisions on promotion.

Mentors need to be trained on how to support mentees through promotion rounds and should subsequently reflect on the progress of their mentees.

Share best practice

Finally, the culture of UK higher education institutions is to create and protect their intellectual property. Sometimes this can impede effective information sharing even when no intellectual property is at stake. Several institutions approached for this project refused to participate on the basis that they were already involved in other initiatives focused on the progression of Black academics. They still declined even when it was pointed out that they could participate anonymously and that the purpose of this project is to share what is currently being done and what works.

This hesitancy, whether motivated by protecting competition, avoiding being called out as a poor performer or another reason, hampers the effective sharing of good practice and slows progress.

Instead, institutions should show leadership in supporting their Black ECAs. The Doctoral Training Partnerships demonstrate the potential that can be gained from collaboration. Institutions should publish and share what they learn, highlighting failures as well as successes. This would save time, energy and resources on initiatives that are ineffective, costly or which lose momentum.

Appendix A: Checklist for institutions

1. Does your institution disaggregate data on Black staff from data on BAME staff?

2. Are ECAs at your institution members of staff networks (which can either operate within your institutions or across multiple institutions)?

3. Do ECAs at your institution receive mentoring? Is mentoring available for all ECAs? If an ECA wanted a mentor or for more support beyond the mentoring they currently receive, is there a process for them to request this?

4. Where Black academics are expected to take on additional responsibilities such as involvement in recruitment panels, is this recognised when allocating workloads, compensation or in another way?

5. Does your institution offer scholarships and / or studentships targeted specifically at Black candidates? Are there processes to make sure staff on these programmes are adequately supported?

6. Are detailed promotion criteria made clear to all staff? When considering staff for promotion, are voluntary tasks included in decisions about which staff to promote?

7. Where you have data, qualitative or quantitative, about the effectiveness of a strategy, does your institution share these data with other institutions?

Appendix B: Survey questions

1. Which of the following best describes you?
    a. PhD candidate
    b. Postdoc
    c. Research fellow
    d. Research assistant
    e. Lecturer
    f. Visiting lecturer
    g. Currently working outside of academia, but formerly a PhD candidate or early career academic. (In this case, please answer questions from the perspective of your most recent academic role.)
    h. Other early-career researcher
2. Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?
    a. Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background
    b. Black or Black British: African, Caribbean or any other Black background
    c. White or White British: British, Irish or any other White background
    d. Mixed: Asian and White
    e. Mixed: Black African and White
    f. Mixed: Black Caribbean and White
    g. Other Mixed Background
    h. Chinese or Chinese British
    i. Other Ethnic Group
    j. Prefer not to say
    k. If you answered Other Ethnic Group (please specify)

3. How would you describe your gender identity?
    a. Man
    b. Woman
    c. In another way
    d. Prefer not to say
4. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
    a. Overall, I am satisfied in my job.
    b. Considering my duties and responsibilities, I feel my pay is fair.
    c. I feel able to be myself at work.
    d. I have good relationships with my colleagues.
    e. I feel that I am supported with my mental health and physical wellbeing.
    f. I feel that my workplace is inclusive.
5. How far do you agree or disagree with this statement? 'As a Black academic I face unique challenges in pursuing a career in academia'.
6. Why do you feel this way? Please explain your answer to the previous question.
7. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Please select one answer per row.
    a. I have been supported by my institution to develop my academic career.
    b. I am excluded from decision-making processes that affect me.
    c. If I were the victim of bullying or harassment, I would feel comfortable reporting it to my institution.
    d. Race is a taboo topic at my workplace.

8. Which of the following challenges have significantly affected your career in academia? Please choose all that apply.
    a. Need for immediate income.
    b. Having a short-term or insecure contract.
    c. A lack of career opportunities at my level and / or in my field.
    d. Balancing academic work with other responsibilities, such as caring responsibilities.
    e. Needing to relocate or undertake a long commute to take up career opportunities.
    f. A lack of community or people like me.
    g. A lack of information on how to advance my career.
    h. Overt racism or discrimination.
    i. Micro-aggressions.
    j. A lack of mentoring or coaching support.
    k. A lack of support with publishing my work.
    l. A lack of support in preparing for an academic career.
    m. A lack of clarity around progression opportunity and criteria.
    n. Unconscious bias.
9. What other challenges have you faced as an early-career Black academic which have affected your career?
10. Which of the following interventions have been implemented by your current institution or any previous institution you have worked at to support the careers of early-career Black academics? Tick all that apply.
    a. Black staff networks.
    b. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training.
    c. Increasing the resource base of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) units.

d. Initiatives to 'decolonise' curricula and research.

e. Mentoring (Black senior academic mentoring a Black junior academic).

f. Mentoring (Senior academic who is not Black mentoring a junior Black academic).

g. Reverse mentoring (Junior Black academic mentoring a senior academic who is not Black).

h. Active recruitment of Black academics.

i. Professional development workshops tailored to Black academics.

j. Targeted grants and funding opportunities.

k. Other (please specify)

11. In your experience, are the following interventions effective?

a. Black staff networks.

b. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training.

c. Increasing the resource base of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) units.

d. Initiatives to 'decolonise' curricula and research.

e. Mentoring (Black junior academic and Black senior academic).

f. Mentoring (Black junior academic and senior academic who is not Black).

g. Reverse mentoring.

h. Active recruitment of Black academics.

i. Professional development workshops tailored to Black academics.

j. Targeted grants and funding opportunities.

k. Other (please specify and highlight effectiveness)

12. Is there anything else you would like to add? We would particularly welcome comments on: Your experience of being a Black early-career academic. The support you have received from your institution. Initiatives that you believe will support early-career Black academics. Any other comments relating to the careers of early-career academics.

13. If you are happy to be contacted for a follow-up conversation on any of your responses, please provide your preferred email address below.

Endnotes

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In recent years the UK higher education sector has made great progress increasing the representation of Black academics, but more work is needed so every early-career academic has equal opportunity to develop their career. In this report, Dr Becca Franssen and colleagues draw on survey results and in-depth interviews to paint a picture of the experiences of Black early-career academics and develop a practical guide for how higher education institutions can work purposefully in this area.

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