

Session Title:	Black Access: A Student Collaboration to Develop & Deliver programmes for Black Students
Speaker(s):	University of York – Access & Outreach
Chair:	Sarah Byard
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Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	Soul Ferguson – Black Access Intern Laura Whitelock – Black Access Officer Andrew Hunter – Access & Outreach Manager
Overview/Aim of session:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscape in the UK for Black students - An introduction to black Access - Challenges and benefits of the programme - Staff working as allies - The importance of ‘for and by’ programmes
Workshop Content	<p><u>Overview of Stats + Context Behind Black Access</u></p> <p>10.2% of Black students entered high education institutions</p> <p>15.5% is Non continuation rate of black students completing their UG degrees</p> <p>14.5% Black students receiving a first-class degree vs 31.5% of white peers (Commission on Race and ethnic disparities 2021)</p> <p>160 / 1% of Black professors in the UK (HESA 21/22) 22,885 ></p> <p>54% black students report having being victims of racism in student accommodation.</p> <p>95% of children witnessed racist language at school. (Guardian)</p> <p><u>The perspective of Soul studying at UoY</u> My experience as a Black Student at Predominantly White Institution by Soul:</p> <p>Who is my ally at this university?</p>

	<p>Finding it difficult to find my 'community'. Feeling alone in my struggles.</p> <p><u>The Birth of Black Access</u> Started in 2020 – only 2% Black UG intake at UoY.</p> <p>Working with current Black students and working with focus groups, from around the university made up from the Afro Caribbean Society / Student Ambassadors / BAME Officers (SU) – tell us what it's like?</p> <p>Focus on application process – enrollment and current study.</p> <p>2 main ideas came from the research:</p> <p>1) Tailored WP programme with black students: Workshops with schools with black students and providing role models</p> <p>2) Supported progression plan run by black access from sixth form to first year study</p> <p>Programme development in 2021 – advisory board from focus groups.</p> <p>Stand 1: Progressive programme, from first year sixth form/ college, ending after 1st year UG (if option to UoY).</p> <p>Participants have a chance to receive alternative offer of up to 3 grades below the standard, plus opportunity to receive scholarships</p> <p>Strand 2: School workshops – delivering sessions and talks in school by black students Primarily online so far Student team: create all sessions – being black at York, applying to university, black access programme.</p> <p><u>The Black Access Team:</u> January 22': 64 students in cohort – 13 student staff</p> <p>August 22: 7 events 6 online/ 1 in person Plus, chance to attend residential, complete online course, 1-1 mentor</p> <p>65% cohort – unlocked additional benefits e.g., reduced offer and 92% attended to 2 or more events through the year.</p>
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KEY THEMES underpinning the programme (decided by Black Access team)

1. Black students visible
2. Honest and raw
3. Access to role models
4. Importance of social media
5. Student life – outside of community
6. Study support – What if I want to study humanities when my parents want me to study Law?

The importance of ‘for and by’ programmes

Authenticity:

- Highlighting the diversity of blackness
 - Sometimes education and empathy is not enough
 - Distrust towards predominantly white institutions (hitting quotas, using PoC students as marketing, tokenism)
 - We are honest about our experiences as Black students as predominantly white institutions

Role Models:

- Black youth don’t get as many role models as their White peers, especially in academic spaces
 - You can’t be what you don’t see – blazing trail for the next generation of black students
 - The importance of specific and tailored advice – understanding cultural barriers such as familial pressure
 - First hand experience + a dialogue

A safe space and community:

- Black students have to leave their community behind when they go to university
 - Programmes like this show students there is a community waiting for them when they go to university
 - Creating a space free from code switching and ignorance
 - Community creates safety which creates honesty
 - Real honest feedback – be more safe and accommodating.

Being an Ally

- Empower student led nature advocating for the student team
- Continual self-improvement, learning and active listening
- Supporting and advocating for change
- A continuous process of listening and adapting programme based on new challenges brought by student team

	<p>It's not about JUST black access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing a safe space - Building a bigger black community at york - Forming bonds and friendships - Enabling black voices to support change across the wider university - Supporting and UoY students to build skills, confidence, and experience - Boosting representation of black voices - Authenticity as a staff member matters – why are you doing it? Open and honest space – opening to learn.
Case Studies/Examples:	<p>Activity</p> <p>Would you be able to answer questions that a Black student may ask you about your university?</p> <p>E.g., do you know a hair shop that will sell braids?</p> <p>Student team + roles</p> <p>Project interns (x3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead on social media - Lead on marketing - Ran events such as live nights and school talks - Meet for advisory board strategy meetings <p>Ambassadors (x9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - speak to students on online platforms <p>Support with content creation and delivery</p> <p>Planning coordinators (x7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet for advisory board strategy meetings - Design and develop black access <p>All paid roles. No hierarchy but some will work more hours than others.</p> <p><u>Running an event (in practice)</u></p> <p>See slide diagram.</p> <p><u>Challenges</u></p> <p>In Summer 2022 10/13 of our team graduated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documented action plans/ content ideas/ minutes - Creation of alumni network - Handover from interns to new interns - Existing student team support with recruitment and training to ensure we have consistency across teams - Recruiting multiple roles within 1 recruitment cycle,

	<p>as opposed to separate cycles previously.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More succession planning. <p>A large amount of freedom meant it took some time to find our footing on terms of things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What to post and branding - Communication with each other - Collaborating on projects - How our roles intertwined <p>Overcoming challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and planning was key - Creating group chats for different teams - Creating documents to track what we as interns were working on - Creating a posting schedule - Having weekly meetings with our managers <p>Benefits – Student Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gaining career skills and confidence which projected us into the next stages of our lives - Being able to act as the academic role models many of us didn't get the chance to have - Being able to make an impact - Finding a community within each other <p>Benefits – Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support student team to develop both personally and professionally - Better equipped to understand and support our black students (across all of our programmes) - Rewarding unique and supportive programme to work on. <p>Benefits – Wider University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving inclusivity and diversity of campus for the black community - Student team support other teams e.g. marketing, international - Student team advising on wider university issues e.g. reporting tool, race equality - More support for black students = black students to apply
Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:	N/A
Questions and Answers:	<p>Are black ambassadors paid differently to student ambassadors?</p> <p>Recruited specifically for black access programme. Paid same as our standard student worker rate.</p>

	<p>Did you find it easy to recruit? Was there suspicions about it being a tokenism</p> <p>Started as focus groups and were at the birth of the programme, they naturally came into the role. It didn't feel disingenuous. Always had students from student team to help with recruitment.</p> <p>What do staff team do?</p> <p><i>Manager</i> Overall project manager Safeguarding lead Budget holder</p> <p><i>Officer</i> Line manager and support for student team Supporting student team</p> <p><i>Graduate coordinator</i> Support student team e.g., marketing emails</p> <p><i>Administrator</i> Managing inbox, bookings and organizing student data</p> <p>Do you have any black people in the staff team? At the moment no, we did have the graduate coordinator. It's been something we've brought up with senior management. University would be open to it. We'd love it.</p>
Summary Key takeaways:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build your offering based on your own students' feedback, challenges, and need - The 'for and by' nature of the programme has been our most effective tool - Do your own research and lots of active listening <p>Get in touch: blackaccess@york.ac.uk</p>