

To lobby the University of Lincoln to stand with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement by providing more educational materials, engaging support and demonstrate positive activism

This Union notes:

We are living through an iconic period of human history. Worldwide popular protests have captivated the attention of all and especially engaged the world's student population in activism and positive change. Even despite social distancing and the abrupt end of the academic year, hundreds of University of Lincoln (UoL) students turned up to show support for the Black Lives Matter Movement within the City of Lincoln alone, countless more nationwide. The world and students demand lasting change for good. As a university and student body it is our duty to recognise the right side of history and provide it.

This Union believes:

- These peaceful movements, local and international, cannot be ignored and their influence for valuable change cannot go to waste. Their ongoing existence is proof token efforts and passive acts of cultural inclusion will not suffice. Students must be shown their voices are being heard and their university stands with their most vulnerable.
- As a higher educational institution with a strong and diverse student community, we must acknowledge the lack of colonial or BAME history taught in UK secondary schools, which in turn causes greater misinformation and strife in students' lives, especially in the current climate. By providing (and encouraging) educational resources on the subject to all this can help fill an unfortunate gap in many students prior understanding of history and soothe tensions.
- Pride, Christmas, Easter and more holidays are hugely popular at the university, however Black History month is not given the same support. Now is the time to use October to not only better integrate people with SU functions and University life but to celebrate black culture, arts, and history to a much higher degree, giving much needed context and respect to the importance of the BLM movement to the new year of students.
- Debate on the subject is healthy, it is pointless if students and staff do not have access to all the facts and are not actively engaged in the subject. The only way to fight prejudice and misinformation is for it to be provided. This mandate will see that education and alternative ideas are listened to, rather than never otherwise being given the chance

This Union resolves:

1. Decolonising the Curriculum

It is imperative that the University is proactive in decolonising the curriculum across its colleges. There are valid concerns that the current curriculum is not reflective of the diversity of students across the University. Whilst there are current initiatives through personal tutoring discussions, this is insufficient. We highly recommend a reflection of diversity in the reading list (this can be achieved through an algorithm currently used in the School of Psychology), discussions and examinations. This would improve learning experiences for students. Decolonisation also requires the hiring and

training of Black staff to ensure excellent research and teaching delivery. Actions short of this would hinder the learning capabilities of Black students.

2. Educational Resources on BLM and the United Kingdom's Colonial History

It is critical that BLM issues are brought to the fore through the availability of accessible educational materials. BLM education and activism have shaped lives and have the ability to inform democracy, influence academic research, non-white feminism, disparity in access to medicine amongst other issues. However, this can only be achieved when the history books can tell the story of the journey and ignite ideas. Indeed, the University should make this worthy investment at this critical time and whilst doing so – trust the process and the outcome.

Education on BLMs and the UK's colonial history should also be told in safe spaces through public and private forums across the Universities' societies and movements. Such movements will enable students peacefully express their causes and allow it to become a dynamic monument of pride and conscientiousness for all.

Education on BLM can be told informally through the ACS's activities. Consequently, we implore the University to facilitate engagement with the SU to ensure the celebration of BLM, ensure ease of access to grants and elimination of bottlenecks.

3. Closing the Attainment Gap

In November 2019, the University made a statement recognising that Black students have lower attainment than their non-black counterparts across the sector but highlighted that this gap is wider in Lincoln, especially with Black men. In light of this, we believe that the University owes a practical commitment to enable Black students attain their full potential. This can include strategies such as improved and targeted teaching strategies, mentoring programmes, guest lecturing, leadership and networking events amongst others. Additionally, student ambassadorial programmes can be instituted. An issue commonly agreed on is the institution of scholarships for Black students at the undergraduate, masters and postgraduate levels.

Fundamentally however, it is critical for the University to understand the cause of the attainment gap, work on fixing them and sharing the outcomes of LEAP meetings and publish more publicly the Access and Participation plan with OfS.

4. Employability

It is crucial that employability is put to the fore. The University should facilitate engagement with local businesses for work experiences and placements whilst assisting students with the requisite documentation for job/placement applications. No doubt, these would improve the job prospects of Black students and the reputation of the University.

5. A Safe and Responsive Reporting Framework.

The University must have a working framework for reporting and resolving issues concerning racism. Students have expressed displeasure at the current framework which needs to be addressed. The framework needs to be standardised, enforceable, clear on its processes and also protect the student/staff making the report – granting them anonymity where desired. Whistle-blowers must be protected. Zero Tolerance against Lecturers using racially insensitive language or comments in lectures, and for inappropriate racially insensitive and outdated material being shown. Additionally, the framework should also be fair and always come to a conclusive end on all reports made. At the end of every year, the reports from the responsible body must be made publicly available to evidence its trajectory. This would ensure that actions against racism is evident irrespective of the platform on which it occurs. It would also demonstrate the Zero tolerance stance of the University on this issue.

Practically, it is imperative that the University and Union CCTV footage is more accessible on request to investigate a claim of racial discrimination.

6. Training

The University should institute mandatory training for all staff and students. Staff have a duty of care that should never be forgotten, and it lies within their responsibility to make the university as safe and hospitable for students. For this reason, they must undergo mandatory sensitivity training. Students should also engage with this training. This would ensure that Lincoln embodies the 'One Community' it pronounces.

Training also mandates that the University provides an onsite therapist/counsellor trained to help those who struggle to cope with being discriminated.

7. Posterity and a framework for future activism

The University must create a third-party tribunal of Students and Staff not affiliated or legally coercible by either the University or The Union. This body will be responsible for assessing the progress the University has made in accountability and answering the needs of BAME students.

This framework produced from this mandate must be promoted and prepared to use for other social BAME, LBGT+ movements so that the students can be best represented and supported. BLM is all about unity and solidarity so a blueprint for other groups to enact change must be provided.