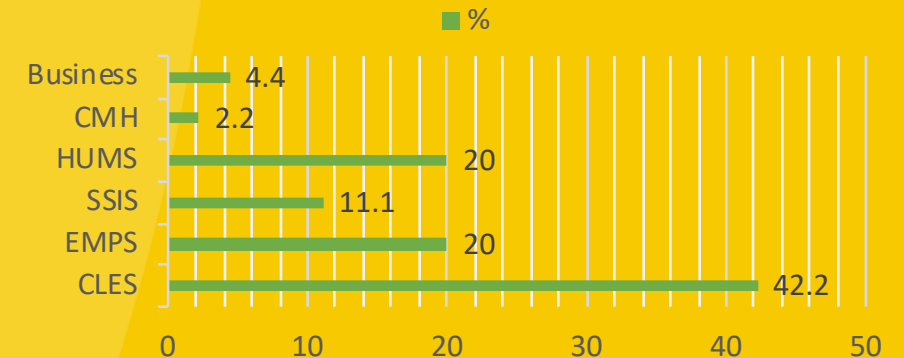
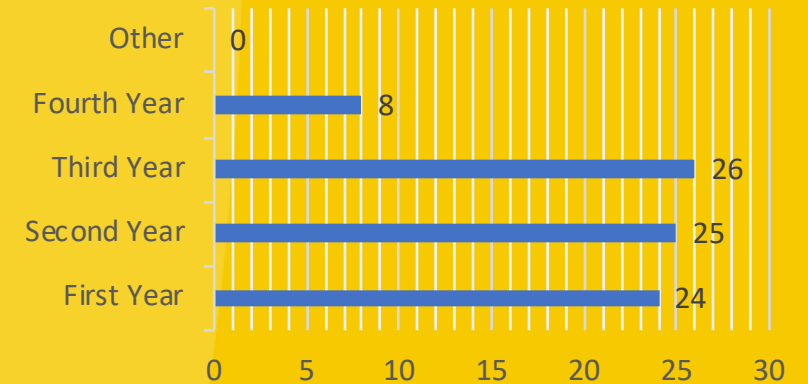
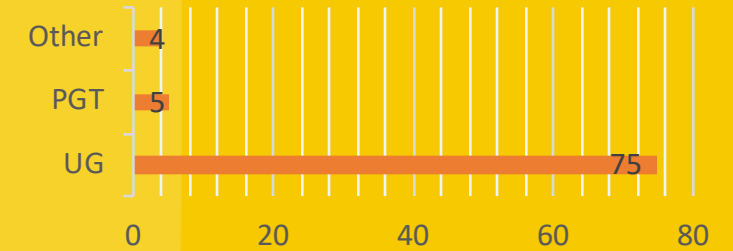


Decolonising the Curriculum Survey Feedback

Survey conducted February – April 2021

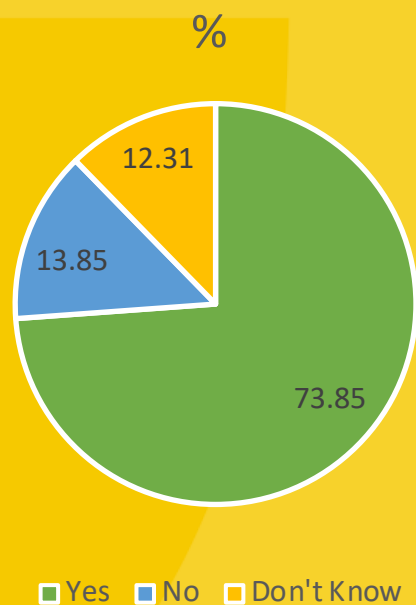
Respondents

- 89% of respondents were UG
- There was a fairly even split between 1st, 2nd and 3rd year respondents
- No clear trend in respondents being from a particular College
- 87% of respondents were Home-UK, 6% Home-EU, and 7% International.
- Over 84% of respondents were white. How do we engage underrepresented groups and marginalized voices in discussions around Decolonising the Curriculum?

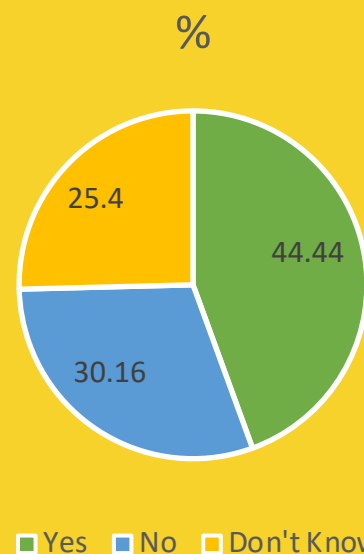


Reflections on White Privilege – white respondents only

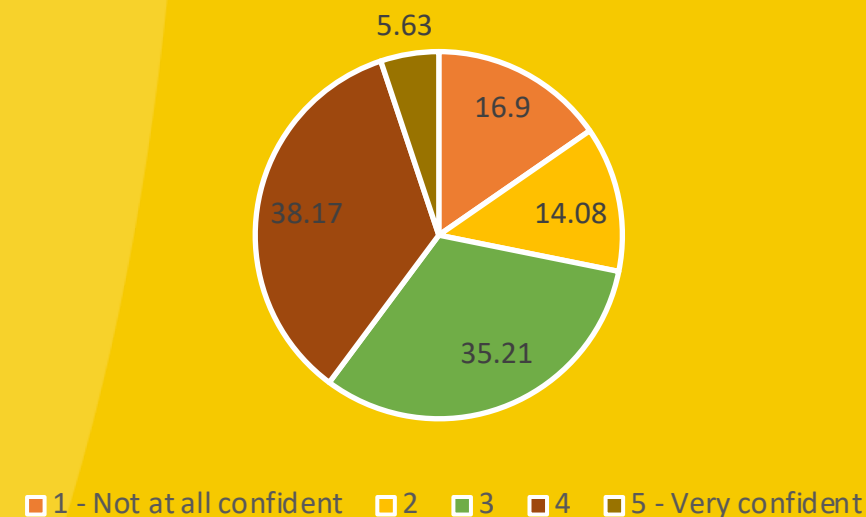
Do you benefit from white privilege?



Have you challenged white privilege
before?

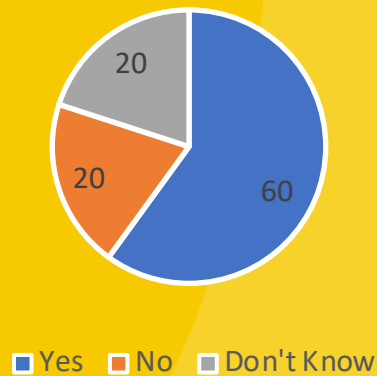


How confident do you feel challenging white
privilege?

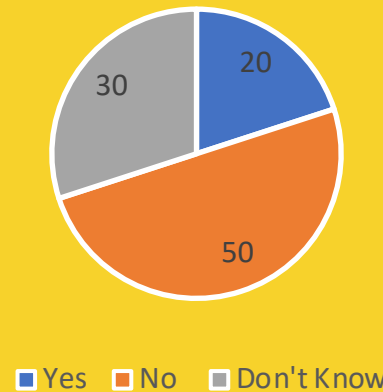


Reflections on White Privilege – students of colour only

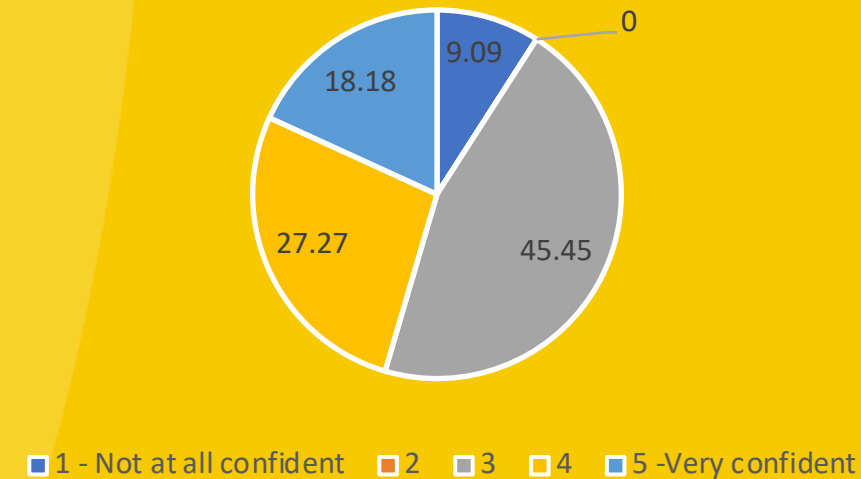
Have you ever encountered white privilege?
%



Have you encountered white privilege on campus?
%



How confident do you feel challenging white privilege?
%



Comments

- “White privilege is more prevalent in Cornwall because the majority of the population is white. I have experienced mild racism being here. **I have only just started to notice it because I’ve lived my whole life in this system – I thought it was normal.** It’s mainly my white friends who point it out where some Cornish people have a shorter temper with me or are ruder to me than they would to my white friend. I’m half white and half east-Asian [...] On campus I haven’t experienced any racism from staff [...] **Some students who think they are “edgy” have made comments (not about me though thankfully). We had to do inclusivity training earlier this year and those same people didn’t take it seriously. I personally don’t know how to approach them because a change to recognize privilege and recognize racism/discrimination is an effort that has to come from the person rather than trying to influence that person”.**
- “Whilst being at university I have seen white privilege demonstrated in various ways such as, not feeling as though I can freely share my cultures without judgement, not being able to have opinions without them being compared to my race, and being surrounded by people who are oblivious to language and customs which are deemed offensive to a person of an ethnic minority. For instance, being referred to as “half-caste” instead of mixed-race. Constantly being part of an ethnic minority does make it harder to address and challenge white privilege, yet it creates opportunities to educate others”.
- “This survey, like others, utterly erases the Cornish national minority. Conversations in Cornwall since the murder of George Floyd has tended to conflate calls for recognition of the Cornish national minority with white supremacy and racism [...]”

Voices in the Classroom

- 43% of respondents reported that BAME staff members had no contribution to their teaching.
- Only 4% reported that BAME staff members contributed “lots” to their teaching.
- Almost 50% of respondents reported that BAME students gave little to no contribution in classroom discussion.
- Only 9% reported that BAME students contributed “lots” in classroom discussion.
- 41% of respondents felt that their classes were “extremely dominated” by white voices.

“It’s not that I have noticed any direct silencing of BAME people within my course [...] it’s more that, out of a cohort of 200+ there are only a handful of BAME students”.

“From my three years of study, I have only had one lecturer that wasn’t white”

“The English department has some excellent lecturers committed to a decolonised curriculum [...] however, all the lecturers I’ve ever had have been white”

“I believe the levels of contribution from BAME students depends on whether they have been accustomed to working in a less diverse and inclusive environment before [...] the significantly high intake of private school students contributes to the reluctance to contribute”.

Curriculum Material

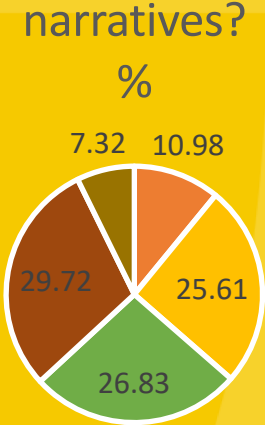
“Most of our content is Western European based”

“The course is traditionally focused on white, cisgender men and women”

“As a student of zoology, I am not sure where the curriculum could reasonably challenge eurocentrism regularly”

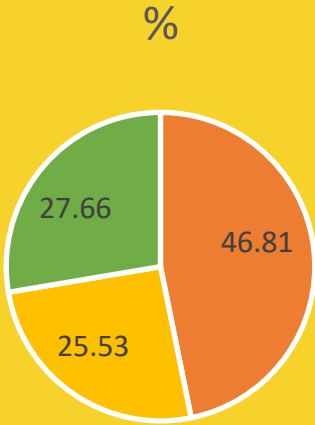
“The idea of decolonisation and breaking the Eurocentric narrative comes up quite a lot but it’s never addressed with something to replace it with”

To what extent do your learning materials challenge Eurocentric narratives?



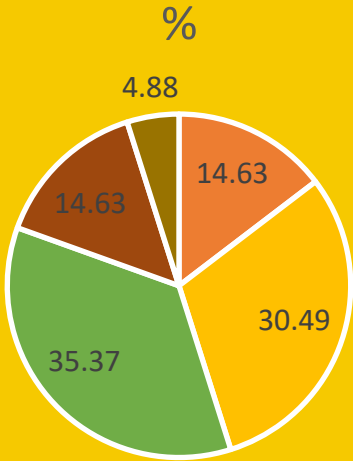
1 - Never Challenge 2 3 4 5 - Constantly Challenge

Do you ever encounter decolonisation narratives in your curriculum?



Yes No Don't Know

To what extent is the work of BAME professionals discussed in your curriculum?

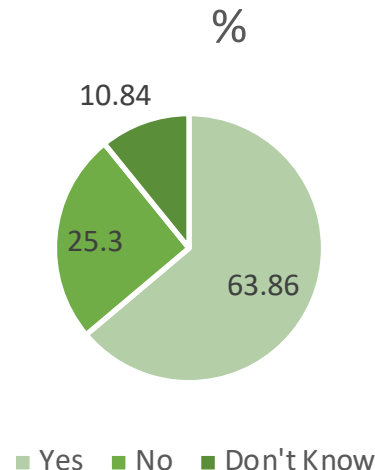


1 - never discussed 2 3 4 5 - constantly discussed

Methods of Learning and Assessment

- 72% of respondents agree that methods of learning are inclusive of all students. 17% disagree.
- However, only 48% of respondents agree the methods of learning are equally enriching for all students. 36% disagree.

Do you think the methods by which you're assessed provide equal, fair opportunities for students to show what they've learned?



“Participation grades aren’t fair – the conversation is dominated by white people in seminars”

“Fieldwork isn’t inclusive of people with physical disabilities”

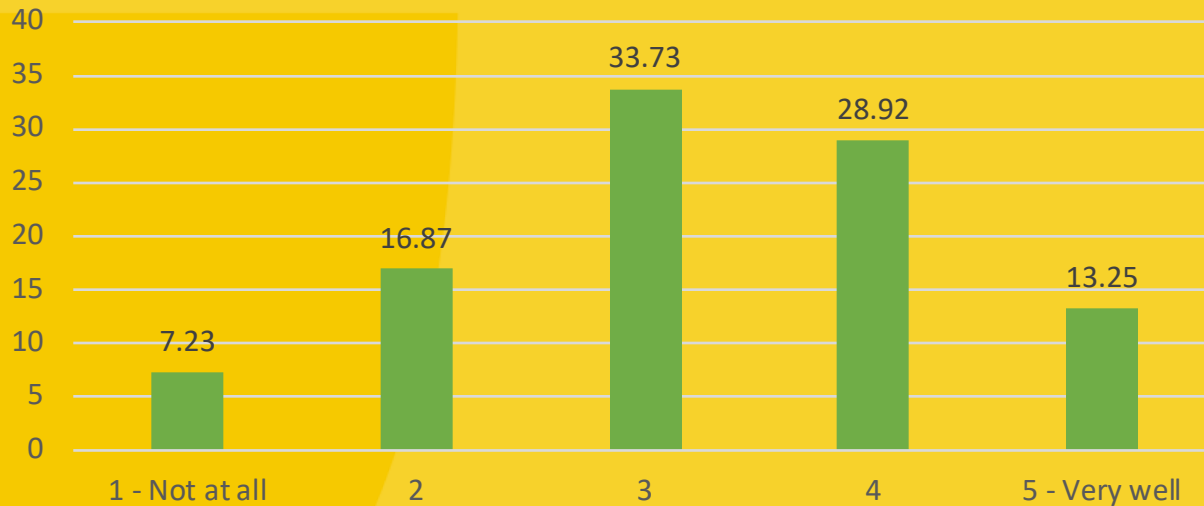
“[...] there is a bit of a burden on POC students to educate their peers [...] there is a lot of emotional and intellectual labour here”

“It isn’t really possible for me to know if methods by which we are taught are equally enriching for all students. I highly doubt they are, but I am not sure I can think of any reasons why this variation in individual enrichment would be caused by the individual’s ethnic identity”

The Students' Union

To what extent does the Students' Union effectively represent all students?

%



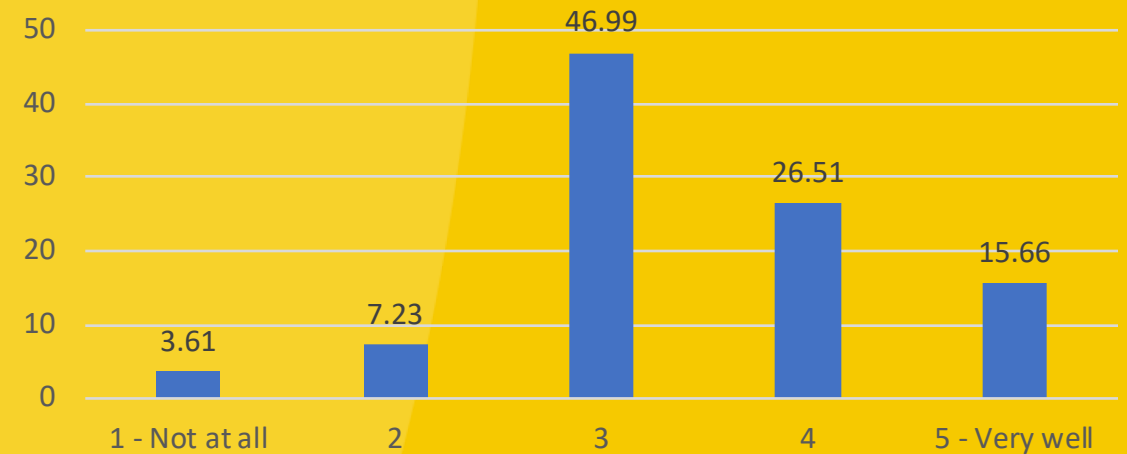
“at the SSLC meeting the majority of reps are white”

“Diversity would probably help, but as most are elected posts how do you ensure diversity?”

“the decolonising the curriculum campaign is the first I’ve really heard of the SU championing BAME students”

To what extent does the Students' Union champion the needs and interests of BAME students?

%



Conclusion

- 58% of students agree that the University of Exeter and the Students' Union need to take urgent action around decolonisation.
- There needs to be a focus on increasing BAME voices in the classroom, both student and teacher. How can we create a more flexible teaching and learning model, with more guest lecturers for example, to help address this in both the short and long term?
- There also needs to be education on:
 - A) What is decolonising the curriculum?
 - B) What is Eurocentrism?
 - B) How do students challenge white privilege?
 - C) How can classrooms be a place of intellectual debate and challenge, whilst also ensuring all students feel included and respected?
- Methods of learning and assessment must be analysed, to ensure they aren't benefitting particular groups of students over others. This could help address attainment gaps at the University. The changes to learning and assessment due to the pandemic may be of benefit here.
- The Students' Union must continue to seek greater diversity in its elected representatives.

"The University has continued to cover up its position to minorities when, in my belief, it currently promotes a very ultra-nationalistic, patriarchal, xenophobic, white supremacist, and homophobic agenda".

"The whole UK university structure is based on a colonial model [...] I would think that we could come up with a better and more inclusive model".

"Over and over again I see the mantra that hate has no place on campus and in our community, yet we are not taught how to combat it? The only tool available is to ban individuals from spaces and have private investigations [...] people with unsavoury views should be challenged intellectually, for all to see, not repressed [...] by not allowing people with unsavoury views and opinions to participate in debate, they end up only finding likeminded individuals, becoming more insular and extreme".