



**University of Brighton**



# Benefits and challenges of leveraging its full value

**Bhavik Anil Patel**

**School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences and Centre for Stress and Age-related Diseases, University of Brighton, UK**

 [b.a.patel@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:b.a.patel@brighton.ac.uk)

 [@bhavianilpatel](https://twitter.com/bhavianilpatel)

NEON Addressing Differential Outcomes for  
BME Learners Working Group  
29<sup>th</sup> October 2020

# Race equality charter

- + Framework for taking a strategic approach to looking at race equality
- + Developed after consultation with and involvement from the sector
- + Trialled in 2014-15 and launched in January 2016
- + Currently 67 members and 15 Bronze award holders

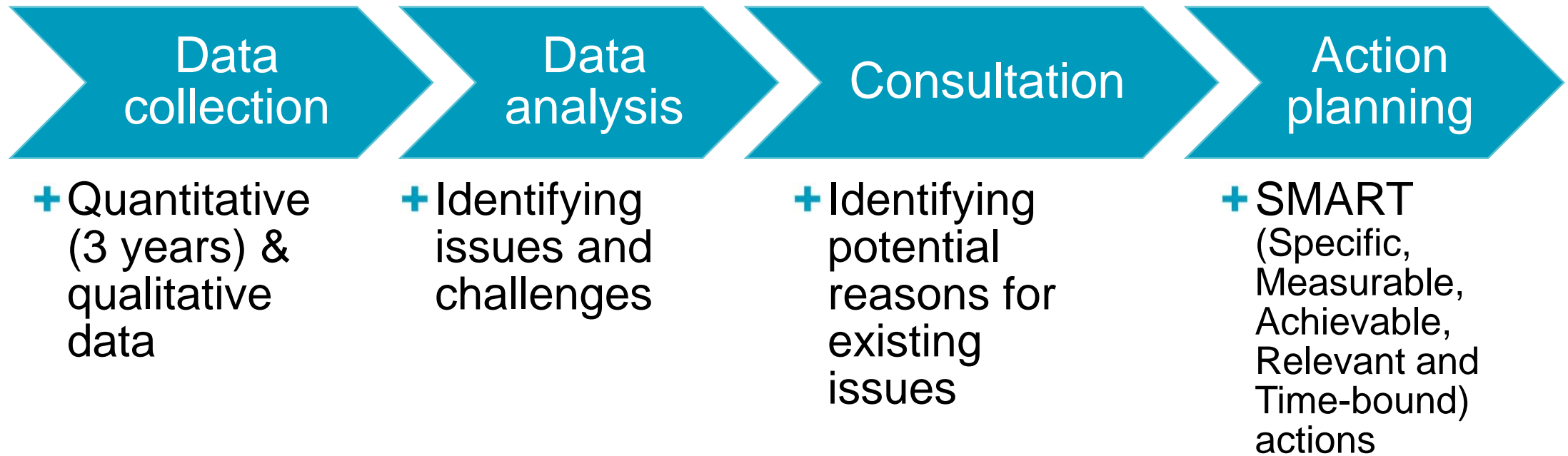


# Guiding principles of the REC

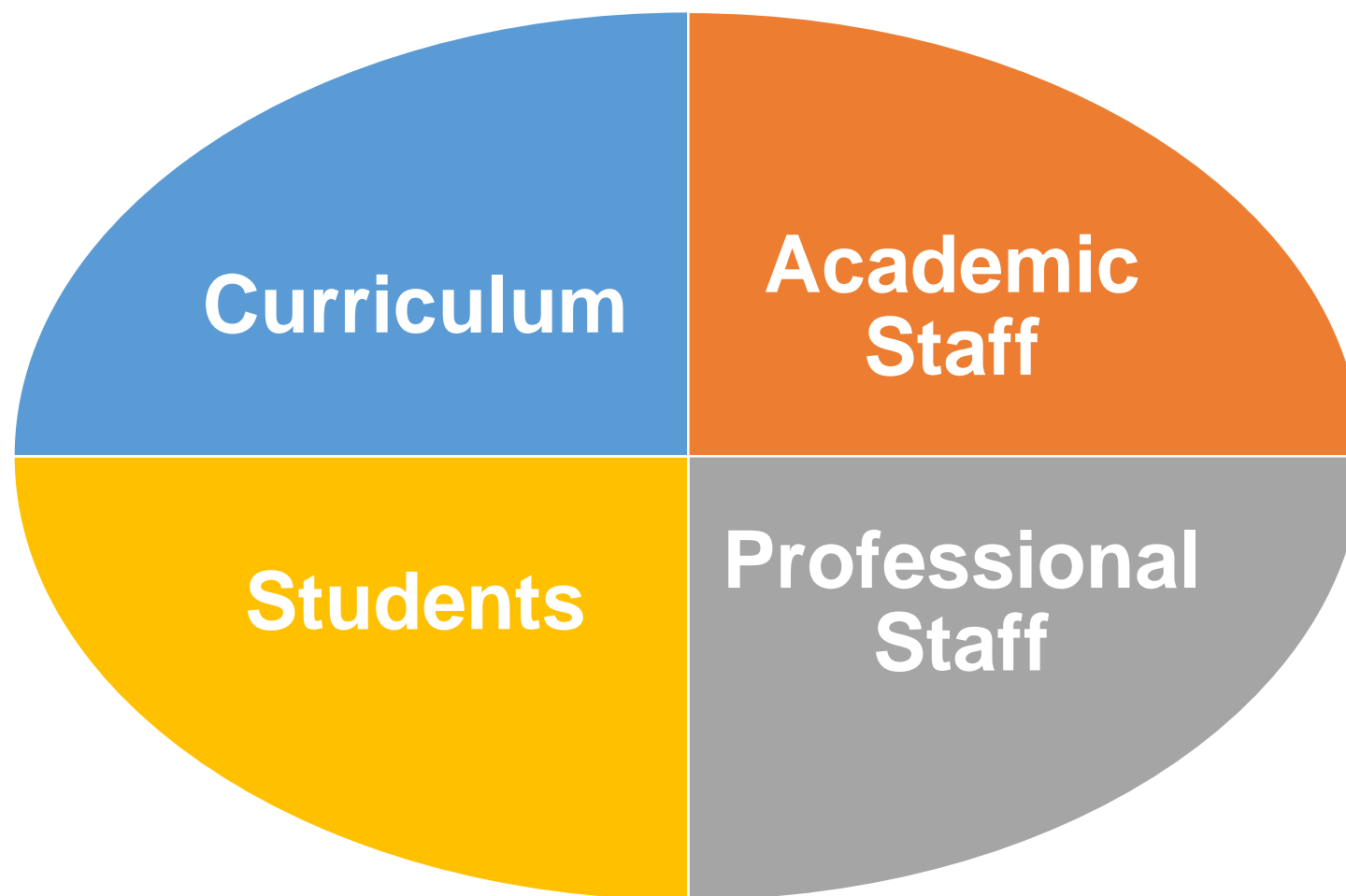
1. Racial inequalities are **not necessarily overt, isolated incidents** and can manifest themselves in **everyday situations**, processes and behaviours.
2. UK higher education cannot reach its full potential until individuals from **all ethnic backgrounds can benefit equally** from the opportunities it affords.
3. Solutions to racial inequalities must **focus on institutional culture change**, avoiding a deficit model
4. Black and minority ethnic staff and students are **not a homogenous group**.
5. All individuals have multiple identities, and the **intersection of those identities** should be considered wherever possible.



# REC methodology



# Data collection



# Why should you institution engage?

Metrics



Conversations

Supports all



Frameworks

Audit



Hope



# Benefits highlighted from award holders

- + Resources provided for activities supporting the REC
- + Investment from senior management
- + A clear framework accessible for all
- + Recruitment, retention and progression of BAME staff
- + Addressing the BME attainment gap and understanding the lived experiences of BME students
- + Cultural and behavioural change
- + Addressing the 'fear of race'



# Consequences that may arise in achieving a REC award

- + Students complain about the lack of staff from BAME community present that they can share their concerns with openly
- + Safe spaces for both staff and students to openly talk about racism are lacking
- + Initiatives can be perceived as tokenistic gestures, and instead of integrating staff, cause further segregation and (self-) stigma for BAME staff
- + Difficulties in providing leadership opportunities given the dearth of BAME staff present in HE





# Quote



*The key thing that is making me anxious is making BAME staff, particularly, lead the charge in tackling racial discrimination. I think that is not appropriate...for me it is the people in authority...so it's the Vice Chancellor, it's the executive and the board of governors... they are responsible for it and they are responsible for ensuring that the voices of BAME staff and students are heard by themselves and that action is taken*

Award Holder, Post-1992, Female, White other



# How could we go further

- + Linking REC to funding
- + Mandatory unconscious bias training
- + Senior staff championing Equality and Diversity
- + Annual reviews of how HEIs have addressed the BME attainment gap
- + Annual reviews of how HEIs have addressed the under representation of BME staff
- + Improving professional development for BME staff



# Do we need school/department level?

- + Shown to be more effective for ATHENA Swan
  - + Ownership
  - + Accountability
  - + Visible change
- + Opportunity for subject specific student/staff champions
- + Greater engagement for students as they can see localised benefits
- + Creates more creative inclusive practices that can be shared





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# Thank You

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