

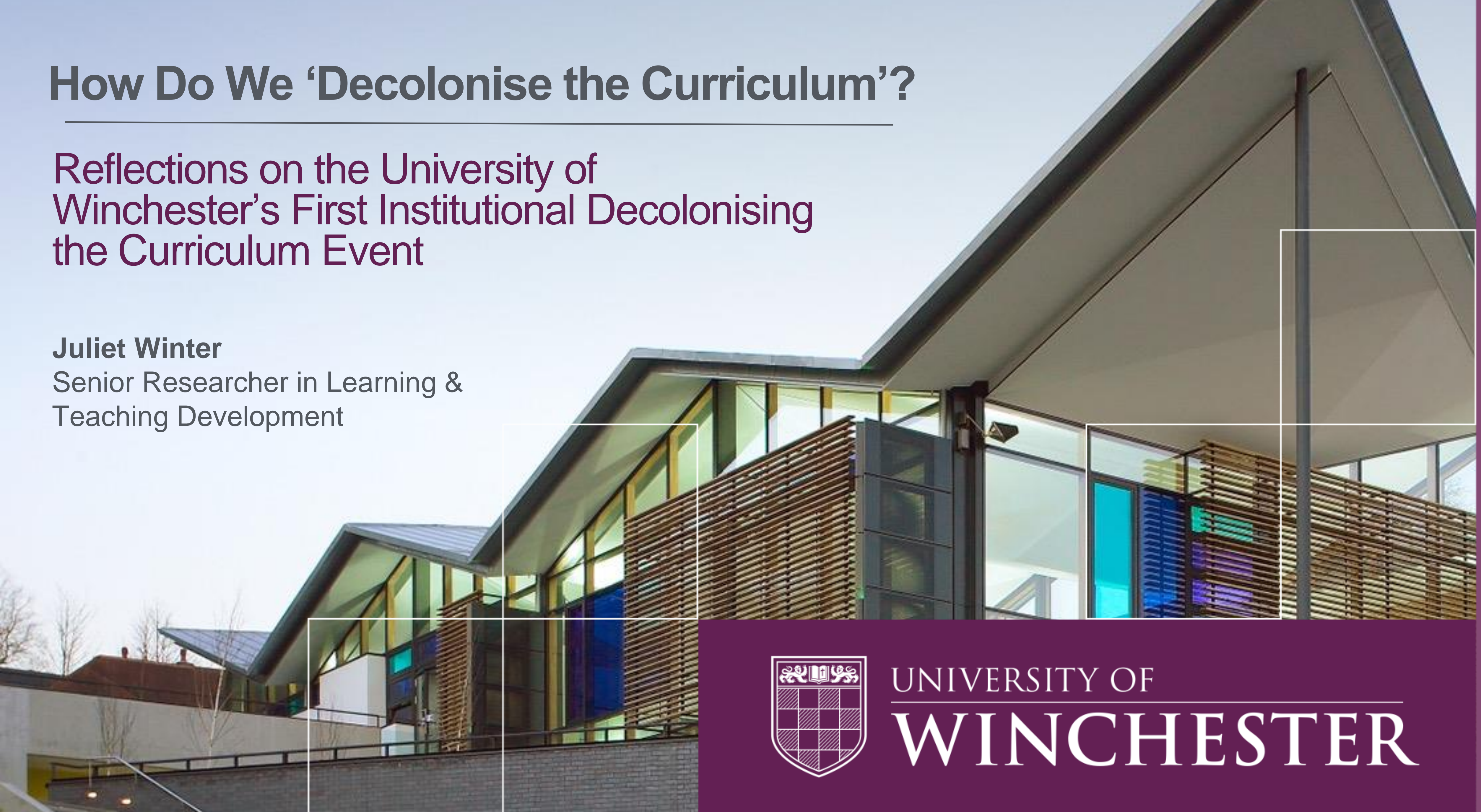
# How Do We 'Decolonise the Curriculum'?

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## Reflections on the University of Winchester's First Institutional Decolonising the Curriculum Event

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# University of Winchester

- The 'University of Sustainability and Social Justice'
- Values-led Institution
- Largely humanities, social sciences and education subjects
- Long-standing commitment to Widening Participation, working with communities across Hampshire and the South Coast
- Long-existing decolonising practice at the local level (UG, PG and PGR)
- Race Equality Action Group (REAG)
- Institutional Decolonising the Curriculum 'action plan' developed in 2020.



# Institutional Event

- Held virtually over two weeks in October 2020.
- Open to both staff and students.
- 21 contributors.
- Variety of topics, approaches and methodologies explored.
- Variety of delivery methods – workshops, presentations, ‘conversations’, creative works, blogs, toolkits, and more.
- Limited participation (63 participants across all sessions).



# Feedback from Staff

- Staff commented that the event raised awareness, encouraged reflection and informed discussion and decision making at the local level.
- They also noted increased confidence in terms of their ability and willingness to talk about issues of race, representation and decolonising practice.
- Colleagues appreciated the discussion-centred nature of many of the talks they attended.
- The practice-based or practical sessions were found to be most beneficial.



# Feedback from Students

- Students noted that sessions which focused on practical solutions were the most helpful.
- They also commented that the discussion-based sessions were most beneficial, especially those that encouraged dialogue to continue beyond the event.
- Significantly, some students noted that the session/s they attended had encouraged them to think differently about their learning and, in one case, their doctoral research.
- One student commented that their participation had encouraged them to 'decolonise my mind' and noted that this would be important outside the context of their university study.





# Developments

- Institutional conversation is on-going.
- Contributors from the event have had the opportunity to feed into conversations at REAG.
- Development of a Learning and Teaching Decolonising the Curriculum Action Plan.
- Utilising the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) to measure 'baseline'.
- Recorded sessions have been collated into a DtC resource for staff and students.



# Challenges and Barriers

## Staff

Lack of time/ resources

Workload allocation

Need for structural change (work beyond the curriculum)

Other institutional priorities (such as responding to the Covid-19 crisis)

How to measure impact of changes to practice

## Students

Lack of BAME student involvement and engagement with the event

Lack of BAME student representation at the University

Wanted practical solutions quickly



# Conclusions

- The event succeeded in ‘starting an institutional conversation’, leading to some localised engagement, action and change.
- There is a clear need to extend the conversation further by providing additional engagement opportunities (perhaps that are more targeted and/ or frequent).
- It is evident that engagement and practice is significantly varied – some colleagues are experts, others are seeking practical advice on starting the process.
- There are a number of challenges and barriers that the institution needs to address in terms of supporting staff to diversify and decolonise their curricula.



# Thank you.

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