

Closing the BME attainment gap through an institutional approach

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The problem

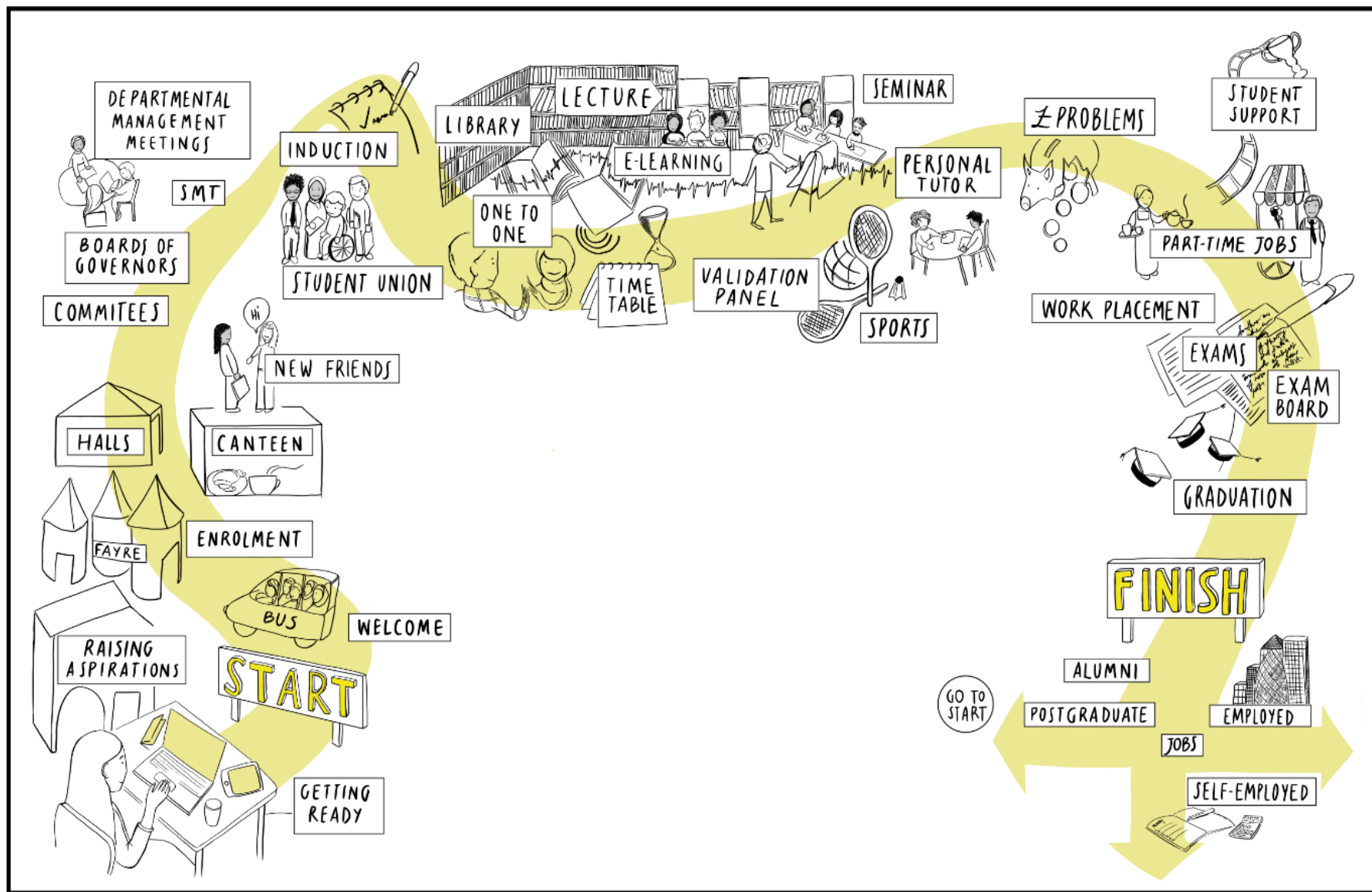
“Universities transform lives. Going to university leads to new ways of seeing the world, to new horizons and networks, and to significantly enhanced job opportunities. But not everyone benefits in the same way.

Fewer students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds go to university, and when they do they tend not to do as well as their more privileged peers. The influence of background continues long after graduation.”

Nicola Dandridge, CEO, Universities UK, (now OFS)
Social Mobility Advisory Group Report 2016



Take a whole student life cycle



Creating change

Understand the arguments:

It's because BME students come in with different tariff points or subjects of study

It's someone else's fault in the University

I am not racist, I treat everyone the same

I don't know what to do about it

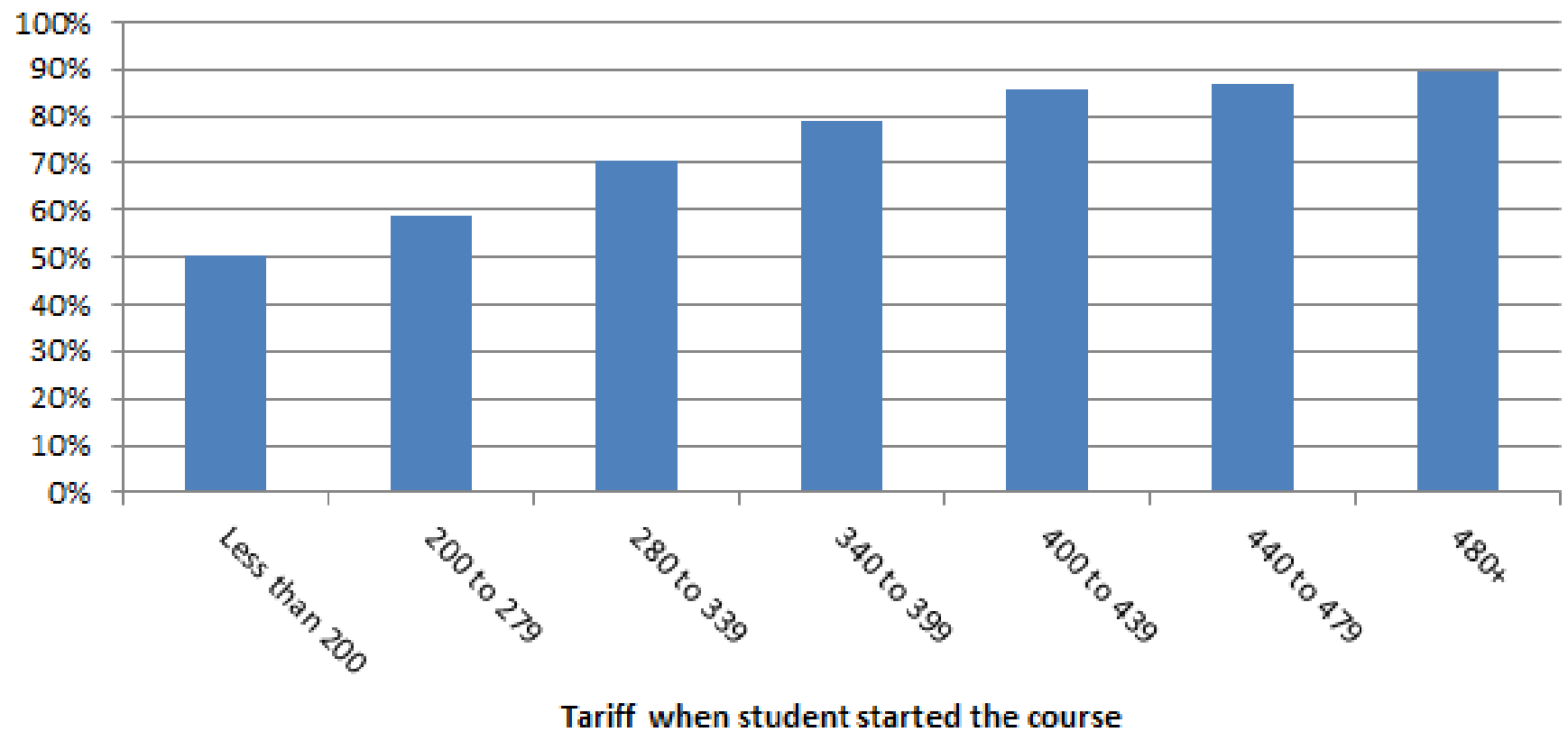
I cant make a difference

It's not my role as a lecturer

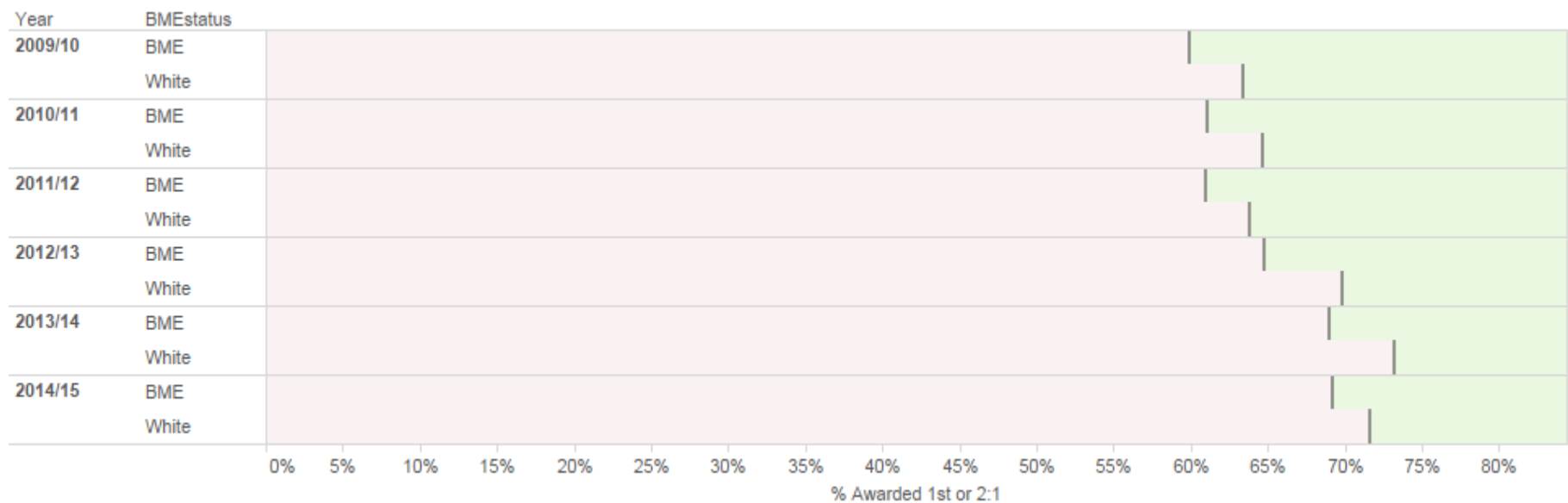
Standards will drop (Brinks, 2009)



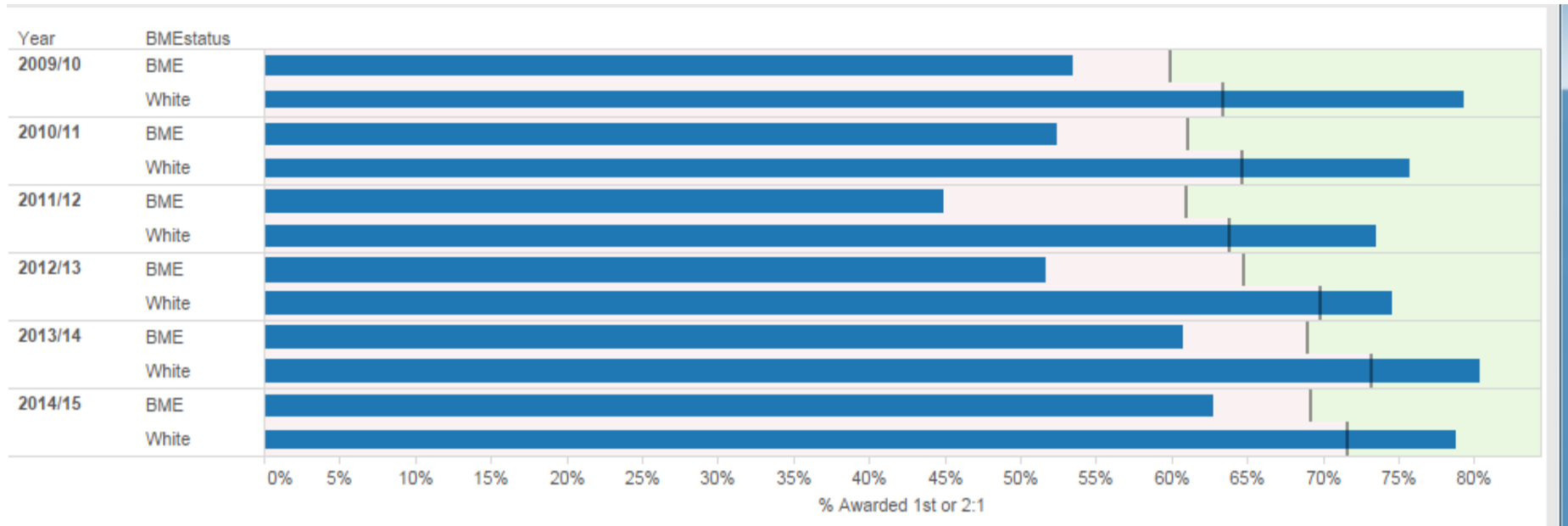
Percentage awarded a 1st or 2:1 at end of course



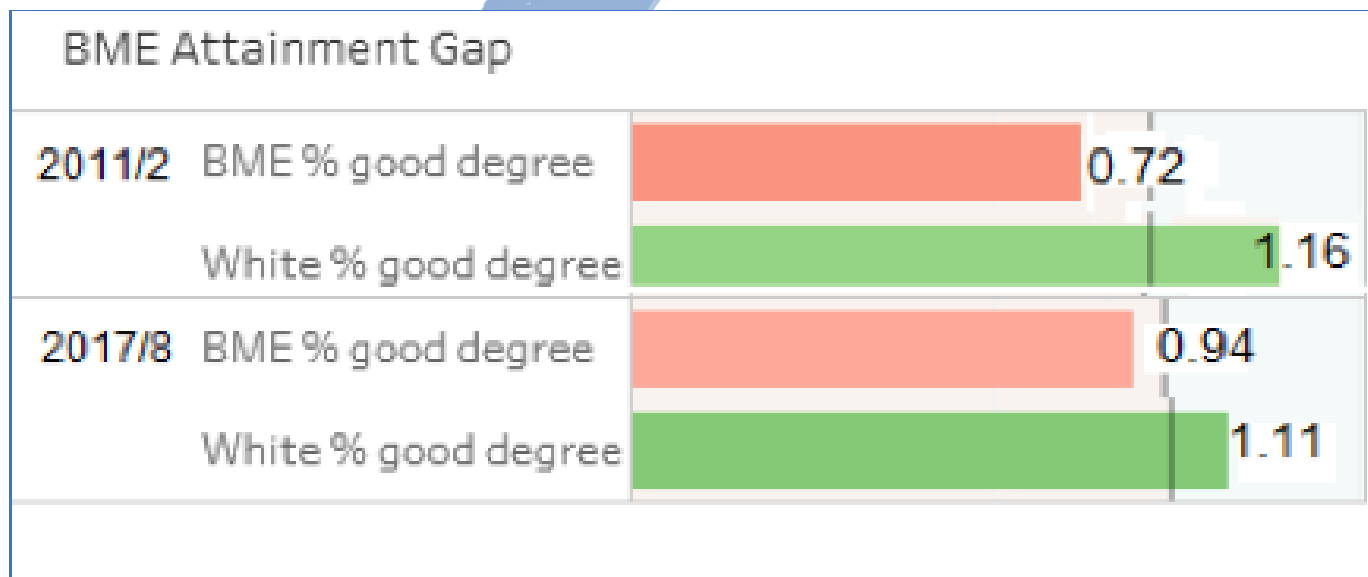
Differential Expectations...



...only explain part of the gap



Value Added statistics
summarise the unexplained
disparities

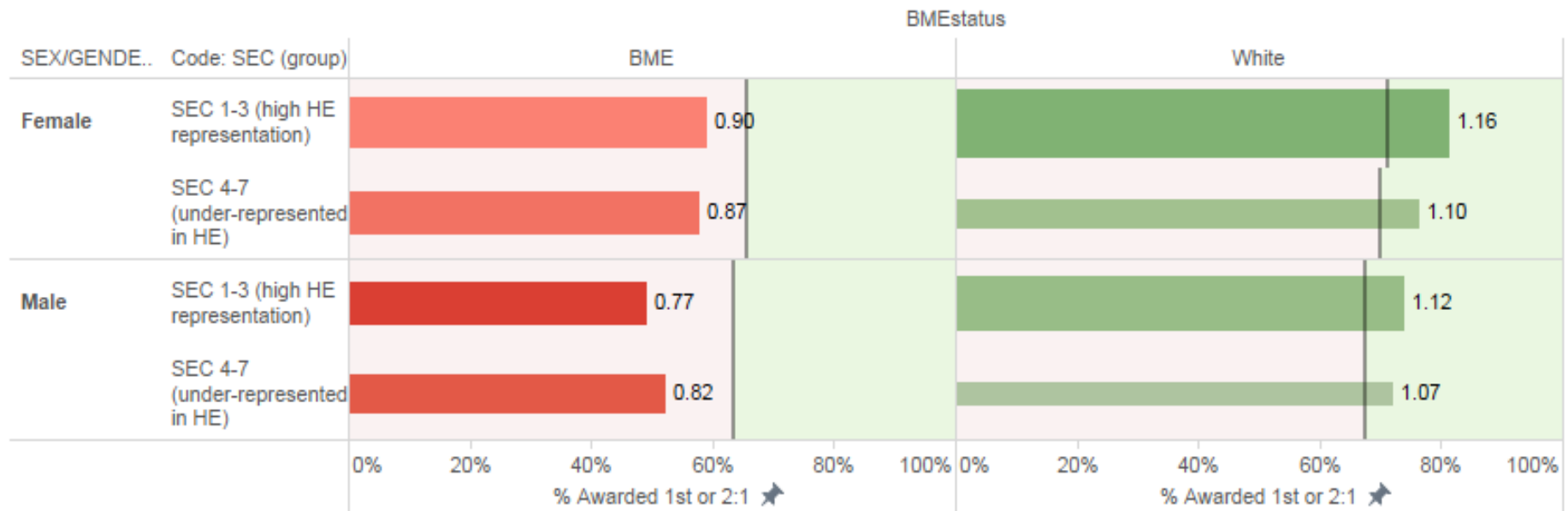


Different student groups may show gaps

Dashboard 6: VA scores by Social Class, Gender and BME status

This dashboard addresses recent coverage concerning white working class male students and their representation in HE. Only students who were aged under 21 when they started their course are included

SEC/Gender/Ethnicity



Complex issues require research informed approaches

- **Improve institutional approaches**
- **Enhance knowledge and skills of staff**
- **Better support student success**

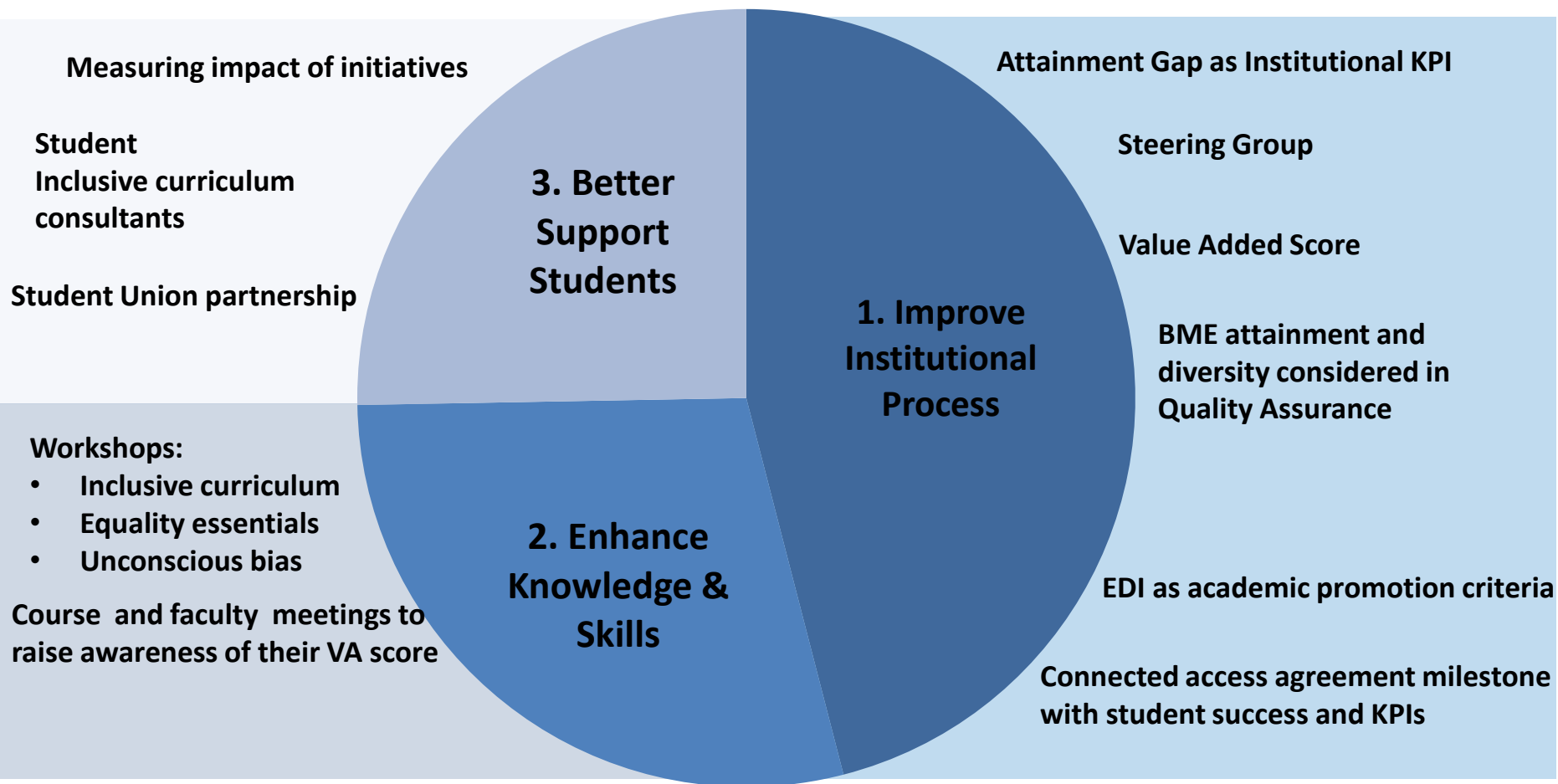
We adopted a multifaceted longitudinal approach to institutional change that took account of cultural complexity as described by Van de Ven et al (1999), Scott Poole and Van de Ven (2004).

We explored issues of race and racism with staff – challenging perceptions

An inclusive approach
“Necessitates...equity considerations being embedded within all functions of the institution and treated as an ongoing process of quality enhancement.

Making a shift of such magnitude requires cultural and systemic change at both the policy and practice levels.” (Wray, 2013: 4)

Kingston's Institutional Approach



What is an inclusive curriculum?

“Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education refers to the ways in which **pedagogy, curricula** and **assessment** are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is **meaningful**, and **accessible** to all” (Hocking, 2010)



Inclusive curriculum framework

McDuff & Hughes, developed 2015

Teaching	Create an accessible curriculum	Enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum	Equip students with the skills to positively contribute to and work in a global and diverse environment
In the concept			
In the content (case study: question, discussion)			
In the delivery			
In the assessment			
In the feedback/forward			
In the review			



Module	Create an accessible curriculum	Enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum	Equip students with the skills to positively contribute to and work in a global and diverse environment
In the concept			
In the content (learning outcomes, reading lists)			
In the delivery (learning and teaching strategy)			
In the assessment (assessment strategy)			
In the feedback (feedback strategy)			
In the review/evaluation (MRDP)			



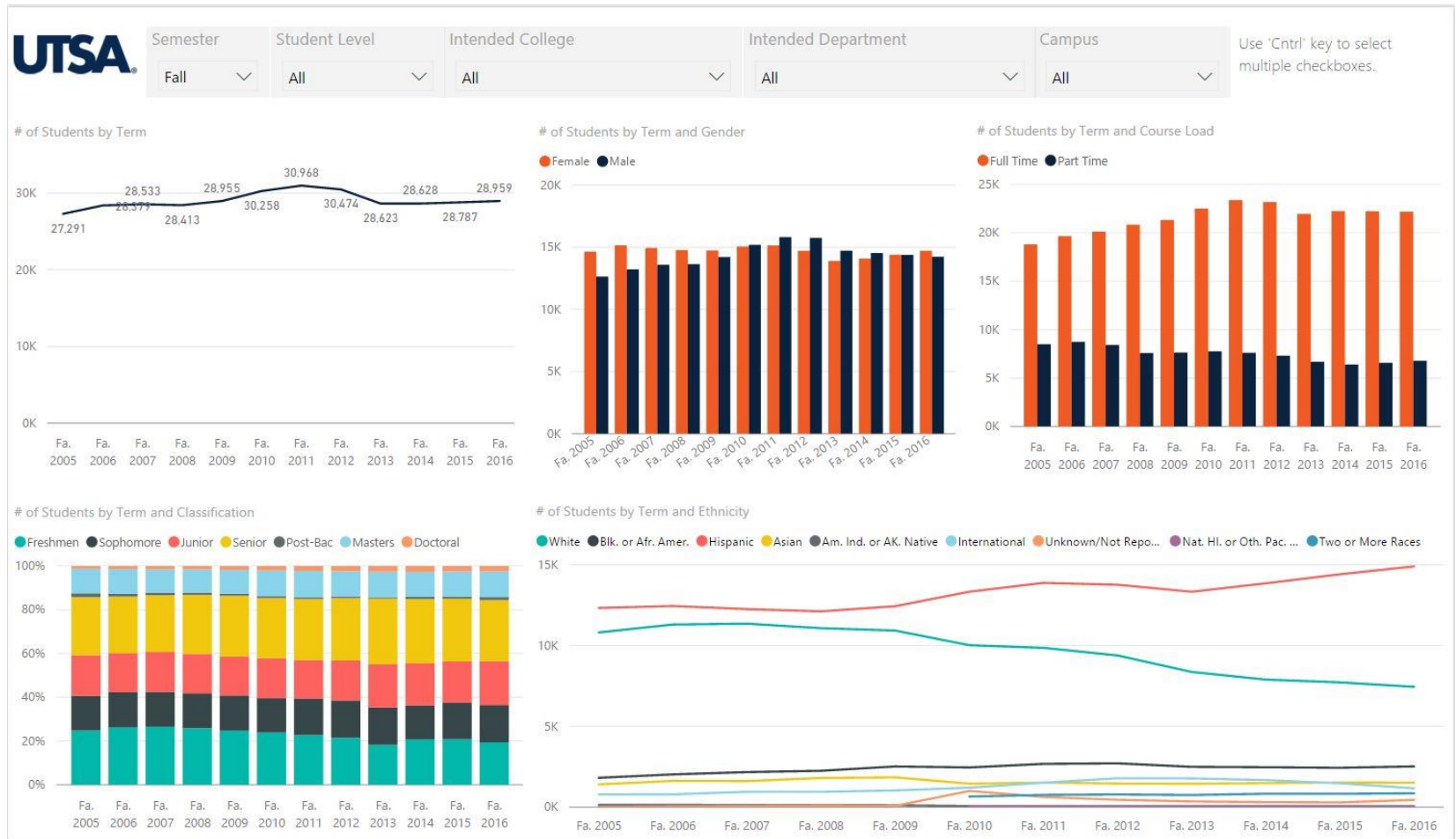
Programme	Create an accessible curriculum	Enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum	Equip students with the skills to positively contribute to and work in a global and diverse environment
In the concept (programme specification)			
In the content (module offer)			
In the delivery (learning and teaching strategy)			
In the assessment (assessment strategy)			
In the feedback (feedback strategy)			
In the review/evaluation (revalidation/ISR)			



University	Create an accessible curriculum	Enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum	Equip students with the skills to positively contribute to and work in a global and diverse environment
In the concept (strategy, academic framework)			
In the content (portfolio offer)			
In the delivery (education strategy and co-curricular offer)			
In the assessment (assessment strategy, HEAR & institutional awards)			
In the feedback (feedback strategy)			
In the review (KPI's, QA & audit)			



The VA is a quality threshold (an example)



How are we doing?

Longer term is the AG/VA score: VA score for BME students has increased from 0.72 to 0.96 and the attainment gap from 29% to 13%.

Interim measures of success include:

- Institutional: changes to process, race budgeting, Inclusive curriculum prizes, estates and flexi-stay
- Knowledge and skills: staff engagement in related training e.g. inclusive curriculum workshops, evaluation of impact, changes made as a result of attendance
- Better support for students: Investment in initiatives that have high impact on student success

Thank you for listening

- McDuff, Ross, Tatam and Beacock, 2018
Closing the attainment gap for students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds through institutional change Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning.