

The BRIT School

Anti-Racism Policy

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Document Control

Title: **The BRIT School Anti-Racism Policy**
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 Version: **Final Version**

Issue Date: **01/12/20**
 Reviewed: **N/A**
 Next Review: **01/12/21**

This policy is applied in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Restorative Approaches Policy

'In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist. We must be anti-racist.' Angela Davis

Purpose

At The BRIT School we believe that everyone has a voice, to be heard, respected and listened to online and offline. The environment should be an inclusive one for everyone from students to staff to visitors. We aim to have a creative place of work in which people with a diverse range of identities and backgrounds are able to be original, responsible and ambitious in an environment of inclusivity and kindness.

This policy acts as a step towards tackling everyday racism and setting out clear commitments that The BRIT School will take as a radical leader to bring about change within our society because it is the right thing to do.

Responsibilities

Every student, employee, board member and freelancer is required to support The BRIT School to meet these commitments to provide an inclusive and anti-racist environment for everyone.

The BRIT School is committed to:

- Challenging racism including microaggressions. If we see or hear it, we will challenge it.
- Bringing about change within the arts industries.
- Be radical leaders who can lead this change.
- Understanding there are moral and social reasons for being a part of bringing an end to racism – it is the right thing to do.
- Understand that many people are judged unfairly on the colour of their skin and that those judgements should never go unchallenged or occur at The BRIT School.
- Understand that many people have privilege, that The BRIT School has privilege and that its leaders have privilege.
- Understand that not everyone gets the same opportunities and to challenge this.
- Understand the importance of diversity, however that diversity does not mean inclusion. We will work towards improving inclusion for everyone – staff, freelancers, contractors, participants and audiences.
- Understand the importance of recognising intersectionality.
- Strive to ensure that the work environment is free from racist behaviours and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Policy scope

This policy applies to all BRIT School students and staff, whether permanent or those on fixed term contract. In addition, contractors, freelancers or agency staff are also required to abide by the principles set out in the policy.

Policy

The BRIT School commits to:

- Bringing an end to racism within The BRIT School and the arts sector.
- Complying with the Equality Act 2010.
- Create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all members of the School community are recognised and valued.
- Provide a working environment that promotes dignity and respect, which is everyone's responsibility.
- No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment being tolerated.
- Challenging all forms of racist behaviour and addressing it in accordance with the relevant policies & procedures
- Encouraging self-education and providing education/training to all students, staff and board members.
- Reviewing language and terminology ensuring it is appropriate and inclusive.
- Moving away from abbreviating terms such as BAME.
- Empower and enable black, Asian, ethnically diverse, indigenous and migrant young artists to be the artists they want and need and deserve to be without the constant pressure of representation.
- Work towards improving access and removing barriers for young artists.

Relevant Terminology

Microaggressions: a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

The BRIT School seeks to promote language that is relevant and respectful to the individual. We promote the following references to groups (as required) in the context of the current (2020) BAMEOver considerations detailed (see paper below from Arts Inc. UK). We also promote the further specificity advocated in the paper.

Language around Ethnicity & Race that is being used in BRIT 2021

BAME - Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (used to refer to members of non-white communities in the UK) and is used for broad statistical purposes. It is **not** used for the purposes of describing people.

- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Heritage
- Person of colour
- Majority world/Global majority
- People who experience racism
- Members of minority ethnic communities in the UK
- Black/White

We are encouraging specificity, e.g:

'Students with African or Caribbean heritage.'

'Staff with East Asian and South East Asian heritage.'

'Artists with South Asian heritage.'

Nb, Black - Black is a political term, best used by those who meet the conditions of its description.

Appendix 1

Arts Inc. UK Paper - #BAMEOver

<https://incarts.uk>

Throughout August more than 1,000 people took Inc. Arts' #BAMEOver survey, and on 4th September 2020 over 250 people came together to reset the terms of reference for people with lived experience of racism.

We set out to answer the question, 'What do we want to be called?'

Through our discussion we've come up with a guide to terminology, for use by everyone who wants to be an effective ally and wants to avoid causing further harm through the use of casual and inaccurate language.

Here are our preferred terms of reference for people in the UK. We urge you to use them and share widely.

We do not want to be grouped into a meaningless, collective term, or reduced to acronyms.

BAMEOver: Our terms of reference

We are African Diaspora people

We are South, East and South East Asian diaspora people, and we are ethnically diverse. We are people who experience racism.

Use these terms in any order you choose.

Just don't call us BAME.

BAMEOver: Rules for engagement

#1: Language is evolving. Deal with it. The terms we've agreed today may change in the future. Times change: come with us.

#2: Collective terminology is necessary: acronyms are not. Nobody wants to be reduced to an acronym. Especially an acronym that is inaccurate.

#3. We reject BAME. The term unhelpfully blends ethnicity, geography, nationality - and in doing so erases our identity and reduces us to an 'other'.

#4. We reject 'Minority: we are the global majority. And we reject 'ethnic'. This terminology is centred on you seeing us as different.

#5. Call us by our name. Be specific. Understand the terms you use.

#6. We're people first. Not a colour. Not a continent. Never say 'blacks' just as you wouldn't say 'whites' (unless you're talking about washing).

#7. People of Colour is a US term, as is 'Black, Indigenous and People of Colour'. In the UK for many people over 35 this has uncomfortable resonance with the racist terminology 'coloureds'. The 'colour' of one's skin is not what we have in common, it is our lived experience of racism directed against us.

Terms of Reference

Here's what to say...

Instead of 'Asian'...

'Asian' can erase millions of people by not reflecting the rich diversity of culture and ethnicity that is in the continent. There's a huge diversity of experience of oppression faced by those the term refers to.

Use 'People of South Asian heritage', 'People of East Asian and South East Asian heritage'.

Instead of ... 'Black'

Many black people don't object to being called black: for others it is not accurate enough. Black is a political term, best used by those who meet the conditions of its description. It speaks of collective action against racially motivated oppression. It includes those of African and Caribbean heritage.

If you mean Africans born in Africa, say so. If you mean third generation Caribbean's, say so.

Instead of 'black', use

'African' for those born in the continent',

'African Caribbean', 'South Asian Caribbean' and 'East Asian Caribbean' for those born in the islands,

'African diaspora people' for people of African and Caribbean heritage, Or

'People of African or Caribbean heritage'

'Minority Ethnic'

What a mess. **Let's talk about who we mean.**

There are many who experience oppression through racist action, including those of Romany heritage, or Irish traveller heritage, or Jewish heritage and some within this definition who are definitely not a 'minority' including Latinx- people of Latin American heritage, cultural and ethnic identity, and many more.

British Asian? Black British?

If you're thinking of using these terms, ask yourself: do you mean those *living* in the UK? Or those *born* in the UK? If it's relevant, say what you mean.

Let's not erase the experiences of migrant communities. Phrases like 'people of X heritage' or 'of the X diaspora' includes migrant people without erasure.

Mixed Heritage?

People of Mixed White and African diaspora heritage, people of Mixed White and South Asian heritage, people of East Asian and Caribbean heritage... you get the idea. Say what you mean.

Too many words? Want an easy acronym? A simple collective term?

There isn't one. We choose not to be reduced to an inaccurate grouping. But what we have in common is that we are...

“People who experience racism”. This term will require you to then articulate who you are referring to, and may, depending on context, refer to Western Asian people, Irish people, Jewish people and others whose oppression is not captured by current terminology. Please use with awareness the phrase ‘people who experience racism’, and don’t make it an acronym ever.

And if you’re not sure of our ethnicity...

What if you don’t know?

If you’re referring to **‘people who are ethnically and culturally diverse, and who experience racism in our society’** be sure to qualify it with detail of who you are talking about: Latinx people? Romany traveller heritage people? Don’t use as a catch all without further detail.

All too difficult? Can’t be bothered?

The difference between saying ‘BAME’ and ‘people of South Asian heritage’ or ‘people who experience racism’ is approximately 2 seconds.

2 seconds is not too much time to devote to taking positive anti-racist action on a daily basis. Remaining actively conscious of the language we use is a powerful act of allyship.

Appendix 2

The BRIT School has adopted [The Halo Code](#), the UK's first Black hair code. No Black staff or students should have to change their natural or protective hairstyle in order to thrive at our school. We hope that the Halo Code will move us one step closer to a world free from discrimination, where all Black members of our community have their identities fully recognised and celebrated.

The Code: "Our school champions the right of staff and students to embrace all Afro-hairstyles. We acknowledge that Afro-textured hair is an important part of our Black staff and students' racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious identities, and requires specific styling for hair health and maintenance. We welcome Afro-textured hair worn in all styles including, but not limited to, afros, locs, twists, braids, cornrows, fades, hair straightened through the application of heat or chemicals, weaves, wigs, headscarves, and wraps. At this school, we recognise and celebrate our staff and students' identities. We are a community built on an ethos of equality and respect where hair texture and style have no bearing on anyone's ability to succeed."

<https://halocollective.co.uk/halo-workplace/>