

The
**Education
& Training
Foundation**

**Developing a Leadership
Pipeline for BAME Staff in
Further Education and
Training**

A report on the scoping phase

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The Education & Training Foundation

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1. Background and introduction

The Education Training Foundation's Further Education sector [survey data 2013/14](#) showed that 84.9% of staff are of "white British" ethnic background – which rises to 91% for senior managers. Across the sector, 4.5% of staff are of Asian descent and 3.5% are of African/Caribbean descent, but only 2.4% or 1.7% respectively are represented at senior management level. This contrasts with 8.2% and 6.4% of learners nationally and highlights continuing inequalities within the sector. In April 2015 The Education Training Foundation laid out their plans for tackling inequality in the [Equality and Diversity Strategy](#), which includes a commitment to seeing the senior leadership of the sector reflect the student population in its diversity by 2020. The Foundation has been engaged in a range of initiatives to support this agenda, including working towards the development of a Leadership Pipeline for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) middle managers and aspiring leaders. This is a report on the scoping phase carried out during February and March 2016.

The following pages give an overview of what some of the barriers are for BAME staff, then look at Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for managers in the sector. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for the Foundation, highlighted in **bold** throughout, to inform an Invitation to Tender for the development of a sustainable leadership pipeline for current and emerging BAME middle managers. There are also recommendations for Senior Leaders, Executives and Non-Executives, which go beyond the scope of the ITT.

2. Methodology

The scoping for this work included some desk research into the experiences of BAME staff in further education, looking primarily at existing research and reports. The research also looked at new initiatives developed by other public sectors (National Health Service and Criminal Justice service) to tackle inequality in their staffing structures. Some examples of practice, either proven to be effective, or emerging practice which has the potential to be effective in supporting BAME staff to progress, have also been included.

Scoping also involved a range of interviews with key stakeholders including:

- Private providers who deliver Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training and support
- BAME principals from across the sector
- Association of Employers and Learning Providers
- Association of Colleges Create
- Women's Leadership Network

Further discussions were held with various stakeholders engaged through the [Spring into Equalities Webinars](#).

3. Barriers for BAME staff and recommendations for the Foundation

- *There does not appear to be a clear framework which maps progression routes for staff in the sector.* A range of technical, vocational and academic training courses and programmes are available to middle managers in the sector, however, there does not appear to be a clear or comprehensive pathway for career progression within the sector and this is a barrier for staff thinking about promotion. Middle managers will need support in navigating their way to senior positions, within their own organisation and across the sector and **a framework which maps skills and expertise to senior roles could help staff to better plan their progression.**
- *BAME staff do not feel supported by senior management teams.* We don't need research to tell us that a lack of support from your seniors will hinder progression. It is therefore not surprising that 59% of BAME staff across Further and Higher education 'reported that senior colleagues and managers had not supported them in seeking to progress their career¹. BAME staff surveyed also felt that they did not always have access to the relevant information, which would allow them to pursue existing opportunities.

¹ UCU (2016) Experiences of Black and minority ethnic staff in further and higher education

This is a major challenge as it suggests that (white) senior leaders discriminate against BAME staff and whether this is knowingly or not, it will be difficult to address. **A whole organisation approach to tackling inequality which does not only focus on the training, skills or development needs of BAME staff would support a sustainable leadership pipeline for all staff.**

There also needs to more Equality, Diversity and Inclusion opportunities available via portals like ELMAG and the visibility of these opportunities could be enhanced.

- Possibly linked to the point above is the *organisational culture across the sector*. Many of those interviewed spoke of the culture of the Further Education sector and described it in varying tones as ‘white middle class’. Interestingly some felt that this was not a barrier as long as you could ‘speak the language’ implying a level of assimilation, whilst others felt that the prevailing culture was not accommodating of their own or other cultures.

Further research is needed to better understand how the culture within Further Education impacts on its staff and learners, and how negative impacts can be rectified.

- The universal plight across all sectors both private and public in times of austerity has been a *reduction in finance, funding and resources*. The situation is compounded for BAME staff who already get less than their fair share. The Foundation’s bursary scheme is an excellent example of supporting the development and progression of a more diverse work force; **any available EDI bursaries need to be more vigorously promoted to encourage greater take up. The aim to support more diverse leadership pipelines would also benefit from more prominence not only on the ELMAG portal but throughout the entire website and beyond.**
- *Intersectionality* describes how individuals may face discrimination based on two or more protected or otherwise distinguishing characteristics. The major challenge here for the sector is to recognise the complex nature of identity and

to move away from approaches which pigeon hole individuals into a single protected characteristic. Northern College have done some interesting work in this area using Thinking Environment processes to challenge untrue or limiting assumptions made about aspects of identity and about intersectionality.²

Many studies to date have focussed on the double jeopardy experienced by women from minority ethnic backgrounds and there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that this is the case in the FE and training sector; however, no major study has been carried out on the impact of intersectionality (across the nine protected characteristics) for staff in FE. **The introduction and roll out of the Equality Data Monitoring Tool will allow for better data collection, greater monitoring and more analysis of the occurrence and implications of intersectionality.**

- *Recruitment and selection practices across the sector play a key role in the unequal outcomes experienced by BAME staff.* There are a range of existing programmes which have been proven to have positive outcomes in challenging discriminatory recruitment practices which could be trialled in this sector including:
 - **Nameless application forms.** It has been noted that BAME applicants are sometimes ‘outed’ by their name especially when they do not have traditionally Eurocentric names; in the same way having qualifications or accreditation gained outside of the UK can also limit chances of being selected. **Removing the name requirement and perhaps even the requirement to give specific details of where qualifications have been achieved from the initial form could enhance the chances of BAME applicants being selected.**

² <http://www.equalitiestoolkit.com/content/identities-programme-northern-college-2015>

- **Using positive action/discrimination.** Equality and Human Rights Commission define Positive Action as³:

“the steps that an employer can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past track record of disadvantage or low participation to apply for jobs. An employer can use positive action where they reasonably think (in other words, on the basis of some evidence) that: people who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic; people who share a protected characteristic have needs that are different from the needs of people who do not share it or; participation in an activity by people who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.”

- **Having BAME staff on every interview selection panel.** Respondents have reported that having people of BAME origin on the interview panel can do two things: (1) it puts the interviewee at ease and (2) it adds a level of quality assurance to the panel.
- **Bespoke EDI training for HR and senior staff.** Where recruitment and selection processes continue to produce glaring disparities in the composition of staff in terms of ethnicity then it should go without saying that those responsible require some level of support to improve their practice. EDI training and support should go beyond raising awareness and should challenge individuals to review their own beliefs and practices and to identify and tackle discriminatory practice within their own organisation.

4. Tackling Inequality - current approaches

The National Health Service’s Equality and Diversity Council, announced in 2014, that it had agreed action to ensure BAME employees have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace. Not unlike the Education Sector, recent reports have highlighted disparities in the number of BAME staff in

³ <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/employment/applying-job/positive-action-and-recruitment>

senior leadership positions across the National Health Service (NHS). Additionally, reports also showed lower levels of wellbeing amongst BAME populations.

In response the Council developed the [Workforce Race Equality Standard \(WRES\)](#) which has been included in the 2015/16 Standard NHS Contracts, requiring organisations employing NHS staff to demonstrate progress against nine indicators of workforce equality. The standard compares metrics for white and BAME staff so that Trusts are able to identify and address gaps where they exist.

Most importantly the standard and use of the associated metrics are mandatory, in recognition of the failure of previous voluntary initiatives. Further, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), National Trust Development Agency (NTDA) and Monitor, will use both standards and metrics to help assess whether NHS organisations are well-led. These two things give the WRES its teeth: (a) it is mandatory and (b) the regulatory bodies for that sector have incorporated the WRES into their assessments.

It is still early days in terms of measuring the impact from the WRES programme; indeed, the very first monitoring reports from Trusts around the country were being analysed at the time of this project. Still the WRES demonstrates how public sectors can begin to comprehensively tackle inequality experienced by BAME staff. The Further Education and Training sector could benefit from a similar approach which would require:

- **Engaging all major stakeholders in the development of a new sector wide approach to tackling inequality in staffing structures, linked to funding, contracting, and inspection.**
- **Commissioning research which identifies the workforce race equality indicators and can inform the development of a race equality standard for the sector.**

The [National Initiative for Leadership and Empowerment \(NILE\)](#) Group is an independent consortium of staff organisations representing BAME professionals within the UK Criminal Justice System. NILE's current membership includes, The Association of Black Probation Staff (ABPO), The National Black Police Association

(NBPA) and RESPECT, the network for BAME staff in the Prison Service. Their broad aims are to:

- Empower BAME staff networks, employees and communities in their dealings with Criminal Justice agencies.
- Equip BAME networks, employees and communities to be knowledgeable and confident when dealing with Criminal Justice agencies.
- Enable BAME staff networks, employees and communities to hold Criminal Justice agencies to account.
- Enhance efforts to eliminate racial discrimination, advance racial equality and to foster good relations between people of different racial origins.

The NILE initiative was set up in 2014 and launched the Black Leadership and Empowerment Programme 2015 to provide training and development support for BAME staff. Whilst the impact from this work are not yet apparent, **further engagement with the NILE Group and other equalities networks, would open opportunities for the sharing of effective practice and a huge network of professionals with a lot of experience of equality, diversity and inclusion.**

In Higher Education the debate around EDI includes a focus on the curriculum as well as the staffing. The NUS [Why is my Curriculum White](#) campaign was launched in response to the lack of diversity in reading list and course content across HE provision, a growing percentage of which is provided by Further Education Colleges. Which raises the question of how diverse is the curriculum across the FE and training sector and how can the Foundation and other stakeholders continue to support more diverse and inclusive curriculums? This again would require **some research to identify any gaps in the curriculum and appropriate courses, materials and resource for a diverse curriculum.**

5. Tackling inequality in the private/social enterprise sector

For private enterprises tackling inequality has been more about ensuring a return on investment or the 'business case' than it is about being moralistic. More and more

private organisations are recognising the benefits of having diverse leadership and staffing teams and are co-opting the support of consultancy organisations like the [Bath Consultancy Group](#) (and their subsidiary Blessing White) and the [Equality Academy](#) to help them tackle inequality where it exists. These and similar organisations can provide nuanced development and organisational change support through the delivery of a range of in-house schemes like leadership and talent development; leadership and executive coaching; HR consultancy; teaming; setting up networks/diversity circles; and specific skills development workshops.

The Leading with Inclusion suite of support delivered by [Blessing White](#) is a good example of how organisations can work closely with their clients to develop fit for purpose interventions. The suite is comprised of four training sessions: Inclusive Leadership, Building Inclusive Teams, Leveraging Difference and Communicating Inclusively. Not yet tested in the public sector this approach has been successful in the private sector helping organisations to increase innovation, improve the return on equity, and to improve levels of engagement and productivity.

Similarly, the Equality Academy runs an Inclusive Leaders Masterclass focussing on:

- Diversity literacy' as personal and professional development
- A strategic view of equality, diversity and inclusion, and how to promote them in your organisation
- A three-level systemic approach, which addresses explicit objectives and hidden dynamics, and builds confidence in a deeper wisdom
- Progress across 8 areas for strategic action based upon up-to-date international business research
- An understanding of how to manage unconscious factors, including bias - your own, your colleagues', and organisationally.

This approach has real currency in supporting organisational change as it targets senior leaders and executives including HR professionals and through the residential delivery gives staff time and space to properly explore what the issues are for them and their setting and how to effectively address them. Unlike other conventional EDI

courses, this approach to EDI does not focus on legislation and political correctness, but goes deeper challenging participants to address their own biases (conscious and unconscious).

6. *Moving up the ladder*

Each institution across the Further Education and Training sector is set up differently with varying levels of middle and senior managers and with each role being specific to the needs of the institution. Some colleges have very small senior leadership teams where staff also have additional teaching and non-teaching responsibilities; other colleges have large leadership teams with more defined roles. The route from middle to senior manager is linked more to experience and expertise than it is to particular accreditations or qualifications. It also helps if there are opportunities for staff to progress within the organisation. The research looked at various job descriptions for senior staff roles and found that generally, senior leaders require the following skills/attributes:

- *Business acumen* or the ability to manage the setting as a business and being able to evidence good financial, accounting, marketing and operational management.
- *Cross organisational experience*. Senior managers are expected to have an understanding of how the whole organisation runs and experience of working in different departments.
- *Able to communicate effectively with a range of audiences*. This includes but is not limited to being able to engage private enterprise, policy makers and members of the board, members of the community, staff and learners.
- *Technical/Professional skills*. Some respondents also spoke of specific technical requirements and professional accreditations needed for specialist post like finance, ICT and HR.
- *Leadership skills*. Broadly speaking, these include the ability to think strategically, to empower people, to be responsive and to make a positive difference.

The following table looks at the existing offer (as available through ELMAG) from a small group of providers and where possible matches it with the skills requirements laid out above. The table also looks at where there might be gaps.

Skills/Expertise	Current CPD Opportunities⁴	Suggestions for CPD
Business acumen and Leadership skills	<p>Realise Network and ETF Building Resilience webinars and Educators Management Programme</p> <p>UCL - Applied Education Leadership and Management MA</p> <p>AoC - Senior Leadership management Development Programme</p> <p>AoC Leadership and Management Skills for new and aspiring college managers</p> <p>UCL Educational Leadership (International) MBA</p> <p>ETF and Peterborough College - Leading beyond the organisation: a systems leadership approach</p> <p>ETF and EaSI – Strategic Partnerships</p>	<p>A mentoring/shadowing programme for aspiring middle managers</p> <p>Work placements/Secondment</p> <p>A Reverse Mentoring programme</p> <p>Coaching for middle managers</p> <p>Greater range of technical courses for middle managers need to be available via ELMAG</p> <p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training and support</p> <p>Whole Organisation programme/tool/resources</p> <p>Access to tailored support</p>
Cross organisational experience	No current CPD identified	
Communication skills	No current CPD identified	
Technical /professional skills	ETF and Coralesce - Level 5 Digital Leadership	

⁴ The courses listed may no longer be showing on ELMAG at the time of publication of this report.

As the table suggests there are some gaps in terms of training and development support and what is available is not currently coordinated into a comprehensive offer. Further these opportunities focus on the ‘individual’ and not the ‘organisation’ and therefore cannot address issues like organisational culture or practices. The suggestions for CPD column presents general recommendations which should inform the Invitation to tender.

7. Conclusion

The research highlights a range of approaches which could be helpful in supporting BAME staff but has not revealed any miracle programmes which would ensure their progress or promotion. Moreover, training and/or skills gaps within the workforce, are not perceived to be the main barriers for BAME staff. There are wider concerns around the lack of clear pathways of progression for staff, the prevailing culture within the sector, recruitment and selection practices which are proving unhelpful as well as undertones of discrimination and racism which need addressing.

The recommendations within the report are for the consideration of the Foundation and other stakeholders including funders, policy makers, providers and regulators. Some of the suggestions will be more relevant to any forthcoming Invitation to Tender and others will require the engagement of a wider group of stakeholders.

8. Recommendations Summary:

General

A framework which maps skill and expertise to senior roles could help middle managers to better plan their progression. This would require a more comprehensive review of the requirements of senior roles in the sector.

A whole organisation approach to implementing the leadership pipeline which does not only focus on the training, skills or development needs of BAME staff would support a sustainable leadership pipeline for all staff. A whole organisation approach would outline the roles and responsibilities of each department, group and individual in relation to the leadership pipeline, making it a collective responsibility.

Recommendations for aspiring/middle managers:

Coaching for middle managers could support them in achieving specific skills and competencies like improved communication skills.

Work placements/Secondment opportunities both within and external to the sector as part of a wider programme of leadership support. These opportunities have been proven to develop skills and expertise.

Greater range of technical/professional courses for middle managers need to be available via ELMAG.

Recommendations for senior leaders/executives/non executives:

There also needs to more Equality, Diversity and Inclusion opportunities available via portals like ELMAG and the visibility of these opportunities could be enhanced. Some of the approaches available in the private/social enterprise sector could be made more widely available to further education colleges and training institutions.

Access to tailored support. As each setting is unique, it will be necessary to ensure that whatever programme is provided can be tailored to meet the needs of individual organisations and adaptable to differing situations.

Recommendations for the Foundation and wider stakeholders

Any available EDI bursaries need to be more vigorously promoted to encourage greater take up. The aim to support more diverse leadership pipelines would also benefit from more prominence not only on the ELMAG portal but throughout the entire website and through other forms of social media (facebook, twitter, blogs etc.)

Further research is needed to better understand how the culture within Further Education impacts on its staff and learners, and how negative impacts can be rectified.

Research to identify any gaps in the curriculum and appropriate courses, materials and resource for a diverse curriculum.

Nameless application forms. Removing the name requirement and perhaps even the requirement to give specific details of where qualifications have been achieved from the initial form could enhance the chances of BAME applicants being selected.

Having BAME staff on every interview selection panel. Respondents have reported that having BAME people on the panel can do two things: it could put the interviewee at ease and it adds a level of quality assurance to the panel.

Positive action/discrimination *is the steps that an employer can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past track record of disadvantage or low participation to apply for jobs. An employer can use positive action where they reasonably think (in other words, on the basis of some evidence) that: people who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic; people who share a protected characteristic have needs that are different from the needs of people who do not share it or; participation in an activity by people who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.*

Bespoke EDI training for HR and senior staff. Where recruitment and selection processes continue to produce glaring disparities in the composition of staff in terms of ethnicity then it should go without saying that those responsible require some level of support to improve their practice.

Engaging all major stakeholders in the development of a new sector wide approach to tackling inequality in staffing structures, linked to funding, contracting, and inspection. The Foundation could take a lead in bringing a forum together or presenting the agenda to existing forums.

Commissioning research which identifies the workforce race equality indicators and can inform the development of a race equality standard for the sector. Again this could part of a collective response and commissioning should be supported by range of stakeholders

Further engagement with the NILE Group and similar forums would open opportunities for the sharing of effective practice and a huge network of professionals with a lot of experience of equality, diversity and inclusion.

9. References

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10. Websites

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<http://www.aelp.org.uk/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/gov/equality-hub/equality-standard/>

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<https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/>

<http://www.equalitiestoolkit.com/>

<http://blessingwhite.com/>

<http://www.bathconsultancygroup.com/#>

<http://www.pearnkandola.com/>

<http://blackofrespect.co.uk/>

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/why-my-professor-still-not-black>

11. Interview List

Andy Forbes, Principal, College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London

Anthony Bravo, Principal, Basingstoke College of Technology

Conrad Reid, Secretariat RESPECT, member organisation of NILE

Jatinder Sharma, Principal, Walsal college

Jonathan Heath, Director, The Equality Academy

Kathryn James, WLN Consultant

Margaret Adjaye, EDI Consultant

Mike Cox, Operations Director, AELP

Nav Chohan, Principal, Shipley College

Rajinder Mann former CEO Black Leadership Initiative

Razia Aziz Director, The Equality Academy

Robin Ghurburun, Principal, Richmond Upon Thames College

Sian Harris, AoC Create

Stephen Ramkissun, Head of Marketing and Membership, AELP

Suzanne Overton Edwards, Principal, Gateway 6FC

Yvonne Coghill, Director, Workforce Race Equality Standard