

Curriculum Enhancement Internships Project Report Form: Decolonising the curriculum audit

Please use the headings and guidance below to report on your Curriculum Enhancement Internship: Curriculum Audit.

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School/Service	School of Sport & Exercise Science
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Project Team	Dr Lee Graves Dr David Tod Ms Cath Walker Ms Milly Blundell Dr Ian Sadler
Programmes	BSc Sport & Exercise Science BSc Sport Psychology BSc Sport Coaching
Audit Process	<p>A colonial curriculum is an inaccurate curriculum, characterized by an unrepresentative, inaccessible, and privileged nature. Decolonising the curriculum is about being more accurate, more inclusive, and more interculturally responsive. It is not about forcing one ideological perspective on students.</p> <p>Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an increasingly important focus for our School. We recognize that to truly embed EDI into the fabric of what we do, we need to focus our curriculum. The curriculum is, truly, the heart of our School and involves everyone; all our staff and students. As a project team, we agreed very quickly that this needs to be considered in three ways- i) what we teach, ii) how we teach and iii) how we assess.</p> <p>Tools/techniques to review curriculum and pedagogy</p> <p>Firstly, the student interns, together with the project team, co-designed a detailed audit tool to review three undergraduate programmes (see above) in the School of Sport & Exercise Science. This tool was designed to review module aims and learning outcomes, learning materials, assessments, and representation. However, following some pilot work it became apparent that due to the time restraints of the internship, this detailed tool would not be used across all modules and thus we made the decision to utilise this tool for all Level 4 modules and conduct a broader review of Level 5 and 6 modules. Our hope is for this work to directly inform current revalidation work, therefore it seemed more</p>

pertinent to employ this more detailed tool at Level 4, as the first content that will be delivered from these newly validated programmes. Based on what we learn from this, our aspiration is to apply this to levels 5 & 6 of the new programme in due course.

Detailed audit tool

The more detailed tool involved reviewing every lecture within each of the L4 modules to assess;

1. How many of the module staff and guest speakers were BAME, and how many were women?
2. How many images used in lecture slides were of BAME individuals, women and/or disabled people?
3. How many written case study examples included BAME individuals, women and/or disabled people?

Broader audit tool

For Levels 5 & 6, select information was reviewed from the key information section on each of the module's canvas homepage for any explicit EDI content and each module was scored between 1-5 (1 being satisfactory-5 very unsatisfactory) for inclusion of EDI content. The information reviewed included;

1. Aims
2. Learning outcomes
3. Assessments
4. Outline syllabus
5. Learning activities
6. Total delivered learning hours
7. Reading lists

Focus groups and interviews

On reviewing these audit findings, we acknowledged the importance of providing further context and a more detailed understanding regarding the complexities associated with integrating EDI into the curriculum in Sport and Exercise Science.

As a team we identified five key stakeholder groups which included;

1. Sport & Exercise Science module team
2. Sport Psychology module team
3. Sport Coaching module team
4. Managerial staff (Eg. Subject leaders and director of school)
5. Students from all three programmes

A focus group and interview guide was developed, informed by the objective audit results. This ensured consistency of topics discussed with all stakeholder groups.

1. General understanding of EDI
2. Representation
3. Diversity in learning
4. Challenges and barriers
5. Revalidation process

	<p><u>Module leader feedback</u></p> <p>The project team designed an excel document to be populated by module leaders who teach across the three undergraduate programmes. This excel document asked teaching staff to provide a brief description of current opportunities for the following aspects of decolonising the curriculum in their module content;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversifying the curriculum 2. Critical thinking 3. Discussing perspectives 4. Historical context 5. Bias, in real World outcomes 6. Active learning 7. Assessments <p>This enabled the team to contrast staff perspectives with the findings from the audit and thus assess understanding of EDI principles in teaching and decolonisation of the curriculum. As a side, it also provided teaching staff with an opportunity for reflection and consideration of this in relation to their modules.</p> <p>The role and benefit of student interns</p> <p>Importantly, this project was “student driven”, in the truest sense; the interns employed fierce peer support and were enthusiastically supported by staff. Their perspective and engagement in this project were exemplary and the interns should be credited with the novelty, volume and quality of work that has been produced.</p> <p>The benefits and challenges of the approach and tools used</p> <p>Initially, we took inspiration from the tools developed by our colleague, Ross Dawson (English). However, it became apparent very quickly that we would need to come together to design more bespoke tools to suit our programmes.</p> <p>Development of new tools was a significant time investment. However, this enabled thorough appraisal of our curricula from numerous perspectives through the audit, focus groups and interviews and, lastly, through the module leader information gathering exercise. This included;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student facing perspective (audit tools) 2. Staff perspectives; from teaching staff to programme and subject leaders (focus groups and interviews) 3. Student perspectives (focus groups and interviews) 4. An opportunity for consideration & reflection (module leader information gathering)
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p><u>Good Practice</u></p> <p>Firstly, we acknowledge some good practice that was identified during our curriculum audit process.</p> <p>Specific EDI content was highlighted in some modules. Specifically, these included content that provided students with insights into working with minority groups in sport (including disabled individuals). One excellent seminar activity asked for students to reflect on their own personal and</p>

professional development while considering socio-contextual influences within their experience. This activity enabled self-reflection, discussions and peer learning around positioning in sport with examples including inclusivity and accessibility.

General Findings

Our primary finding, perhaps unsurprisingly, was that the undergraduate courses that were audited exhibited minimal content relating to, or consideration of, ethnic diversity.

As a team, we have discussed the notion of 'creation of an inclusive curriculum', as opposed to 'decolonisation of the curriculum', to improve the experience, skills, and attainment of all students, especially those in protected characteristic groups, by ensuring that all students, are able to fully participate and achieve at equal rates. This approach is very much aimed at reducing attainment gaps, such as the well proven 'BAME attainment gap', within the university by enabling all students to relate to and engage with academic material and assessments. This requires a diversification of module/programme design, delivery, and assessments. Whilst not specifically relating to the curriculum it also requires more diverse role models (including BAME individuals, women, members of the LGBTQ+ community and disabled people, plus intersectional representation) within academia itself.

By adopting this approach/philosophy, we interrogated the data from our audit tools and interviews/focus groups and identified several emerging themes.

Emerging Themes

1. Staff and speaker diversity

We identified a lack of diversity amongst teaching staff and guest speakers (in terms of gender, ethnic diversity, and disability).

2. Protected characteristics

We identified a lack of content explicitly relating to individuals who may identify as a minority group in sport and a lack of diversity amongst images and case study examples.

3. Learning resources

We identified a lack of diversity amongst resources to cater for those with different learning styles and needs. The most common resource identified was journal articles and book chapters.

We identified potential challenges for students associated with canvas; these were both voiced in focus groups and apparent from the audit findings. For example, we identified a lack of consistency between proformas and key information listed on canvas pages.

Lastly, students described feeling disconcerted at the lack of visuals on canvas landing pages such as a photo of and contact details for their module leader and the wider teaching staff.

4. Syllabus

EDI is not incorporated into any learning outcomes or module aims.

5. Challenges

	<p>Staff expressed insufficient knowledge, awareness, and confidence around EDI in the curriculum and thus did not feel empowered to make changes they recognized as important.</p> <p>There was an apparent lack of subject lead direction/communication regarding EDI expectations in the curriculum and in teaching practice. Given the staff feedback, we must consider that this may be due to subject heads sharing a lack of confidence/knowledge of this area and thus feel hesitant to advise.</p> <p>Dissimilar values amongst staff members regarding the importance of EDI and how it should be incorporated into the curriculum were identified. Overall, there was not universal buy in from all staff members.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Having undertaken this audit, do you have any recommendations to inform institutional priorities and activity in relation to decolonisation or the wider theme of equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>In relation to the themes identified; the team have listed some preliminary recommendations below, however analysis of this data is still ongoing.</p> <p><i>1. Staff and speaker diversity</i></p> <p>Due to the lack of diversity amongst current SPS staff, and the desire to not disproportionately allocate workload to staff who are from protected characteristic groups, we recommend that staff carefully consider external speakers, and utilize the opportunity to provide students with diverse role models.</p> <p><i>2. Protected characteristics</i></p> <p>The team recommends diversification of lecture content in the form of imagery and case study examples to include individuals from protected characteristic groups.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Sport England provides a free and accessible photo bank, which could be used to diversify imagery. ii. An EDI checklist will be developed as a resource for all staff. We acknowledge that this will not aid in abating the root-cause of a colonial curriculum but will help staff who are time limited but want to make a conscious effort to incorporate EDI into their teaching practices iii. In this resource, the team plan to include a series of self-reflective questions in an attempt to encourage self-awareness. <p><i>3. Learning resources</i></p> <p>We recommend the diversification of self-directed learning materials and specifically recommend the inclusion of podcasts, YouTube videos, documentaries and blogs. This recommendation would have two distinct benefits; i. to cater for different learning styles and thus promote inclusivity and ii. An additional opportunity to display inspirational and diverse figures to our students.</p> <p>To ensure inclusivity, we recommend that all module landing pages include a photograph and full contact details for module leaders and</p>

	<p>associated teaching staff. Furthermore, the development of a ‘universal canvas template’ that considered inclusivity.</p> <p><i>4. Syllabus</i></p> <p>Syllabus change will be the result of sustainable and progressive change over time. This project is the first step our School is taking and is creating an honest and considered self-assessment of our curricula in relation to EDI, and the consideration particularly to ethnicity. The team are currently supporting the revalidation of five undergraduate programmes and utilizing these findings to diversity our curriculum and promote inclusion. With conscious and considered design, we aspire to implement module and programme level aims and learning outcomes to all of our programmes that relate to EDI. Furthermore, we will clearly map these to module learning outcomes in order to fully embed EDI as part of the subject specific content. This recommendation will support the endorsement of our programmes to the BASES undergraduate endorsement scheme, which requires students to <i>"be able to self-reflect on academic, professional and personal attributes... [including criteria 5.1.4] Equality, diversity & inclusion"</i>.</p> <p><i>5. Challenges</i></p> <p>It is clear that there is a need for provision of EDI related training and/or interactive workshops. We suggest that these are embedded locally, for example in away days or staff forums to maximise engagement from staff.</p> <p>We would encourage critical conversations in a clear/transparent manner. As a team, we will initiate this aim by a series of feedback activities that we have planned over the coming months. This includes, i. a pre-recorded presentation from our student interns for all staff; ii. Whole school feedback at a staff forum, followed by Q&A and breakout group activities, with the opportunity for feedback and, iii) attendance from team members to programme team meetings.</p> <p>Moreover, we hope that the provision of these activities facilitates elevated consciousness and self-awareness amongst colleagues which, in turn, will promote more empathetic delivery to those with different characteristics and identities.</p>
<p>Cultivating collaborative activity online</p>	<p>As a School, we had never engaged in a project like this before and as such the staff project team were learning through action. We employed a very honest approach with our student interns and established from the outset of this project a team approach. Specifically, we ascribed to an ethos whereby all members of this project team were equal; every opinion or thought was valued, and we actively listened and learned from one another. As stated earlier in this report, this project was “student driven”, and our interns added incalculable value to this project in terms of their perspectives, ideas, passion and efforts.</p> <p>We managed our collaborative activity through an MS Team for resource sharing and communication. We set up a recurring weekly meeting throughout the duration of this project; for which at least one member of staff was present (most weeks all were present). These meetings enabled the whole team to keep discussions active and influence the</p>

	<p>evolution of the project, as well as ensuring that the interns were adequately supported.</p>
<p>Next Steps Future Developments, including plans for further evaluation and dissemination</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outline any potential for the curriculum audit to be further developed 2. What plans do you have for further activity, evaluation and dissemination? <p>Ultimately, this is one project of many within the School of Sport and Exercise Science which, we hope, will contribute to real and meaningful cultural change. Culture change is a complex and timely process that requires complete buy in and engagement. We have broken this down into short, medium and long term aims;</p> <p><u>Short</u> Develop a pre-recorded presentation outlining the process we have undergone and broad observations and recommendations. This will reach all staff in the school and generate thought about how EDI might be incorporated into modules immediately (this academic year).</p> <p><u>Medium</u> Wider feedback on the audit will be completed when all data have been analysed. This will include attendance at programme team meetings which will include more detailed and specific feedback as well as facilitated discussion by members of the curriculum audit team.</p> <p><u>Long</u> An EDI enhancement theme has been created to inform the curricula in our school. Currently this has a specific focus on a large portfolio of revalidation work ($n=5$ undergraduate programmes). This work will empower programme staff to design more inclusive curricula underpinned by programme and module level learning outcomes related to EDI and thus sustainably embed EDI into the curricula.</p> <p>Senior management will also seek to support training opportunities to empower staff to make these important changes.</p> <p>Long term, the project team have discussed the creation of an expert statement on <i>the creation of inclusive curricula in SPS</i>, to be submitted to the British Association of Sport & Exercise Science (National governing body for sport and exercise science in the UK).</p>