

# Activism and Academia

Lisa Shoko

Decolonise the University of Kent (DUoK)

Master's Researcher : Tensions of (Un)Belonging in Higher Education

# Decolonise the Curriculum at the University of Kent

Created by students and staff of colour on campus

Empowered students to start thinking of themselves as capable of contributing to the academy

Encouraged students to become innovative in their learning and the confidence to take academic risks in their writing assignments

Created the Kaleidoscope Hub, Readings Lists, Kaleidoscope Network and BAME Network

Award Winning for their 'Contribution to Equality and Diversity' at the University



# Decolonise UoK Manifesto

- Pedagogy and Powerful Learning Experiences
- Race, Identity & Belonging: Promoting Inclusion/Countering Exclusion
- Student Voice & Co-production with academics: Stakeholders within the University

<https://decoloniseukc.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/decolonising-the-curriculum-manifesto-final-2.pdf>

# Decolonise UoK Manifesto

“I do not want to speak up in class because I do not want to be that one brown kid who talks. It feels like seminar leaders are more social with students that look like them.”

## “My whole time at this university, I have been alienated”.

“I don’t use student support because there isn’t anyone who can fully understand me or my situation”.

“In order to fit in, I felt like I had to compromise my beliefs. I had to change the way I dress, the way I speak, even what I say”.

“The University is a community and so it needs to act for the voices that are not adequately heard. Students are not interested in tokenism but being full citizens at the University”.

<https://decoloniseukc.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/decolonising-the-curriculum-manifesto-final-2.pdf>



Decolonising the Curriculum:  
revolutionary project to empower BAME students inspires chain reaction of events

6 June 2019

Decolonising the Curriculum Project Manifesto presented to Speaker of the House of Commons

13 June 2019



## Building the Anti-Racist Classroom at Kent

Postgraduate Community Experience Award

Join this interactive workshop for students and staff facilitated by Building the Anti-Racist Classroom (BARC), an international collective of women of colour academics, in collaboration with Decolonise UK.

This free workshop will provide a forum for people of colour and white allies to discuss and develop interventions that address racial discrimination and inequalities in higher education through participative activities that centre the voices and knowledge of students



# Afro-Diasporic Legal Network Demands

@kent\_students

- 1. We demand,** that a short and long term strategy be implemented that enhances political discourse and political education on both the Canterbury and Medway campuses.
- 2. We demand,** that a campus wide initiative be undertaken to develop anti-oppression initiatives, trainings, and facilitations.
- 3. We demand,** a solidarity statement that makes explicit the acknowledgement of whiteness, white supremacy, systemic racism, and racial violence on campus. This statement should also publicly condemn acts of systemic racial violence and over-policing (from any institutional or policing body on campus).
- 4. We demand,** that funding be allocated in the form of a specific student levy fund dedicated to BME collectives and societies. This levy will be used to resource projects, programming, and supports that are alternative to institutional support and necessary to their members.
- 5. We demand,** that the extent of executive authority of campus security be clarified and made transparent to the student body.
- 6. We demand,** that the accommodation agreement that students sign discontinues its practice of carding students that disproportionately targets BME students.
- 7. We demand,** a forum that is reimagined, that could serve the purpose of facilitating the reporting of discrimination on campus.
- 8. We demand,** that those in positions of institutional power do the work to understand the history of Blackness, Black movements, and black student organizing that can inform any additional structural changes.
- 9. We demand,** the implementation of a physical BME student space that can be used for BME societies and collectives as a student community service hub.
- 10. We demand,** the immediate hire of BME Counsellors within Student Support and Wellbeing that can facilitate their weekly drop-in sessions for BME students.

<https://medium.com/@afrodiasporiclegallnetwork/bme-societies-submit-a-statement-of-solidarity-demands-to-the-university-of-kent-a353c351e9df>



# Afro-Diasporic Legal Network Demands

@kent\_students

- Mentorship for Black Students studying Law
- Campus Security and the issue of over policing
- Accommodation Agreement

<https://medium.com/@afrodiasporiclegalnetwork/bme-societies-submit-a-statement-of-solidarity-demands-to-the-university-of-kent-a353c351e9df>

The image features a white background with two teal-colored geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large teal trapezoid that tapers towards the right. On the right side, there is a smaller teal triangle that tapers towards the left. The text 'Q & A' is centered between these two shapes.

Q & A

The image features a white background with two teal-colored geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large teal trapezoid that tapers to a point on its right side. On the right, there is a smaller teal triangle that tapers to a point on its left side. The text is centered between these two shapes.

“Searching for Belonging:  
Institutional Racism and the  
“Silent Crisis” in Higher  
Education.

# Student Experiences at UoK

- “Racial Micro-aggressions are everyday slights and degradations as opposed to direct racism. They can seem innocuous in isolation but cumulative experiences of these microaggressions can impact the well-being and life chances of minoritised people”.
- “Spaces like the library and some societies” are not safe for visibly Muslim women.
- Kimberle Crenshaw talks about the “skid marks” that the accident makes at the junction of our identities and when you analyse the skid marks, you cannot tell which car did what from which road.

- *Decolonising the University: A Kaleidoscope for Empowered Action* (Counterpress, Oct 2020).  
<https://counterpress.org.uk/publications/towards-decolonising-the-university/>
- Decolonise UoK Manifesto, Principles & Conferences Footage:  
<https://research.kent.ac.uk/sergj/kaleidoscope-network-decolonising-the-university/>
- Afro-Diasporic Legal Network  
<https://medium.com/@afrodiasporiclegalnetwork/bme-societies-submit-a-statement-of-solidarity-demands-to-the-university-of-kent-a353c351e9df>
- Jivraj, S (2020) Towards Anti-racist Legal Pedagogy: A Resource  
<https://research.kent.ac.uk/decolonising-law-schools>
- Decolonising SOAS Learning and Teaching Toolkit  
<https://blogs.soas.ac.uk/decolonisingsoas/files/2018/10/Decolonising-SOAS-Learning-and-Teaching-Toolkit-AB.pdf>
- Decolonising the Curriculum Toolkit  
<http://cti.westminster.ac.uk/decolonising-the-curriculum-toolkit/>

## Resources

The image features a white background with two teal-colored geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large teal trapezoid that tapers towards the right. On the right side, there is a smaller teal triangle that tapers towards the left. The text 'Q & A' is centered between these two shapes.

Q & A