

## 'We have the framework, now we need the commitment,' delegates told

A diverse, competent workforce was vital and now that a framework had been put in place, the next step was commitment, said Rajinder Mann, Vice-chair of the Network for Black Managers. Welcoming the positive responses from the government and the Learning and Skills Council, Ms Mann said she was encouraged by the inclusivity of consultation.

She highlighted the fact that there was now ample material to help colleges make headway on equality. 'We must

acknowledge that the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the Learning and Skills guidance and the Commission's recommendations, provide colleges with a comprehensive toolkit to take the agenda forward,' she claimed. Beacon colleges of excellence would 'light the path for others to follow.'

She was also pleased to announce that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) was establishing an initiative offering discrete training for potential Black managers early next year (see Inspector training for Black applicants on this page) and hoped the Department for Education and Skills would consider working in partnership with the Network for Black Managers.

'I hope this will be the start of real change,' she added. 'I'm confident we will see a difference.'



The panel left to right: Sam Allen, Phil Barnett, Avril Willis, Dame Lorna Borland-Kelly, David Gibson, Josephine Ocloo, Joel Whittle

### Defining terms

The Commission's definition of the term 'Black' includes members of African, African Caribbean, Asian and other visible minority ethnic communities who may face racism. However, the Commission is conscious that the debate on terminology is not static.

## Inspector training for Black applicants

The Post Compulsory Education Division of Ofsted is responsible for inspecting all sixth form, tertiary, general further education and specialist colleges. Ofsted works alongside the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

Ofsted wishes to take positive action to increase the number of additional inspectors from African, African Caribbean, Asian and other visible ethnic communities. The Post Compulsory Division intends to provide training and encouragement for such people to apply for posts as additional inspectors. Experience as an additional inspector offers curriculum managers and co-ordinators an opportunity to help monitor and improve

educational standards and to gain unique professional experience working with Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Working with the Network for Black managers in further education, Ofsted would like to announce that applications for selection and training would be welcomed from Black managers and curriculum specialists who feel that they have the relevant qualifications and experience.

#### You would need:

- experience as a successful specialist in a curriculum area
- up-to-date knowledge of teaching in a curriculum area in further education
- experience at middle or senior management level

in further education

- experience of effectively monitoring and reporting on quality standards
- the ability to:
  - provide clear oral feedback in an appropriate context
  - write reports clearly and concisely following a precise brief
  - work alone as well as part of a team
  - analyse and interpret complex information quickly and accurately
  - make accurate judgements based on evidence
  - meet deadlines and work well under pressure
  - good IT skills, including experience of word-processing.

If you are interested in applying write to: OFSTED Personnel Management Division, Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE. We will hold your details until positions are advertised in September and then application packs will be sent out. Successful applicants will be invited to a training and assessment event on 15 and 16 January 2003.

#### Voice from the floor

**'The message I'll take back from this conference is that as a Black person I need to get more involved.'**

Harriet Agard, Southwark College



# Black Staff Commission

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## Tackling race issues in further education

### An agenda for action

The Commission for Black Staff in Further Education launched its report into discrimination in the sector at a conference held at Banqueting House in Whitehall, London, in July. Delegates listened to contributions from Ivan Lewis, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Adult Learning and Skills, and Avril Willis, Director of Quality and Standards at the Learning and Skills Council. Commission Chair, Mike Peters, presented the Commission's findings and a panel involving Sam Allen (Loughborough College), Phil Barnett (Learning and Skills Council), David Gibson (Association of Colleges), Robin Landman (Network for Black Managers), Dame Lorna Boreland-Kelly (Lambeth College), Joel Whittle (St Helen's College) and Josephine Ocloo (Commission for Black Staff in Further Education) led a heated debate. Chaired by the event between them were Wally Brown, Liverpool Community College, Paul Mackney, NATFHE, and Chrissie Farley, Hackney Community College, while Rajinder Mann, Network for Black Managers, provided the summing up.

This special report launch issue looks at some of the main areas discussed and highlights the key findings of the report. Selected speakers' notes and the Commission's summary report are available on [www.feonline.net](http://www.feonline.net), the news, information and services site for the Association of Colleges and the further education sector.

## A time to get to grips with racism, says Ivan Lewis MP



*'It takes a certain kind of courage to say there's something wrong with the status quo and it's time to change,' said Ivan Lewis, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Adult Learning and Skills. 'The Commission represents a lot of effort of a lot of people. It comes from the only education sector to date to have reviewed the working situation for its Black staff.'*

He told conference that the Commission's recommendations demonstrated that 'you don't always get a favourable answer when you ask difficult questions.' Nevertheless, the sector was voluntarily getting to grips with the impact of racism on the working lives of Black staff and the organisations in which they worked.

'Put simply, we should not discriminate. We should not tolerate discrimination from others. We should not accept that our systems are fixed or cannot be improved to ensure they give everyone an equal chance.'

### Government's commitment

The work that government had carried out to tackle discrimination, claimed Mr Lewis, focused not only on the new Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which placed a duty on further education colleges to monitor the ethnicity of their staff and learners, but also on requirements for the Learning and Skills Council to publish information on ethnicity as part of the annual review process of its equality and diversity measures.

The government was also committed to implementing the European Union Article 13 Employment and Race Directives by 2006, outlawing discrimination in employment and

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## Action points for further education

The report outlines a number of areas that sector organisations should be addressing. These include:

- providing clear **leadership** and commitment to promoting race equality
- developing a **race equality policy and an action plan** through consultation with minority interest groups within the college and with trade unions
- ensuring governors, managers, staff and learners understand their responsibility to **be accountable** for promoting race equality
- **mainstreaming** the college's race equality policy and action plan into its strategic plan, with individual departments developing their own race equality plans
- establishing **targets** for race equality using key benchmarks, such as the size of the local and national minority ethnic populations and the college's student profile
- using positive multi-cultural images in **marketing** materials
- putting in place an **ethnic monitoring** system
- providing facilities and services to meet the needs of minority ethnic groups through a **positive action** programme
- establishing mechanisms for **reviewing and evaluating** policy and progress.

← *continued from page 1*

vocational training on the grounds of race, sexual orientation, religion and belief, disability and age.

In addition, Secretary of State, Estelle Morris, had announced a strategy for reforming further education and training. Mr Lewis commented, 'We want the sector's help in shaping that strategy further. We want to improve standards and teaching in colleges, to reform learning, to meet employers' needs, and to create more choice for learners.' A more diverse sector workforce was part of the solution.

**Leadership college**

The government's proposed 'leadership college', due to open next year, would address some of the key issues, particularly professional development and support programmes for senior managers and those aspiring to become senior managers, including specific modules on equal opportunities. The new college would also be expected to work with the Commission and other partners and to offer specific programmes for Black middle managers.

**Steering group of key stakeholders**

Mr Lewis told conference, 'We will take joint responsibility with the LSC to ensure the Commission's recommendations are implemented by 2004. However, government and the Learning and Skills Council can't do it all on our own. We need a partnership approach, building on the expertise of the Commission.' This partnership, he said, would take the form of a steering group of key stakeholders, who would look at actions taken.

'Today is a wake-up call. Once we've heard it, we can have no excuses for failing to act.'

**Voice from the floor**

**'I thought this was a very progressive meeting which could be a landmark for change. There's also a level of expectancy and I think this will encourage Black staff to go for things.'**

*Ian Lewinson, Hackney Community College*

**Prioritising equality: a view from the Learning and Skills Council**

The Commission's report would be used as a key tool to promote equality, said Avril Willis, Director of Quality and Standards at the Learning and Skills Council. It would, she claimed, provide the impetus for change across the sector.

The Learning and Skills Council, which had published its race equality scheme, was keen to provide the best possible service to learners, which meant having the best possible staff: 'Staff need to be drawn from the widest pool of applicants. We can't ignore talent wherever we find it,' she told conference.

There was still a lot to be achieved. The new leadership college would need to take steps and the Standards Fund had a vital role to play. In addition, a pilot mentoring scheme was being established to support the professional development of Black staff and further activities would be developed, claimed Ms Willis.

Highlighting the disparity between the number of known Black students (365,000) and the number of Black staff (13,000) across 85 per cent of colleges, Ms Willis commented, 'Black learners make great use of further education. The profile of Black learners will be monitored. It's not acceptable that the



*Avril Willis with LSC colleague Phil Barnett only Black people they may encounter are auxiliary staff. We want to see a racially diverse teaching force right across the country.'*

She also announced a range of mechanisms to address inequality, including diversity impact measures for learners and employment targets. The council also wanted to see 11 Black principals in the sector by 2009. 'This is a modest figure, but it is a challenging increase. Let's publicise it as a sector goal. We must "grow" the principals we want to see,' she stated.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act meant that colleges now had a duty to have a policy and carry out an annual ethnic analysis of teaching staff. This information should be used to identify inequalities in the staff and learner profile. The new Act should be used 'as a driver for change and development,' she concluded.

**Delegates' questions answered**

- Q.** What do you think about positive action and positive discrimination?
- A.** Black staff don't want positive discrimination, they want equal treatment. Black middle and senior managers are under-represented. We should ensure that every institution is aware of discrimination. We want people to realise there's a problem. We have committed ourselves today to implement the Commission's recommendations by 2004. *(Ivan Lewis)*
- Q.** What kind of penalties will the government introduce if colleges don't play the game? There has to be a timescale.
- A.** My style isn't to do with penalties. Our starting point is to persuade people that it's not just about fulfilling potential but about quality. If in 2004, we've made no progress, we'll talk about penalties. *(Ivan Lewis)*
- Q.** We've talked about penalties. What about rewards? What plans are there to regard funding as a reward?
- A.** There is a question about how we provide incentives. It's a mistake to divorce this agenda from raising standards. We will reward the best performing colleges in the future. The colleges with the highest standards will have the most progressive policies. *(Ivan Lewis)*
- Q.** Shouldn't there be recommendations concerning extra resources for all this work?
- A.** The Commission is not about making recommendations in theory – it's about practical application. We must see these things measured. It will require money, but colleges can't use money as an excuse for not doing anything. Dedicated resources are needed, but attached to part of the mainstream, not as bolt-on resources. *(Mike Peters)*

**Voice from the floor**

**'The big challenge is that this goes beyond the people that are already committed, that this isn't about strategies for areas that have Black populations, but that it's for the whole of the UK. It's important for the education of people in a democratic society.'**

*Geoff Saul, Leicester College*

**The Commission's findings**

Mike Peters, Chair of the Commission for Black Staff, presented conference with the Commission's main findings, which showed that:

- 6.9 per cent of staff in further education were Black
- seven per cent of teaching staff, six per cent of support staff and seven per cent of other support staff were from minority ethnic groups
- there were only four Black principals
- Black staff constituted 4.9 per cent of managers, 3.8 per cent of heads of teaching departments and 4.6 per cent of senior lecturers
- only six per cent of all Black staff were managers, compared with nine per cent of white staff
- Black lecturing staff were over-represented in part-time lecturing posts (8.5 per cent) and under-represented in more secure fractional posts (4.5 per cent)
- 55 per cent of minority ethnic staff in further education were educated to first degree level compared with 49 per cent of white staff
- six per cent of minority ethnic staff had no formal qualifications, while eight per cent of white staff were similarly unqualified
- most colleges had equal opportunity policies, but few had specific race equality policies
- 52 per cent of colleges had specific equality procedures that addressed the recruitment, selection, induction and progression of staff
- the majority of colleges said they used ethnic monitoring data, but few set targets for the employment or progression of Black staff

- fewer than half of further education colleges always used formal recruitment procedures when employing part-time hourly paid teaching staff
- the percentage of minority ethnic students in further education in England had increased from 12 per cent of the total student population in 1997/98 to 14 per cent in 1999/2000
- minority ethnic young people were more likely to remain in full-time education than their white counterparts.

Mr Peters also focused on action points for the sector (see page 1, Action points for further education) as well as recommendations (see below). Summing up, he added, 'This is an issue that will not go away. Education is at the heart of the struggle and further education is leading the way.'

*Copies of the full report of the Commission are available from the Commission for Black Staff in Further Education, tel. 020 7827 4600.*

**Key recommendations**

The Commission recommended that key stakeholders, such as colleges, the Department for Education and Skills, the Learning and Skills Council, inspection bodies and trade unions took a number of steps to advance equality. These included:

- setting up an equalities commission for the further education sector
- devising and funding a three year strategy to implement the recommendations of the Commission, reporting progress to the Secretary of State
- establishing a 'Beacon' award scheme for colleges demonstrating good practice
- working in partnership with other organisations to ensure that race equality best practice is adopted.

**Quote unquote**

'Positive action means equipping people to compete on equal terms.'  
*Phil Barnett, Learning and Skills Council*

'Courage is needed to make change and strong leadership is necessary. In taking this agenda forward, leadership needs to surround itself with people who understand that agenda.'  
*Wally Brown, Liverpool Community College*

'It's critical for principals and managers to be aware of what's going on. It's not enough to leave it to Black individuals to lead the lonely fight.'  
*Robin Landman, Network for Black Managers*

'All colleges have a business case to implement equal opportunities. Four Black principals is just not good enough.'  
*Sam Allen, Loughborough College*

'The Commission is committed to supporting Black focus groups. They provide a voice for Black staff and keep the issues on the agenda.'  
*Josephine Ocloo, Commission for Black Staff in Further Education*

'This is an historic day. This is a sector that's trying to take the issue of institutional racism seriously and honestly. There's considerable power in people saying this is how it is and this is how we're going to change it.'  
*David Gibson, Association of Colleges*

'It's the principal's obligation to lead and inspire.'  
*Chrissie Farley, Hackney Community College*

'We want to see further education colleges walk the talk in equality.'  
*Rajinder Mann, Network for Black Managers*

'We have to do something about temporary contracts, especially about the appalling number of Black staff on temporary contracts. Black people have been excluded by informal recruitment practices, so they have gone on to get extra qualifications, but white staff, in the meantime, have gained the experience.'  
*Paul Mackney, NATFHE*