



the  
**Commission**  
for **Black Staff** in  
Further **Education**

Race Equality  
in FE Employment  
**The Commission's  
Legacy**

# FOREWORD

Since the publication in 2002 of the Commission for Black Staff in Further Education's final report '*Challenging Racism: further education leading the way*' I am encouraged by the progress our sector has made. As I said at the time - the recommendations can only represent a first step. We all have a responsibility for taking the next steps. From the evidence set out here, it is clear that many have accepted that responsibility and are actively working to challenge racism and to tackle the under representation of black staff in the sector's workforce.

All the key stakeholders have made a commitment to change but it is vital that we concentrate on strengthening partnerships across the sector to make further progress. Steps are being taken to achieve this goal by the scheduling of annual reviews of the Department's Race Equality Scheme and the LSC's Equality Report. By 2009 all partners within the sector will have implemented their own race equality employment targets. I will maintain a keen personal interest in this important agenda and look forward to regular reports on progress across the sector.

There is undoubtedly much more to be done. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) report '*Towards Racial Equality*', published in July 2003, highlighted continued weaknesses in FE compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. We cannot afford to be complacent. However, it is right that we should recognise the progress we are making. I consider some of our most notable achievements to be:

- The launch of the Centre for Excellence in Leadership, with equality and diversity at the very heart of its remit. The Centre is developing its Equality Diversity Strategy, with a significant focus on race equality and on practical measures. These include subsidised places for black and ethnic minority participants to encourage progression into leadership positions in FE colleges. I am confident this will be a tremendous support to the sector.
- The development of a Race Equality Scheme in the Department which has been welcomed by Trades Unions and the CRE.
- The piloting of a new Race Equality Standard for FE to provide a coherent framework for organisational change and support the provider review process.
- The Beacon Award for Race Equality which has encouraged and given public acknowledgement of good practice in race equality.

I thank all those across the sector who have played a part in taking this work forward over the last two years and especially the members of the Commission itself. We look to further education to set an example across the public sector through its determined and innovative approach.



department for  
**education and skills**

**Ivan Lewis MP**

*Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Skills and Vocational Education*

*'An integral part of the strategy for reforming further education must be to create a more diverse workforce, aware of its commitments to equality and opportunity and to challenging those practices that inhibit the ability of black staff to reach the highest levels... (The Commission's) report is a wake-up call. Once we've heard it, we can have no excuses for failing to act'.*

**Ivan Lewis, MP.**  
**Parliamentary Under-Secretary of**  
**State for Adult Learning and Skills**

*Foreword to the Commission's Final Report,*  
*November 2002*



## Race Equality in FE Employment – The Commission's Legacy



*'The final report of the Commission for Black Staff in FE...argued for greater awareness in Colleges of the effects of racism on colleagues from black and minority ethnic communities... As this awareness percolates through the organisation, procedural, behavioural and attitudinal changes will begin to occur. This is the gradual and subtle process of 'cultural change' that justifies the legislative stick.'*

**Wally Brown,**  
**Chair, Commission for Black Staff in FE**

In November 2004, the Commission for Black Staff in FE will formally close. It has taken over four years to deliver its challenging remit, during which time it has firmly established the case for race equality in employment. While it recognises the long road yet to be travelled, there is evidence that its activities have generated debate, raised awareness and encouraged innovation that should lead to lasting change within the sector. This is undoubtedly its most important legacy.

The Commission is proud of its many achievements and acknowledges the support and encouragement it has received from individuals and organisations across the learning & skills sector. It is confident that it can pass on the challenges it has highlighted to a sector that is both ready and equipped to meet them.

### Commission's Achievements

- Gathering evidence via ten 'witness day' events held throughout the country between 2000 and 2001. Staff from all backgrounds spoke of their experiences and gave their views on what could be done to tackle under-representation, discrimination and other concerns.
- Commissioning research to establish objective evidence and produce quantitative and qualitative data about the involvement of black staff in the sector.
- Examining evidence and data from the LSC's Staff Individualised Records (SIR) for 2000-2001, research into recruitment and selection practices conducted by the Learning and Skills Development Agency in 2002 and other sources contributing to the Commission's evidence base.
- Talking to partners and receiving evidence from national organisations, key stakeholders and expert witnesses about the key challenges facing the learning and skills sector and other public sector organisations.
- Consulting college leaders, practitioners and black staff at consultation events that gathered views and helped identify recruitment, selection, employment and career progression priorities within the sector.
- Launching its final report at high profile events and distributing its findings and recommendations throughout the sector.
- Promoting good practice via three Race Equality in Further Education Good Practice Guides and circulating over 20,000 copies to Principals and HR managers, providers and individuals across the learning & skills sector.
- Establishing a Stakeholder Steering Group, in partnership with the DfES and the LSC, responsible for developing and monitoring the progress of the Commission's recommendations.
- Disseminating the Commission's Recommendations via fourteen regional dialogues targeted at senior officers and staff aimed at identifying actions that will take colleges forward in a spirit of partnership with local LSCs.
- Supporting the development of the Black Leadership Initiative, a DfES and LSC funded pilot project to trial a programme of targeted professional development that has included mentoring and work placement opportunities and increased the pool of black staff suited to leadership and management posts.
- Developing a website and e-learning resource for providers seeking to convey key messages about race equality and promoting awareness and best practice to governors and staff.
- Developing a Pilot Race Equality in Employment Standard for FE that offers a framework for complying with the specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RR(A)A) 2000 and meeting the Commission's recommendations - to be piloted by participating LSCs and providers in 2005.

*'We all deserve to live in - and enjoy the benefits of - a diverse and culturally rich society. My commitment, to promoting equal opportunities and diversity in the learning and skills sector, which is shared by all my DfES colleagues, is reflected in our placing of equality at the heart of our Success for All strategy to transform the sector.*

*Together we are making progress. I am particularly proud to have worked with colleagues in AoC and LSC on the Black Leadership Initiative; and to have established, again with the full support of our many partners, the Centre for Excellence in Leadership. CEL is now taking forward the BLI work as a key part of its diversity strategy. I am determined to build on these strong foundations. We must continue to work together, so that we can realise our shared ambition of a learning and skills sector which truly reflects the community in all its diversity.'*

**Janice Shiner,  
Director General,  
Lifelong Learning, DfES**

## Sector-wide partnerships

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**S**ince the publication of the Commission's report in 2002, Learning and Skills stakeholder organisations have been working in close partnership to implement its recommendations and initiate the step changes that will move providers beyond mere compliance towards long-term institutional change. Their progress thus far confirms a growing commitment to tackling under-representation and promoting race equality in employment.

Over the coming five years, this commitment will continue to be closely monitored by the DfES and the LSC with the active support of members of the Stakeholder Steering Group - a partnership of representatives from Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Association of Colleges (AoC), Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), NATFHE (National Association of Teachers in Further & Higher Education), UNISON; Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO), Network for Black Managers, the Commission for Black Staff and individual experts. With the end of the Commission, the membership and remit of the group is currently under review. Their current remit is to develop a joined up, sector-wide response to the Commission's recommendations. The group has played a central role seeing that the recommendations are implemented at a strategic level and will continue to do so.

The piloting of the new Race Equality in Employment Standard for FE (REES) is a direct outcome of the steering group's deliberations. Proposed by the Commission, REES will offer providers explicit criteria and success indicators to support in-house auditing and provide evidence for Inspection, Strategic Areas Reviews and Development Plans. It is hoped that the Standard will be welcomed both as a useful self-assessment tool and a mechanism for helping colleges, whatever their diversity profile, to plan for and achieve continuous improvement.



**Black Leadership Initiative** is a direct outcome of the Commission's work. This positive action programme was a strategic approach to the development of black leaders for FE. Funded by the DfES and LSC, the BLI exceeded its targets by delivering 40 mentoring partnerships, 86 mentors, 11 secondments and 22 work shadowing opportunities. The BLI-

Ofsted work shadowing partnership was particularly successful, giving black staff an opportunity to observe the skills required for inspection and the confidence to apply for posts in the Inspectorate. Now under CEL, the BLI will continue to address black under-representation and provide a range of development opportunities with direct links into CEL programmes.

*"The challenge to diversify our sector's leaders is not something the BLI can achieve alone. It requires the leadership, co-operation and commitment of all sector partners. Building on the work of the Commission, and the Network for Black Managers, this project stands as an example of what can be achieved when stakeholders co-operate, share their experiences and work to a common agenda."*

**Stella Mbubaegbu  
Chair, Black Leadership Initiative**

# Sector-wide progress

The Commission has invited key stakeholders to report on progress against its 2002 recommendations and highlight any significant achievements. The Stakeholder stocktake is well underway, and has involved a review of race equality in 40 FE colleges based on detailed interviews with responsible staff. The results of the stocktake will provide a clear strategic framework for a fuller evaluation of the long-term impact of the Commission's work as well as outlining future steps.

Evidence provided by colleges and stakeholder organisations suggests that the Commission's challenge to leaders and managers has begun to have an impact across the sector. Both within their organisations and in their public roles, many Directors and Chief Executives are championing race equality by espousing values of access, inclusion, diversity and participation. Many senior staff are engaged in more rigorous strategic planning and have set challenging employment targets to improve the representation and status of black staff. There is a growing awareness of the social, moral and business case for diversity and understanding of the need for positive role models to enable learners to achieve their full potential. There is also staff awareness of the central role of colleges in promoting community cohesion and preparing all students for life and work in a multi-cultural society. Examples of good practice suggest that colleges are gradually moving beyond a mere culture of compliance.

The Commission recognises that targets and policy commitments alone will not bring about the changes it has called for. The development of a reliable database providing detailed benchmarks for monitoring and measuring progress is among our sector's key challenges. Both quantitative and qualitative data are needed to gain a truer picture of progress within the sector and provide credible evidence that the barriers faced by black and minority ethnic staff are being systematically dismantled. Nevertheless, it is reassured by the evidence it has received to date and confident that its partners will continue to build on their short-term achievements.



The **Centre for Excellence in Leadership** was launched in October 2003 with a mission to improve the standard of leadership and the diversity of the talent pool of leaders in the learning and skills sector. Improving the diversity profile of the sectors' leaders is a key

strategic aim and CEL has developed a wide-ranging diversity strategy to promote cultural change within its partner organisations. Demonstrating a proactive commitment to equality and diversity is to be an essential criterion for recruiting and selecting CEL staff, including its senior managers, and CEL is actively working to increase the proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) staff in management and leadership roles in its own organisation. A requirement in all sub-contracts is that they will have a significant impact on the diversity challenge in the sector and take full account of equality and diversity considerations in all contracted work. Subsidies are also available to BME participants of CEL programmes. Building on the success of the Black Leadership Initiative and working alongside key agencies and stakeholder bodies to ensure a coherent approach to diversity strategy are among CEL's key strategic priorities.

*'The most important reason (for delivering race equality) is because it is about people.... it is about people with dreams and with needs, regardless of where they come from, regardless of what their backgrounds are, regardless of what advantages or disadvantages they've had in life. I believe passionately that they should have the opportunity to go as far as their talents and their efforts can take them.'*

**Mark Haysom, Chief Executive, LSC**

*Speech to LSC Equality and Diversity Conference, February 2004*



## Learning+Skills Council

The **Learning and Skills Council** established workforce targets in 2003 to improve the diversity of its workforce at all levels and help it become more representative of the communities it serves. It aims to increase the proportion of its ethnic minority staff to 9.1% by 2010. Equality and Diversity Impact Measures have been set in relation to gender, race and disability throughout the country on recruitment, participation and achievement. It has also prioritised funding to support a range of race equality initiatives, including:

- The Commission's implementation strategy involving the development of Good Practice Guidance and E-Learning resources.
- A Senior Leadership Programme for aspiring black college principals.
- A Management Development Programme for black middle managers leading to a nationally recognised management qualification.
- The Black Leadership Initiative, providing secondments, mentoring support and work shadowing opportunities for black staff.
- Dissemination of the Commission's findings via regional seminars for senior officers in LSCs and colleges, to help identify local and regional priorities.
- Targeted training for recognised Trades Union representatives to promote awareness of the Commission's findings and the implications for Unions.
- A £5 million Ethnic Minority Student Achievement Grant to help raise the achievement of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds .

As well as reviewing its own race equality scheme and publishing the report in Spring 2005, the LSC has established a new Equality & Diversity Committee to oversee the implementation of its Equality & Diversity strategy. The LSC's commitment to this agenda extends beyond the Commission's 2002 recommendations and includes working in partnership with others, sharing expertise and learning in order to bring about lasting change.

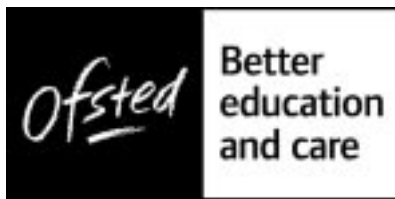


## ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE

The **Adult Learning Inspectorate's** strong commitment to equality and diversity is evident in all areas of its work. Since 2001 it has increased the proportion of inspectors from minority ethnic groups from 2% to 5% and published detailed guidance for inspectors on the implications of the RR(A)A. The benefits of a diverse workforce are well understood and ALI has developed a range of relevant policies and procedures including an equal opportunities policy and a diversity strategy. Its Diversity Working Group has responsibility for developing and implementing its action plans. A headline target in ALI's 2004-05 business plan relates to improving the proportion of staff from minority ethnic groups among its workforce from 7% to 8.5% and it has set workforce representation targets to 2008.

*'Race equality is a national priority. Most people accept the moral imperative and the place of race equality in a tradition of tolerance and fairness. Crude discrimination by the white population against people from ethnic minorities is generally regarded as intolerable, yet much remains to be done. The ALI is committed to race equality in the wider context of celebrating diversity. As an employer we are determined to show by example what we expect of others, and demand of them through inspection.'*

**David Sherlock, Chief Executive, ALI**



**Ofsted's** efforts to tackle under-representation have already begun to show results. The overall proportion of black and minority ethnic staff in Ofsted has increased from 12.4% to 13.1% over the past year. The proportion of HMI (full-time inspectors) in Ofsted has increased from 3.6% in 2000 to 4.9% in

2004. Ofsted's partnership with the Black Leadership Initiative has provided valuable opportunities for black staff from the FE sector to understand and develop inspection skills. 15 shadowing placements were provided for BLI participants to observe college inspections, and more opportunities are planned for autumn 2004. Ofsted has also conducted a staff survey and incorporated Equal Opportunities into all staff training initiatives. Judgements on college responses to the RR(A)A are now included in all college inspection reports. During 2004-05 Ofsted is surveying FE colleges' progress and good practice in implementing the RR(A)A. Increasing the number of ethnic minority inspectors and ensuring that the revised Common Inspection Framework and methodology provide the necessary coverage of race and inclusion are among Ofsted's strategic priorities.

*'Ofsted is fully committed to the principles of race equality. We know how important it is for black and ethnic minority learners to have opportunities to improve their life chances through further education. We will maintain our focus on how well FE colleges meet the needs of these learners and how well race equality policies and plans are improving opportunities for both staff and learners. We will continue our efforts to find effective ways of increasing the numbers of inspectors of black and minority ethnic origin.'*

**David Bell, Chief Inspector of Schools**



Since 1998 the **Network for Black Managers** has been working towards its goal of transforming the ethnic diversity of leadership of our sector. It celebrates excellence by co-sponsorship of the Beacon Award for Race Equality, and through its own Network Awards. It will continue to build its membership, broaden the scope and quality of its services and assist institutions to meet their obligations under the RR(A)A.

*'As an authoritative voice on race equality, the NBM will maintain its role as a critical friend of the sector, providing practical support for colleges and individuals and lobbying at the highest levels to ensure the development of a robust, funded, national strategy to implement the Commission's recommendations.'*

**Robin Landman, Secretary, NBM**



**FENTO's** progress includes training its Chief Executive and another senior member of staff within the organisation as BLI mentors, the provision of a BLI secondment and a work-shadowing opportunity to a black middle manager. Through national newsletters, press releases and the website, FENTO has provided regular publicity about the various development programmes and materials and the black staff who are using them successfully. Staff have also been provided with updates on the implications of new legislation. FENTO's internal staff audit concerns that its staffing levels more than reflect the proportions of BME students within the general student population. At the end of 2004, FENTO expects to transfer all of its functions into Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the new sector skills council for lifelong learning. It will recommend that, when recruiting its full complement of staff, LLUK seeks to address the historic deficit in the number of BME staff employed in middle management positions. It will also recommend that LLUK seek to embed the principles of the possible new race equality standard within its national occupational standards.



Association of Colleges

Among the **Association of Colleges'** most important achievements is the brokerage of a joint agreement on race equality with all recognised Trade Unions on the joint national forum covering employment, recruitment and selection, staff development and positive action. It is currently working on a similar Joint Agreement on Religion and Beliefs. In May 2002, it organised a national conference on Implementing the RR(A)A: Creating a positive framework which was attended by 184 delegates. AoC has project managed the Black Leadership Initiative in partnership with the Network for Black Managers, the Commission and the Learning & Skills Development Agency (LSDA). It has also supported the work of the Commission and of the Network for Black Managers by providing office space, information and advice. It has liaised actively with the Black Leadership Initiative to provide work shadowing opportunities and subsidised placements for black managers and provided a BLI-sponsored secondment opportunity at the AoC. Its priorities include 'Promoting Diversity' workshops for Governors, commencing January 2005, and commissioning research into the barriers to participation for Governors from under-represented groups in association with CEL.

*Black workers have played a key role in the development of the British trade union movement. They have been highly influential in getting unions to address the issues of discrimination in the labour market. UNISON was founded on a commitment to tackle discrimination and with an understanding that this is the responsibility of each and every member of our union. Members facing discrimination have a particular role to play in guiding the unions work in fighting discrimination in the workforce and society. This is vital for the growth and strength of our trade union.*

**Dave Prentis, General Secretary**



**NATFHE**  
The University & College  
Lecturers' Union

**NATFHE** has actively supported the work of the Commission and maintains a high profile stance against racism. It has held regular events for its black members' network, including a black members' conference in 2004, and an equality conference is planned for 2005. Further training events focusing on the relevance of the RR(A)A to NATFHE members are planned.

NATFHE's Race Equality Policy for its own staff is reviewed regularly and its Black Staff Group are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement. The results of its staff equality audit will be examined in terms of the grade and geographical location of staff, and where black staff are under-represented in any grades or locations, targets will be set to rectify this. We will encourage more black members to stand for elected positions - through training, newsletters and articles in *The Lecturer*.

*'Stephen Lawrence would have been 30 years old this year. The report into his brutal murder 12 years ago challenged every institution - including FE colleges - to tackle barriers to race equality and social inclusion. The work of the Commission highlighted the huge task facing further education; to deliver lifelong learning through a diverse workforce with equal opportunities for all staff and students. Black staff are essential to FE's mission of access and second chances for those failed by the education system. Every act of discrimination is a robbery of those life chances'.*

**Paul Mackney, General Secretary**



**UNISON** has delivered eight successful training workshops on how to take the Commission's recommendations forward, in partnership with NATFHE. These

attracted over 100 Union representatives and more joint sessions are planned with employers. It has established a number of project groups to oversee development and implementation of its anti-racist strategies. Three-year action plans are being drawn up to support seven identified priorities - Tackling Racism in the workforce, Policy and Campaigning Development, Tackling the BNP, Community Cohesion, Recruitment, Organisation and Participation, Employment and Staff Development and Service Delivery and Membership Care. The union will also be commissioning an independent audit every three years to assess progress in prioritised areas.



The Commission's work was funded by the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) and the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) up to November 2004. The Commission agreed that its work must be practical and time limited, and focused on securing workable recommendations both for the sector as a whole, and for individual stakeholder organisations.

Key organisations in the sector recognised the pressing need to tackle institutional racism and established the Commission as an independent body.

Sponsor organisations included the AOC, NATFHE, the Network for Black Managers and the LSC.

As work progressed, other organisations expressed a wish to contribute.

They included the Sixth Form Colleges' Employers' Forum, UNISON – the public service union, the Association for College Management and the GMB, Britain's general union.

The Commission would like to thank all those who have contributed to its research, witness and consultation events and colleges in the further education sector for supporting the Commission and making its work possible.