



Name of the project/ initiative

Internationalising the Rural Geography Curriculum at Kingston University

Which teaching sessions/modules/ courses/directorates are involved in the initiative?

- Faculty of Science, Engineering and Computing/School of Natural and Built Environments
- Geography Course Team
- Module Leader

Briefly describe the initiative and the students who have participated.

The module entitled Restructuring the British Countryside was reorganised and updated into one called Global Rural Geographies.

GG3731: The module leader had noticed that her Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students attained less well in this module and that they appeared to struggle with some of the concepts that

I have visited many different parts of Britain	White British	BME
Disagree	42 (26%)	28 (46%)
Neither agree nor disagree	42 (26%)	19 (31%)
Agree	76 (48%)	14 (23%)
Total	160	61
		p = .002
I have often travelled to the British countryside for holidays or day trips	White British	BME
Disagree	50 (32%)	39 (63%)
Neither agree nor disagree	40 (25%)	11 (18%)
Agree	68 (43%)	12 (19%)
Total	158	62
		p = .000
I have travelled outside the United Kingdom more often than within the UK	White British	BME
Disagree	49 (31%)	16 (26%)
Neither agree nor disagree	35 (22%)	13 (21%)
Agree	75 (47%)	32 (53%)
Total	159	61
		p = .749

were discussed in the lectures such as the 'rural idyll'. They also seemed to be less familiar with the types of spaces and places being discussed in terms of their physical, economic and social landscapes. Drawing on research data from a HEA project that the module leader was leading, she was presented with concrete evidence that her BME students were much less likely to live or visit rural parts of the United Kingdom which she argued may explain their lack of awareness of rural geographies in the UK. For many BME students, their experiences

of rural places were outside the UK, often but not exclusively in the Global South. The curriculum was therefore more conceptually inaccessible to the students from BME backgrounds compared to the students from White backgrounds. Unwittingly, the module had normalised White experiences in the curricula contributing to outcomes that disadvantaged BME students.

The module was redesigned to take a more international focus and was renamed Global Rural Geographies. Case-studies were drawn from both the Global North and the Global South and the module drew from a much wider global literature and reflected authors writing from the Global South. Therefore, the concepts in the module were made more accessible and students could more readily see themselves and their backgrounds reflected in the curriculum.

What has been the impact? Is there any data on the effect on student performance? If it is too early for this, what are students saying about it?

The attainment gap data for Global Rural Geographies 2014/2015

Mod Code	Mod Name	BME	White	Grand Total
GG6030	Global Rural Geographies	63.3% 7	59.4% 9	61.1% 16

This data shows that the average mark for BME students marginally exceeded that of White students by 3.7%

How far could this be adopted elsewhere in KU?

The principles of the changes reflect the key principles identified in our KU Inclusive Curriculum Framework:

- 1) Create and accessible curriculum
- 2) Enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum
- 3) Equip students with the skills to positively contribute to and work in a global and diverse environment.

These principles could be used to reconsider curricula in other parts of the University.

Any other comments and contact for further information:

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