

Race and Equality

'It's not just about having black faces'

Tessy Mbofung and Joan Simons:

TESSY MBOFUNG: I was going to talk about recruitment, so when we talk of making sure that our recruitment is our recruitment partners are diverse so that we can have a workforce that is as diverse as possible.

There's a very key point there that I want to make, it's not just about having a workforce that is diverse. Or if I have to put it in if I have to say in a very blunt way, it's not just about having Black faces across the OU. It's not just about having Black or Brown faces all over the place it's about giving them the voice as well.

It is very important that when we hire Black people or people with disabilities or people with protected characteristics, we empower them. So how do we empower them, we empower them to talking about Black and Asian minority people. You bring them in you train them, you make them feel comfortable and know the feel that they can obviously be part of they could really, they can relate with the work of the University.

Empower them by letting empowering other people around them, creating awareness with others around them. So that they can understand how to treat them.

So, if people that they have to work with know how to relate with them know understand that the diversity, understand that they are from different backgrounds. And they obviously perhaps have different values they would know how to relate with them. And it just empowers these Black people or Black or brown people that you've brought in, to know that whatever contribution they have they can speak up and their voices will be heard, their contributions will be valued.

So, it's going back again to that awareness, unconscious bias, equality and sanctions and whatever message or training we can put out there to get to create awareness is very, very key.

JOAN SIMONS: Thank you Tessy, I think that's a very powerful message. It's not about having increased numbers of Black, and Brown faces but it's about having them empowered to be equal.

TESSY MBOFUNG: Yep, absolutely.