

# **Using Interactive Learning Approaches to Deliver Effective Outreach: Towards a Pedagogy for Equity**

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# Background

- Senior Lecturer in Teaching and Learning
- The Inclusive Curriculum work stream & Inclusive Curriculum Consultants
- PhD: Developing Decolonial Praxis Typology
- Director: Dorcas Inclusive Education



# Catherine Millan

- Student Recruitment and Widening Participation officer: Black, Asian and minority ethnic.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consultant Dorcas Education
- Anti-Racism training consultant The Anthony Walker Foundation
- BA: Education Studies
- MA: Voluntary and Third Sector Management: Specialising in Education



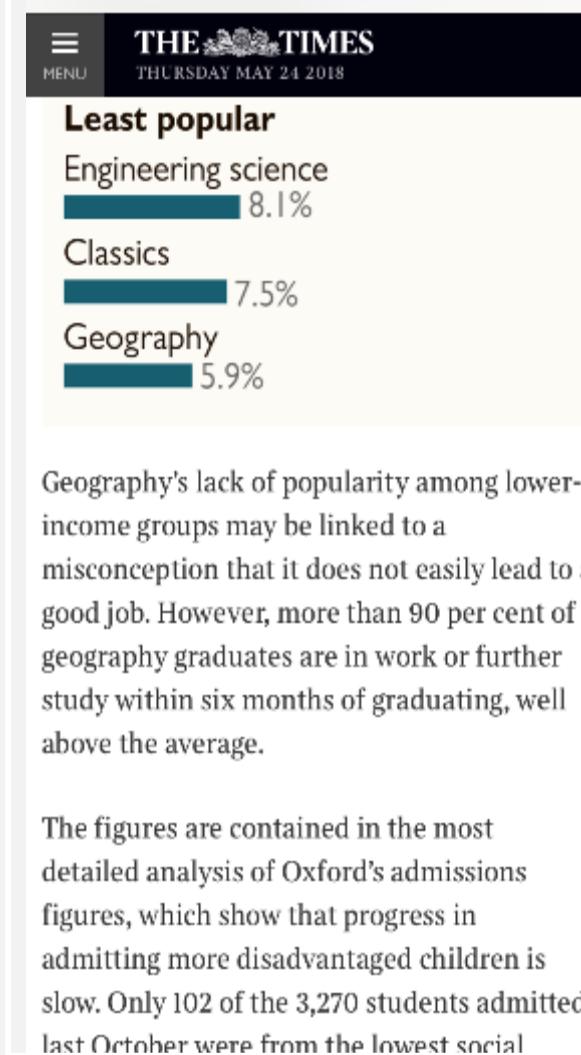
# Overview

- Background
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- Project Aims
- UOM Context
- Literature
- Methodology
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
- Interventions
- Challenges, Conclusion, Recommendations

# Background

- Geographers have highlighted the “Whiteness” of the discipline (Desai, 2017; Esson, 2018; De Leeuw & Hunt, 2018; Tolia-Kelly, 2017)
- British geography has been recognised its role of the discipline in the colonial project (Liang 2021).
- Geography focuses on producing, reproducing and perpetuating Eurocentric knowledge (Esson 2018).
- “Whilst popular, it is still unable to attract ethnically diverse students” (Desai 2017 p 1).
- Colonial assumptions that are unremarked, normalised and perpetuated. (Domosh, 2015, p. 1)
- Call for geographers to reflect on structures of coloniality embedded within the discipline and to look to find ways to use uniquely situated opportunities for educational change

(Liang 2021) 2021



## Geography finds its place among elite

Rosemary Bennett, Education Editor

May 23 2018, 12:01am, The Times



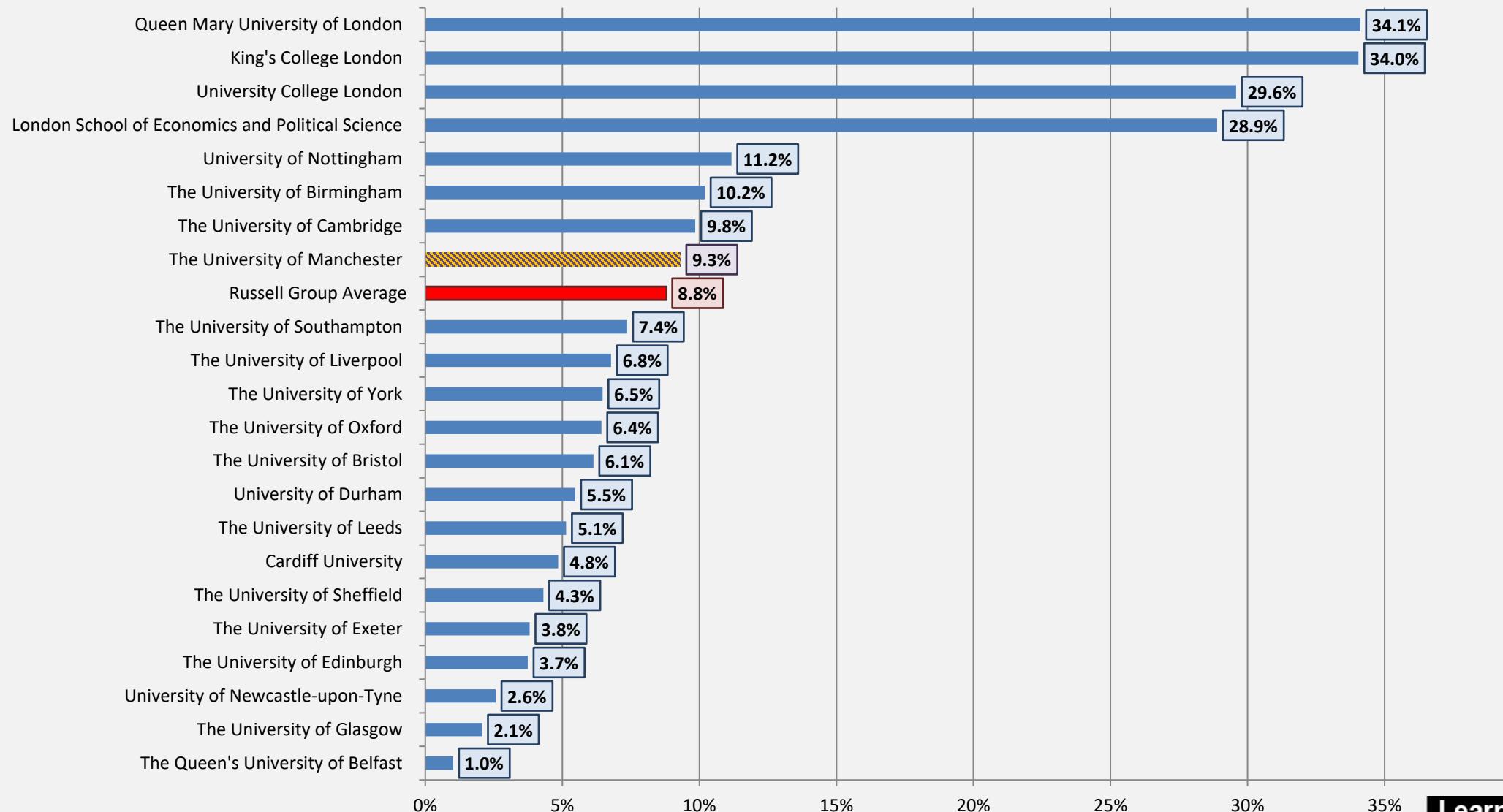
Louise Richardson, the Oxford vice-chancellor, said that the university reflected the deep inequalities in society

TOM PILSTON FOR THE TIMES

# UOM Context

- Acknowledgement of lack of diversity in the staff and student population
- Development of widening participation activities in The School of Education Environment and Design
- Limited targeted interventions
- PGCE & BA, BSC Geography predominantly white cohorts
- Higher offer rates in London. North West and West Midlands
- Local WP partnership work is needed.

Proportion of BAME among First Degree Full-Time New Entrants to Geography, Russell Group Universities, Full-Time Equivalent,  
3 Years average (2013/14-2015/16) ( Source: HESA Returns)



# Project Aims

To capture BAME pupils' perceptions of studying geography.  
Evaluate their experiences accessing a range of interventions designed to enthuse their interest in studying geography at university.

## Objectives:

1. Explore a group of year ten BAME pupils perceptions, expectations and experiences of studying geography
2. Evaluate their participations, experiences of a range of activities designed to enthuse BAME pupils.
3. Recognise the root cause of under representation and barriers for BAME applicants to study geography.

# Literature

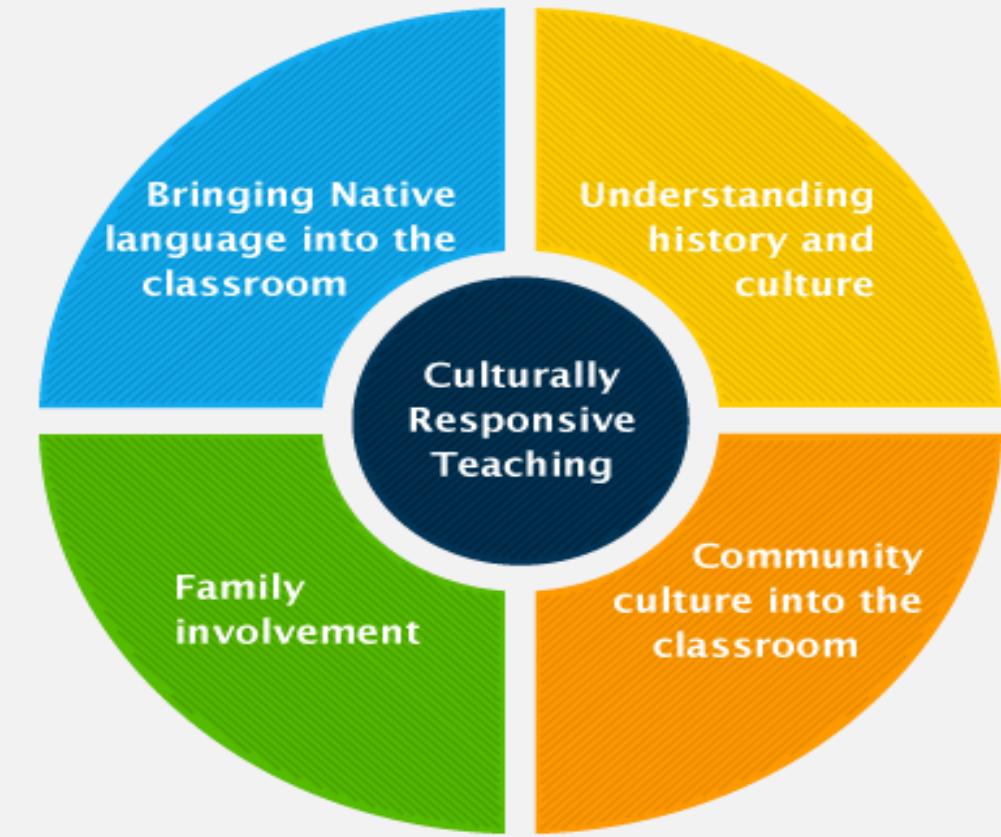
- Pupils studying GCSE geography has steadily increased since 2014, 225, 000 candidates obtained GCSE geography, 55,600 obtained A level geography.
- “Whilst popular, it is still unable to attract ethnically diverse students” (Desai 2017 p 1).
- Limited research on the perceptions of Secondary pupils' decision-making process for option subjects (Weeden 2006).
- Concerns around the status of the subject (Biddulph & Adey 2004).
- Five areas impact on pupil choice: ability, success, enjoyment, advice from parents and teachers, importance of the subject (Biddulph and Adey 2001).
- Findings from the Biddulph and Adey 2001 study suggest pupils found some aspects of geography enjoyable, they enjoyed group work active approaches and investigative approaches, they disliked passive learning (p 1).
- In 2015 only 16% (1130) of the 7115 18-year-old UK domiciled Black students applying to higher education with three or more A-levels had grades AAB or better. This compares to 32% of white applicants (Russell Group 2016).

# Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

- Culturally responsive pedagogy can be defined as a student-centred teaching approach which acknowledges the significance of students' cultural backgrounds and incorporates cultural references into the learning experience (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2010; Samuels, 2018).
- Culturally responsive educators seek to support students of all cultures in their academic development, cultural competence, and socio-political critical awareness.
- In order to do so, this approach posits that educators need to actively develop their own awareness and acceptance of all cultures. Build strong personal relationships with individual students to learn about the complexities of each student's cultural identity.

# Culturally Responsive Principles

- Communication of high expectations
- Active learning and teaching methods
- Students strengths are identified and nurtured
- Inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse teaching strategies
- Cultural sensitivity
- Supportive learning environment reflecting the cultures of the students
- Small group instruction (Howard 2010)



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\(450 x 550\) \(pinimg.com\)](https://pinimg.com/450x550/78/b3/25/78b32590e7580137a25e34acd02c5f08.png)

# Methodology

- Academy X was chosen with a diverse pupil intake from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Inclusion criteria pupils approached ***who have chosen*** to study GCSE geography.
- Exclusion criteria: pupils who ***do not*** identify as BAME.
- Participatory evaluation research
- Reflective diaries
- Pre & Post intervention focus groups
- Post intervention, post it note feedback

# Participants

- Eighteen year ten pupils participated in the research project
- The gender split comprised of ten females and eight males
- A purposive sampling strategy was adopted as participants were drawn from Academy X due to its diverse student population.
- The inclusion criteria included pupils who identified as BAME currently studying GCSE geography.
- The majority of participants resided in (POLAR) 3 areas,
- Most participants came from African heritage in countries such as Somalia, Zimbabwe, Congo, Eritrea and Malawi.
- Many of the BAME pupils were recent arrivals and languages spoken included Kurdish, Persian, Congolese, Gujurati, Arabic, and French.



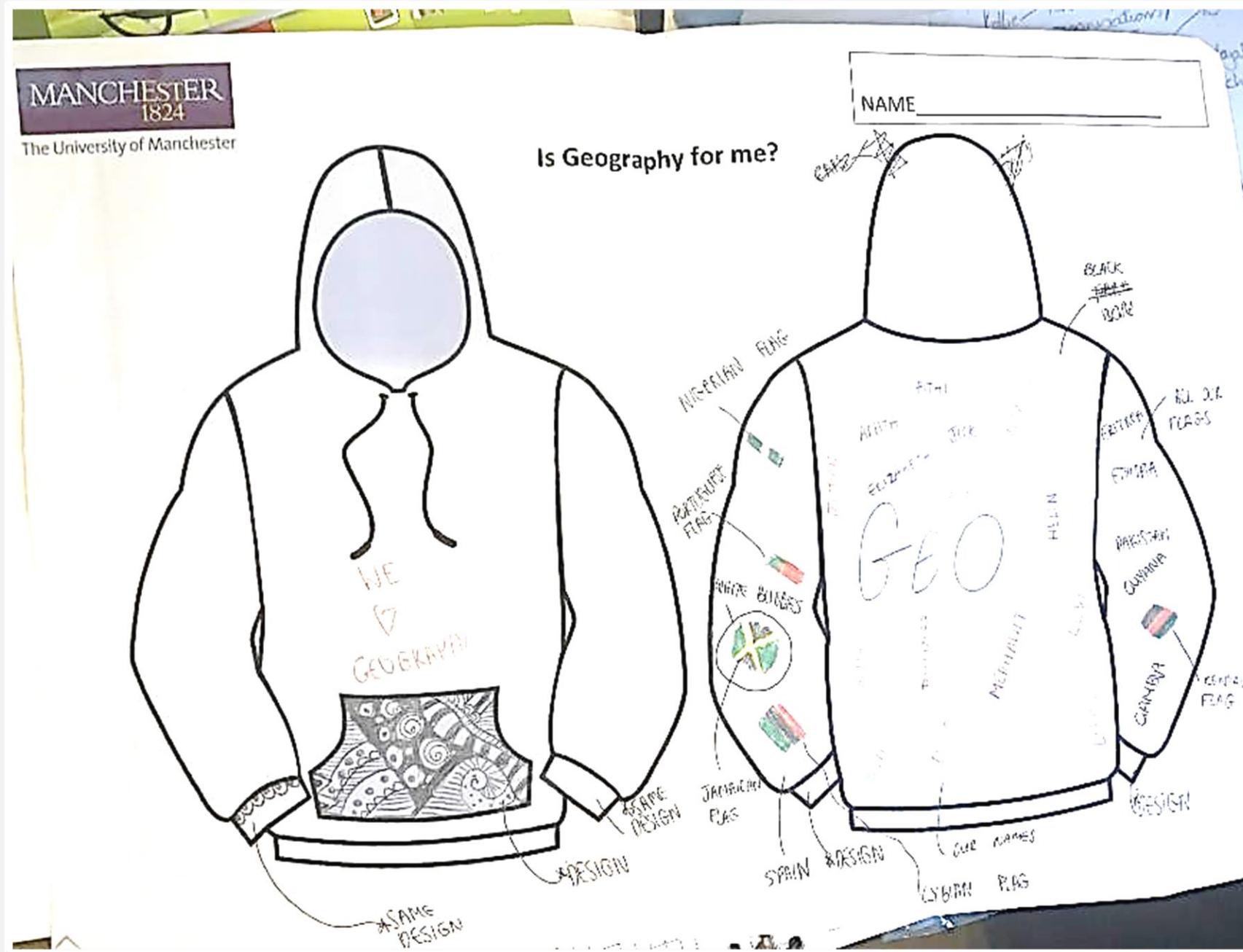
# Interventions

- Pre Project Briefing
- Pre Intervention Focus Group
- Human and Physical Geography Workshop
- Austerity & Geo Mapping Activity (Uganda)
- Buddy Day
- Museum Visit
- Professional Day
- Post Intervention Focus Group

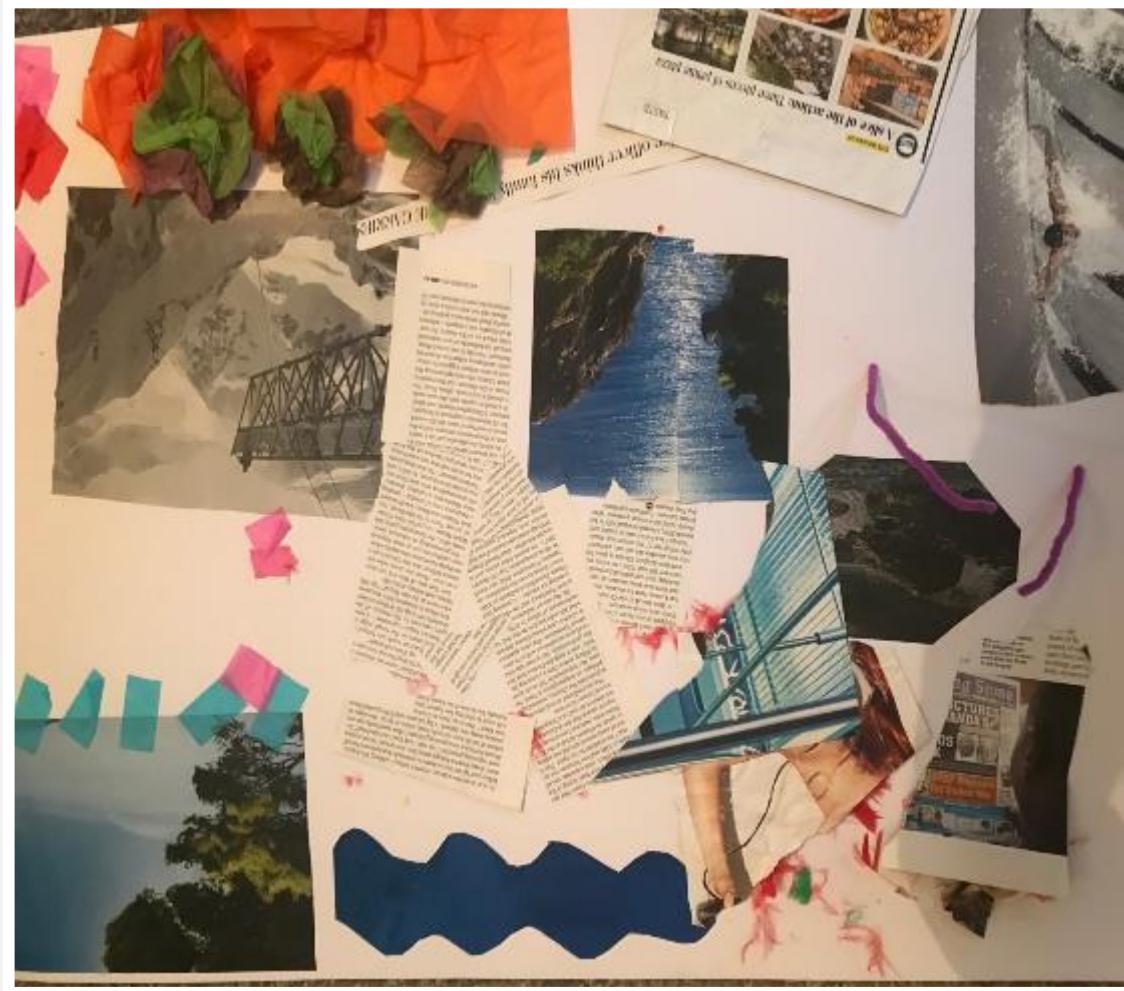
# Pre Project Briefing Session



- Sense of belonging
- Space to talk and about race and identity.
- Traditionally favoured degree courses vs passion and interest.
- Construction of geography rivers, mountains



# Collage





# Human and Physical Geography Workshop

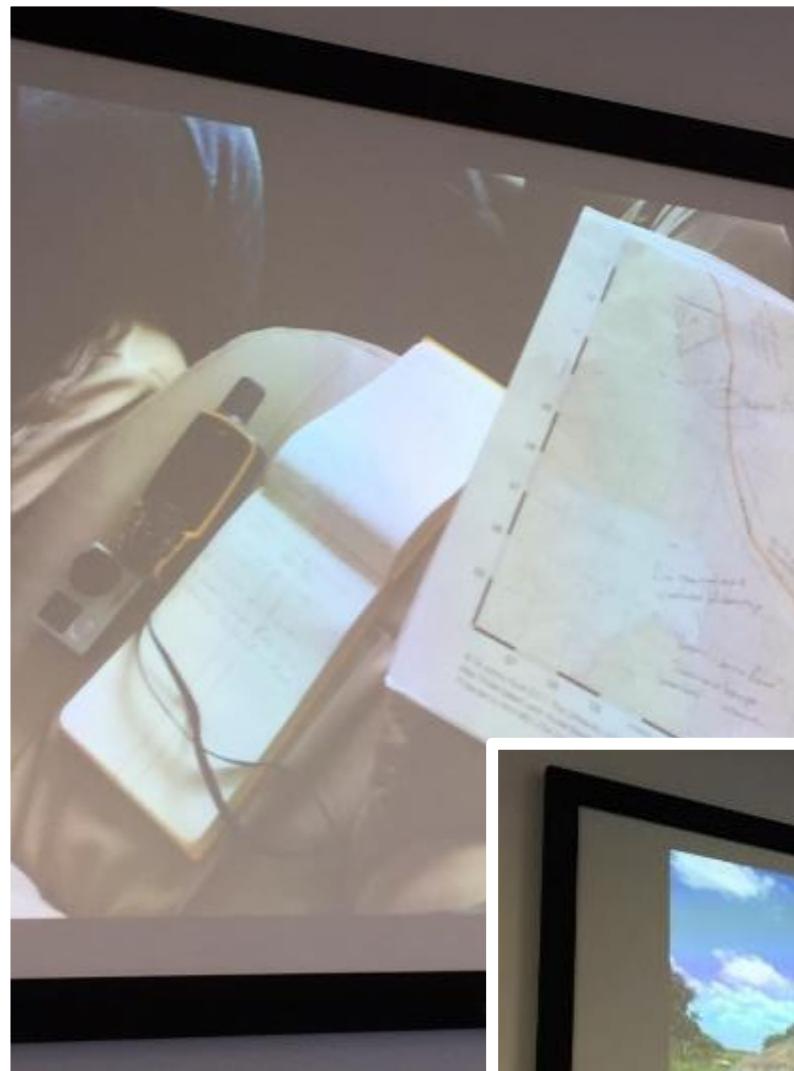
Student Ambassadors

Exploring identity and pupils country of origin

Perceptions of geography



- **Austerity & Geo Mapping Activity (Uganda)**
- Careers workshop
- Humanitarian aid work



- **Buddy Day**

- Campus Capital
- “Be what you see”
- One to one advice and guidance
- Introducing students to aspects of university life outside of the course; ACS, SU,



# • Museum Visit

- Field trip experience
- Bespoke session by Manchester staff
- Topic around stolen artefacts during the colonisation.
- Linked back to talking about identity.



# Professional day

- Variety of graduates from different industries
- BAME role models
- IAG: Volunteering, Work experience, Internships
- “Be what you see concept”

Reflective Prompts: Links to Profession Day

What have you learnt about the career paths open to geography students?

Has hearing about Geography graduates' career options changed how you feel about studying Geography beyond GCSE level?

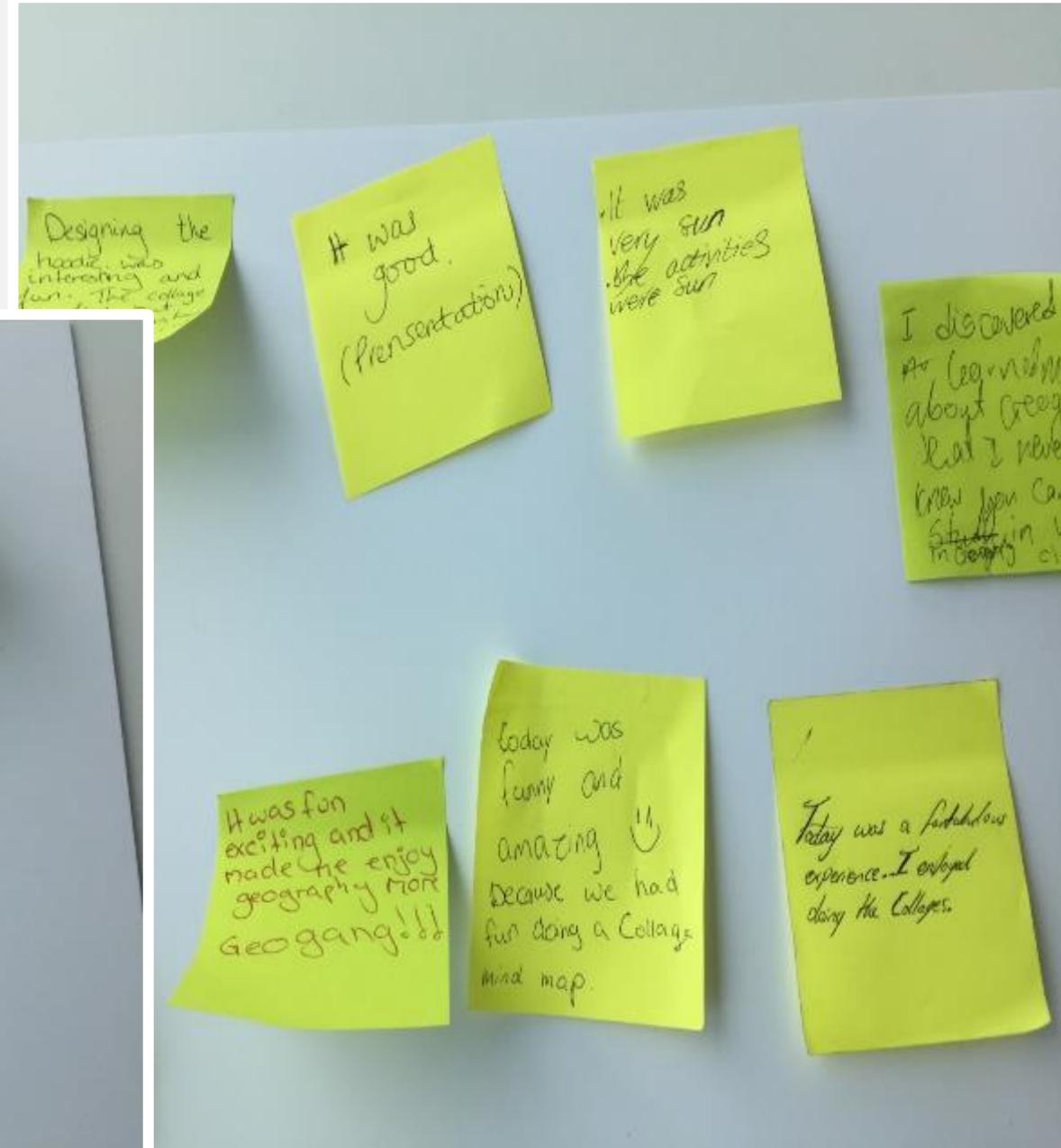
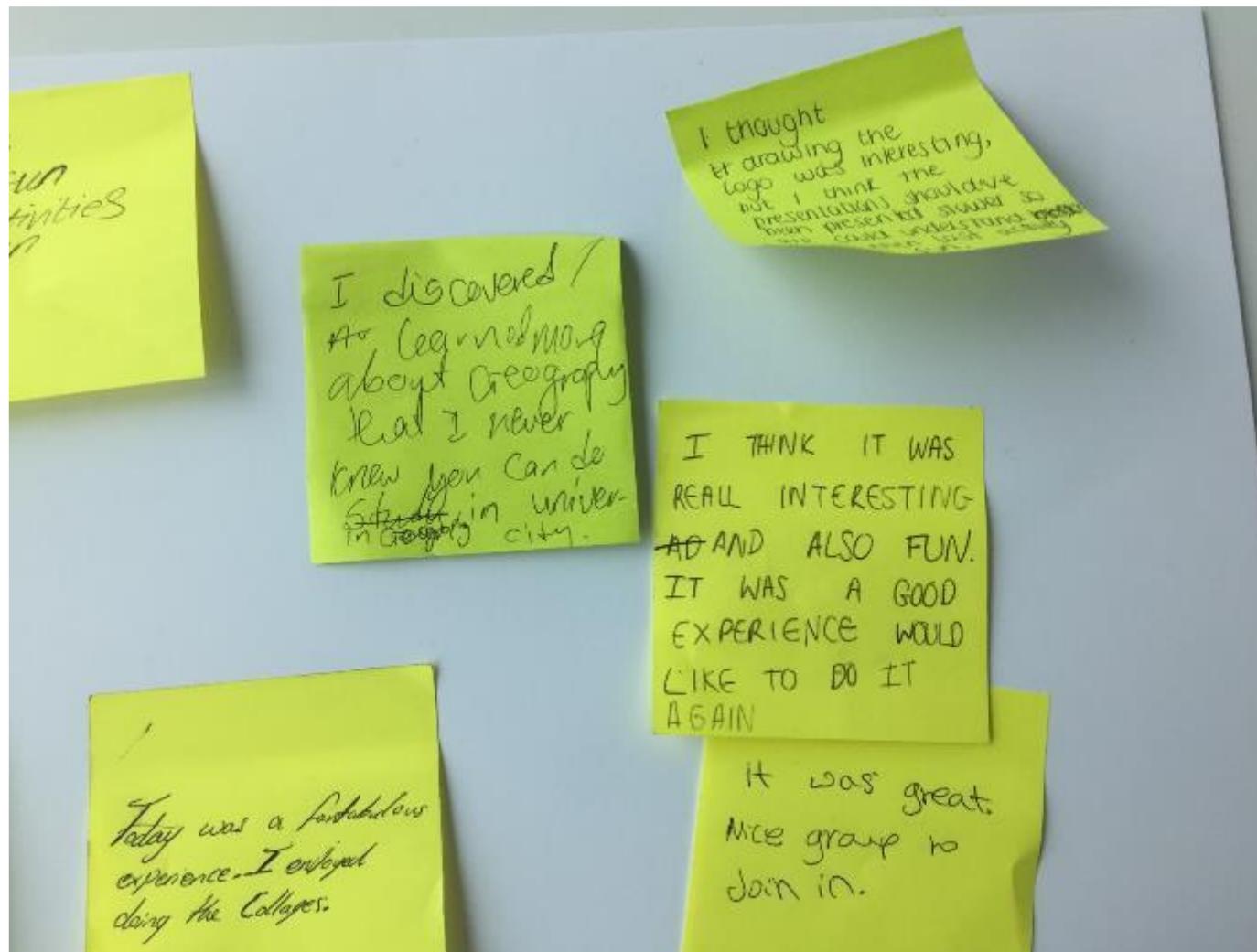
# Challenges

- Lack of Black and Asian students studying Geography role models
- University level geography vs School level Geography
- Unclear career path ways vs family
- Lack of engagement from the Geography Department
- Attendance was patchy pupils had caring responsibilities after school

# Conclusion

- We observed from the data changes in concepts of geography “there is a lot more about geography than rivers”
- From the post workshop evaluation pupils enjoyed activities linked to their ethnic identities
- Two pupils are considering studying geography at university
- Engagement depends on how the subject is taught “*Miss is boring I sometimes fall asleep in lesson*”
- Interventions need to be delivered pre GCSE choice as decisions have been made prior to year 10
- Co create activities with students
- Conduct longitudinal research on students choices post school
- Develop culturally responsive WP framework

# Feedback



# Recommendations

- Offer workshops to pupils and parents on the careers in geography related fields to further parental views on employability opportunities within the field of geography
- Develop a fully embedded decolonial and culturally responsive widening participation programme which explores decolonising geography.
- Conduct further analysis and interrogate pupils' perceptions of culturally responsive decolonising geography and the impact on pupils' perceptions of the subject.
- Recruit academics who specialise in decolonising culturally responsive geography to design and deliver widening participation interventions.
- Ensure schools provide further details on the skills, knowledge and employability options available when studying geography to support pupils' decision-making process when choosing GCSE options.
- Develop fun activities to ensure students are engaged

# Reflections

- What are the experiences of BME students and staff within education (primary to higher education)? How does this combine to reflect broader systemic biases?
- What are the systemic biases that shape peoples' pedogeological experiences?
- What implications does systemic biases have for how we 'do' geographical teaching from primary through to secondary education and beyond?
- How might we create educational policies and practices that overcome all of this? (Adapted from Dr Alison Browne)

# Thank you!

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