

Careers and Enterprise

Employability, Entrepreneurship and progression

Julie Kouamo, Enterprise Manager

A bit about me



ual:  KOUAMO

 Queen Mary
University of London

Queen Mary University of London Demographics

33,000 students on degree programmes

Over **170 nationalities**: approximately 41 per cent are from overseas.

More than **93%** of our home students are from **state schools**;

71% are **Black Asian and Minority Ethnic**,

47% are **first into higher education**.

over 30% are from households where the household income is **less than £15,000**,

27% come from families with an assessed household income of **less than £10k**.

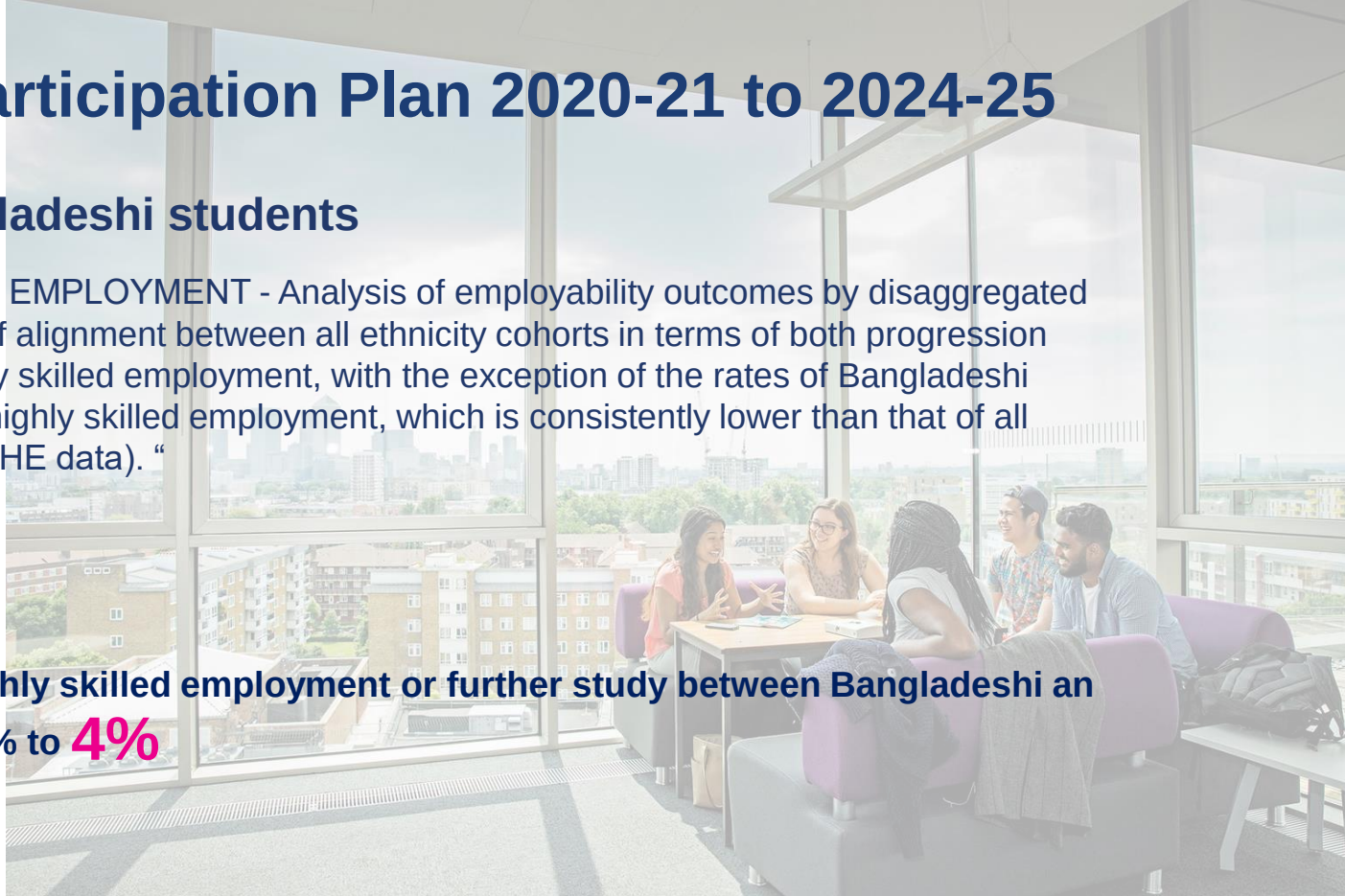
Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Target group: Bangladeshi students

“1.2.4 PROGRESSION TO EMPLOYMENT - Analysis of employability outcomes by disaggregated ethnicity shows a degree of alignment between all ethnicity cohorts in terms of both progression into employment and highly skilled employment, with the exception of the rates of Bangladeshi students progressing into highly skilled employment, which is consistently lower than that of all other groups (based on DLHE data). “

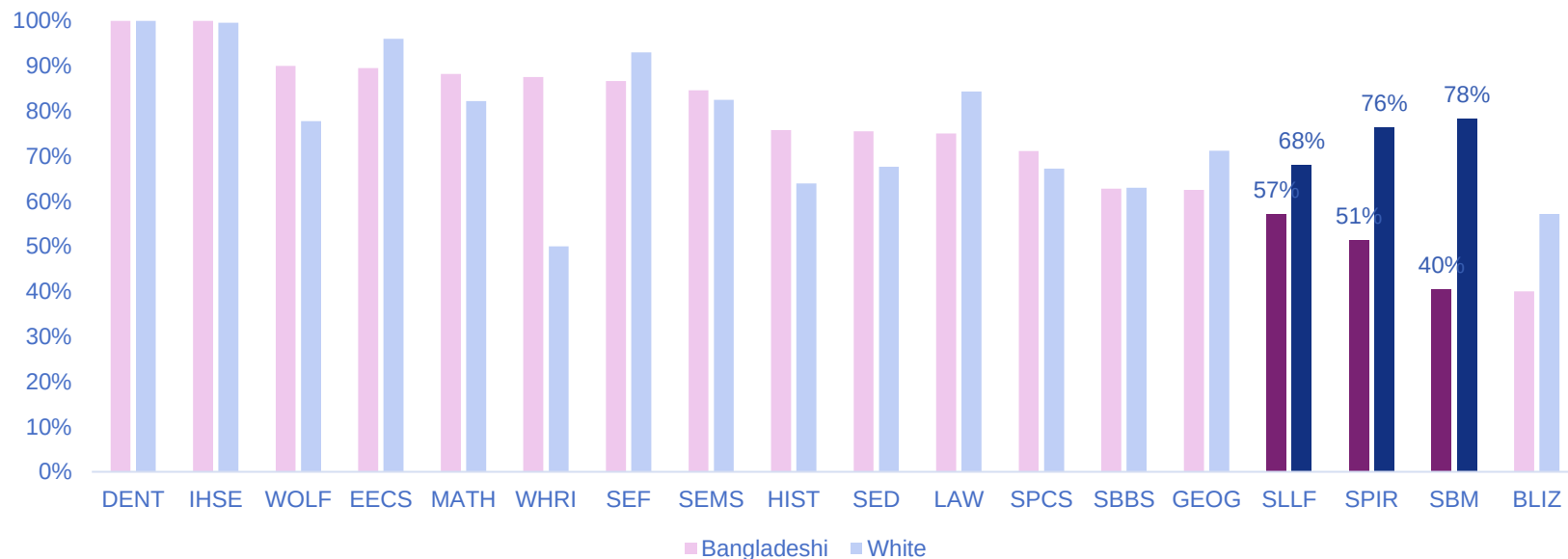
Objective:

To reduce the gap in highly skilled employment or further study between Bangladeshi and White graduates from 6% to **4%**



Data insights

We can see in the table that School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, School of Politics and International Relations and School of Business and Management, **have historically had a lower % of Bangladeshi students** in highly skilled work and a higher % of White students in highly skilled work.



Data insights

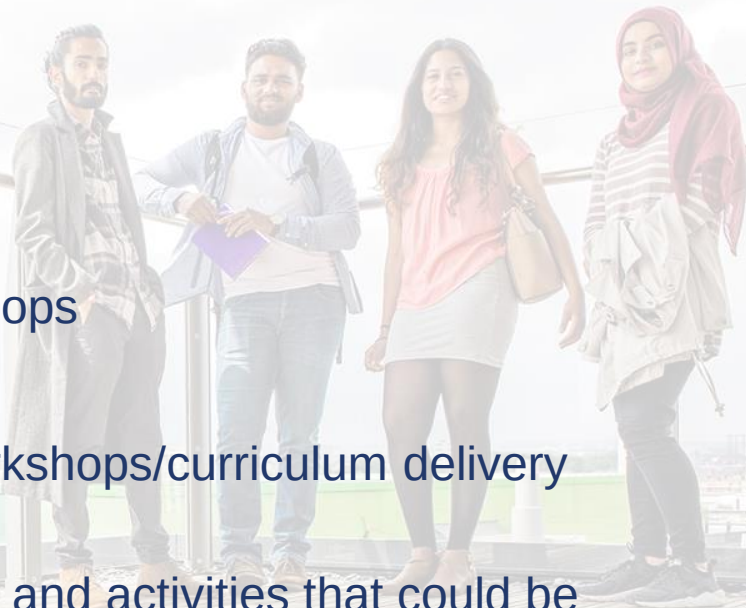
- Placement rates for Bangladeshi in Student Consultancy Project, Micro-Internships, and Enterprise Opportunities are lower than their counterparts (white students).
- Low numbers of Bangladeshi students attend graduation giving us a partial picture using the exit survey; but appear to have less **work experience** than other students.
- Low numbers of Bangladeshi students taking up appointments and attending events



Actions

Increasing Bangladeshi student and graduate representation across the service:

- Increase speakers at careers events/workshops
- Increase Bangladeshi Alumni case studies
- Ensure marketing and images for use in workshops/curriculum delivery represents Bangladeshi students
- Identify partner organisations to offer events and activities that could be targeted at Bangladeshi students



Actions

- Part-time Bangladeshi Careers Coach to work with finalists/graduates
- Research project carried out by Queen Mary Academy* into career motivations of Bangladeshi students, tailoring our offer to respond
- Tailor Graduate Internship Programme to Bangladeshi students
- Develop bespoke mentoring programme for Bangladeshi students
- Increase work experience with Bangladeshi run businesses

*Queen Mary Academy is committed to providing outstanding development opportunities to enhance academic practice across Queen Mary

Enterprise and Entrepreneurship lens

Research conducted at Queen Mary, specifically the Breakthrough Café report among female Bangladeshi students in the School of Business and Management, revealed:

- Some women felt incapable of pursuing certain jobs or opportunities due to the dominance of white males in high-paying positions.
- The scarcity of women of colour in senior roles or as entrepreneurs/business owners, which affects their confidence and belief in their success.

Entrepreneurship and gender

Women's career landscape is rapidly evolving in the UK, with over 150,000 new companies founded by women in 2022. Nevertheless, persistent cultural barriers affect women throughout their entrepreneurial journey:

- Women tend to be more risk-aware and cautious, hesitating to embark on uncertain ventures.
- Women often lack confidence in their entrepreneurial skills, with only 39% feeling capable of starting a business (compared to 55%men)
- Women have fewer entrepreneurial connections and access to sponsors, mentors, or professional support networks.

Rose , A. (2019). The Alison rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship.



Actions

- Ringfencing a Funding award prize money for Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs
- Recruiting a Female entrepreneur-in-residence from Southeast Asian heritage
- Delivering a Female Founders retreat and developing a female entrepreneur network



Case study: Female Founder Retreat

Pilot in June 2022

8 Women entrepreneurs who launched their business within 5 years

3-day retreat focused on collaboration, knowledge exchange and knowledge sharing, community building



Case study: Female Founder Retreat

Focus on wellbeing with Somatic therapy work

Sessions on

- Impostor Syndrome in entrepreneurs,
- Owning your narrative
- Stories of resilience
- Finance and money beliefs
- Investment decisions

121 coaching session with Career and Personal development Coach



Case study: Female Founder Retreat

“The Female Founders Retreat was a life changing, phenomenal time! The balance of strategic learning, knowledge sharing, community building, and wellbeing learning, I felt really cared for and invested in by Jac and the other organisers and workshop facilitators. The beautifully peaceful setting helped me land body and spirit into the learning and community growing and I am so grateful for the tools and new women founder sisters I feel I have gained over the weekend!”

Ku'u lei Lewis: Lei'sSweetCakes



What happened since the retreat?

- ✓ One women entrepreneur secured a consultancy contract for LingLab with Queen Mary's Careers Department working on the department's diversity and inclusion strategies.
 - ✓ Two women entrepreneurs secured contracts for their food products in Boxpark Shoreditch.
 - ✓ One woman secured business engagements at various London startups.
 - ✓ One entrepreneur obtained fresh copy-writing and branding clients.
-
- ✓ Enterprise team launched QMUL Women Entrepreneurs Network
 - ✓ Hosted regular meet-ups
 - ✓ Network started with 8 women and now has 40 women connected on the WhatsApp group





Thank you



Queen Mary
University of London



Queen Mary
University of London