

# **Student voice and the inclusive curriculum: Using Friendship as a Research Method**

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## **Aim of Research:**

The aim of this research is to find out if through the use of student voice and the inclusive curriculum, how undergraduate students (currently completing the two-year accelerated Primary Education degree) in a post 1992 university will successfully navigate the taught curriculum to attain degrees with classifications of firsts and 2:1 as one solution to narrow the awarding gap between white and ethnically diverse students. The two research questions are: 1. What factors contribute to the success of a diverse student population in a post 1992 university? 2. Can a review of the curriculum contribute to narrowing the award degree classification gap between white and ethnically diverse students?

## **Research Method:**

The research method will follow Heron's (2020) innovative 'Friendship as a method' approach where friends interview each other in pairs using cue cards and questions provided by the researcher who will not be present during the conversations. Friendship pairs will meet and record their sessions on Microsoft Teams and use Otter.ai to transcribe the interview. There will be a pre and post researcher/participant meeting to discuss the brief, interchanging roles of interviewer and interviewee and respond to questions.

## **Anticipated Impact:**

The impact is threefold. Firstly, the research will provide data aligned to the university's strategic plan (which identifies 'Education as a catalyst for social equality' (LMU 2019/20 to 2024/25:2)) to reduce the degree awarding gap between white students and those from black and ethnically diverse groups. Secondly, students will tell their stories using the Critical Race Theory Framework which acknowledges their community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) and analyses and investigates key societal issues such as the intersectionality of race, class and ethnicity (Cremshaw, 1989; Bhopal, 2018; Mirza and Arday, 2018). Thirdly, the research will provide an insight of curriculum change and the university's 2020 Education for Social Justice Framework while 'negotiating a changed world' due to the global pandemic (WHO, 2020).