Union Black Course Frequently Asked Questions

Programme/ course logistics

When does the programme run and is there a limitation on the number of people who can attend?
The programme launched at the start of the 2021/2022 academic year and is available to all UK Universities at no cost for a period of three years. The programme will run twice each academic year (September-December and January-April).

There is no limitation on number of learners in a cohort, each university can offer it to all their student and staff population. Once the learner enrols on the course, he/she will be able to complete the 6 hours of content in their own time.

Who is the course being designed for? Who is the target audience?
The course is designed for all students and staff members in UK Universities.

What is the deadline to complete the course?
You can complete the course at any time during the duration of the two cohorts, but eligibility for entry into the prize awards would mean that you need to have completed by 3rd December 2021.

Are we able to share the course with our alumni?
At the moment the course is only available for students and staff.

Do students and staff get a certificate or is part of CPD?
Learners will get a digital certificate upon completion of the 6 hours of content.

Will Universities have access to the FutureLearn platform?
Any learner will have access to the course directly on FutureLearn with individual logins.

Will it be possible to find out how many of our staff and students sign up/complete the course?
Yes, statistics and data about how many of your students and staff take the course will be provided to the University.

Will the course be open to feedback from students/staff enrolled on it?
Yes, we will be collating feedback on the course over the first two cohorts and adjusting future iterations of the programme.

How accessible is the platform/content of the course for those with disabilities or additional learning needs?
The FutureLearn accessibility policy can be found here:
https://www.futurelearn.com/info/terms/accessibility-policy

The platform is designed, and continually enhanced, to exceed current accessibility standards, and to comply with current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. Learners are able to change colours, contrasts levels and fonts; resize text up to 200% without impact on the functionality of the website; zoom in up to 400% without loss of information or functionality, or the need to scroll in more than one direction; navigate the website using just a keyboard; and use a screen reader. Video content comes with subtitles and transcripts, but without audio description. Images come with alt text and figure descriptions. Accessible Word and PDF formats will be made available.

Content

What is the content of the course - reading lists, key discussion topics, resources, theories, concepts etc.
An overview outline of the course is available on the webpages

Have current students / recent graduates been involved in designing the course in any way?
Students from different institutions have been represented on the course Steering Committee. Incoming university students were also surveyed for input into the course design and development. Lastly, the course also features contributions from current university students.

Can we supplement the course content with our own elements to embed within our institution / What level of flexibility is available in terms of localising the content?
The course is standalone, and we are not able to make changes on an institution-by-institution basis. However, we intend to include the course as part of a broader offering at DU.

What safeguarding is in place for students?
A key element of the course design will be to construct a safe learning environment and accompanying expectations on participation and conduct. The course also follows the FutureLearn safeguarding policies outlined here: https://futurelearn.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360015259980-Safeguarding-at-FutureLearn.

Will there be any monitoring of discussion for racist content or comments?
FutureLearn automatically filters out any racist content before comments are published. Furthermore, discussions will be monitored by The Open University. The course is designed to include activities that promote safe discussion.

What is the facilitators approach to white fragility manifesting in the session and what support is available to students in the moment and afterwards?
Anti-racist activists and white allies must manage their own fragility by recognising and confronting their own biases and contexts that impact this space, e.g., privilege. We will aim to create an environment that is conducive to the development of psychological safety. We will provide references and resources on the topic of Whiteness, fragility, silent racism etc to help and support the understanding of this phenomenon and signpost to relevant support networks where and when necessary.

How does this package fits with other high profile activities institutions undertake, such as Race Equality Charter mark / Black Curriculum Project.
This is a standalone course that runa in tandem with other activities and programmes such as those listed above.

Evaluation & Impact

How will the course be evaluated, and impact be measured? How do you intend to identify that a change has taken place in the evaluation process? What does the success criteria look like? What is the metric for success of this course?
There is no individual learner assessment in the course. However, we are currently developing ways to measure course impact. We will share more information on this in due course.