

Durham UCU Anti-Racism Statement

Durham UCU stands against racism, bigotry, and hate, and we are committed to tackling them wherever they arise. We stand in solidarity with protestors fighting for justice for George Floyd and challenging the systemic racism, racist violence, and white privilege that are also prevalent across the UK. Black lives matter.

As members of Durham University, we are proud of our international community and the diversity that exists in it, and we appreciate Durham University's stated commitment to providing a welcoming and inclusive space for all.

However, Durham University not only exists within the broader context of racial injustice and privilege that permeates our whole society, but also has specific structural problems stemming from privilege and exclusion in its student body, under-representation of certain groups, and the way in which different cultural expressions are valued. These problems have deep roots in the University's history and ongoing consequences in the present. Much more needs to be done to address this systemic imbalance, as well as to address specific incidents of racism.

Durham University's [2019-20 ethnicity report](#) reveals very low numbers of black British students, while people of colour are also underrepresented among senior staff. We are committed to working with the University to ensure that people of colour have better access to studying and working at Durham University, and experience a welcoming environment where they are included and respected.

Sadly, our community has also been the venue for overt racial hatred, with numerous racist incidents reported in the media (e.g. in [The Guardian](#) and [Palatinate](#)) as well as anecdotally and on social media. Durham UCU condemns these incidents in the strongest terms and offers solidarity to all victims of racial harassment at Durham.

Much more needs to be done to create an environment in Durham University where there is not only immediate and universal condemnation of individual racist actions, but where it is clear in all parts of the university community that racism will not be tolerated. The university must build an environment that is not only non-racist, but actively anti-racist. In this context, we fully support the work of Durham Students' Union officers and the Durham People of Colour Association (DPOCA) in challenging colonialism in the university's curriculum.

Nationally, UCU is working actively to challenge the ethnicity pay gap (including as [one of the demands in our recent strike action](#)), support members who suffer discrimination, and protect those who are at risk from hostile environment policies. For more information on UCU's national response to recent events, see the "[UCU - standing proudly against racism](#)" statement.