

What did you do/who's involved?

I introduced a new Science of Bias module to bias train Psychology BSc students. The module draws together relevant topics in Psychology from genetics, evolution, social psychology, neuroscience, and organisational psychology to provide students with an alternate approach to typical unconscious bias training, which tends to be ineffective in challenging people's viewpoints. Experts within the department contributed lectures on each topic and students took part in the focus groups that formed the evidence base for the module.

The module looks at how people are treated differently because of a protected characteristic and asks how bias operates within a specific context. This shifts the focus from seeing bias as a problem within an individual that needs removing to looking at what we are doing to students that isn't allowing them to reach their potential, for example.

The module takes a problem-based learning approach and looks at real life situations where bias is relevant. There is a big focus on science communication in the assessment of students on the module, which provides them with real-world applied skills. Students give presentations about a particular problem as their formative assessment and make a media piece to explain the problem (eg. write a policy brief) as their summative assessment.

The success of the module has caused us as a department to rethink, restructure, and diversify our entire bachelors programme, including our programme diets and assessments. The Science of Bias module will be compulsory for second years across all degree programmes in the department from 2023. We will diversify our assessments to give students more real-world applied skills, such as science communication.

Original inspiration came from a university in the Netherlands where they have an awarding gap greater than UCL's. They were concerned about how the backgrounds of their students was impacting interactions at the university,

What evidence/rationale underpinned your choice ?

and staff should be given the time to commit to doing this. Creating the Science of Bias module took a great deal of work and commitment on my part.

What difference has this made to staff and students ?

Student and staff feedback about the module has been very positive.

We hope that the module will have a positive impact on the students in that it will contribute to closing the awarding gap (we don't yet have the longitudinal data to show its impact). We also hope that these changes will allow us to continue to be a top department globally, competitive, and world leading.