

To: The University of Nottingham & University of Nottingham's Students' Union,

In response to the statement released by the University and Students' Union on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 regarding the ongoing racial conflicts around the world. We commend you on taking a stance against the injustices we have faced for centuries however; this statement is simply inadequate.

Your unwillingness to **directly** address the Black community within the university is disheartening. The recent deaths of numerous, innocent African-Americans such as George Floyd and Black British citizens like Belly Mujinga, has catalysed a movement. A movement which demands that Black people around the world be treated with the dignity and respect that we deserve and not as second-class citizens.

Needless to say, the UK is far from exempt from similar injustices against the black community; from the abhorrent treatment of our parents and grandparents in the Windrush Generation to the mismanagement and lack of accountability in the Grenfell Tower Tragedy. Unfortunately, neither is the University of Nottingham. As you can see from some of the replies beneath your official UoN twitter post, the University has yet again failed to do the bare minimum. Silence is compliance and this is no longer an option, it is time for the University to **do more and do better**.

It is truly disappointing that there is no clear action agenda outlined in your statement. Nevertheless, the Presidents of the majority black student societies on campus have identified specific areas affecting the Black community in the University of Nottingham that require immediate improvements.

- Firstly, we would like a proper acknowledgement of who we are as a community - a community of black students within the University of Nottingham. We make up 21% of the BAME community yet our attainment gap is a lot lower than the other minority groups. The university must address this gap by taking race equality seriously and providing a positive experience for black students. To most effectively support and acknowledge us, we ask that the University of Nottingham Student Union appoints a Black Students Officer in order to better represent and cater to the needs of the black students within the University. We also suggest that more officers be appointed to acknowledge the other ethnic minority groups at the University.
- Secondly, we believe that both the University and the Students Union are capable of doing much more to celebrate Black History Month. It is important that more funds be allocated to the Black History Month Celebrations in order to create more and better awareness about the black community, our history and our diverse cultures. Black History Month is not just a month about the celebration of the black community, but it is also a month that should be dedicated to educating everyone within the University of Nottingham community about how they can contribute to fight against racial injustice.
- A faster, clearer and more user-friendly system to report racial harassments and creating more awareness of the system. The current system of reporting to "[harassments@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:harassments@nottingham.ac.uk)" has been repeatedly reported as inefficient by your students. In addition, it is not widely known to the black community and this has gravely impacted the mental health of some members of our community as your current system

simply does not offer us a safe place to seek refuge. Thus, further reiterating our emphasis for the need of a Black Students Officer within the Student Union.

- The University should also develop clear policies and procedures that outline consequences for discriminatory treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, and other social identities. These much-needed policies should seek to provide accountability that is critical for combating hostile racial climates.
- We also strongly suggest that curriculums across all schools and departments be decolonized. As diversity is highly valued by the university, an inculcation of black history, notable achievements and case studies should be acknowledged and taught in all fields of study where applicable.
- We also urge you to provide professional training for departments in the University and SU on how to lead effective conversations about racism in their classrooms and as student advisors. We also ask that you provide similar training to administrators, staff, and student leaders.
- Stop using only numeral diversity in admissions or graduation rates as the primary metrics for progress. Instead, focus as well on measuring the racial climate on campus and student feelings of belonging and attachment to the institution. Both quantitative and qualitative data on diversity within the University should be critically examined.
- We urge to source a sponsor who would be happy in providing financial aid or some sort of crowd funding specifically for Black British students, who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, directly in recognition of the turmoil our community has faced economically and socially at the expense of British Society. Similar to the International student's financial aid.

*Chineye Nwagagbo*

**President of Student Union's Afro-Caribbean Society**

*Annette A.A. Amoa*

**President of Student Union's Ghanaian Society**

*Gakenia Siika*

**President of Student Union's East African Society**

*Bolu Fayese & Jared Spencer*

**Co-Presidents of Student Union's One Heritage Society**

*Nifemi E. Runsewe*

**President of Student Union's Nigerian Society**

*Adila Ismail*

**President of Student Union's Somali Society**

*Omolade & Bridget*

**Student Union Black and Minority Ethnic**

*Michelle Gladstone*

**President of the Afro Caribbean Medical Network**

We invite constructive discourse to see that these programs and initiatives become a reality. We eagerly await your response.

Kind Regards,