

# RE-TENSION



**USING FILM AND DEBATE TO TACKLE  
RACISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
A TOOLKIT AND TRAINING SESSION FOR UNIVERSITIES**

# Re:Tension

*Re:Tension* is a short 20 minute film that follows Thapelo, a bright and capable university student, on a day where he is unwittingly forced to question the judgements of his tutors and peers, and delve deeper into his own actions, choices and beliefs.

*Re:Tension* addresses the topic of institutional racism and the gap in student retention amongst BAME (Black, Asian and Minority, Ethnic) students within British universities. The film was inspired by analysing statistical data that highlighted the unexplained dropout rate of BAME students.

The film attempts to provide an real insight into unconscious racial harassment within the higher education system and micro-aggressions that often go unnoticed.

## The toolkit

The toolkit, developed by Senior Teaching Fellow Syra Shakir in collaboration with Ricardo Barker, uses *Re:Tension* and the aftermath debate to openly challenge racism and discrimination. It encourages group discussion around accountability and responsibility, uses a theoretical model titled 'The Forced Silence' and refers to two of the five principles of Critical Race Theory essential in the fight against discrimination; The Voices of People of Colour and Interest Convergence.

## How is it delivered?

A half-day online session delivered by Syra Shakir and Ricardo Barker.

Following the screening of *Re:Tension* (run time: 20 minutes), Syra and Ricardo will begin the aftermath debate. The audience will be split into groups with opportunities to discuss the film, how it made them feel and feedback to the group. Attendees will be encouraged to share personal experiences and reflect on racial inequality in their institutions. It is anticipated that the University will come away with actions that can be implemented.

## How many people can attend?

There is no maximum number of attendees – the more people involved, the better.

## Who should attend?

All staff members – lecturers, researchers, professional services, Leadership team, Executive – we can offer separate sessions for different Schools/departments if required.

## When is the training available?

Wednesdays, from September 2020 (online only).

## How much does it cost?

£1,000.

## Meet your trainers



### Syra Shakir

Syra Shakir is a Senior Teaching Fellow and has worked as a senior academic at Leeds Trinity University since 2008. She is a qualified social worker with children and families and her background is professional, front-line practice with communities for over 18 years. She has also worked as an Independent Reviewing Officer for children in care, in youth work and in the probation service. Syra's passion is in supporting people to be the best they can be and challenging social injustices. She lives in Bradford, West Yorkshire.



### Ricardo Barker

Ricardo Barker is a filmmaker and music composer residing in the north of England. He worked for ITV in the UK as a single-camera television director before becoming a freelancer of short-commissioned documentaries for the BBC and Channel 4. His passion lies in the cinematic portrayal of narrative drama. He is a Senior Lecturer in Film Production at Leeds Trinity University and lives in Leeds (TBC).

**Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the training toolkit will be delivered online and delivered through Microsoft Teams. The face-to-face toolkit will be available in the near future dependent on COVID-19 restrictions being lifted. If you are interested in the online training toolkit, please get in touch with Sophie at [retension@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:retension@leedstrinity.ac.uk).**



## Contact us

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