**Black student experience and outcomes on S112: improving a level 1 STEM module**

**Jennie**

You've probably heard about the awarding gap between Black and White students’ outcomes at The Open University and indeed the sector wide. The gap exists at qualification and module level and for outcomes, for example the degree class awarded, and rates of completion and progression.

Data suggests that Black students on S112: *Science concepts and practice,* are significantly less likely to complete all the assessments, less likely to pass and for those who do pass, less likely to be awarded a good pass than their White peers. We should adhere that there are relatively few Black students on S112 typically between 25 and 30 per year out of up to 2000.

So, having identified that we have a problem we asked, what are the needs of Black students on S112 are and barriers to their study, and what could be influencing the experience and outcomes for Black

students?

**Louise**

To answer these questions, we're gathering detailed data about the students. This includes scores from assessment information about prior and concurrent study and their employment status.

We have welcomed to the project team Angela Richards; a Black Associate Lecturer as Angela says, “the voice of African Caribbean students who have an interest in science can somehow get lost if it's not encouraged.” We want to know how we can improve the module and students support to enable better outcomes for all our African and Caribbean students.

Angela with assistance from Anne-Marie Hines, who is a black OU health sciences student, will be facilitating focus groups with the students in the autumn. We intend to undertake qualitative, probably thematic analysis, of the focus group transcripts and share our findings next year.

So, what can you do to help? We welcome any suggestions you may have on how to engage students in our project. We are currently struggling to recruit them for the focus groups, but we hope direct contact from Angela will work.

Thank you for listening.