BOOK REVIEWS

Krystian Szadkowski (2023), *Capital in Higher Education: A Critique of the Political Economy of the Sector*
London: Palgrave Macmillan, xxv, 271 pp., ISBN: 978-3-031-38443-1

This book makes an important contribution to critical university studies, presenting a Marxist critique of the political economy of higher education centred on higher education's transformation into a capitalist productive sector, through the 'subsumption' of academic labour and transformation of academic prestige. Rejecting 'exceptionalist' perspectives centred on higher education's incompatibility with capitalism and the profit motive (pp. 72–75), Szadkowski uncovers the contemporary publishing, indexing and measurement complex as a 'hidden abode of production' (p. 78), operating through capitalist platforms, products and services.

Szadkowski's approach is theoretically and methodologically exemplary. The first two chapters outline and justify a Marxist critique of the capital–labour entanglement. Dialectical critique offers possibilities to break through conceptual and political deadlocks (pp. 8–9), through a triple move of 'in-against-beyond'. Chapter 3 surveys existing critiques of neoclassical economics, academic capitalism and higher education's 'non-capitalist' characteristics, arguing that these fail to explain how capital and academic labour are entangled. Chapter 4 argues that failure to understand the entanglement process leads to failure to identify how it might be avoided or transcended.

Chapter 5 explains 'subsumption' as the critical Marxist concept upon which the whole book rests. Chapters 6 (on measurement) and 7 (on prestige, 'quality' and the prestige economy) explain how academic labour is brought under capitalist control. These most substantive and detailed chapters show how capital and academic labour became entangled through measurement apparatuses that control, standardise and accelerate academic labour. The 'evaluative state' is the key to how academic labour becomes subject to specifically capitalist forms of measurement via national evaluation systems (pp. 144–145). The state's increasing demands for control through data and measurement are eagerly met by burgeoning commercial entities involved in academic publishing, data and metrics. The underpinning 'political

ontology of science' (p. 173) is explained by the historical development of the scientific prestige economy, leading on to an account of cognitive capitalism, dispossession and the development of capitalist 'open access' in Chapter 8.

The preoccupation with subsumption leads to an important distinction being missed, between 'open access' as redefined by the contemporary capitalist complex and the clothes that it stole from existing knowledge commons. Enclosures of knowledge in the process of commodification involved in academic publishing, data and metrics ('primitive accumulation', in Marx's terms) are relatively downplayed. Szadkowski does not acknowledge historical global activism that anticipated the current capitalist oligopoly and continuously sought to de-commodify and 'common' knowledge ahead of the rise of the current commercial evaluation complex. Chapters 9 and 10 address the production of the common but privilege a somewhat formal analysis. The common is a revolutionary concept that functions dialectically, by critiquing what it is not – not the governance of common resources and not forms of democratic social autonomy that coexist with capital, even if these forms seem more humane.

The conclusion calls for a movement to create a free university that universalises the common as a *formal* potential to abolish capital itself (p. 246). Really existing non-capitalist alternatives are not revolutionary enough, while anti-capitalist initiatives fail to counter neoliberal versions of open access (pp. 209–210, 216). Concentration is focused on the horizon of critique (in, against), while not quite reaching what lies 'beyond' – the horizon of transformation. Szadkowski is not optimistic, concluding that commons within and beyond university walls are limited, fragile and threatened, only neoliberal versions of profit-seeking open-access – the 'parasitic forms' remain (pp. 238–239). Residing on the 'ontological order', the common stands for openness and transformability of being, but stands aside from concretely open beings or doings. The call to common 'big science, technology and infrastructure' (p. 256) addresses capital, universities and research, neglecting smaller-scale, capillary and networked processes of open research, learning and teaching. Robust, globally diffused, open practices and resources exist and could flourish, especially as the contradictions and cracks widen in the capitalist evaluative oligopoly. Non-capitalist open access and scientific commoning already attract an ambivalent level of support from evaluative states across the Global North, while national and regional systems in the Global South have continuously relied on open resources, collaborative non-profit science and non- or less commercialised commons out of necessity. Commercial academic publishing's astonishing greed, yielding greater profitability than Google, Apple or Amazon (Buranyi

2017; Mayoni 2022), contradicts neoliberal educational and research austerity, pushing universities, academics and even the evaluative state towards de-commodified alternatives.

Perhaps the 'exceptionalism' critique throws the baby out with the bathwater. Praxis, learning methodology and pedagogy are surely relevant, since horizontally distributed, collaborative and engaged practices concretely transform knowledge in the present. If the common is a social relation and not a thing, the decolonial Marxist critique of 'thingification' (Césaire 2000) is central, concerning learning itself as a social relation connecting unalienated subjects and use values. As bell hooks wrote, '[t]he academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility' (1994: 207). A systematic, alternative approach to knowledge commoning as practices of use enables academics and perhaps even states to resist commercial capture. Non-profit knowledge and science networks provide resources for transnational organisations and activists, being connected to academics who are not engaged in being evaluated by state institutions, but rather in contesting the very aims of economics and education, while connecting learners and scientists with struggles for environmental, health and social justice, and peace.

Open practices and resources extend beyond the capitalist subsumption of academic labour by the capitalist measurement, publishing and marketing oligopoly. Non-commercial open research and education can resist the subsumption of academic labour by capital, by offering alternative social relations of commoning, production, evaluation and use.

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Virna Rossi (2023), *Inclusive Learning Design in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Creating Equitable Learning Experiences*
New York: Routledge, 344 pp., ISBN: 9781032122298

Inclusivity is equity, justice and social respect. Virna Rossi, the author of *Inclusive Learning Design in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Creating Equitable Learning Experiences* (2023), provides practical guidance for higher education professionals on designing inclusive learning experiences and environments. The classroom is a place of opportunities, yet inequities in the higher education sector mirror broader societal disparities in the UK. Addressing these challenges is difficult due to the limited investment in higher education institutions to accommodate multicultural and diverse abilities. Thus, creating an inclusive educational environment requires deliberate efforts, resources and skills, raising the critical question of who is responsible for making universities more inclusive places for learning.

Contributions from eighty students and staff members allow for examining the persistent challenges amid rising student expectations and multifaceted global events impacting local, national and international contexts within higher education. The book's case studies urge interdisciplinary collaborations to foster innovation. While these varied perspectives and lived experiences offer valuable insights, the core values shared among colleagues highlight the importance of inclusivity in all aspects of learning and teaching.

The 'roots-to-shoots' approach in the book guides readers through five phases of the comprehensive learning design journey. Section 1 explores the foundational values of the 'metaphorical inclusive learning design tree'. Section 2 follows by addressing the learning context of setting up and engagement. Section 3 develops learning content through input and practice. Section 4 frames understanding outputs and feedback via assessment of learning. Section 5 completes the cycle by evaluating the course and university experience. Each section encourages readers to reflect using the case studies to activate our inner dialogues towards inclusive learning design, with provocative questions probing our thinking and applications.

Inclusive design is the book's central topic, with Rossi and her collaborators skilfully positioning students at the heart of the 'roots-to-shoots' approach, continually examining the duties and responsibilities of educators, teachers, supporters and all others with higher education roles. For example, the 'INCLUSIVE' acronym framing the content of Section 1 captures educational values from both professional and student perspectives, displaying inclusivity (p. 3). This approach goes beyond merely listing values; it encourages critical questioning and ultimately living these values

to intentionally foster fairness, justice and inclusiveness. Designing learning with students in mind points towards the principle of 'equitable hospitality', as described in Bali's example (p. 6). It also incorporates the holistic development of students, considering their intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions, as discussed by Hefte (p. 10). Thus, pedagogical partnerships are valuable, inclusive practices for students and colleagues, reinforcing the overall inclusive learning design narrative (Section 1).

The book emphasises engaging students through both physical and digital spaces, fostering a supportive community and culture (Sections 2 and 3). It focuses on practising and articulating values, reinforcing the purpose of universities and classrooms. The case studies highlight the need to accommodate all abilities by centring students and promoting inclusivity and decolonised content. A critical question posed, 'What knowledge is valued in my discipline?', encourages readers to ensure that content is relevant and supports students' well-being and sense of belonging. Despite the complex structure of universities today, the book discusses teachers' and lecturers' responsibilities within this environment (p. 131), questioning whether they should function as distant talking encyclopaedias or focus on connecting and relating challenging conceptual ideas. Sections 2 and 3 stimulate critical reflection on the purpose of teaching, urging a reconsideration of learning and fostering more inclusive learning designs (Chapter 4).

The book recommends using learning threshold concepts (p. 138). This approach masters transformative and often challenging core ideas that fundamentally change how a learner understands and engages with a discipline to shift towards a form of teaching incorporating feedback (p. 141). It advocates for inclusive approaches like flipped learning and self-directed learning to promote democracy and inclusivity, accommodating both neurotypical and neurodivergent learners (Chapter 5, p. 162). Addressing the multifaceted challenges in higher education, this book discusses the need to scaffold cognitive overload, embrace students' learning journeys and integrate diverse approaches to enhance engagement and representation beyond the classroom.

Evaluation and feedback to learning are often rushed and overlooked in limited contact hours. However, Sections 4 and 5 stress the importance of continuing inclusiveness in learning outcomes and feedback, highlighting the need for students to feel valued and fulfilled (p. 232). Shifting the locus of control from teachers to give students a choice highlights the university's role in fostering self-regulation through formative and summative assessments. Though challenging, reflective practice is crucial to evidencing learning and allowing students to assess progress and engage with relevant disciplinary practices (p. 262). However, from a broader perspective,

evaluating learning and completing the 'roots-to-shoots' approach should inform course evaluation and broader curriculum design, contributing to ongoing professional development. Chapters 10 and 11 address the importance of continuous course evaluation, offering opportunities for asynchronous student feedback and encouraging educators to be open and transparent. This openness allows student scrutiny, helping create more inclusive learning environments and enhancing the university experience.

Overall, this book highlights inclusivity as both a responsibility and an opportunity for everyone in higher education, regardless of their role. Rossi and the diverse contributors emphasise the necessity of engaging in inclusive learning design. Although implementation can be challenging, human diversity provides valuable insights and opportunities for collective academic, cultural and social growth. The book frames inclusivity through values, context, content, assessment and evaluation. While initially targeting higher education professionals with classroom responsibilities, the book also serves as a resource for students, promoting the co-creation of learning and teaching activities through partnership. Higher education is inherently challenging, but the focus should be on system-wide improvement. This book advocates empowering students as leaders in their learning and urges educators to reflect on their pedagogical positions within the broader educational ecosystem and embrace inclusive learning design values. Through personal reflection, Rossi guides readers through her professional development journey, illustrating how this vision can enhance growth while remaining rooted in core values.

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Rosi Smith (2024), *Deepening Participation: The Impact of Cuba's Local University Centres*
New York: Peter Lang, 244 pp., ISBN: 978-1-6366-7278-6

Deepening Participation: The Impact of Cuba's Local University Centres offers a comprehensive analysis of the effects of the major reform to university access implemented in Cuban higher education in the early 2000s. The creation of local universities in every Cuban municipality allowed Cuba to reach enrolment rates of 40 to 66 per cent between 2005 and 2010 (MES 2019). These impressive figures involved a huge reshaping of the Cuban university landscape – for instance, creating new campuses, democratising

access and diversifying the sociodemographic background of teachers and students. Rosi Smith provides one of the very few serious studies of this major transformation. The book is a very valuable contribution to this scarcely studied topic.

Drawing on an innovative approach that combines ethnographic methods with the Latin American perspective of testimony, Smith examines the impacts of the universalisation of higher education policy by dialoguing with those considered marginal or subaltern actors in the Cuban university system. This choice is based on the criterion that participants' 'voices should challenge dominant and colonialist discourses as an equal and alternative form of knowledge' (p. 5). Additionally, this monograph sketches out potential directions for analysing university impacts worldwide. Its relevance lies in how Smith links local universities with young people's and teachers' lives, communities' cultural practices and changes in interpersonal relationships. She sees local universities themselves as sites of ongoing changes and local development. And she still makes room in the book for comparisons with the UK model.

Chapters 1 and 2 provide the historical, geographical and political contexts. In the first chapter, readers meet the evolution of the university system in Cuba from the 1720s to the present. Smith gives an account of the in-depth transformation of higher education that started in 1959 and then focuses on the impacts of the economic crisis of the 1990s on declining university enrolments and a reversal of the progress made in widening participation as two key conditions for creating municipal universities in the 2000s. The second chapter describes Granma province, which was the site of research. Compared to Havana, this is poor, mainly rural, relatively neglected and one of the most peripheral Cuban territories. Known as the 'Cradle of the Revolution', Granma seems frozen in time.

Delving into the municipalisation programme's inception, in Chapter 3 Smith introduces the reform that created university campuses in every Cuban municipality between 2002 and 2010. Initially known as municipalisation, it worked simultaneously as a higher education, social and employment policy. It aimed to reintegrate unemployed youth into education because Cuba had very high levels of youth disengagement during the 1990s. Drawing on teacher and student testimonies, the author discusses how local universities became a pathway for disenchanted young people to return to education and eventually enter university while receiving a small stipend. The passage from the street to education was through enrolling in 'Access Courses for Youth', in which the so-called 'lost generation' was prepared to access university. Figures show the magnitude of the programme, reaching a peak in 2007–2008 when university enrolment was 743,979 (MES

2019). Marking a turnaround in overcoming youth disengagement, the establishment of 'municipal universities was part of a broader response to the new fragmentation of society that had arisen during the 1990s' (p. 38). Smith describes the diverse challenges faced by students and teachers, including performing beyond the established negative social perception of marginalised youth and the difficulty of balancing study with work and family responsibilities.

In Chapter 4, Smith addresses how the new universities helped to revitalise local economies and provided new opportunities for community development, such as for those who lost their jobs in the decline of the sugar industry. In Smith's view, this higher education modality benefited the communities not only economically but also socially and culturally. In the interviewees' words, it was a transformative programme for them.

> Taking a degree is a complete change. It's not the same when you walk through a large room or theatre for them to say, 'Look, the operator, the worker from the sugar mill', as it is for them to say 'Look, it's Engineer so-and-so'. (I.38, student, agro-industrial engineering, Bartolomé Masó, p. 66)

> I'd say that I changed almost 99.99 per cent from going through the process. These days, … I realise how much I changed, because my vision of the world was completely altered, because the degree of sociocultural studies is beautiful and, for me, the subjects common to all degrees are beautiful too. (I.1, student, sociocultural studies, Bartolomé Masó, p. 66)

Furthermore, moving to the level of interpersonal relationships in Chapter 5, the author points out that by adopting 'situated learning' it was possible to mitigate the massiveness of the local universities, create new kinds of interpersonal links and transform participants' social status. In her view, all the achievements she describes could only be understood as a collective participation process, which is highlighted as having important political effects.

Smith discusses social changes fostered by local universities in Chapters 6 and 7, which encompass gender advancements and communities' cultural developments. She highlights the independence, power and confidence gained by women. This is labelled by the research participants as 'women's empowerment', even though women often had to balance work, study and domestic responsibilities. Education altered women's relationships with their partners, families and communities, leading to greater gender equality. The text suggests that universalisation drove women to lead cultural initiatives, particularly those who enrolled in the degree in sociocultural studies. Overall, local universities strengthened the role of cultural promoters and

art instructors in fostering community participation and preserving local traditions. Undergraduate dissertations from local university centres illustrate the depth of community participation and the impact of cultural work.

Given the impressive impact that Smith describes earlier, in Chapter 8 she wonders how the local universities should be judged. This powerful ethnography allows her to go beyond controversies in Cuba concerning the affordability, relevance, quality, financial cost and impact on employment of the universalisation programme. She contrasts the hegemonic narratives about the negative aspects of this programme, which originated mainly in Havana and account for national statistics, with its beneficiaries in Granma province. The author argues that, despite the challenges, the value of local universities went beyond economic considerations and quality concerns, and they should be taken as a success.

Addressing the future of municipal universities, Smith assesses in Chapter 9 the changes in their role. Nowadays, these universities are called to play a strategic function in local development due to the decentralisation policy that has transferred powers to local governments. Municipal University Centres draw on local graduates who are now available to facilitate this process through knowledge production and management.

Based on the experience of Cuban local universities, in Chapter 10 Smith draws parallels with widening participation universities in England. Reflecting on the importance of place and connection in higher education, the author argues that education should not just be about individual social mobility but also about collective community development. 'If the UK model can be crudely characterised as higher education providing a new cultural experience that changes you so that you can, or even must, leave your community, a similarly simplistic account of the Cuban model under municipalisation might say that the cultural change in you then changes your community' (p. 210). Rosi Smith concludes that, coming from the Cuban experience, widening participation should be important not only in terms of access but also in deepening the impact of education on communities.

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Gary Saunders (2023), *Prefiguring the Idea of the University for a Post-Capitalist Society*
London: Palgrave Macmillan, xxxii, 256 pp., ISBN: 978-3-031-46648-9

Practising critique from within autonomous learning spaces

While the sense of crisis affecting the higher education sector is growing and intensifying, at the same time faith in critique as a tool for intervention is beginning to wane. More and more voices are being heard about the need to develop a post-critical approach that will transcend the limitations of critique, especially in the area of practice. The accumulation of critical knowledge about the processes that are turning the university into ruins seems to have overloaded critique and caused it to bend under its own weight. Thus, critique has plunged completely into negativity and lost its affirmative capacity to construct a world beyond the status quo. Fortunately, the critical tradition still has strong arguments to fend off such accusations, and by no means has to surrender the field. Gary Saunders's book *Prefiguring the Idea of the University for a Post-Capitalist Society* is clear evidence of this.

At first sight, Saunders's book could be read as yet another book on British higher education as the frontier of a neoliberal takeover of universities. But nothing is further from the truth. If indeed this process is at the centre of his concern, the perspective adopted in the book brilliantly evades post-critical accusations of a contemplative and therefore external attitude to the object of study. It succeeds by making autonomous learning spaces the privileged vantage point that frames his narrative on the neoliberal reforms made to British higher education since the late 1970s. The strength of this solution lies in a peculiar status ascribed by Saunders to autonomous learning spaces. It is peculiar because it occurs on several interrelated levels. Its conceptual nature, fuelled by the traditions of 'Open' Marxism and anarchist thought, meets here with a historical perspective – historical documentation of autonomous learning spaces' emergence out of the UK student protests – and finally with autoethnographic reflection, as Saunders has first-hand experience of being active within autonomous learning spaces. History, theory and practice are, thus, intertwined in a powerful narrative that gives hope to the sector that is under constant pressure. Autonomous learning spaces in Saunders's argument become a living concept and experience. This is what sets Saunders's book apart from shallow criticism that all too often is nothing else but a longing sigh for lost privilege. It perfectly captures how hope and opening the horizon of the future are produced through taking an antagonistic stance and through the process of struggle. But what becomes clear with every page is that this struggle itself is prefigurative of the future yet to come.

In the end, it is a struggle *for* something. But not for the lost public university, nor even for a more collegial and open university, but for a post-capitalist one. It is a struggle for that which was prefigured in its content: values antagonistic to the status quo that were produced through adapting new forms of education, subjectivation and organisation. Hence, Saunders seems to argue that any endeavour to prefigure post-capitalist alternatives to higher education requires the institutionalisation of the ethos and lessons learned from autonomous learning spaces. This involves shaping an organisational form capable of embodying and exemplifying potential post-capitalist alternatives. It follows that there cannot be a ready-made blueprint of such a form, but Saunders clearly points to the idea of a cooperative university that slowly but consistently takes form in this process – a process that is increasingly dependent on the ability to connect different struggles (in his chosen example of autonomous learning spaces) and at the same time cross hierarchies that make this process daunting in the first place (as in the case of student–faculty relations).

This is precisely what I find the most valuable in Saunders's narrative – the ability to 'stay with the trouble' of autonomous learning spaces. His focus on different historical experiments with alternatives to neoliberal higher education has nothing to do with a romanticisation of such spaces. Saunders clearly points to limitations – both internal and structural – that autonomous learning spaces face in the course of their development. But transcending these limitations does not hinge on blind faith in the form of autonomous learning spaces themselves. It rather can be achieved by learning from what has already been accomplished and putting those experiences into practice in the course of the struggle itself. And this is exactly what Saunders does, as each discussion of different autonomous learning spaces within Britain puts great focus on both practical and theoretical knowledge accumulated in the course of its activity. Through Saunders's book this knowledge is shared and becomes an indispensable collection of practical knowledge ready to be deployed and to carry the process of prefiguring a post-capitalist university forward. As such, the book culminates in one of the chapters taking the form of a guide with practical points of advice – such as connecting different autonomous learning spaces to build a wider network of resistance; establishing connections with the local community; nurturing the affective dimension – for those who are involved or wish to be involved in setting up autonomous learning spaces.

As such, *Prefiguring the Idea of the University for a Post-Capitalist Society* undoubtedly deserves much praise. However, a small caveat is warranted. The sheer scope of prefiguring a post-capitalist university calls for an equally expansive response to this task. Although Saunders pays much

attention to how, through the process of connecting and scaling different autonomous learning spaces, it becomes possible to crack the shell of the old university and make space for something new to flourish in its place, at times his scope seems somewhat limited. This limitation manifests itself with his sole focus on struggles within the British higher education sector. In this sense, it is a pity that May '68, which appears in the historical part of the book, does not return in spirit in the later chapters to remind us of the importance of the circulation of struggles, not only within the sector but also between sectors and across national borders.

Regardless of this remark, Saunders's book truly represents what critique and critical university studies have to offer – integrity of critique, thinking with and from within the movement, and blurring distinctions between work of theory and practice. To be able to deliver on its promise, critique has to be embodied. Saunders not only makes a strong case that such embodiment can happen through autonomous learning spaces but goes a step further. He gives us tools as a result of which we have fewer and fewer excuses to put off prefiguring our shared future.

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Arun Verma (ed.) (2022), *Anti-Racism in Higher Education: An Action Guide for Change*
Bristol: Policy Press, 230 pp., ISBN: 978-1447364726

This informative and thought-provoking edited collection offers practical guidance to students and staff in UK universities and colleges on how they can act to challenge racism in their own institutions. It is the result of the editor's call for Black, Asian and minority ethnic students and staff to contribute their knowledge and experience to 'enable HE institutions to start a sustainable and authentic anti-racist journey' (p. 3). The intended readership includes those already active in equality, diversity and inclusion work and those unaware of what commitment to anti-racism entails.

In the introduction, Arun Verma summarises the legal duties of higher education institutions to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups. Institutional and structural racism, anti-racism, intersectionality, colonialism, imperialism and White privilege are then briefly defined. The chapters that follow cover staff and student experiences of racism, research

systems, teaching systems and pedagogies that enable racism, and issues of governance and strategy. Each chapter starts with a review of recent and relevant literature and ends with a series of questions for readers to consider.

In Chapter 2, Min Duchenski, Tamjid Mujtaba and Jalpa Ruparelia address academic staff's experiences of racism. They advocate for meaningful and mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training for all staff and effective procedures for reporting instances of bullying and harassment. All too often, employees do not report such experiences because they fear they will not be listened to and will be victimised as a result of complaining.

Claire Lee deals with professional and support services staff's experience of racism in Chapter 3. She proposes senior staff sponsorship of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff networks and systematic career development training for all professional and support services staff. Staff employed on time-limited projects should be given individual support as well, including assistance in finding another job when their fixed-term contact ends.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 consider students' experiences of racism and are written by Josephine Gabi and Sonia Gomes, Arun Verma, and Zoe Nutakor respectively. The recommendations in Chapter 4 include curricula and teaching methods that acknowledge students' prior knowledge, experiences and histories and more efforts to reduce the degree-award gap that exists between White students and Black, Asian and minority ethnic students with the same entry qualifications and similar social and educational backgrounds. The necessity for a complaints procedure in which postgraduate students can have confidence is a key recommendation in Chapter 5, along with zero tolerance of racism in student societies and the university as a whole in Chapter 6.

Arun Verma writes about research funding and contracts, the research excellence framework, research collaborations and publishing in the next three chapters. He calls for more Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff on grant awarding bodies, research assessment panels and the editorial boards of scholarly journals. Researchers from the Global North should also make sure that research partnerships they undertake with colleagues from the Global South are genuinely collaborative and do not automatically prioritise the research agendas of countries in the Global North.

In Chapter 10, Arun Verma discusses the position of academics whose job descriptions consist of teaching and scholarship rather than teaching and research. They are still expected to publish and apply for grants so need to have time for this in their workload allocation and to be included in relevant communities of practice. He goes on to argue in Chapter 11 that external evaluations of an institution's learning, teaching and student support, such as the Teaching Excellence Framework and the National Student Survey,

should include a much stronger equality, diversity and inclusion perspective, as should the institutional action plans that follow these external assessments.

Musharrat J. Ahmed-Landeryou examines pedagogies, professionalism and curricula in Chapter 12, concluding that embedding anti-racism in teaching methods and the curriculum helps to make the classroom a safer place for all students. In Chapter 13, Parise Carmichael-Murphy and Eileen Ggbagbo encourage lecturers to recognise students' experiential knowledge in class discussions and use examples and case studies drawn from different parts of the world in their class presentations and the assignments they set.

In Chapter 14, Briana Coles and Arun Verma stress the importance of engaging Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and local communities in how the characteristics and values of the university are portrayed in external communications. It is crucial that the images of racially minoritised students and staff used in publicity material reflect the reality of the university and do not pretend that the institution is more diverse than it actually is.

Recognising that applicants for jobs may want to leave their current post because of discrimination or bullying, Deya Mukherjee (Chapter 15) says that questions about the reason for leaving should be dropped from application forms, along with the requirement to obtain a reference from one's current line manager. Higher education employers should also pay a living wage to their lowest paid workers and improve the pay and conditions of outsourced workers by bringing cleaning and security services back in-house.

In Chapter 16, Jitesh S. B. Gajjar, Manish Maisuria and an anonymous author remind readers that Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff are seriously under-represented at leadership level in universities and that the membership of governing bodies lacks diversity. They advise senior management teams and boards of governors to work closely with students' unions and with staff trades unions in the development and monitoring of equality, diversity and inclusion policies and actions.

In Chapter 17, Manvir Kaur Grewal points out that there should be at least one racially minoritised person on every appointment panel, that White senior staff would benefit from reverse-mentoring by a less senior Black, Asian or minority ethnic member of staff and that, of course, the time spent on official equality, diversity and inclusion work should be recognised on workload allocations.

Strategy, planning and accountability are addressed by Shaminder Takhar, Rashid Aziz, Musharrat J. Ahmed-Landeryou and Pamela Thomas in Chapter 18. They advocate improving whistle-blowing, grievance and

disciplinary procedures and better resourcing of equality, diversity and inclusion units. The meaning of allyship and the importance of collective action are discussed in Arun Verma's conclusion.

The content, format and language of the chapters make the book very straightforward to read. It is the questions for reflection that are challenging, especially for White readers who have not faced discrimination or harassment themselves or considered how the experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and students might be different. I would encourage all readers to persevere with thinking about the questions and to find ways of discussing them with others. For example, readers could select the questions most relevant to their own position in their institution and discuss them in informal groups. This collective activity could lead to participants raising the most urgent issues in their staff union, student union or equality, diversity and inclusion committee to get broader support and, in due course, identification of specific actions to promote racial equality. But, as several authors in this book point out, this is not the end of what is needed. It is essential that any anti-racist action plans, whether for the whole of the institution or part of it, are actually enacted, regularly monitored and progress reported back to the group or committee that initiated the plan.

This is a powerful book. Its coverage of all the key activities that take place in a higher education institution, the inclusion of the lived experiences of the authors and the encouragement to readers to reflect and act are particular strengths. I would like to see it read and acted on in every higher education institution in the UK.

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