

A photograph of three diverse individuals—two men and one woman—collaborating at a laptop. The man in the foreground is Black, the man leaning over him is White, and the woman on the right is wearing a black hijab. They are all looking intently at the laptop screen. The background is blurred, suggesting an office or meeting environment.

Wales  
**TUC**  
Cymru

**Wales TUC  
Anti Racism in  
the workplace**

# Introduction from Shavanah Taj, General Secretary of the Wales TUC



As Trade Unionists we celebrate Black History Month, recognising our history and building for the future. The covid pandemic has highlighted, inequalities run deep into the services we use and the treatment we receive.

Our history has informed our present.

Workplaces are still not equal places and actions are needed to change that. Unions are key to making these changes through bargaining, negotiation and collective action. As Trade Unionists, we must work together to provide solidarity, opportunities and a fair deal for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers.

We're choosing to stand up against racism and hate wherever we find it. We're confident in our common values of respect and equality for all people in Wales.

This Black History Month, we're proudly listing the actions that we can take. Aimed at reps and union members they outline how

we can all make a difference in our workplaces. We know what racism is, we know how harmful it is to people and to our communities.

We've spoken to government, we've informed policies, we've made many changes and plans. Now is the time to take action so that we can make genuine moves towards anti-racism.

Over the coming year, we'll work towards creating further resources, to help drill down into these actions and provide you with step by step guides on how to carry out these changes.

### **The Equality Act**

The Equality Act 2010 is a law that is supposed to protect workers from unfair treatment due to age, sex, race and a number of other characteristics. This law can only protect workers if there are strong equal opportunities policies and practices within every organisation.

### **Using the term Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic**

When collectively discussing racism against a group of people, using terms or acronyms can be helpful in illustrating the collective experience of racism. However, when in workplaces or services – respecting a person's expression of their personal identities in the way they choose is important. In this document we take on board the consultation feedback that Welsh Government received in their Anti-Racism Action Plan. We will continue to use the full term of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people when referring to a collective. However, we also recognised that for Gypsies and Traveller people, Jewish people and people of the Islamic faith, there are concerns about how much this term includes their identities. We will strive to be as specific as possible.

# 10 Actions for workplace reps

As the Welsh Government looks to deliver the Anti-Racism Action Plan, trade unions are at the forefront of making sure that workplaces deliver good quality, fair work for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic workers. This means safe workplaces, where:

- Voices of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic workers are respected, listened to, and acted upon
- Pay is fair, collectively bargained and rises with relation to inflation
- Terms and Conditions are favourable to workers, don't discriminate disproportionately and don't rely on zero-hour or gig economy conditions
- Progression, development, and learning is factored into the worker experience so that all workers can experience this and grow within a workplace
- Workplaces are active in preventing racism, and

in dealing with it quickly, effectively and through a trauma-led approach when it does happen.

**Here are 10 actions that reps can take to make real practical changes in workplaces:**

## **1. Carry out a race audit on your workplace.**

Find out the race of all workers, what grade each worker is employed on and what contract type. This is important to know as many Black Asian and Minority Ethnic workers are underemployed and are working below their qualification level, and often on poorer quality contracts.

### **Checklist**

- Request from HR an analysis of workers by contract type, race, gender and Disability.
- Is there a union agreement on the employment of temporary contract and agency staff?



- ☑ What proportion of the workforce is employed on a temporary contract or through an agency?
- ☑ Have you held a union meeting to ask members if there workers who are working below their qualification level, or who would like to move more hours?
- ☑ Are Black, Asian and Ethnic minority workers overrepresented in the lowest paid jobs within your workplace?

- ☑ How do pay and contract types of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers compare to white workers at the same grade?

## **2. Eliminate zero-hour contracts**

Find out how many roles are currently being undertaken on a zero-hour contract. Work towards providing these workers with decent contracts.



## Checklist

- Is there a policy on and a criteria for the use of temporary and agency staff?
- Does monitoring extend to staff on temporary contracts?
- Why are such workers not given permanent contracts?
- Are there instances where jobs of a similar role or grade are undertaken by staff on permanent contracts?
- Are there instances where the temporary contracts of workers are automatically renewed?
- Are exit interviews conducted with temporary or short-term staff? If yes, what happens to this information?

## 3. Zero tolerance anti racism workplace practice

Create a workplace agreement on the treatment of workers who experience racism, both from colleagues or from customers or clients. Work through actions that will be taken to address the racism and protect the worker experiencing racism.

### Checklist

- Is there a union negotiated agreement on what happens if a worker reports an incidence/ incidences of racism?
- Is there a policy on how to deal with racism towards a worker, from a person outside of the organisation? For example, a patient, client or member of the public



- What records are being kept on incidences of racism and are there trends in that data?
- Are all workers trained in how to deal with incidences of racism?

#### 4. Training

Negotiate that your workplace delivers anti-racism training to all members of staff and set up clearly a code of conduct within the workplace.

##### Checklist

- Have you spoken with your union branch to find out what training they have on anti racism?
- When can you negotiate with your workplace to fund anti racism training for everyone,

including all management staff?

- Have you negotiated mandatory anti racism training for all new staff members as part of their joining instructions?
- Are you enacting the changes quick enough?

#### 5. Monitor progress

Keeping track of what data is being collected and why is important. Monitoring your workplace to make sure that they know where people are working and what types of contracts they are on, can be useful in negotiations.

##### Checklist

Here are a list of questions that can help you in the monitoring process:

- ☑ What is being collected and how will it be used?
- ☑ How will monitoring data be stored and who has access to it?
- ☑ What, when and how will the information be published?
- ☑ What does the data reveal about the diversity?
- ☑ Does it reflect the local population demographics?
- ☑ If the monitoring reveals disproportionate results for certain groups – what steps will the employer take to identify why this is the case?
- ☑ Have race equality targets (ranging from pay, promotion, training, grievances) as a result of the monitoring.
- ☑ Are these targets specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound?
- ☑ Will they be measured by milestones?







## 6. Negotiate changes in recruitment practices

Small changes can make a big difference – anonymised application forms, providing opportunities to visit the workplace prior to interview and guaranteed interview schemes for Black, Asian, and Ethnic minority workers may be positive steps to make your workplace a more welcoming place.

### Checklist

This checklist identifies question that you should ask yourself before putting together a list of demands on changes to your recruitment and selection procedures that you put forward to management

- Does the composition of the workforce reflect the local population? (Information on the local population is available from the local authority and the Census.)
- If not, is any monitoring being carried out to determine if Black



workers are applying for job vacancies and what happens to their applications during the recruitment process

- ☑ Where are job vacancies advertised?
- ☑ Are any steps taken to ensure job advertisements are targeted at under-represented groups?
- ☑ Is a standard application form used for all recruitment?
- ☑ Are job descriptions and selection criteria made clear to all potential applicants and are they objective?
- ☑ Are applications anonymised (i.e. names and gender removed) before being handed over for shortlisting?

- ☑ What training is provided to staff involved in the recruitment and selection process? Does this include training on your workplaces equalities policy and its application to recruitment?

## **7. Invest in workplace development**

As workplaces continue moving towards more automated workplaces, they are losing jobs at the foundational level, many of these are held by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers. Run a retraining and retaining programme to make sure that there are opportunities to progress and stay within the organisation if job roles change

## Checklist

- ☑ This checklist covers issues that you should think about before putting together a list of demands on changes to your career development processes.
- ☑ Is there a specific policy or scheme for career progression?
- ☑ How are promotion/acting up opportunities advertised?
- ☑ Is there open access to career development opportunities and are workers being paid for taking on extra responsibilities?
- ☑ Are all workers eligible to apply for any promotion or acting up opportunities? If not, what reasons are given for limiting access?
- ☑ Is there evidence to show that the employer has followed standard recruitment procedures for promotions? Are job descriptions and person specifications available for

the job, and are applications assessed against this?

## 8. Set up a staff union-backed Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic group

This can help to find out how workers are treated within the organisation and if they are dealing with any workplace issues. It must be supported by Trade Unions.

### Checklist

**Step 1:** talking to the workers who have been affected by discrimination

- What are Black and Ethnic workers experiences of discrimination?
- What do they know about the equal opportunities policies at their place of work?
- Do they feel as though they're working? What does monitoring information reveal?

**Step 2:** Create a course of action before approaching management

- What are the main issues that need to be tackled?
- Is it discrimination at the recruitment stage?
- Or is there an issue with certain groups of workers not being promoted?

**Step 3:** Start thinking about possible solutions and how you can gain support from the majority of your union members. For instance, would a workplace campaign be the most effective way to raise awareness of the issue?

**Step 4:** Think about how management might respond.

**Step 5:** Clarify the exact objectives you're hoping to achieve. You should have this ready before you approach management.

When approaching management, it's also very important that

the voices of Black workers are represented.

And of course, you need to ensure that any agreement you reach with your employer benefits all union members equally.

## 9. Remember the past by honouring the future

Many workplaces will outwardly celebrate Black History Month without taking actions to support their own workers. Work with your employer to make sure that they don't just pay lip service and their actions are not performative.

### Checklist

- Black History Month can be a great time to launch a resource or get employers engaged, but moving towards Anti-racism is something that should happen every day. Is your employer taking actions throughout the year?



- ☑ Is this work is action orientated and being revisited regularly?
- ☑ Are you providing support opportunities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers?

## 10. Build a strong union

Your actions are important, and they rely on having a well organised workplace. Ensure that your union is taking steps to see Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people represented at every level.

### Checklist

- ☑ Campaign for union recognition
- ☑ Make sure that your union membership is inclusive and reach out to workers who haven't yet joined
- ☑ Hold regular union meetings so that everyone has a chance to speak about their issues.
- ☑ Train reps
- ☑ Engage with workers
- ☑ Schedule regular meetings with management and engage in collective bargaining opportunities
- ☑ Show solidarity with other workers from other unions
- ☑ Celebrate your successes as a union
- ☑ Provide opportunities for recovery. Activism is important, but so is rest

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