

## If you have suffered race discrimination

Racism is widespread in further and higher education. UCU is opposed to race discrimination in whatever form it takes. Colleges and universities have a legal obligation to prevent racism towards staff and students. There are a number of ways of challenging racism and giving support to lecturers suffering from it. If you think you may have been racially discriminated against then UCU has clear procedures to support you.

- Don't approach management until you have taken advice from a UCU local representative.
- If you don't know how to contact your local branch officers, then your regional office can assist you. You can find details of our regional offices on our national website, [www.ucu.org.uk](http://www.ucu.org.uk).
- In the first instance, you should contact your departmental union rep or your UCU branch/LA secretary, although you may find it useful to talk to other members of your branch as well, particularly your branch equality officer.
- Your local branch or representative will nominate someone who will be your first point of contact. They should be able to listen to your concerns, and discuss with you the best way to raise them with management
- You should keep a careful diary of events and save any relevant information (letters, emails, documents) that may relate to your case.
- Your employer has certain minimum legal responsibilities. These are set out in the NATFHE (one of UCU's parent unions) document, *Handling Race Discrimination Claims*. There are copies on the web at [www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2305](http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2305). You should make sure that you have seen a copy of this document. Your employer should have a written procedure to deal with claims of racial discrimination or harassment.
- There are many non-confrontational ways of asking your managers to prevent racism. These can include talking to or writing to your immediate manager, or their manager, if the problem is with your supervisor. Later, you can take a complaint through the college grievance or harassment procedures, or initiate a race discrimination questionnaire. If your employer fails to take action after these procedures have been exhausted, then they may be liable to legal action.

- If you decide that the only way to achieve redress is through an Employment Tribunal, then to be eligible for help under UCU's legal scheme, you must have been a UCU member for 90 days. Meanwhile, any application must be made to an Employment Tribunal within three months of the discrimination. Bear in mind that the success rate of race discrimination claims at Tribunal is low, so where possible it is best to resolve the issue within the institution.

**Tackling your concerns can also help prevent the same happening to other staff**