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Black academics paid 14 per cent less than white peers

By Chris Parr

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UCU analysis lays bare shocking pay discrepancies in academia

Just 3 per cent of black academic staff at UK universities are employed as professors, compared with 11 per cent of their white counterparts, according to an analysis by the University and College Union.

The research, published on 15 October, showed that 93 per cent of UK professors are white, despite white people only comprising 84 per cent of all academic staff. According to the

analysis, which looked at data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the average white professor's salary is £82,665, while a black professor can expect to earn £76,610 on average.

It also found an overall pay gap of 9 per cent between white and black and minority ethnic academic staff in general, with academics from a black background suffering the largest pay gap of 14 per cent.

Deborah Gabriel, founder and director of the Black British Academics network and a senior lecturer at Bournemouth University, said the data "merely affirms what we already know—that racial inequality is rife across the higher education sector".

"How long are higher education institutions going to be allowed to continue discriminating with impunity?" she told Research Professional News. "What is needed are sanctions that impose financial penalties on institutions that fail to recruit black academics, fail to remunerate black academics and fail to promote black academics in equitable numbers."

Jo Grady, the UCU's general secretary, said the figures lifted the lid on "the extent of the race pay gaps in universities".

"It is going to take systematic change and some difficult conversations if we are going to make any headway," she said. "Universities need to work with us to address the issue and recognise that they will need to transform their practices to implement real change for BME staff."

A Department for Education spokeswoman told Research Professional News that universities "are autonomous and are responsible for decisions on who they employ and how much they are paid".

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