



## The University of Tomorrow: A Virtual Conference - 5 February 2021

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### Keynote Speaker Biog: Kaushika Patel

Interim Deputy PVC for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Project Director: Decolonising DMU

Deputy Dean for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Kaushika is the Interim Deputy PVC for EDI, Project Director for Decolonising DMU (DDMU) and Deputy Dean for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences and has been in academia for the past 14 years. Prior to entering academia, she practiced and managed as a qualified social worker working with young offenders, children in care and child protection in

Leicester. Kaushika practiced for 17 years before moving to academia and during that time she co-chaired the Black Workers group for Leicestershire County Council for two years.

Kaushika's experience in Higher Education (HE) and the public sector allows her to bring a personal insight and professional perspective in the importance of understanding how to build resilience and emotional intelligence and understand organisational systems and networks and how to operate within them.

Kaushika's approach is to ensure inclusivity in engagement, to ensure that all voices are heard and she is especially conscious of ensuring that she supports and enables the quieter or silenced voices to be heard and have their space. To this effect Kaushika also formally mentors and coaches Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff at DMU to support their career progression as well as enable the building of resilience.

### Keynote Address Theme 2: Decolonising DMU

#### **"It's not just about the curriculum.... the importance of Decolonising the whole Institution and building an anti-racist University"**

Many universities are engaging in work to decolonise the curriculum however as the evaluation of DMU's Freedom to Achieve project identified this is too narrow a focus. The factors for change identified by the project include the place and space of study alongside those who teach and support students and those in positions of power, authority and influence. The main consideration being; do all of these factors provide an institution within which Black, Asian and minority ethnic students can see themselves, their identity, image, history and story reflected and so enabling them to succeed.

This keynote will outline the context, within DMU, the sector and more broadly in society, for the progression to Decolonising DMU. It will consider a variety of approaches for Decolonising an institution and will conclude with information about how to engage with the project and critique attendees' own practice to enable them to begin the process of decolonising the individual, cultural and structural positions they occupy.