

Film has important message

By Claire Lomax

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A FILM about the attainment gap of BAME university students is being filmed at [Leeds Trinity University](#).

Re:tenion is a 20 minute short film following the story of 19-year old Thapelo, a university student wrestling with the idea of whether or not to report racism at his university after an incident with his football teammates.

It is written, directed and produced by Ricardo Barker, a professional documentary and filmmaker and Senior Lecturer in Film Production at [Leeds Trinity University](#).

Ricardo said: "The attainment gap for BAME students within the higher education sector is, unfortunately, pointing towards institutional racism, unconscious bias and micro-aggression at universities across the UK. *Re:tenion* highlights what this looks like in real-life, from the perspective of an 18-year old, a BAME university student, someone who doesn't know exactly how to deal with the banter, or insult, they've just witnessed. It's a powerful story, told by Thapelo but focusing on those closest to him - his



Ricardo Barker filming at [Leeds Trinity University](#)

friends, family members, peers and lecturers."

Re:tenion has been supported financially by [Leeds Trinity University](#) which also provides the set for the two-

week film shoot. Alongside professional actors, Ricardo has enlisted the support of 15 student crew members and in-house production company Trinity Vision to support

with the shoot. Ricardo added: "I'm pleased to be able to highlight such an important message through the power of film and work closely with our students, alongside pro-

fessional actors, to create *Re:tenion*."

Ricardo's vision for *Re:tenion* is to provide a resource for universities to use when discussing racism.



Leeds Trinity film puts racism in the spotlight

A film about the attainment gap of BAME university students was recently filmed at Leeds Trinity University.

Re:tension is a 20-minute short film following the story of 19-year old Thapelo, a university student wrestling with the idea of whether or not to report racism at his university after an incident with his football teammates.

It is written, directed and produced by Ricardo Barker, a professional documentary and filmmaker and Senior Lecturer in Film Production at Leeds Trinity University.

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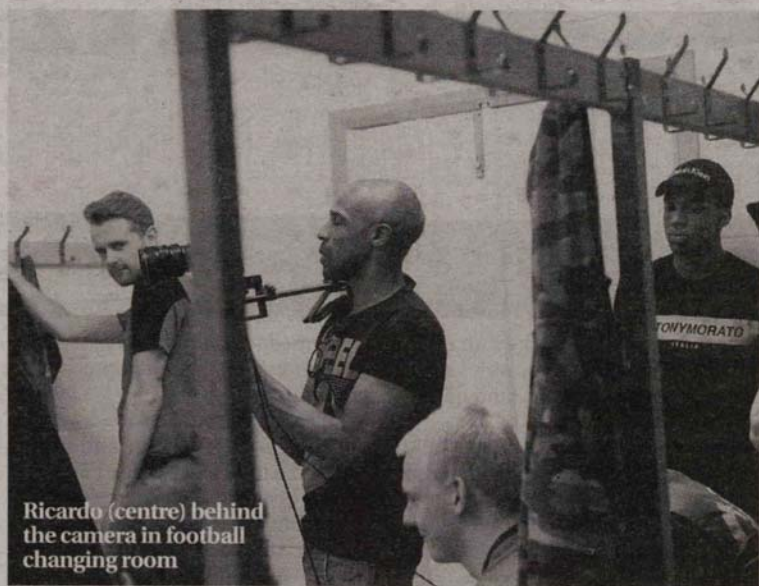
"*Re:tension* highlights what this looks like in real-life, from the perspective of an 18-year old, a BAME university student, someone who doesn't know exactly how to deal with the banter, or insult, they've just witnessed.

"It's a powerful story, told by Thapelo but focusing on those closest to him – his friends, family members, peers and lecturers."

Re:tension has been supported financially by Leeds Trinity University which also provides the set for the two-week film shoot starting this week. Alongside professional actors, Ricardo has enlisted the support of 15 student crew members and in-house production company Trinity Vision to support with the shoot.

Ricardo added: "I'm pleased to be able to highlight such an important message through the power of film and work closely with our students, alongside professional actors, to create *Re:tension*."

Ricardo's vision for *Re:tension* is to provide a resource for universities to



Ricardo (centre) behind the camera in football changing room

use when discussing institutional racism, unconscious bias and the impact this can have on retention and attainment for BAME students.

Despite it being filmed at Leeds Trinity, the University is not mentioned so the film can be accessed and used by other universities.

Professor Ray Lloyd, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Leeds Trinity University, said: "We are committed to ensuring that all our students achieve to their full potential and removing the attainment gap, which is completely at odds with our mission and values.

"Part of the process in eliminating the gap is to speak openly and honestly about the experience of BAME students at Leeds Trinity University, as well as the national picture. This is a conversation that all universities should be having, and we believe Ricardo's film will provide a powerful tool in developing that conversation."

The film is expected to be complete

by the end of August 2019. It will then be launched at the university, submitted for film festivals, and circulated to other universities.

In May 2019, a new report by Universities UK (UUK) and the National Union of Students (NUS) concluded that all UK universities must demonstrate their commitment to university-wide change to eliminate the BAME student attainment gap in UK higher education.

Nationally, of those students graduating in 2017, 57 per cent of black students and 71 per cent of Asian students achieved a first or 2:1, compared to 81 per cent of white students.

At Leeds Trinity University, in 2017, 79.5 per cent of BAME students achieved a first or 2:1, compared to 78.9 per cent of white students – however over the last three years, a lower proportion of BAME students have achieved a first or 2:1 than white students overall.



Film premiere at university

FILM POWER

By **Sally Burton**

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INSTITUTIONAL RACISM and unconscious bias within higher education are key subjects tackled within a film to premiere at Leeds Trinity University.

Re:Tension is a 20-minute short film that follows 19-year-old student, Thapelo, as he wrestles with the idea of whether or not to report racism.

Written, directed and produced by Ricardo Barker, a professional documentary and filmmaker, and senior lecturer at Leeds Trinity, the film highlights what institutional racism, unconscious bias and micro-aggression look like in real-life.

Ricardo said: "It's a powerful story told from the perspective of a 19-year old BAME university student; someone who doesn't know exactly how to deal with the banter, or insults, they witness, but also focusing on those closest to him – friends, family members, peers and lecturers.

I'm pleased to be able to highlight such an important message through the power of film."

Senior university leaders, policy makers and local MPs will attend the November 7 premiere from 4pm.

It will include a question and

answer session with Ricardo, the university's deputy principal Professor Ray Lloyd, and cast and crew members. Leeds Trinity will also present its educational toolkit, developed to accompany the film, for all universities to use as a resource.

Professor Lloyd said: "Part of our commitment to ensuring our students, and students across the country, achieve their full potential is about speaking openly and honestly about the experience of BAME students.

"We hope Re:Tension can be used to develop a conversation and to ultimately have a positive impact on increasing retention and reducing the attainment gap of BAME students."

ONLINE: For breaking news, visit www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk

"I'm pleased to be able to highlight such an important message through the power of film."





FILM: Re:Tension will premiere in Leeds.

EVENTS

Premiere for film tackling racism

A FILM that addresses institutional racism and unconscious bias within higher education has premiered at Leeds Trinity University.

Re:Tension follows 19-year-old student, Thapelo, as he wrestles with the idea of whether or not to report racism at his university. The film was written, directed and produced by Ricardo Barker, a professional documentary and filmmaker and senior lecturer in film at the university.

More than 150 people attended the premiere, including staff and students, senior universi-



FILM: Ricardo Barker, left.

ty leaders, policy makers, local MPs and professionals from the film industry.

The event also featured a question and answer session

with Ricardo, members of the cast and crew, Syra Shakir, co-chairman of the university's BAME network, and Tim Leadbeater, director of student support.

Following the premiere, Leeds Trinity University presented an educational toolkit, created by Ricardo and Syra. The toolkit was developed to accompany the film, and once finalised will be available for all universities to use as a resource.

Re:Tension was also screened as part of a discussion panel at the Universities UK 'Tackling Racial Harassment' conference.



BUSINESS DIARY

Film lecturer puts racism in the spotlight

A film which addresses institutional racism and unconscious bias within higher education has premiered at [Leeds Trinity University](#).

The film, called *Re:Tension*, was written, directed and produced by Ricardo Barker, a professional documentary and filmmaker and senior lecturer in Film at [Leeds Trinity University](#).

More than 150 people attended the premiere, including staff and students from the [Leeds Trinity](#) community, senior university leaders, policy makers, local MPs and professionals from the film industry.

Mr Barker said: "The reception to the screening of *Re:Tension*, as well as witnessing the connection the film made with the audience – causing them to reflect on their own experiences – was fantastic.

"I look forward to sharing the film with higher education institutions, in the hope that it will provoke open and engaging discussions."

