their ability to engage with and complete coursework and assessment tasks. Because of the shame that can be associated with financial hardship, some students may well be reluctant to reveal their situation or access financial support.

seen at Coventry University at the following link.

5. Unconscious bias

Issue: There is a large body of evidence confirming that BAME students face a variety of conscious and unconscious discriminatory practices in traditional classrooms. For instance, BAME students' behaviour is more likely to be rated harshly compared to similar behaviour of white students, staff tend to express more positive and neutral speech toward white students than toward BAME students. And in terms of assessment, BAME students are consistently given lower marks and less favourable feedback than their white counterparts. Though this is an under researched area, evidence suggests these biases are/can be replicated online.

Solutions: We need to assume we not only have the capacity to be biased, but despite our intellectual capabilities, we do practice unconscious bias. So the trick is to try to design this out and one of the benefits of online learning spaces is that we can step back and really develop, design, implement, and evaluate strategies for promoting equitable learning environments. Some of this will be time consuming, but we can for instance, collect real- time data/feedback, which if done sensitively, can empower students too. A good way to enable this is to create anonymous discussion forums.

Unconscious bias results from exposure to negative stereotypes. One way of counteracting this is to ensure that the selection of the range of digitally delivered content does not end up erasing BAME subjects, denying them agency or pathologizing them.

6. Sense of Belonging

Issue: There is a growing body of evidence that student sense of belonging has a direct impact on student attainment and success. Academic life and university processes can be challenging for all of us, but if you come from a background aking the transition can be particularly daunting. In contrast to class based learning, online environments radically change the way we perceive each other and therefore presents its own unique challenges. However, there is evidence that done well, online environments can actually reduce anxiety and disrupt stereotypical impressions. Moreover, with asynchronous learning, it allows students greater flexibility which can be more responsive to cultural differences. However, just as class based learning requires

example, online discussion groups may be inhibiting for students for whom English is not their first language, or they may simply not be familiar with some of the technology.

Solution: The key to creating inclusive learning environments is to reduce student anxiety and, for non-

ility.