

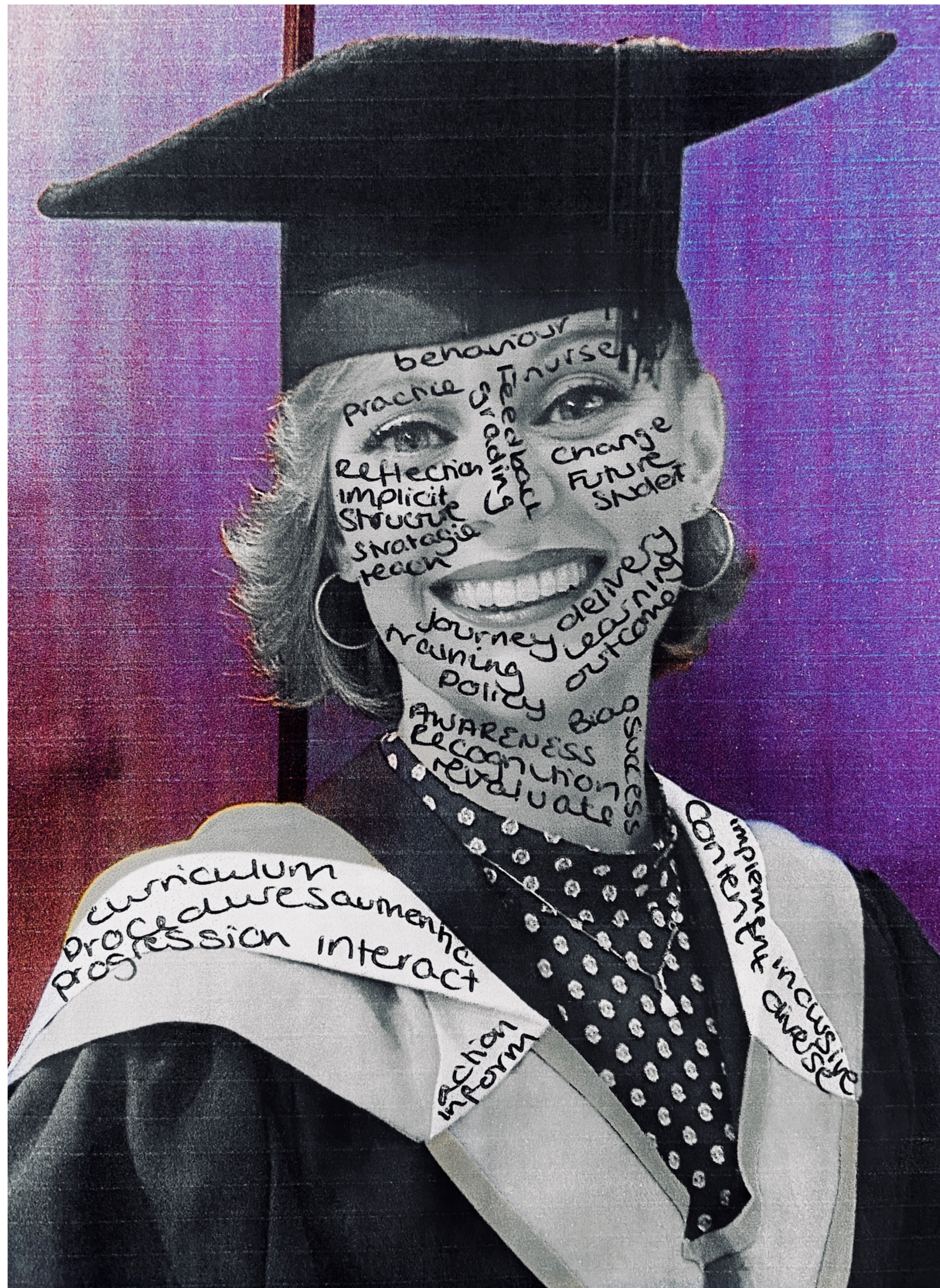


**Bournemouth University**

# Decolonising the Mental Health Nursing Curriculum

E.E.L Brooks

The awareness of explicit and implicit bias within the United Kingdom's higher education (HE) system is growing. Biases can influence HE structure, policies, procedures, resources, curriculum content, and student access. This can infiltrate teacher implicit bias, affecting curriculum delivery, learning outcomes, and assessment practices.



Biases continue to disproportionately impact HE minority groups, who often experience stereotyping, stigma, discrimination, and disparities in service provision. This poses significant challenges to fostering a diverse Mental Health Nursing (MHN) workforce, which is crucial for culturally competent care and reducing healthcare disparities.

## Removal or partial removal of the HE grading system

Grading systems, while intended to assess student performance, can inadvertently perpetuate bias and create disparities. Moving away from a singular assessment outcome and focusing on progressive skills and knowledge development throughout the learning journey could provide a more comprehensive and equitable evaluation of student learning and nursing abilities.

## Decolonising the MHN curriculum

A conscious effort is needed to ensure seminal texts and clinical models reflect diverse perspectives of race, ethnicity, and culture. Broadening the representation and inclusion of diverse voices and experiences, the MHN curriculum can better prepare students to provide care that meets the needs of diverse populations and challenges systemic biases.

Bias within higher education is not solely limited to the MHN curriculum or the grading system. Involving diverse stakeholders, engaging in dialogue, and conducting research can support working together to make tangible interventions that reduce bias, promote inclusivity, and support the success and career progression of marginalised student groups.

## References

Brooks, E., 2023. A critical exploration of how bias in Higher Education in the United Kingdom can influence structural delivery and teacher implicit bias in mental health nursing. *Unit 2 The Context of Higher Education Practice*. Bournemouth University, Unpublished.

