

## Elitism: Navigating Professional Diversity Barriers

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**Abstract :** In the UK, reliance has been placed on the professions to 'heal themselves' in improving equality and diversity. This approach has faltered, in part due to the global economic climate, and stimulus is needed to make faster equality progress. Recent empirical evidence has identified specific diversity barriers, namely: the cost of training; the use of high school grades as a primary selection criteria; the significance of prior work experience in recruitment decisions; and recruitment from elite universities. Students from majority groups and affluent backgrounds are advantaged over their counterparts. We as educators are passionate about resisting this. We believe that education can be a key agent of change. As part of this belief, the presenters have recently designed learning and teaching materials for the 2015/16 academic year. These are aimed at undergraduate law students for the purpose of 1) educating them on career barriers; 2) helping them to develop personal strategies to overcome them; and 3) encouraging them to address their own biases, both conscious and implicit, so that they, themselves, may be fairer employers and managers in the future.

**Keywords :** career barriers, challenging professional bias, education, elitism, personal student strategies

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