

Recruiting, supporting, and retaining new teachers from the global majority

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Overview

A teaching workforce that reflects the diversity of the pupils and communities it serves is important for equity, belonging, and educational opportunity. Yet in England, the teaching profession remains significantly less ethnically diverse than the pupil population (Department for Education, 2025a, b), and almost half of schools in England currently employ no teachers from the global majority (Tereshchenko et al., 2020).

The under-representation of global majority communities in the English teacher-workforce isn't the result of any lack of interest in teaching careers within those communities. In fact, people from the global majority are very well represented among applicants to teacher training (Sharp & Aston, 2024). Yet compared with White applicants, these aspiring teachers are less often offered a place on training programmes, less likely to enrol, and less likely to ultimately get jobs in classrooms.

This matters not only for children and young people from the global majority, who benefit from seeing themselves reflected among the adults who teach and support them, but also for the health, legitimacy, and cultural responsiveness of the education system as a whole. **School communities are a microcosm of the society we are helping to shape.** As educators, we therefore have a social responsibility to address the structural barriers that limit who enters teaching, whose identities are affirmed, and who is supported to stay.

This report brings together current research on the recruitment, support, and retention of new teachers from the global majority. Based on a 'rapid evidence review' of 17 research syntheses and 23 recent primary studies, we provide an accessible, evidence-informed overview for those involved in shaping teacher pipelines and professional cultures. These stakeholders might include teacher education providers, policymakers, and school, trust, and system leaders.

The evidence shows that under-representation is not simply a question of individual aspiration or 'pipeline' supply. Rather, **again and again the evidence points to systems that are not designed with all aspiring teachers in mind.** And where these shortcomings might be expected to prompt system-level change, instead too often the expectation falls on people from the global majority to adapt, persist, and 'be resilient'.

This report is intended as a practical resource. Readers may wish to use it when reviewing recruitment and admissions processes, to strengthen mentoring and induction, to reflect on programme and school culture, or to identify where policy and system change are needed. **The evidence challenges policymakers, teacher education providers, schools, and funders to ask difficult questions, and to move beyond rhetoric towards structural change.**

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Opening words from Mission 44

'This review adds to the growing evidence that a more diverse teaching workforce is essential to an inclusive and equitable education system. We already know many of the barriers preventing global majority teachers from entering and staying in the profession – the priority now is turning evidence into action. This report sets out the practical changes needed to build a teaching workforce in which all teachers can thrive, belong and progress.'

Cara Cinnamon

Mission 44 Chief Impact Officer

Notes on language and on limitations of the evidence

The literature reviewed in this report used a range of terms, including ‘ethnic minority’, ‘minoritised’, ‘BAME’, ‘BIPOC’, and other context-specific descriptors. For clarity and consistency, here we use the term ‘global majority’ when referring to diverse or multiple ethnic groupings. In some places, we retain the language used by original studies where referring to specific participant groups, identities, or national contexts.

Most of the literature that we reviewed involved interviews and other forms of qualitative work, most of which was undertaken in the United States. This means the review offers invaluable insight into patterns, experiences, and promising approaches, but there is less robust evidence on the comparative effectiveness of particular interventions, especially in the English context. The findings should therefore be used to inform reflection, decision-making, and further development, rather than as a definitive guide to ‘what works’ in every setting.

How to use this report

This report is designed as a practical resource. Different readers may find it useful in different ways.

- **Teacher education providers** might use it to review admissions, programme design, mentoring, placement experiences, and the extent to which anti-racist practice is embedded across training.
- **School and trust leaders** might use it to reflect on workplace culture, induction, belonging, leadership pathways, and the day-to-day conditions that shape whether early career teachers stay.
- **Policymakers and system leaders** might use it to consider how funding, accountability, data, and workforce policy either reduce or reinforce inequity in recruitment and retention.
- **Partner organisations and sector bodies** might use it to support collaboration across schools, communities, and providers, and to identify where targeted action or evidence-building is needed.

Theme 1: Belonging and marginalisation

People are more likely to join and stay in teaching when they feel they belong.

Providers and schools should examine whether global majority trainees and teachers experience their settings as affirming, safe, and professionally validating. This includes tackling racial microaggressions, challenging deficit assumptions, reviewing how professionalism is defined, and increasing visible representation in staffing, mentoring, and leadership.

Global majority teachers face discrimination, marginalisation, and social isolation throughout their ITE and early-career experiences, which create unwelcoming professional climates and barriers to their sense of belonging in the profession (Brown, 2014; Carver-Thomas et al., 2024; Chávez-Moreno et al., 2022; Garratt, n.d.; Unda, 2025; Yip & Xu, 2025; Young & Young, 2020). Global majority teacher trainees and early-career teachers therefore often feel undervalued, and excluded and disconnected from their programmes and school environments (Achinstein et al., 2010; Arar & Tlili, 2024; Brown, 2014; Harper-Hooper et al., 2025).

Racism manifests both interpersonally (e.g., through microaggressions and stereotyping) and institutionally, and experiences of isolation and stigma are compounded for those with multiple marginalised identities (e.g., Black and LGBTQ; Young & Young, 2020). Indeed, over half of global majority PGCE students in one recent study described experiencing at least one racial microaggression during their school placements, including assumptions of inferiority, peers denying the existence of racism, or questioning trainees' belonging (Tereshchenko et al., 2025).

These challenges are embedded in the structures and cultures of teacher education, throughout curriculum, pedagogy, and everyday interactions. Global majority teachers' persistence in the teaching profession therefore relies heavily on their emotional strength and collective support networks (Arar & Tlili, 2024). But although these assets can sustain teachers through difficult contexts, prolonged exposure to systemic racism can lead to 'racial battle fatigue' that harms well-being (Ali, 2021).

Racialised expectations of behaviour

Many global majority trainee teachers perceive teacher education curricula as being designed around White, middle-class norms (Brown, 2014; Chávez-Moreno et al., 2022; Yip & Xu, 2025). School pupils—often accustomed to associating those norms with authority—may challenge the legitimacy of teachers who don't match their prototypical expectations. Global majority teachers therefore find their competence questioned, and they face racialised, gendered, and class-based questioning of their authority from pupils and parents, which contributes to 'imposter syndrome' (e.g., Beltramo & Archuleta, 2024; Bettini et al., 2022; Brown, 2014).

Stereotyped expectations may undermine these teachers' professional roles and contribute to their early departure from the profession. For example, male teachers from the global majority are often hired with the stereotyped expectation that they will provide effective discipline for pupils (Ali, 2021), and often stereotyped as threats in early childhood settings (Young & Young, 2020). Gaudreault et al. (2023) describe one US teacher's daily negotiation of cultural identity, whereby his assimilation to American culture was valued over affirming his Latino heritage. Similarly, global majority teachers in another study described being compelled to reject family cultural practices in order to be considered good teachers, thus creating psychological harm (Souto-Manning & Emdin, 2023). These kinds of cultural disconnects can prevent educators seeking and receiving the meaningful support they need (Chu et al., 2023).

In a similar vein Yip and Xu (2025) draw attention to sociolinguistic oppression, where global majority trainees are pressured to modify their normal ways of speaking to conform to White-normative standards, eroding their authentic professional identities. Men in one recent study reported how they—as trainees on predominantly White teacher education programmes—censored themselves to avoid upsetting White peers or being seen as confrontational, which in turn led to alienation (Vasquez, 2023).

Representation

A lack of ethnic diversity among faculty and trainee cohorts contributes to global majority trainees' feeling of being 'othered' in teacher education spaces that are predominantly White (Bhana-Lopez et al., in press; Blaha & Evans, 2024; Gerrard et al., in press; Robinson & Briscoe, 2024; Vickers-Hulse & Whitehouse, 2024). Visible representation is therefore a critical enabler for recruitment and retention of global majority teachers.

Research participants emphasise the importance of seeing teachers and leaders who reflect their own ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which fosters their belonging, confidence, and commitment to the profession (Bhana-Lopez et al., in press; Blaha & Evans, 2024; Gerrard et al., in press; Francis-Edge et al., 2025; Simieou et al., 2023; Simon et al., in press). In one study, global majority trainee teachers explained that having global majority tutors strengthened their sense of belonging, encouraged them to seek academic and pastoral support, and positively influenced their likelihood of completing the programme (Tereshchenko et al., 2025). Yet half of the global majority respondents in the same study had never interacted with a tutor of the same ethnicity.

Teachers described feeling validated when their global majority backgrounds were explicitly acknowledged as an asset. For example, in Glover and Stewart's (2024) case study in the UK, a trainee teacher reflected on the positive impact of being accepted onto the programme because of their 'different background,' noting that this recognition had been particularly supportive for his career development.



Reflective prompts

- Where in our organisation might global majority trainees or staff be made to feel like outsiders?
- How are concerns about racism heard, acknowledged, and acted on?
- Do we treat cultural and linguistic difference as an asset, or as something to be managed?



Theme 2: School partnerships and early exposure

For many, the journey into teaching starts long before any formal application.

If the sector wants to diversify the teacher pipeline, then our work must reflect this consideration. Partnerships between schools, communities, and teacher education providers can build interest early, challenge stereotypes about who teaching is for, and create culturally affirming routes into the profession. Strong programmes might involve community engagement and mentoring, and clear transition support into teacher education.

One means of attracting trainees from global majority communities into teaching is building partnerships between higher education institutions (HEIs) and schools. In this way, HEIs work with local schools to spark pupils' interest in teaching and support their journey into teacher training (Yip & Xu, 2025). These early exposure initiatives can play critical roles in cultivating interest in teaching, through fostering mentorship, identity development, and positive representation, particularly from secondary school onwards (Ali, 2021; Carver-Thomas et al., 2024; Steeley, 2003).

An example is the ‘teacher club’ outlined by Ali (2021), situated within secondary schools linked to HEIs. A key aim of these clubs is to address the underrepresentation of global majority male teachers in schools. They do this by introducing global majority male pupils to teaching as a rewarding, socially meaningful, and empowering career choice, and a form of leadership and community engagement. In parallel, they seek to disrupt narratives that portray these pupils as disengaged, underachieving, or threatening, and to disrupt stereotypes that frame teaching as unsuitable for global majority young men. The teacher club includes structured mentoring in which each participant is paired with a male teacher or university lecturer in education; pupils are encouraged to challenge and deconstruct rigid gender roles and harmful societal expectations about male behaviour, especially as these relate to global majority men.

Whereas some such initiatives address practical challenges, others emphasise reflective practice. So-called ‘bridge programmes’ were described as effective in the recruitment, retention, and transition of global majority men into the teaching profession (Ali, 2021). Designed to create intentional connections between secondary schools, community colleges, and HEIs, bridge programmes are culturally affirming spaces that guide trainees into school environments where their identities will be valued. These programmes provide academic support services (e.g. test preparation, monitoring of academic performance) to improve degree completion and qualification rates.

These kinds of partnerships often reflect local communities’ specific cultural and social needs. Other examples illustrated by Yip and Xu (2025) included (1) bringing high school pupils onto university campuses for teaching-related activities, to help them see teaching as a possible career; (2) targeting global majority pupils in high schools and supporting them through mentoring, college-level courses, and offering them teaching experience in local primary schools; (3) encouraging global majority young people to apply to teacher education programmes; and (4) organising family meetings and information sessions to raise awareness about teaching careers.



Reflective prompts

- How intentionally are we building interest in teaching among young people from the global majority?
- Are our outreach and partnership models rooted in local communities and trusted relationships?
- Do prospective teachers encounter teaching as a realistic and welcoming pathway?

Theme 3: Financial considerations

Access to teaching is partly about what people can afford.

In other words, financial barriers should not be treated as secondary or incidental: the evidence suggests they are central to both recruitment and retention. Training providers, funders, and policymakers should consider how bursaries, hardship support, and financial guidance can reduce the hidden costs of entering teaching. Schools and trusts should recognise that retention is shaped by pay, workload, and placement in under-resourced contexts.

Financial instability is a major deterrent to entering and remaining in teaching, particularly for global majority trainees. Dixon et al. (2025) describe the ‘hidden costs’ for global majority people of training to become a teacher, such as the necessity of working multiple jobs. Many commute several hours between home and university, thus reducing their ability to engage in campus life, access support services, or participate in activities designed to foster belonging (Chu et al., 2023). Bhana-Lopez et al. (in press) found that nearly all of their global majority participants described financial burdens of entering and remaining in teaching; as a consequence, participants struggled to balance employment, family obligations, and teaching demands.

This financial burden makes scholarships, stipends, and targeted funding essential for enabling their access and progression through teacher education, with global majority applicants sometimes willing to overlook less-favourable aspects of an institution if financial support is available there (Blaha & Evans, 2024; Dixon et al., 2025). Financial supports were described as enabling global majority candidates to focus on academic and practicum commitments, rather than on financial survival (Gaudreault et al., 2023). These supports not only reduce the cost burden of preparation but also contribute to restoring positive perceptions of education among communities often excluded from the profession.

Economic challenges impact teacher retention, too. Ginsberg et al. (2017), Madkins (2011), and Unda (2025) all note that low teacher salaries—especially when compared to other relevant professions—serve as a disincentive to entering or staying in the profession. Global majority teachers, who are more likely to be placed in under-resourced schools, are particularly affected by the pressures of financial insecurity (Achinstein et al., 2010); funding models that allocate additional resources to high-need schools could therefore mitigate the structural inequities often faced by these teachers (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024).



Reflective prompts

- What hidden costs are built into our pathway, and who is most affected by them?
- How clear, accessible, and responsive is our financial support offer?
- Are we expecting trainees or new teachers to absorb pressures that make successful participation harder from the outset?



Theme 4: Recruitment, selection, and organisational support

Rigid ideas about teacher potential can close doors for diverse talent.

When recruitment systems rely heavily on traditional markers of merit or complex administrative processes, they can unintentionally narrow the pool of potential teachers. A more inclusive approach could involve reviewing admissions criteria, simplifying application journeys, and ensuring that administrative systems do not disadvantage those less familiar with higher education norms. Once teachers enter the profession, leadership support and fair access to opportunities matter for whether they remain.

Teacher training programmes often raise academic entry standards as a means of enhancing prestige; in doing so, many adopt admissions criteria that prioritise traditional academic metrics (Ginsberg et al., 2017). These criteria often disadvantage global majority trainees, who may have faced systemic barriers throughout their educational journeys. As a result, trainees with strong commitments to teaching in underserved communities or to social justice education are often excluded from entry. Many see this gatekeeping effect as undermining efforts to diversify the teacher workforce, by privileging academic credentials over cultural knowledge, lived experience, and community-rooted motivations for entering teaching (Ginsberg et al., 2017).

Recent studies highlight other barriers to entering the profession for global majority teachers, including difficulties navigating qualification requirements between different countries/states (Bhana-Lopez et al., in press). Aspiring teachers whose families were unfamiliar with higher education were especially likely to struggle with completing their applications, applying for financial support, and completing administrative processes (Dixon et al., 2025). Similarly, Chu et al.'s (2023) participants faced challenges

with demanding application essays and entrance exams, which disproportionately disadvantaged those global majority candidates who were less familiar with academic writing conventions.

Limited representation of the global majority in teacher education programmes' recruitment materials and websites can deter prospective candidates (Blaaha & Evans, 2024). Marketing campaigns designed in collaboration with professional recruitment organisations—particularly those who share applicants' ethnic and cultural backgrounds—may foster a stronger sense of representation and trust among global majority prospective trainees (Yip & Xu, 2025).

Reviews by Ginsberg et al. (2017) and Carver-Thomas et al. (2024) also stress the importance of setting explicit diversity targets for providers and collecting and publishing data on teacher diversity. As Carver-Thomas et al. (2024) note, systematically gathering and publishing diversity data enables schools and policymakers to track progress, identify gaps, and set concrete improvement goals. In doing so it can also facilitate more-equitable access to teacher education for global majority trainees, and support efforts to develop, hire, and retain a diverse teaching workforce (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024). In terms of broader recruitment strategies, Harper-Hooper et al. (2025) highlight targeted job fairs and partnerships with global majority-serving institutions as promising approaches for expanding outreach.

When they are recruited, global majority teachers are disproportionately placed in under-resourced schools, serving high proportions of pupils from low-income backgrounds and those with low academic performance (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024). Many report feeling unprepared or unsupported in meeting these challenges, thus contributing to turnover (Achinstein et al., 2010; Carver-Thomas et al., 2024; Unda, 2025). Despite these challenges, many global majority teachers remain in hard-to-staff schools longer than their White peers, in part because of strong emotional and ethical commitments (Villegas & Irvine, 2010).

Compared to their White peers, global majority teachers report lower satisfaction with leadership and greater professional discouragement. A lack of teacher autonomy, administrative backing, and influence over decision-making contribute to higher turnover among global majority teachers (Achinstein et al., 2010). Arar and Tlili (2024) and Achinstein et al. (2010) document how these teachers often face marginalisation in school decision-making processes and are overlooked for leadership roles or progression opportunities.



Reflective prompts

- Which parts of our recruitment and admissions process may act to screen promising applicants out rather than welcome them in?
- Do our materials, messaging, and recruiters help candidates feel represented?
- Once recruited, do teachers from the global majority experience strong leadership backing and equitable opportunity?

Theme 5: Alternative training routes

Many aspiring teachers need more realistic ways into the profession.

Alternative routes can widen access, especially for career changers and those who cannot step away from paid work. But flexibility alone is not enough. If alternative pathways are to be inclusive, they need strong academic support, mentoring, financial stability, and programme design that recognises the pressures of learning while working. Without that, routes intended to improve access may simply redistribute pressure onto those already facing barriers.

Alternative training routes into teaching are seen as effective in recruiting global majority teachers, offering greater flexibility and helping to reduce financial and structural barriers to entry. In one focus group study with Black male educators in the USA, Simieou et al. (2023) found that participants deliberately chose alternative routes to combine affordability with their desire to positively impact pupils' lives. Similarly, in a study with trainee and qualified special education teachers, Bhana-Lopez et al. (in press) noted that these teachers valued pathways that allowed them to earn income while completing their programmes.

Madkins' (2011) review contends that nontraditional training programmes, including apprenticeship models, have been successful in diversifying the teaching workforce in the USA. Yip and Xu (2025) similarly emphasise the need to broaden the range of pathways into ITE, including by (1) recruiting paraprofessionals already employed in schools, many of whom bring valuable local knowledge and community-rooted perspectives; and (2) creating entry pathways for mid-career professionals looking to transition into teaching.

Non-traditional pathways do, however, bring their own struggles. In Bhana-Lopez et al. (in press), some teachers described choosing non-traditional programmes out of necessity, since they could not afford a traditional, full-time programme. Yet this choice created a new burden of teaching full-time while still learning pedagogical strategies in parallel, often with insufficient support. Chu et al.'s (2023) participants echoed this challenge, describing how the need to work full-time compromised their academic performance and financial aid eligibility, a cycle of stress that programme faculty often failed to recognise. These accounts highlight how alternative training routes, while intended as inclusive, can inadvertently intensify other pressures. Carver-Thomas et al. (2024) underscore that global majority teachers increasingly enter the profession through alternative pathways that lack the pre-qualification coursework and practice associated with retention and career longevity.



Reflective prompts

- Are our alternative pathways flexible in ways that truly support participation, or only in ways that shift risk onto trainees?
- What additional support is built in for those balancing paid employment and training?
- Are we treating access and retention as connected, rather than separate issues?



Theme 6: Mentoring and communities of practice

No one should have to navigate the early years of teaching in isolation.

Mentoring should be a core retention strategy. The evidence suggests that global majority trainees and early career teachers benefit from mentoring relationships, affinity spaces, and communities of practice that offer validation, guidance, and a sense of connection in environments where they may otherwise feel isolated. Effective support is likely to be relational, sustained, and attentive to the realities of racism and professional marginalisation.

Early-career induction and mentoring can reduce teacher turnover, especially among global majority teachers, and are central to supporting academic and professional growth (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024; Steeley et al., 2023; Yip & Xu, 2025). Beyond the classroom, mentoring relationships and peer interactions foster social and cultural capital, as well as helping global majority participants to feel less isolated in predominantly White institutions (Bhana-Lopez et al., in press; Robinson & Briscoe, 2024). Tailored mentorship that offers critical professional and emotional guidance, whilst acknowledging racial bias, cultural challenges, and identity complexities, may enhance teachers' retention and professional development (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024).

Initiatives that provide safe spaces for reflection can be key to addressing systemic racism and increasing representation in teacher education (Francis-Edge et al., 2025). Global majority trainees report valuing institutions with established affinity networks and reflective communities of practice: spaces in which they can share and affirm their culture with others (Beltramo & Archuleta, 2024; Gerrard et al., in press; Vasquez, 2023; Vickers-Hulse & Whitehouse; 2024). As Yip and Xu (2025) highlight, communities of practice create collaborative and supportive environments where global majority trainees can exchange culturally responsive teaching strategies, reflect on their practice, and build a sense of collective identity.

Participation in these communities of practice could play a vital role in retaining global majority trainees in ITE, and develop their confidence as change agents within diverse classrooms (Yip & Xu, 2025). Trainees benefit from learning spaces that support critical dialogue, encourage processing of racialised experiences, and foster peer solidarity. For example, Chávez-Moreno et al. (2022) reports that all-global-majority seminars offered safe spaces for trainees to discuss experiences with racism, fostering ethnic identity and supportive social networks. To give another example, participation in ‘culture circles’ enabled global majority, Catholic teachers opportunities to reflect on and integrate their intersectional identities, particularly how race, language, gender, and faith shaped their roles as educators (Beltramo & Archuleta, 2024). Members valued the freedom to use cultural and linguistic practices, such as speaking Spanish, which contrasted with the constraints of predominantly White school environments.

Reflective prompts

- Do our mentoring structures actively address the experiences of global majority trainees and teachers?
- What opportunities exist for affinity, peer support, and reflective community?
- Are mentors, and teachers themselves, equipped to discuss race, belonging, and inequity with confidence and care?



Theme 7: Social justice and anti-racist pedagogy

Teaching cannot be separated from the values and systems it sits within.

The review suggests that anti-racist and socially just practice cannot sit at the margins of teacher education or school improvement. Where programmes affirm identity, support critical reflection, and treat diversity as central rather than supplementary, global majority teachers are more likely to experience their values and professional purpose as aligned with the work. This points to the need for curriculum, staff development, and institutional culture change, rather than one-off diversity activities.

One proposed route to retaining global majority teachers is using pedagogies that affirm their social identities and commitments to social justice (Arar & Tlili, 2024; Brown, 2014). Global majority teachers are frequently motivated by a desire to serve their communities and pupils from under-served backgrounds, recognising their racial identity as an asset alongside their own personal experiences of marginalisation (Achinstein et al., 2010; Bhana-Lopez et al., in press; Simieou et al., 2023; Steeley, 2003). These teachers often persist in the profession primarily because of their dedication to those communities and pupils (see also Tereshchenko et al., 2025).

It is therefore argued that teacher education programmes which centre diversity, critical pedagogy, and culturally relevant curricula can support these commitments and foster professional resilience (Arar & Tlili, 2024; Steeley, 2003; Unda, 2025). Revising curricula to be culturally relevant may not only make programmes more attractive to global majority candidates, but also strengthen retention and equip teachers to support pupils (Bettini et al., 2024). Chávez-Moreno et al. (2022) recommend explicitly teaching trainees about the historical erasure of marginalised communities and the prevalence of deficit-oriented narratives in education. Other authors endorse creating space within teacher education for trainees to examine their positioning in relation to racial privilege, and advice on navigating historically marginalised educational spaces (Kim & Cooc, 2020; Robinson & Briscoe, 2024). Such preparation, they argue, can increase retention of global majority teachers in isolated or challenging school communities.

Pedagogy can serve as a vehicle for racial equity and critical consciousness, and to address the cultural and social realities of global majority trainees (Brown, 2014). In one study for example, Hisherik et al. (2025) examined a programme in Israel where Jewish and Arab trainee teachers trained together to teach across community lines. Joint teaching by Arab and Jewish lecturers created rare opportunities for these teachers to openly discuss Israeli–Palestinian conflict, fostering trust and confidence in addressing controversial political issues. Structured discussions, simulations, and guided training equipped participants with practical strategies for navigating conflict in the classroom.

As noted above, teacher education curricula are often perceived as having White pupils as the normative audience, thus neglecting the preparation of trainees to work effectively in diverse classrooms (Brown, 2014; Chávez-Moreno et al., 2022; Unda, 2025; Arar & Tlili, 2024). For example, Black women art teachers in one study shared that their training

programmes rarely reflected global majority artists or professors (Bailey, 2023). All trainees therefore require learning experiences that develop their capacity for inclusive, anti-racist teaching, and Chávez-Moreno et al. (2022) caution against assuming that global majority trainees inherently possess the tools to enact this pedagogy. When all teachers are adequately prepared to serve diverse pupil populations, global majority teachers experience reduced isolation, increased satisfaction, and greater retention (Carver-Thomas et al., 2024).

Relatedly, teacher educators themselves often lack the confidence to teach anti-racist pedagogies, with many lacking racial literacy and understanding of systemic racism (Garratt, n.d.). A culture of celebrating ‘colour blindness’ impedes honest conversations about racism, negatively affecting teacher wellbeing and retention (Arar & Tlili, 2024). This culture, in turn, fails to prepare teacher trainees to recognise and challenge systemic racism within educational settings (Garratt, n.d.). Institutional transformation, not solely curriculum reform, may often be required for fostering long-term, reflective engagement with anti-racist learning (Garratt, n.d.).

Yet many teacher education programmes still treat diversity as an ‘add-on’ rather than a core pedagogical imperative. Garratt (n.d.) underscores that explicit, coherent, and sustained anti-racist pedagogies in ITE must go beyond superficial treatment of race and directly confront how racism manifests in schools, curriculum, and teacher practice. However, anti-racist efforts frequently meet resistance. Garratt (n.d., p.15) references how some White trainee teachers employ emotional, ideological, and performative strategies to avoid engaging meaningfully with treatments of racism.



Reflective prompts

- Is anti-racist practice embedded across our curriculum and culture, or is it treated as an add-on?
- How well equipped are staff to teach, lead, and facilitate conversations about race and inequity?
- What would it take for all trainees and teachers to experience equity work as part of professional practice, not peripheral to it?

Concluding words

The evidence drawn together in this review points to a clear message: improving the recruitment, support, and retention of teachers from the global majority is not about asking individuals to overcome unequal systems on their own. Instead it requires purposeful action across teacher education, schools, and the wider sector to remove barriers, strengthen belonging, and create environments in which global majority teachers are recognised, supported, and able to thrive. While the evidence base has its limitations, it nevertheless offers a strong case for action now. A more diverse teaching workforce matters, not only for those entering and working within the profession, but also for the children, young people, and communities that our schools serve.

Appendix: Review methodology

Rapid Review Part 1: Synthesis of review papers 2000 – 2025

We developed a search strategy for identifying relevant syntheses published in English between 2000 and 2025. We implemented this strategy using two formal database searches in Scopus and again in Web of Science; the first searches aimed to capture papers that were explicitly tagged as review papers in each database; the second searches aimed to capture review papers that were not correctly tagged as reviews, through including papers whose title, keywords, or abstract contained specific, ‘synthesis-related’ terms.¹ Our inclusion and exclusion criteria are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Part 1 of the review

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Population	Papers focusing on ethnically diverse teacher candidates or novice teachers (e.g., Black, Asian, Global Majority, ethnic minority groups).	Papers not identifying global majority teachers as a focus; papers focused only on general teacher populations with no attention to teacher ethnicity/race or focused on the ethnicity of students/pupils rather than of teachers.
Outcome	Evidence on recruitment, preparation, progression, or retention of global majority teachers; includes barriers, enablers, and perceived factors for effectiveness.	Papers not reporting one or more of these relevant outcomes; papers focused only on pupil outcomes, school leadership, or policy without linking to teacher pathways.
Setting	Papers focused upon initial teacher education (ITE) programmes or early career professional development (novice teacher phase).	Papers not focused on teacher education or early career, e.g., in-service teacher training without specific focus on early stages.
Output type	Review papers (systematic, narrative, scoping, meta-analysis); published in English from 2000 to 2025.	Primary empirical papers, commentaries, editorials, book chapters ² ; non-English publications; pre-2000 papers.



From these combined searches, 18 outputs appeared to meet the inclusion criteria based on screening of titles and abstracts and were selected for full-text screening. In addition to the database searches, further candidate outputs were identified through a supplementary manual search process. This included a review of references cited in the included articles ($n = 14$), as well as the manual screening of the first 100 relevant studies returned by Google Scholar ($n = 10$) and Undermind AI ($n = 6$) using the key terms ‘recruitment,’ ‘retention,’ and ‘ethnically diverse teachers,’ and ‘review’.

These 48 candidate outputs were selected for full-text screening. Following full-text screening, 17 outputs were judged to meet the inclusion criteria and were therefore retained for analysis (see PRISMA Diagram 1 in Appendix). We began with expectations of certain codes that we would look out for, but we refined these codes and identified new codes as our review of the data progressed. Extracted codes were then grouped into common themes.

The majority of the included outputs (9 of 17) were published in or since 2020. Most (14 of 17) were published by lead authors in the United States, with the remainder by lead authors in the UK, Australia, and China.

Search 1 (as formatted for Scopus)

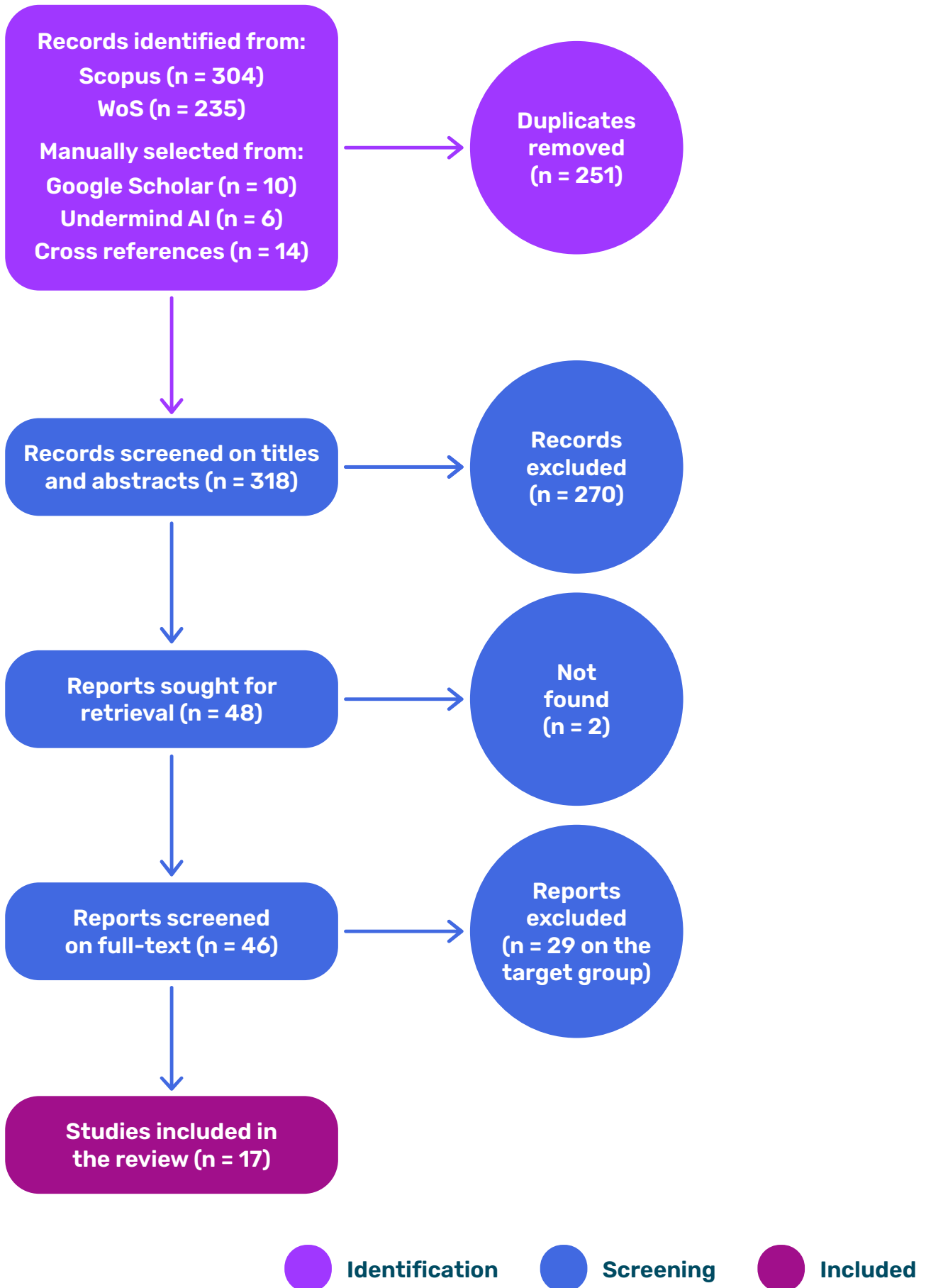
TITLE-ABS-KEY (('teacher educat*' OR 'teacher train*' OR preservice OR pre-service OR 'initial teacher' OR 'trainee teach*' OR 'student teach*' OR ite OR itt OR pgce) AND (antiracis* OR anti-racis* OR race OR racis* OR racia* OR ethn* OR black OR asian OR divers*) AND (recruit* OR progress* OR retention OR continu* OR complet* OR select* OR succe* OR rejec* OR advanc* OR represent*)) AND PUBYEAR > 1999 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE;'j')) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE;'re')) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE;'English'))

Search 2 (as formatted for Scopus)

TITLE-ABS-KEY (('teacher educat*' OR 'teacher train*' OR preservice OR pre-service OR 'initial teacher' OR 'trainee teach*' OR 'student teach*' OR ite OR itt OR pgce) AND (antiracis* OR anti-racis* OR race OR racis* OR racia* OR ethn* OR black OR asian OR divers*) AND (recruit* OR progress* OR retention OR continu* OR complet* OR select* OR succe* OR rejec* OR advanc* OR represent*)) AND PUBYEAR > 1999 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND TITLE (review OR meta-analysis OR metaanalysis OR synthesis) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE . 'j')) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE . 'English'))

² Whereas we excluded book chapters from our main literature search, one of the outputs that we located in the supplementary searches was included despite being a book chapter (Chávez-Moreno et al., 2022), due to its very clear relevance to our aims.

PRISMA Diagram 1 – Review of review papers 2000 – 2025



Rapid Review Part 2: Synthesis of primary research 2023 – 2025

We were mindful that Part 1 of this review methodology, by virtue of focusing solely on published review papers, may fail to capture the most recent and cutting-edge research findings. We therefore developed a second search strategy for identifying relevant primary studies published in English between 2023 and the time of searching in 2025. We implemented this strategy using formal database searches in Scopus, Web of Science, ESBCOhost and ProQuest Education Database³. Our inclusion and exclusion criteria were identical to those listed in Table 1 above, with the exception of the Output type criteria which were as follows:

Table 2. Amended aspects of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Part 2 of the review

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Output type	Empirical studies employing qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approaches; published in English from 2023 to 2025.	Secondary research (e.g., review papers); non-English publications; pre-2023 papers.

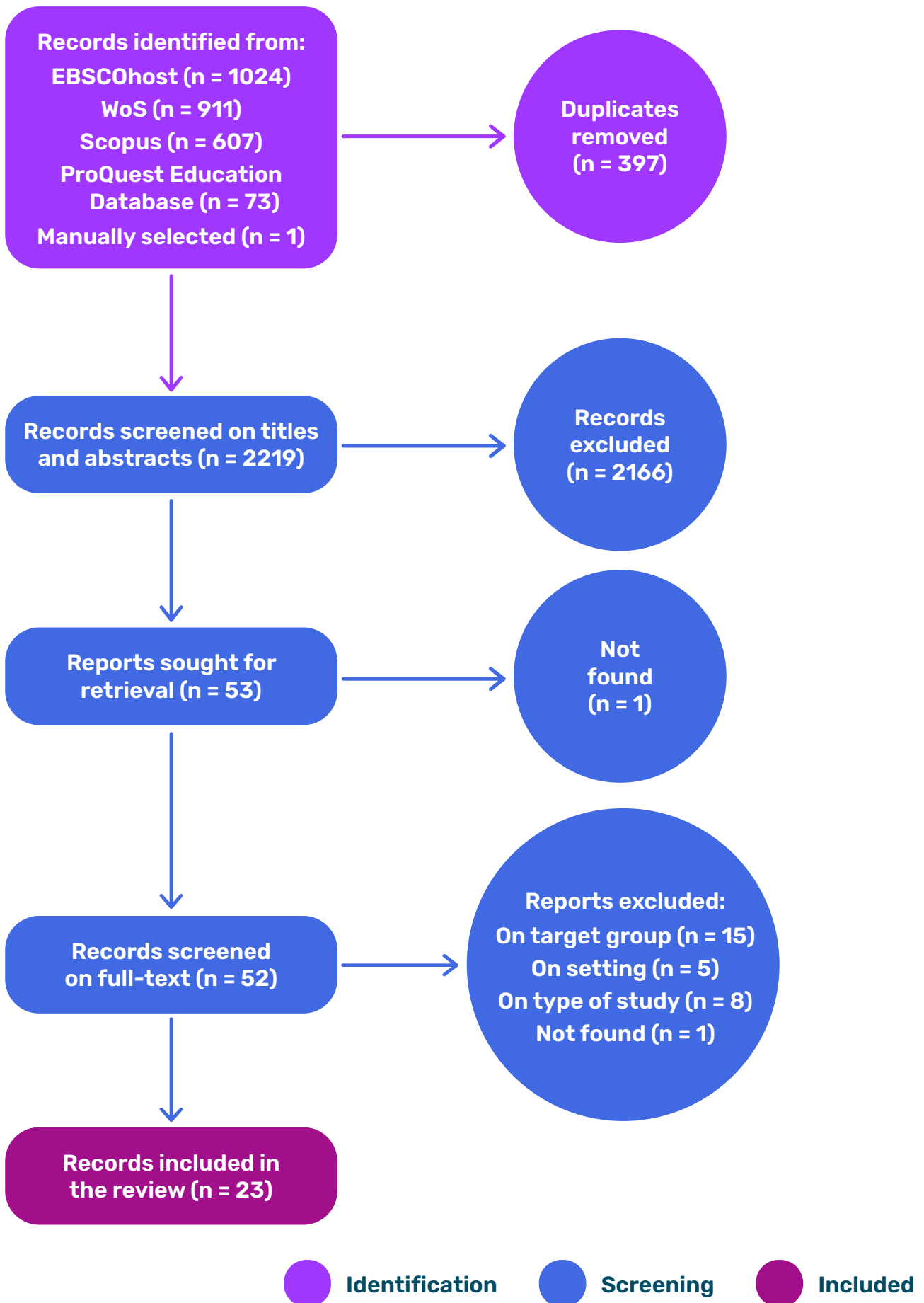
Based on these criteria, 52 papers appeared relevant based on the screening of titles and abstracts, and were read in full, along with one additional paper that we were already aware of (n = 53 in total). After this full-text screening, 23 papers were judged to meet the inclusion criteria and were retained for analysis (see PRISMA Diagram 2 in the Appendix).

Just as in the first part of this review, most empirical studies in this part of the review were conducted in the United States (n = 17), with a few conducted in the United Kingdom (n = 5), and Israel (n = 1). A total of 19 studies employed solely qualitative methods, drawing on approaches such as narrative inquiry and case studies, while only 2 studies used solely quantitative methods (Bardelli et al., in press; Bettini et al., 2025) and another 2 used mixed-methods designs (Glover & Stewart, 2024; Tereshchenko et al., 2025).

³Search string (as formatted for Scopus)

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TITLE-ABS-KEY ( ( 'teacher educat*' OR 'teacher train*' OR preservice OR pre-service OR 'initial teacher' OR 'trainee teach*' OR 'student teach*' OR ite OR itt OR pgce ) AND ( antiracis* OR anti-racis* OR race OR racis* OR racia* OR ethn* OR black OR asian OR divers* ) AND ( recruit* OR progress* OR retention OR continu* OR complet* OR select* OR succe* OR rejec* OR advanc* OR represent* ) ) AND PUBYEAR >= 2023 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SRCTYPE;'j' ) ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( DOCTYPE;'ar' ) ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( LANGUAGE;'English' ) )
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PRISMA Diagram 2 – Review of primary research 2023 – 2025



List of outputs included in this review

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