

It doesn't matter if your eggs are in the for or against basket, one thing is for certain, you've heard of Love Island. Every day for 8 long summer weeks, millions of people tune in to watch a group of strangers 'fall in love' and face daily challenges and games. This year, Love Island has had more viewers than ever at 4.2million which only increases the amount of equality and diversity related questions being asked. So we feel that we should discuss these!

### Love Island boss defends the lack of body diversity: 'We want people to be attracted to each other'.

ITV bosses have said the reason Love Island lacks body diversity is because they want the contestants "to be attracted to one another".

The reality TV series has been severely criticised for not casting contestants with a range of body types and, when this year's Islanders were unveiled on Monday night, fans of the show continued to be disappointed by the 2019 line-up.

The group of toned contestants led to an outpouring of frustration on social media, with viewers and former stars of the show expressing concerns at the lack of physical representation that is was set to appear on the nation's screens for the last eight weeks.

Addressing the topic at a press conference in Spain, Richard Cowles, creative director of ITV Studios Entertainment, suggested the reason Love Island tends to feature one physique is because non-slim people might be deemed less attractive by contestants. "I think we try to be as representative and diverse as possible," Cowles said.

The Love Island boss continued by explaining that the show isn't encouraging people to aspire to a certain body image but instead selects contestants based on who they think the public will want to watch for two months.

In response to previous complaints regarding the topic, a spokesperson from ITV2 said: "When casting for Love Island, we always strive to reflect the age, experiences and diversity of our audience and this year is no exception with a cross section of different personalities and backgrounds in the villa."

**What are your thoughts on the 2019 line up? Do you think that shows like Love Island have a duty to consider body image and diversity?**



### Does Love Island have a race problem?

Every year, Love Island's black contestants have been the last to get picked during the first coupling ceremony. This year's first episode was no different with the show's only black contestants Sherif, Yewande and Michael being picked last. Whether they do it consciously or not, Islanders have shown their underlying trends when it comes to their romantic "preferences" yet again this series. Many viewers have set to social media to discuss what the British media see as 'attractive' and debates have broken out stating that the popular culture industry still see white individuals to be more 'beautiful' than black and that this has an effect on our society. This is called institutionalised racism.



Dating app trends show that ethnic minorities are often discarded as romantic options. According to data from OKCupid, Asian and black men receive fewer messages than white men, while black women receive the fewest messages of all users. Christian Rudder, founder of OKCupid, summarised the findings by saying, "Essentially every race – including other black people – [gives black women] the cold shoulder."

Colourism is the discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, and many viewers have been saying that there has been a lot of subtle and unconscious discrimination on the show this year and people haven't realised how it can affect their dating preferences.

### Sherif Lanre claims he may have been a victim of "unconscious racism" in the villa.

The star says he was repeatedly reprimanded for mistakes and slips of the tongue that other contestants seemed to get away with. Sherif claimed: "I can't rule out that racism was a factor here. I think there may have been some unconscious racism."



"By that I mean, the producers might not have been aware of what they were doing, but they may have had an inherent bias in their minds that caused them to act against me. I say this because there were so many things I was pulled aside on. One example was calling Amber 'lighty,' which I know is a poor choice of words but she did not get offended. She said people often used the same word in Newcastle, where she is from."

A Love Island spokesman said: "We would strongly refute any accusation of racism. All of the Islanders are treated fairly and in accordance with our duty of care."