

Jason Arday

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Jason Atta Kwei Arday (born 1985) is a British academic. He was appointed Professor of [Sociology of Education](#) at the [University of Cambridge](#) in 2023, and was one of the youngest black professors in the United Kingdom. After being accused of plagiarism and academic misconduct, Arday resigned from his posts at Cambridge in August 2026.^[1]

Early life and education

Jason Atta Kwei Arday^{[2][3]} was born in 1985^[4] to Ghanaian parents, the third of four brothers, and grew up in [Clapham](#), South London.^[5] His mother was a [mental health nurse](#) and his father a chef.^[5] Arday was diagnosed with [autism](#), [global developmental delay](#) and [dyslexia](#).^[6] He was [non-verbal](#) until the age of 11 and could not read or write until he was 18.^[7] He is also epileptic.^[8]

Arday undertook his undergraduate degree in education studies with physical education at [St Mary's University, Twickenham](#), graduating with a [Bachelor of Arts](#) (BA) degree validated by the [University of Surrey](#) in 2008. He remained to complete a [Master of Arts](#) (MA) degree in education and [pedagogy](#), and then undertook a [Postgraduate Certificate in Education](#) (PGCE) at the [Institute of Education](#).^[9] He completed his [Doctor of Philosophy](#) (PhD) degree in education at [Liverpool John Moores University](#). He claimed he had to relearn the content of his dissertation weeks before defending it following the removal of a benign brain tumour that caused memory loss.^[10] His doctoral thesis, "An Exploration of Peer-Mentoring among Student Teachers' [*sic*] to Inform Reflective Practice within the Context of Action Research", was completed in 2015 under the supervision of Phil Vickerman.^[3]

Academic career

Early career

In 2017, Arday was paired with MP and Shadow Minister for Mental Health [Rosena Allin-Khan](#) through the [Operation Black Vote](#) MP Shadowing Scheme.^[11] Arday has conducted research into Black students' experiences across universities^[12] and has argued for greater recognition of Black British history in the school curriculum.^{[13][14][15]}

Appointments

Arday has held academic posts at the University of Roehampton, Durham University, and the [University of Glasgow](#).^[16] In 2021, he was appointed Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Glasgow.

In March 2023, the [University of Cambridge](#) announced his appointment as Professor of Sociology of Education, making him the youngest black professor ever appointed at the university.^[17] [Sally Morgan, Baroness Morgan of Huyton](#), chaired the appointment board for the Professorship.^[18] Arday was a Fellow of [Jesus College, Cambridge](#).^[19] His appointment received wide publicity because of his reported life story.^[20] He resigned on 5 August 2026 following allegations of academic misconduct.^{[21][22]}

Honorary degrees

Arday was awarded honorary doctorates by [Anglia Ruskin University](#) and [Southampton Solent University](#) in 2023^{[23][24]} and St Mary's University and the [University of Westminster](#) in 2024.^{[9][25]}

Fundraising and charity work

In 2010, the [Richmond and Twickenham Times](#) reported that Arday ran 30 marathons in 35 days to raise money for [Shelter](#) and the [Shooting Star Children's Hospices](#).^[26] In 2012, Arday was a [bearer of the Olympic Torch](#).^{[27][28]}

Allegations of academic misconduct and false biographical details

Academic

In December 2023, Arday was required to issue a correction in the journal [Social Sciences](#) to include more references to two other articles that had been extensively used, but not cited, in Arday's 2018 article.^[29]

In July 2026, allegations of plagiarism were initially made public in a [Substack](#) post by Nathan Cofnas, a Cambridge alumnus, researcher, and self-described "[race realist](#)".^{[30][6]} Cofnas's blog post was followed by a [The Daily Telegraph](#) report alleging that many of Arday's works, including his 2015 PhD thesis, contained similar or identical passages to other academic works.^[31] [Retraction Watch](#) reported that [Times Higher Education](#) had planned to report on the allegations in September 2025, but the article was cancelled after

Jason Arday
FRSA



Arday in 2020

Born	1985 (age 40–41)
Academic background	
Education	St Mary's University, Twickenham (BA, MA) Liverpool John Moores University (PhD)
Thesis	<i>An Exploration of Peer-Mentoring among Student Teachers' to Inform Reflective Practice within the Context of Action Research</i> (2015)
Academic work	
Discipline	Education
Sub-discipline	Sociology of education · sociology of race and ethnic relations · social stratification · social mobility
Institutions	University of Roehampton Durham University University of Glasgow University of Cambridge

receiving a legal letter from the firm [Carter-Ruck](#) on Arday's behalf.^[32] The *Times Higher Education* reporter was also investigated by the police, who requested that the reporter not contact Arday.^[33] Retraction Watch also suggested that corrections made in 2023 to a previously published paper by Arday point to further plagiarism.^[32] Following allegations of plagiarism, Arday's biographical claims were also questioned.

It was further reported that Arday had for several years claimed to have authored a book titled *Being Young, Black and Male: Challenging the Dominant Discourse*, which had supposedly been published by [Palgrave Macmillan](#). It had in fact been abandoned by the publisher years prior and never released.^[34]

Both the [University of Glasgow](#) and [Ohio State University](#) refuted claims that Arday held visiting professorship roles with them, while [Nelson Mandela University](#) stated that he had only ever been a temporary [adjunct professor](#) prior to November 2025, and not a visiting professor as claimed.^{[35][36][37]}

Other

Arday additionally claimed that he had run 600 miles in six days (a near world record), had personally raised "£5.5m for over 80 charities", and had been featured on the documentary series *Seven Up!* as a seven-year-old.^{[38][39]} When these claims were challenged publicly in news media, Arday subsequently stated that the 600 miles had been completed over a period of twelve days, including rest days, and that the fundraising was done as "part of a syndicate of about 100 people".^[6] Regarding *Seven Up!*, he stated that he had been referring to a community initiative and not the television series.^[40] Arday had previously made claims of working on projects abroad for the charity [WaterAid](#), with the charity replying to enquiries that it did not send volunteers abroad.^[41]

Arday claimed that, after he was appointed at Cambridge, he had been assaulted, threatened by a masked man with a knife twice at the university, and that a pig's head was sent to his parents' home that was investigated by the police. *The Guardian* found no evidence of these claims, with the [Metropolitan Police](#) stating no investigation had taken place. When this statement was put to Arday, he stood by his allegations and stated "To be honest with you, I thought you'd just believe me. Why would I lie?"^[38]

Response

These allegations drew varied responses. [David Sanders](#), a biochemist at [Purdue University](#) who writes for *Times Higher Education* about scientific misconduct and was consulted by them for their unpublished report, stated "There is no question that there is extensive plagiarism".^[32] David Harris, professor emeritus at [Plymouth Marjon University](#), said that Arday's works "seem to display indications of serious plagiarism".^[42] [Robert Dingwall](#), an emeritus professor of social sciences at two universities in [Nottingham](#), recommended an impartial investigation, stating: "In the current climate, it is difficult to comment on allegations of plagiarism against a prominent minority scholar without seeming to take sides on [EDI](#)".^[31] Campaigning organisation the [Good Law Project](#) published an open letter signed by more than 10,000 supporters, including [Simon Woolley](#), [Sonita Alleyne](#), [Ijeoma Uchegbu](#), actor [Colin Salmon](#), and politicians such as [Zack Polanski](#), which stated that "entirely false allegations of plagiarism were made against Professor Arday" and that "right-wing media have attempted to smear Professor Arday's reputation and undermine his career."^{[31][43]} Subsequent reporting noted that Ijeoma Uchegbu's name was removed as of 3 August.^[44]

The University of Cambridge and Liverpool John Moores University published statements defending Arday, with Cambridge stating that he was "the victim of a vile campaign to undermine his credibility".^[31] The University of Cambridge subsequently announced it had "begun an investigation following new information about Prof Arday's academic qualifications and honorary appointments".^{[31][45]} Prior to his resignation, Arday's publishers [Simon & Schuster](#) confirmed that these allegations had not affected their plans to launch his memoir, *Great and Unfortunate Things*, on 27 August 2026, which they had reportedly paid Arday "1.4 million" (in either dollars or pounds) to acquire the rights to.^{[46][47]} [Routledge](#) also confirmed in late July they still intended to publish Arday's work, *Considering Racialised Contexts in Education*, in 2030.^[46]

In an interview with [The Times](#), Arday admitted that he had made errors in his dissertation and early academic work, but attributed them to lacking supervision and support for his autism and "complex learning disabilities".^[6]

Following the announcement of investigations by the University of Cambridge and Jesus College, Arday resigned from his professorship on 5 August 2026. He said that this should not be "mistaken for an acceptance of the narratives that have surrounded me".^[1]

Selected publications

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