

## **Action on Access WP and Access eUpdate Issue 145: 10 December 2021**

*This eBulletin is created and produced by Andrew Rawson,  
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colleagues in the wider access widening participation and  
student success community.*

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Our eUpdates provide a monthly round-up of the latest news, events, resources and information requests on higher education, and include occasional features on Widening Participation, access, student success and social justice.

I hope you find it useful and informative. Please continue to send me your feedback and contributions. This edition will be available until the next monthly edition at <http://www.actiononaccess.org/ebulletin/>

If you have any suggestions for how the newsletter could be improved, have any items of news, an event or an article you would like to contribute, please contact the editor at [contact@actiononaccess.org](mailto:contact@actiononaccess.org).

We disseminate information every day through our [ACTIONONACCESS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK](mailto:ACTIONONACCESS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK) list and current WP, access, student success and related vacancies are also regularly posted at <http://www.wptestsites.co.uk/actiononaccess/resources>

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## Welcome to the December 2021 *Action on Access* eBulletin.

The next issue of the eBulletin will be published on Friday 21 January 2022.

**Copy deadline: Wednesday, 19 January 2022.**

We look forward to receiving information you wish to share with colleagues.

### Editorial

Thank you for being a part of the Action on Access community over the past year and through continuing trying times. Supporting opportunities for the widest sharing of information and networking through the Action on Access WP Jiscmail, website and this eBulletin link is what we do best. We continue also to inform and link colleagues working in a wide range of roles and across a wide range of sectors - universities and colleges delivering higher education; further education colleges; Sixth Form colleges; Uni Connect, NCOP, Aimhigher and other university and college outreach collaborations; main players such as UCAS and the OfS; collaborative research organisations and researchers, independent consultants, charities and voluntary organisations; education and training providers; the list goes on.

In this month's eBulletin, I think you will find many interesting inter-related features that highlight both the pleasingly rapid, yet sometimes disappointingly slow, pace of upward social mobility effected through higher education - which often succeeds in spite of frequently changing government attitudes and policies. And once again we are faced with more policy change. Institutional Widening Participation 5 year-plans are just becoming nicely embedded despite the disruptions we have all experienced over the past two years only for all that has been gained to be threatened. Currently, it is far from clear as to the ministers' comprehension as to the distance travelled; the simple realities of how institutions work; or indeed, the social forces that operate to hinder upward social mobility – and the appointment of a new Director for Fair Access always creates some unease particularly alongside the imminent departure of two highly experienced and committed senior OfS staff. Add to this two new Bills currently going through Parliament (Skills and post-16 Education Bill and Higher Education Freedom of Speech Bill) and the change from Erasmus to Turing gives us much to ponder at the end of 2021.

The initial six items in this month's eBulletin sketch out some of the new changes facing us. We must not forget that these are merely setting out direction of travel and it will be for the OfS and new Director of Fair Access and Participation to produce the concrete details: guides, maps, instructions for how we travel and indeed our specific destination. The new Directorial perspective which comes primarily from a schools' policy background; and an increased ministerial attention on school prior attainment will undoubtedly lead to changes of approach but I hope will recognise also that the responsibility for school attainment must lie primarily with schools (supported by HE providers of course). This must not lead to refocusing resources on outreach at the expense of the work ongoing inside institutions to improve all student engagement, attainment and progression (which is not just about salary).

Attention to supporting the government's levelling up policies should build nicely on the focus we have had with Uni Connect and NCOP programmes to spread HE opportunity to areas of the country which, for various reasons over the years, have been neglected. Ministerial focus on "getting on, not getting in" we must presume vindicates the direction of travel in the continuation and the development of greater institutional emphases on student retention, success and progression in recent years. Despite an apparent ministerial perspective that institutions are self-interestedly recruiting through Widening Participation (as evinced in their letter of 23 November), actually, since the time of Aimhigher, institutions have largely guided and supported the progression of school and college pupils into the best courses and institutions for the individual student. The challenge remains, however, in monitoring and recording the results and tracking outcomes of these "altruistic" interventions – and how to do this within a government-driven increasing marketisation of Higher Education. Their assertion that the new approach will mean less bureaucracy is very welcome - although significant change, as we know, often brings more bureaucracy; and further, it is not unusual for this to be accompanied by an understanding that providers will be expected to deliver "material efficiency benefits from this less bureaucratic approach."

There is a real plethora of valuable information in the rest of this eBulletin: news, policy, research, reports, podcasts, and questions; consultations and calls for proposals to respond to; events to attend; groups and courses you can join; vacancies to apply for. I hope you will find plenty of suitable reading over your Christmas break to inform and fortify you for the New Year. I wish you all a very merry and happy break; and once again thank you for all your contributions, kind and constructive comments and support. See you in January.

Cordially, Andrew.

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## Quotations of the month

“The projects will ambitiously tackle the issues causing under-representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students in postgraduate research, with the aim of stimulating innovation and developing effective practice for universities and colleges throughout the country. This is vital, so that postgraduate research in this country can benefit from the talents of people from all backgrounds.”

**Chris Millward, Director for Fair Access and Participation at the Office for Students, see the item below, ‘Projects to improve black, Asian and minority ethnic students’ access to postgraduate research’**

“Rather than create a binary system of academic A-Levels and vocational T-Levels, should we think more broadly to create a parity of esteem between vocational and academic learning? A new, baccalaureate-style system, similar to the International Baccalaureate already used in 150 countries, that allows students flexibility and the scope to blend high-quality academic and vocational routes could be the solution.

If we want our young people to compete for the jobs of tomorrow and deliver a skills revolution, we need to remove the false dichotomy between vocational and academic achievement that has unfairly constrained our young people for decades.”

**Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Committee, see item below in What’s Wanted, ‘Do post-16 qualifications prepare young people for the future world of work?’**

“Our sector has many strengths we must maintain, but also one fundamental weakness – its offer to people from the working classes and those who do not share its liberal orthodoxies. To change this, we need to adopt an agenda which enables real choice for working-class students, which kicks away at the last remnants of the ivory tower and promotes pluralism and civil disagreement within the academic community. With new Ministers in place and reforms to higher education in the pipeline, there is no better time for Ministers and universities to embrace the One Nation University for the benefit of all.”

**Richard Brabner, Director of the UPP Foundation, see item below, ‘The One Nation University: Spreading opportunity, reducing division and building community’**

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## What’s New

### Letter from govt on appointment of John Blake as new Director of Fair Access and Participation, 23 November 2021.

The new Director for Fair Access and Participation will start in post on 1 January 2022. The government sets out guidance under section 2(3) of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 to the Office for Students (OfS), the new approach in relation to Access and Participation they require from the Director for Fair Access and Participation and the OfS.

Some highlights. [The letter](#) recounts successes around entry to higher education from disadvantaged and under-represented students who in the past did not fare so well, but points out, for example, that entry to HE from White British young males is still far too low and that, particularly, attainment remains poor for students from black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

The letter suggests: a refocusing of the “A&P regime” to a greater role in continuing to raise aspirations and standards in education, i.e. in schools and colleges. The letter asserts that what really matters for disadvantaged students is high prior attainment, successful completion of a high-quality

degree, and giving access to high-skilled employment. Universities can play a key role, and have a key interest, in raising school standards, increasing pupils' aspirations, and levelling the playing field for future students across the country. The letter strongly urges the OfS to include due consideration of regional inequalities to help drive forward its levelling up agenda.

Higher education providers should "altruistically" deliver activities that support students on to other positive outcomes – including apprenticeships, vocational education and access to other universities – not solely judged on increasing access to their own institution.

Another government focus is now to strongly focus on ensuring that the courses students are admitted to are genuinely high quality, and providers supporting for students to both complete their studies and develop the skills and knowledge that will lead to graduate employment or further study – rather than simply "ensuring more people can get into higher education". And suggests that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are being let down by these courses and that the OfS should take an enhanced regulatory approach in this regard.

Finally, the government wants the OfS to strongly encourage providers to set themselves ambitious, measurable targets to significantly increase the proportion of students on higher and degree apprenticeships, Level 4 and 5 courses, including Higher Technical Qualifications, and utilising greater flexibility of access such as part time courses.

The letter maintains the benefits of its new approach include: a streamlined planning, monitoring and evaluation process; short, concise plans both accessible and easy to understand; comprehensible to students and parents, and clearly signposted on university websites, so that they can hold institutions to account on their commitments; material efficiency benefits from this less bureaucratic approach.

### **New director for fair access and participation.**

[The OfS welcomes](#) the appointment of John Blake as the new director for fair access and participation. The Department for Education (DfE) has also issued the OfS with new guidance around access and participation plans. John Blake said: "I am especially keen to see further development of partnerships between higher education providers and groups of schools to improve attainment for disadvantaged young people throughout their schooling, providing them with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to access higher education.

But attainment and access are only the first steps: they need to be matched by participation and success. It is crucial that students are able to study on high quality courses which meet their needs, and are then supported so they are ready to embark on rewarding lives and careers after graduating." Schools' policy expert John Blake is a former teacher who now leads on policy and political issues related to schools, education, and wider social impact for educational charity Ark, which runs the multi-academy trust Ark Schools. Blake, currently head of public affairs and engagement at Ark, the charity which operates multi academy trust Ark Schools will succeed Chris Millward whose four-year term of office expires at the end of December 2021.

If you are interested you can see the 'Office for Students' ['Director for Fair Access and Participation information pack'](#).

### **'New director to lead 'reboot' of HE access', FE Week**

[This article](#) gives a summary of the Director's role, responsibilities and powers.

The Director for Fair Access and Participation is a statutory position, established in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 which also established the Office for Students. The £130k a year post is one of two executive positions reporting directly to the OfS board appointed by the secretary of state. The other being the chief executive.

Under the Act, Blake assumes a range of powers to approve, monitor, and report on higher education providers' performance against their access and participation plans. Colleges that deliver higher education, as well as universities, are required to develop and publish these plans. And you can see a photo of the new Director.

### **Who is John Blake and Why was he chosen to lead a new agenda for access and participation? Jonathan Symons, for WonkHE**

In [this blog](#) the author looks at John Blake's background and mandate, in the context of a renewed focus on pre-18 attainment and alongside "a set piece speech from the minister (reported in next item), and guidance for the new postholder of the independent regulator, which makes clear that universities will be expected to reshape their Access and Participation Plans to focus much more on pre-18 attainment, and employability and outcomes post-graduation. The author describes himself as

a colleague and good friend to Blake, who he describes as an expert educationalist with a career which has been in and around schools - not higher education - serving as a teacher and senior leader in schools for a decade, and then for the last few years working in the central team at the Harris Federation, for Policy Exchange, and most recently at Ark Schools.

Blake is reported as an expert in education policy, in stakeholder relations, and in communications; setting up Labour Teachers network, with a strong sense of place, and with a decade long history of writing publicly on education. The author describes in what ways he sees the new Director of Access and Widening Participation being driven, within the context of attainment, schools and higher education providers, and evidence driven and evidenced widening participation policy and practice.

### Higher and Further Education Minister speech at Times Higher Education Campus Live event, 24 November 2021.

Michelle Donelan delivered a speech at a Times Higher Education event outlining plans to give learners of all ages the chance to gain skills and experience through Lifelong Loan Entitlement. She announced a once-in-a-generation opportunity to enact historic reforms that are long overdue. That a holistic higher education system cannot ignore the fact that **when** a student accesses their learning is absolutely as important as **what** they are learning. She talked excitedly about a new funding and access system to develop a culture of lifelong learning, a fair and inclusive system supporting individuals to reskill and upskill and in turn ensure that our education system is the engine powering the government's levelling up agenda. Doesn't mention credit accumulation unfortunately, but she does offer a meaningful consultation, and call on the entire sector to partner with the DfE to help shape, publicise and deliver this once-in-a-generation reform.

Once again, she reiterates that real social mobility is as much about getting on as it is about getting in, and that social mobility has been almost entirely focused on getting in. And talked about the relative success with disadvantaged students but that "it is unacceptable that so many still find themselves on courses where fewer than 50% of those who start have good outcomes after leaving, or are encouraged onto courses that providers know have poor completion rates". And the minister states that "We have let down too many disadvantaged students for too long."

Therefore the government is intent "on refocusing the entire Access and Participation Regime in order to ensure that improvements in access for disadvantaged people also result in improvements in attainment and outcomes", and, working with the new Director of Fair Access and Participation, "shifting its measure of success in social mobility from intakes to outcomes" with every university to in turn revising and resubmitting their Access and Participation Plans to refocus them on equality of opportunity, and raising aspirations and standards in education. And she talked about what APPs should look like including higher education providers required to work more closely with school and colleges "to improve attainment", an increased focus on various higher technical qualifications and "higher" rather than "lower value" courses. Read the speech [here](#).

### Guidance from government

You may want to re-visit and reflect on the OfS's website on Guidance from government in the light of things may be a changing to a "a new normal" with the govt. expressed intention on "refocusing the entire Access and Participation Regime."

These pages list documents which cover details of strategic advice and priorities from the government to the Office for Students.

### 'Access and participation plan monitoring data and outcomes for 2019-20'

[This report](#) looks at the annual monitoring returns submitted by providers in April 2021. The data it contains is published as official statistics.

This report sets out:

- the progress made against providers' targets
- sector expenditure in access and participation
- an overview of what providers reported to us about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the delivery of their access and participation plans
- an overview of the student submissions that were submitted as part of this process.

In terms of delivery the report highlights 'Making reasonable decisions and taking all reasonable steps' and "Support for disabled students".

See the data on [Progress against targets](#) where the OfS reports providers' reported progress against institutional 2019-20 access and participation targets. For most targets expected progress was made. Around a fifth of targets reported no progress.

### Evaluating the delivery of the OfS investment in TASO

Results of the mid-term survey of higher education providers in England commissioned by the Office for Students to evaluate the delivery of the OfS investment in the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO). The main objective for this survey was to provide further data for the evaluation, following the [baseline report published in February 2021](#). The interim report can be seen or downloaded [from here](#). Interesting and useful set of recommendations.

### Race and ethnic disparities in higher education

[In this blog](#) where Chris Millward, current Director for Fair Access and Widening Participation at the OfS, reflects on the content of his keynote presentation at the governance Advance HE Evolving Governance Conference on 18 November, he looks at the data and reflects on how resilient black, Asian and minority ethnic students often need to be in order to succeed while at university and when looking for graduate jobs or postgraduate education.

He writes about importance of diversity to the learning experience in higher education – how a healthy and vibrant educational environment brings different identities, perspectives and backgrounds together. The data also remind us – as exemplified by the pattern of differential outcomes we see in relation to race and ethnicity in higher education - how much further some students have to travel to get into university, the resilience that is needed for them to succeed whilst they are there, and the further barriers they can face at the next frontier, whether it is the graduate jobs market or postgraduate education.

The blog presents data on: the gaps in the proportion of 18-year-olds entering higher education compared with the wider population; progression to higher education by age 19 by ethnicity, gender and free school meal status; the proportion of students achieving first or upper second grades by entry qualification; and finally on entrants to postgraduate research courses

He discusses the measures used to tackle these disparities and how they have been and are contested. He brings to our attention the OfS and Research England-funded [£8m research programme](#), through which universities will work collaboratively with each other to bridge the gap between undergraduate and postgraduate education for Black, Asian and minority ethnic students, piloting changes to admissions within universities and disciplines, and creating new pathways through doctoral education and research careers. Chris looks to a renewed momentum for action to address race and ethnic disparities in higher education.

### 'Degree attainment: Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students'

"Providers are closing the attainment gap for black, Asian and minority ethnic students".

[Latest case studies](#) from the OfS showing how providers are making progress through taking a whole provider approach, inclusive education and facilitating conversations about race.

The OfS is updating this page with more examples of effective practice as they identify them. If you have, or are aware of, examples of effective practice in this area please contact [app@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:app@officeforstudents.org.uk).

### Fair Equality of Opportunity means a fair chance to succeed

This 15 November [HEPI guest post](#) from the nearly-departed OfS Director of Fair Access and Participation continues what he has been speaking much about lately - the importance less of national policies to reduce access during the coming year and more about local strategies that will capitalise on the talents of all our graduates, whatever their background and wherever they live. He also reiterates that his experience in this post has shown him that students can be [the most powerful voice](#) for access and participation, showing the next generation that people from their schools and communities can succeed, whilst raising the ambitions of senior leadership and governors, and holding them to account. In addition to enlightening universities, student perspectives like these can illuminate the conceptual questions running through the sector's work on access and participation, for example what we mean by promoting equality of opportunity or fair access. Conversations with students from the widening participation cohort have repeated the difficulty in bridging the gap between talent and opportunity, and that outcomes matter to students and their families.

Chris Millard examines in some detail the scale of this challenge: in School attainment and university access; in Geographical inequality and graduate jobs. And he talks further about geography, place and social mobility.

### **‘Outsourcing Turing exchange scheme to Capita ‘risks selling students short’, Guardian article 9 December 2021**

The Turing exchange programme replaced Erasmus in the UK when the gov. pulled out after Brexit. The Turing exchange scheme was announced by Boris Johnson in late 2020, after the government broke its earlier pledge for the UK to remain a member of the Erasmus scheme after Brexit. [The article](#) reports that Labour MPs and unions have criticised the government’s decision to outsource the administration of the £110m Turing scheme to Capita, saying it risked “profiting off students’ aspirations”.

Capita is to take over Turing in March 2022. It has said it will be assisted by several educational organisations, including the Confederation of School Trusts, the Sutton Trust and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). Joanna Newman, the secretary general of the ACU, said: “The ACU will be supporting with the applications and assessment of mobility projects, drawing on our global networks and building on our extensive expertise in delivering renowned international mobility schemes, including managing the UK government’s Chevening, Commonwealth and Marshall scholarships, and the multilateral Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth scholarships.”

Matt Western, the shadow universities minister, said: “The Conservatives’ plan to farm out the Turing scheme to the private firm Capita risks selling students short. With the firm’s history of mismanaged contracts, students will clearly fear this government does not have their interests at heart. Since the prime minister broke his promise to keep Erasmus membership, ministers have cut corners, showing a lack of ambition to make study abroad a serious part of global Britain. Ministers must now guard against providers profiting off students’ aspirations.”

### **Spotlight on The Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, SOAS-FACE Access Podcast**

This, the second episode of the SOAS-FACE Access Podcast focuses on the Skills and post-16 Education Bill, which was introduced to Parliament in May 2021. The Bill comes as [new figures](#) show that further and technical education provision boost the economy by £26 billion. According to a report by the Social Mobility Commission, twice the number of disadvantaged 16 to 18-year-olds are in further education than in school sixth forms. The Bill is now at committee stage in the House of Commons. The proposed abolition of technical qualifications has been delayed for a year, with reassurances that many, if not all, BTECs are likely to continue after an outcry from the sector and strong interventions at the House of Lords.

[In this episode](#) of the Access Podcast, we hear from [John Butcher](#), Professor of Inclusive Teaching in Higher Education and Director Access, Open and Cross-curricular Innovation at the Open University; [Dr John Baldwin](#), 45 years of experience in FE, lecturer, head of department and senior manager including a responsibility for higher education in the college; [Robin Webber-Jones](#) - Head of Apprenticeships at the University of Derby. Introduced and chaired by Renata Albuquerque, Access and Student Success Manager (Languages & Community), UCL.

### **‘Sheffield Hallam flexes ‘levelling up’ power in South Yorkshire’, THE article 2 December, John Morgan**

As ministers prepare White Paper, could the South Yorkshire Futures programme reaching neglected suburbs and towns be model for putting policy into practice? [Long article](#) for the THE which seeks to demonstrate how Sheffield Hallam’s work on South Yorkshire Futures shows how a new role for universities may be opening up – and may be required in many other areas across the country – in uniting schools and councils behind “place-based” ideas to raise educational attainment from the early years onwards.

### **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill 2021: Committee stage report**

[This Research Briefing](#), published Monday, 18 October, 2021 analyses the progress of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill following its second reading and committee stage in the House of Commons. The [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill](#) was presented in the House of Commons on 12 May 2021. The Bill extends and strengthens existing legislation intended to uphold freedom of speech and academic freedom in registered higher education providers (HEPs) and students’ unions.

It implements legislative proposals set out in a [Department for Education \(DfE\) policy paper](#) published in February 2021.

In its current form, the Bill has nine substantive clauses. Clauses 1 to 3 relate to the legal duties of registered HEPs, their constituent institutions, and students' unions respectively. Clause 4 creates a new statutory tort, which will enable individuals to seek legal redress if freedom of speech and academic freedom duties have been breached. Clauses 5 to 9 concern the functions of the Office for Students (OfS), which regulates higher education in England. They introduce a new complaints scheme, new registration conditions for HEPs, and a new OfS Director for Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.

At the committee stage [85 amendments and 13 new clauses](#) were considered. Amendments 1 to 26 and new clause 1 were all tabled by the Government and subsequently accepted. Amendments and new clauses were tabled by the Opposition and other members of the committee on academic freedom, the Bill's coverage of student bodies, the reporting requirements of the OfS, and the appointment process for the new free speech director, none of which were accepted. In some cases, the Minister of State for Higher and Further Education, Michelle Donelan, committed to considering the issues raised.

Background to the Bill, commentary on its provisions, and responses from the sector can be found in the Commons Library [briefing Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill 2021](#), May 2021.

### **Talking leadership 1: Ron Daniels on the university as a bulwark for democracy' interview, THE 11 November 2021.**

Free speech and academic freedom have been inherent to the idea of the university since it was formulated, according to Johns Hopkins University president Ron Daniels, and with their additional, inbuilt mechanisms to enhance social mobility and foster civic duty, universities are in a unique position to strengthen democracy, he believes. We are, Daniels says, at a critical juncture in the story of democracy. If we do not act now, the arc will continue bending in the wrong direction.

[The article](#) warns that some might see a danger in a university president's highlighting his students' lack of engagement with freedom of speech in the context of recent attacks on universities regarding this issue, particularly in the US and the UK. Daniels' response is robust. It is his responsibility as a university leader to advocate for and defend his organisation, he says, but also to be alert to the criticisms that are being levelled against it, to unpack them and see whether they contain kernels of truth.

One of Daniels' core arguments is that universities have made great strides in increasing the diversity of their student and academic bodies, but they have not matched that with mechanisms that enable those individuals, who inevitably hold differing views, to form friendships and debate their ideas. Rather, they have dismantled some of the structures that once pulled students together. A notable example is housing policy; another problem is the recent decline in institutional emphasis on debate; another is encouraging a broad shift in curriculum without undermining the very academic freedom we seek to protect? Research is another important avenue. Johns Hopkins has opened a new research institute, named the Agora after the central public spaces in Ancient Greek city states, to investigate the root causes of the threats to democracy and the growing polarisation of American and other Western societies.

### **'We should not abandon the link between qualifications and student loans, but radical reform is necessary', HEPI guest blog, Tim Blackman, 12 November 2021**

Professor Blackman, Professor of Sociology and Social Policy and Vice-Chancellor at The Open University writing in a personal capacity, gives his understanding of the UK Government's new Lifetime Loan Entitlement (LLE) for England, which will break new ground when it is introduced in 2025 to replace the current student loans system, importantly making student loans flexibly available for studying short courses. The author examines some of the complications involved, for instance advocating an approach of stacking qualifications as a developing portfolio could avoid the potentially negative impact of minimum entry requirements on both lowering the status of non-degree qualifications and making degrees even more socially selective. [The blog](#) discusses the currently very inflexible higher technical qualifications might fit better into the system. And the inevitable re-thinking of the traditional full-time degree.

In conclusion, the author sees an English landscape of existing and new higher education qualifications and funding support as a picture of dots that are not joined up, he has tried here to outline in this piece how the dots can be fully joined up to create a system fit for the twenty-first century.

### **'The One Nation University: Spreading opportunity, reducing division and building community'**, HEPI debate paper 28, Richard Brabner, Director of the UPP Foundation

In [this paper](#) Richard Brabner, says universities and the Government should adopt the political idea of One Nation to reshape universities in England. Writing in a personal capacity, Brabner says criticism of recent higher education expansion stems from having a university sector that benefits the professional classes more than those from working-class backgrounds. To overcome this, he argues we should adopt the idea of the One Nation University, which is a concept based on: spreading opportunity; reducing division; and building community.

The paper:

- argues against caps on what or where students can study and in favour of more active government policies to support flexible higher education to properly allow more and real lifelong learning opportunities
- explains how a pervasive monoculture within higher education institutions affects how universities cope with cultural clashes and free speech
- outlines the importance of participation in a student experience underpinned by community engagement, particularly for less advantaged students, to revitalise local communities, help students gain vital skills, tackle mental health, and help bridge town-gown and generational divides.

The author says, "Our sector has many strengths we must maintain, but also one fundamental weakness – its offer to people from the working classes and those who do not share its liberal orthodoxies. To change this, we need to adopt an agenda which enables real choice for working-class students, which kicks away at the last remnants of the ivory tower and promotes pluralism and civil disagreement within the academic community. With new Ministers in place and reforms to higher education in the pipeline, there is no better time for Ministers and universities to embrace the One Nation University for the benefit of all."

### **'Projects to improve black, Asian and minority ethnic students' access to postgraduate research', Office for Students**

13 new projects will attempt to tackle persistent inequalities that create barriers for black, Asian and minority ethnic students to access and take part in postgraduate research (PGR).

The projects, nearly £8 million investment from Research England, are innovative in scope, scale and focus to an extent that has not been seen in England before. Delivered over the next four years, they will improve access into research, enhance research culture and the experience for Black, Asian and minority ethnic PGR students, and diversify and enhance routes into a range of careers.

[The projects](#) range from targeting recruitment, admissions and transition to increasing the number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic female professors, and generating new admissions practices to creating longitudinal, systemic, and structural change at various English universities.

Director for fair access and participation at the Office for Students, Chris Millward said, "The projects will ambitiously tackle the issues causing underrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students in postgraduate research, with the aim of stimulating innovation and developing effective practice for universities and colleges throughout the country. This is vital, so that postgraduate research in this country can benefit from the talents of people from all backgrounds."

### **'Building belonging: Developing religiously inclusive cultures for Muslim students in higher education',**

[Two reports](#) pulling together research by Maisha Islam AFHEA, Student Engagement Research and Projects Co-ordinator, Careers and Opportunities Hub, University of Winchester on Muslim student experience, student voice and perceptions of belonging in UK Higher Education – in the context of a current 'Muslim degree-awarding gap'. Funded by Advance HE Good Practice Grants 2020 available to Advance HE members only.

### **'Care experienced students in higher education: Building a fuller (data) picture'**

The Office for Students (OfS) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency have been working to improve the way data about care experienced students is captured. The work between the OfS and HESA has resulted in [an improved HESA field](#) to identify and record a broader range of students who have experienced being in care. The field is broken down into sub-categories to differentiate between formally recognised 'care leavers' and those who have experienced care, but are not supported by their local authority.

## Advance HE student survey sector reports

Advance HE share key findings on student mental health and wellbeing across their three large student surveys: [Postgraduate Research Experience Survey](#), (see author's key thoughts [here](#)), [Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey](#) and the [UK Engagement Survey](#).

Their 10 December event, '[Findings from Advance HE's student experience surveys](#)' (see below in Events section) will explore the survey findings, focusing on student mental health and wellbeing, access to support, as well as student's perception of HEIs' handling of Covid-19.

## The latest issue of the Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning (WPLL)

This special issue brings together papers from the recent Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) Annual Conference with its usual collection of articles highlighting the continuing work to support widening participation and lifelong learning across the sector. For example, and including:

- 'Lifelong learning in Rochdale: Building sustainable community voices' on co-production of research and building community co-operation with the university as positive and respected community partner.
- 'Nurturing belonging in a diverse student group: Transition and transitioning innovations in the University of Opportunity', some of the work Wolverhampton University is doing to support challenges around the transition to higher education in a region of high unemployment and low qualifications
- Bill Jones book review for 'Reclaiming the university for the public good: Experiments and futures in co-operative higher education'
- 'Beyond bridging: The prospects for porosity in widening participation work with parents', a study of widening participation activity with parents/carers from multiply-deprived communities.

If you are a subscriber to the journal access this special edition [here](#). If not, you can still read the editorial which is open access. If you wish to subscribe, you can sign up for institutional membership (£199 inc. VAT) or personal membership (£92) [here](#)

Please contact [WPLL-journal@open.ac.uk](mailto:WPLL-journal@open.ac.uk) if you wish to discuss anything or for further information.

## BTEC Qualifications on the way out?

Last month's Action on Access eBulletin highlighted worries about the disappearance of BTEC qualifications. Good to note that there have been significant changes put forward by the House of Lords to the [Skills and Post 16 Education Bill](#) currently making its way through parliament. At the least we can assume the BTECs will have a longer phase out period. Elsewhere, Kasim Chaudry the managing director of the BAME apprenticeship network argues [here](#) that BTECs are crucial for levelling up. Additionally, many Vice Chancellors have said that culling BTECs will prevent under represented students and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds from studying a range of different careers as [this example](#) describes for training and qualifications in nursing.

Also, the Government has several proposals underway on post-16 qualifications which you may wish to peruse/respond to. See item below in the '[What's wanted](#)' section for much more detail, '[Do post-16 qualifications prepare young people for the future world of work?.....](#)'

## 'Which university degrees are best for intergenerational mobility?', The Sutton Trust, November 2021.

[This report](#) asserts to be a landmark piece of work for the study of social mobility in this country, utilising data on socio-economic background and education pathways linked to adult labour market outcomes for several entire school cohorts. The report has been produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, in partnership with the Sutton Trust and the Department for Education and authored by Jack Britton, Elaine Drayton and Laura van der Erve.

The report looks in detail at how higher education attendance influences the chances of social mobility. While social mobility can take many forms, the piece looks at income mobility in particular, looking at how many young people who grow up economically disadvantaged move into high income groups when they reach adulthood, and which university pathway they have taken.

The report uses the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset to document mobility rates for each university, subject and course in England. The focus of the main analysis on people who

attended university in the mid 2000s, although also investigates the likely trends in mobility rates for more recent cohorts. Key findings include:

- in the mid 2000s, students who attended private secondary schools were around 100 times more likely to attend Oxford or Cambridge than FSM-eligible students, and there is also a clear high variation in access to different subjects.
- the very best-performing institutions in terms of their labour market success admitted few FSM students.
- many Russell Group universities have high success rates but admit very few FSM students, leading to below-average mobility rates.
- taking into account adjusted earnings for cost-of-living differences across the country London universities still dominate the top of the mobility distribution, and the most selective universities still perform poorly.

The authors maintain their overall conclusions are robust to reasonable changes to definitions (such as how we define low-income children and how we define success).

There is a Sutton Trust summary document, '[Universities and Social Mobility: Summary Report](#)', accompanies the report 'Which university degrees are best for intergenerational mobility?'

### '2021 annual report on education spending in England', Institute for Fiscal Studies report, 30 Nov 2021

[This article](#) aims to give us a clear, consistent picture of the level of spending at each phase of education, how this has changed over time, how it is likely to evolve going forwards and what factors have driven these changes. This should provide policymakers and the public with a sense of current resource priorities and future challenges (Education spending is about £99 billion in 2020–21 in today's prices or about 4.5% of national income). The article asserts that these issues are also a vital component of the education policy debate, particularly given empirical evidence showing how investments at different stages of the life cycle combine to drive long-run outcomes.

The article gives:

- total spending
- spending on Early years
- spending on Schools
- spending on Further education and Sixth Forms (Further education colleges and sixth forms have seen the largest falls in per-pupil funding of any sector of the education system since 2010–11)
- spending on Higher education (Up-front higher education spending per undergraduate student in 2020–21 was about 9% lower in real terms than it was in 2012–13. As with further education, a major challenge for the higher education sector is the expected growth in student numbers, **which are expected to rise by 13%**).

Visit the IFS Education spending homepage [here](#).

### Circular letter Participatory Research funding allocations 2021-22, Research England

Research England is allocating a total of £6 million to higher education providers (HEPs) for 2021-22 to be used for Participatory Research. Participatory or co-produced research strengthens research outcomes by involving the communities and users of research, better recognising their experience, needs and preferences, and giving greater agency to communities to implement findings. [The letter](#) explains how the funding can be used, and how much institutions are getting.

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## What's Still Current

### Consultation launched on proposed OfS strategy for 2022-25

Office for Students consultation on their proposed strategy for 2022-25. The consultation proposes a plan of action that will guide its activities as a regulator over the next three years. It will make sure they are targeted, sequence our work effectively, and are able to achieve their aims and make best use of all their available resources.

The proposals identify two main areas of focus: quality and standards, and equality of opportunity, plus OfS objectives and goals for the period, how they intend to deliver them, (and a minor addition to the [regulatory framework](#)). To read and respond to the consultation go [here](#).

**Consultation open until 6 January 2022** to anyone with an interest in higher education in England.

### Uni Connect phase three guidance for 2021-22

[This document](#) sets out the aims, priorities and expectations of the Office for Students' (OfS) Uni Connect programme for phase three, covering 1 August 2021 through to 31 July 2022. It has been updated October 2021, to reflect the changes to the approach to programme monitoring for 2021-22 (section 7). It will be of particular interest to the Uni Connect partnerships as a source of information for the delivery of activity in the 2021-22 academic year.

The OfS will issue further guidance during 2022 to cover the remainder of phase three of the Uni Connect programme, which should run until July 2025.

### A Special Interest Group for Access and Participation Plans

A new network for widening participation professionals with responsibility for responding to and monitoring University and College Access and Participation Plans providing a space to discuss common issues and questions and to support each other with regard to widening participation. The network will go beyond FACE's own membership and expertise, and seeks to gather perspectives from many sector professionals to facilitate insightful contribution to understanding the intersection between policy and practice, and to also represent a powerful collective voice for discussion and change. The inaugural meeting of the APP SIG took place on 4 November, but the network is open to anyone with responsibility for responding to and monitoring institutional Access and Participation Plans. If you are interested, [this blog](#) gives more information.

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## Missed this?

### Liberating the Curriculum: Inclusive Learning and Teaching at UCL

You can see here the recording and original text from the November 17th webinar on the theme of 'Where next with decolonising the curriculum? There are also some excellent, informative and practical links (as were provided in the webinar) on [this website page](#).

The wider UCL [Liberating the Curriculum webpage](#) contains useful reflections and discussion on an inclusive curriculum, and the student-teacher-curriculum inter-relationship.

### Designing assessments to support deeper learning, Campus, THE

New ways to test and feedback on students' progress that help enhance their learning

Assessment is an area of rich debate in higher education with a multitude of opinions on how to do it better for both students and staff. There is much room for improvement. [This collection](#) offers insight and guidance from university staff who are using a wide range of assessment strategies to boost student learning outcomes, from authentic assessment design to doing away with grades entirely.

### 'Belonging to the Future', UPP Foundation new 2025 strategy

Launched 24 October as the Foundation celebrates five years supporting the higher education community the strategy '[Belonging to the Future](#)' outlines its vision to help students, graduates and universities fulfil their potential to transform lives and communities.

Running until 2025, Belonging to the Future articulates three goals for the UPP Foundation: enable students and graduates to succeed; develop green and sustainable civic universities; support higher education's value to society. To deliver these goals the UPP Foundation will continue to fund pilot initiatives with charities and universities, and develop agenda setting thought leadership. The 2025 strategy also articulates a purpose to make effective use of its collective resource to provide support and development opportunities for grant recipients and the wider higher education community.

## What's wanted

### 'Developing a survey of taught postgraduate students', Office for Students

The Office for Students is developing options for a feedback survey for taught postgraduate students - a 2022 Pilot Survey. (A key source of information about the undergraduate experience is provided by the National Student Survey (NSS). However, there is a lack of comparable published information about the postgraduate taught student (PGT) experience."

[The OfS is exploring options](#) for a PGT survey that can:

- provide information that contributes to the public accountability of higher education
- provide information to help us fulfil our regulatory duties under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017
- provide data that supports higher education providers in improving the student experience.

They will be running a pilot survey during 2022 and are inviting expressions of interest from higher education providers in England with PGT students who wish to take part. Providers that take part will see summarised responses from their own students, so will benefit from an early look at how students respond to the questionnaire. The pilot survey is expected to run between April and May 2022. To take part in the 2022 PGT pilot, please contact [pqt@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:pqt@officeforstudents.org.uk) by **12 December 2021**.

### 'Call for Ideas', The Independent Review of Children's Social Care

The Independent Review of Children's Social Care was announced in January 2021, building on their the 'Case for Change' (June to August) the IRCSC is asking for **responses until 5pm on 15th December 2021**. As the Review moves into its final few months, it is asking you to share your ideas for change, looking to pooling ideas around solutions which will help inform the review's final recommendations next Spring. Ideas submitted through this form will be considered alongside the suggestions captured <https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/call-for-ideas/> through engagement with children, young people and others who have lived and professional experience of children's social care. [Submissions](#) are asked to identify

- What will change as a result of your idea?
- Who will be affected if your idea is implemented?
- Are there any challenges or risks associated with implementing your idea?

### 'New Challenges, New Solutions', Advance HE

Advance HE [launches 2021-22 round of the Collaborative Development Fund](#). Five themes of equality, diversity and inclusion, student success, the Professional Standards Framework (PSF), College Based Higher Education and inclusive institutional cultures. Advance HE will be [inviting submissions from their members](#) to lead grant-funded solutions offering opportunities ranging from £2,500 to £50,000. **Call closes 21 December 2021**. Advance HE members only.

### Call for Symposia proposals, 'Bridges between disciplines: Gender in STEM and Social Sciences', 12-16 September 2022

A forum to provide focused discussions of both new and emerging topics or innovative applications of established approaches; to bridge the gap between what has been thought of as separate and decoupled fields of knowledge (STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics- and Social Sciences), but also to think about gender differences in Sciences from an intersectional perspective. [Conference](#) research themes:

- inequality in Science and Academia - mapping critical problems we need to deal with: for example, career track, hierarchies, gaps, harassment, precariousness, temporary leaves and dropouts, work-life balance, mental health;
- reflections on the masculinist construction of Science and knowledge;
- languages of Science - concepts and wording, dialogues, communication, and outreach;
- strategies and approaches for an emancipated and emancipatory Science: a Science for all.

Topics not listed but within the scope of the BRIDGES 2022 (Gender and Science) conference are also welcome. For more information on symposia proposals contact <https://bridges2022.com/call-symposia-submission/>. **Deadline for proposals 30 December 2021**.

### Call for proposals. 2022 UKAT Annual Conference 4-6 April 2022:

The [Call for Proposals](#) is now open.

Based on collective recent experiences, and new ways of doing academic advising and personal tutoring, the [2022 UKAT Annual Conference](#) will explore how we might reimagine advising/tutoring so that it is more relevant to students, more effective at helping all students and institutions to achieve their intended outcomes, and more efficient in its operation. The conference will focus on five key themes:

- digital technology
- identity
- community
- equality, diversity and inclusion
- student-centred transformation.

The 2022 UKAT Annual Conference will be an online conference to make it as accessible as possible to all who are interested in attending. **Closing date for proposals: 6 January 2022.**

### 'Do post-16 qualifications prepare young people for the future world of work?', Education Committee launches inquiry

Consultation, launched 23 November 2021 examining how effectively post-16 qualifications, such as A levels, T levels, BTECs and apprenticeships, prepare young people for the world of work.

The Government has several proposals underway on post-16 qualifications:

- [Level 3 qualification reform](#): The Government has responded to consultation on reforming level 3 qualifications - a [policy statement published in July 2021](#), timeline for reforms to level 3 qualifications, including defunding from technical qualifications overlapping with T Levels
- the [Skills and Post-16 Education Bill](#), second reading House of Commons on 15 November
- the further rollout of T Levels.

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Education Committee said: "Rather than create a binary system of academic A-Levels and vocational T-Levels, should we think more broadly to create a parity of esteem between vocational and academic learning? A new, baccalaureate-style system, similar to the International Baccalaureate already used in 150 countries, that allows students flexibility and the scope to blend high-quality academic and vocational routes could be the solution.

If we want our young people to compete for the jobs of tomorrow and deliver a skills revolution, we need to remove the false dichotomy between vocational and academic achievement that has unfairly constrained our young people for decades."

The Committee's new inquiry will look at the impact of these changes and whether existing and proposed arrangements go far enough to prepare young people for the world of work.

The Committee is inviting written submissions addressing any or all of the following areas:

- the experience to date of those taking or delivering T Levels, and any changes to T Levels that may be needed to ensure they are accessible to all students.
- the strengths and weaknesses of the current system of post-16 qualifications, with reference to A Levels, T Levels, BTECs and apprenticeships, in preparing young people for work **or further and higher education.**
- the benefits and challenges the Government's proposed changes to level 3 qualifications would bring, with reference to any **implications for BTECs and routes into apprenticeships.**
- the extent to which the Government's review of level 3 qualifications will **impact disadvantaged groups**, students from minority ethnic backgrounds, students known to the care system, and students with special educational needs or disabilities, and what measures might be put in place to mitigate any negative impacts
- the benefits and disadvantages of introducing a baccalaureate system in post-16 education that allows students to take a variety of subjects, including both academic and vocational options.
- **the benefits and disadvantages of a post-qualifications admission system.** International good practice examples of systems for post-16 education and qualifications.

[Submit your written evidence here](#)

**The deadline for submissions is Thursday 20 January 2022.** [For further information see the inquiry page on the Committee's website.](#)

## WP Events

**13 December 2021, 13.00-`5.00: 'Mental Health Declarations by Black Students'**, Open University  
In September 2020 the Open University established a Task & Finish group under the Access & Participation Plan (APP) to explore the gap in mental health declaration rates by Black students (compared to White students).

[This seminar](#) presents feedback and findings from this group to the sector and includes the following:-

- hear about scholarship with OU students & staff
- learn from desk research on best practice from across the sector
- how do policies and procedures impact the success of students
- new resources created to support students and staff
- learn from the group's experience of setting data baselines.

The seminar will be recorded and shared after the event but attendance is recommended to enable you to interact with other delegates and ask questions from the presenters.

**14 December 2021, 9.00 am to 14.00: 'Looking Back, Moving Forward: Conversations about student inclusion and belonging in higher education'**

[This event](#) will look back at three years of #IBelong by sharing what has been collaboratively done and learned to improve sense of belonging in a disruptively changed context. Changes erupted due to Covid-19, due to the prevalence of global social movements against racism, sexism and heterosexism, and due to the existing inequities in access and persistence in higher education. The event considers what a sense of belonging means to students and university lecturers in different regional and national contexts of the consortium partners while also learning from other contexts by colleagues working at universities in the Global South.

**14th December 2021: 'How to recognise and promote a neurodiverse workforce'**, AbilityNet'

[The webinar](#) will include a chat between Jane Hatton, CEO of Evenbreak, a coach and a successful candidate, followed by a panel discussion between a panel of speakers, exploring:

- perceived barriers to career progression and how to challenge them
- the panel's personal experiences and their top tips for progression
- how employers can support inclusive career development
- what are companies doing to support people with neurodiverse needs?
- differences between the private and public sector (Jess Gosling)

The panel includes: Jane Hatton, CEO of Evenbreak, social enterprise which helps inclusive employers attract and retain more talented disabled candidates; Jess Gosling, who works in the UK government on matters of diplomacy, and is a public speaker on unseen disabilities and championing neurodiversity in the workplace; and Rina Wharton, Junior Accessibility and Usability Consultant who regularly runs audits and checks of clients' websites and mobile applications and offers recommendations on how to fix them.

**14/15 December 2021, and 2 February 2022: 'Blended approaches to widening access – what works'**. NEON

This three-day course builds on the 'outreach online' course that supported over 200 widening access practitioners in 2020-21 and will once again feature Dr Jon Rainford, Associate Lecturer, Open University and Martin Webster, Operational Consultant, NEON as the facilitators.

[This course](#) will reflect upon what has worked with online delivery, what might have been lost and what innovation can be driven by adopting a blended approach going forwards, covering subjects such as: What blended learning is; what value does it bring to outreach; how to audit your provision and developing an effective sustainable face to face and online offering. As part of this programme, you will develop a project that will enable you to better support learners.

**15 December 2021, 16:30-17:45: 'Interrogating 'belonging' in Higher Education'**, Winter Symposium 2021, University of Winchester

Hosted by The University of Winchester's Centre for Student Engagement, [the Winter Symposium 2021](#) (free symposium) will be focused on Interrogating 'belonging' in Higher Education. Joined by Dr Kate Curruthers Thomas (Birmingham City University) and Caroline Cooke (AECC University College) who will present two sessions on critically interrogating themes relating to 'belonging' in UK Higher Education. Any questions, please do not hesitate in getting in touch with: [CfSE@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:CfSE@winchester.ac.uk)  
**Registration closes on 15 December** and we ask that colleagues use an organisational email address to book their place.

**15 December 2021, 14:00 - 15:30: 'Widening participation in higher education: longitudinal research on the 'first in family' student experience and labour market outcomes'**, Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL

[This online event](#) explores the findings of a research project on 'first in family' students, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, and aims to address how 'first in family' students, those whose parents do not have a degree but who go on to achieve one themselves, navigate the higher education system and the labour market compared to their peers. The project findings have important implications for both social mobility and educational inequality. A unique opportunity to hear from 'first in family' students and leading inequality researchers

The event includes a presentation of results from the project and a discussion on how the research adds to evidence and thinking on widening participation in higher education. Two 'first in family' students will speak candidly of their experiences, and we will hear from experts from both the policy and the research community.

Presenters include:

- Dr Anna Adamecz-Volgyi, UCL Centre for Longitudinal Studies
- Dr Nikki Shure, UCL Social Research Institute
- Sam Friedman, Professor of Sociology, London School of Economics
- Penny Longman, Senior Careers Consultant, UCL Careers
- Laura Kwiatkowski, Development Officer, Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools.

**11 January 2021, morning: 'Key priorities for education recovery in the wake of COVID-19 - raising attainment, student catch up, and improving social mobility'**

[This conference](#) is looking at priorities for supporting educational attainment in England in the wake of the pandemic and particular approaches needed for supporting disadvantaged families. The agenda:

- attainment in the wake of COVID-19 and priorities for recovery
- strengthening early educational foundations/supporting educational attainment long term
- priorities for the early years sector, and attainment at secondary level
- how has COVID impacted on progression?
- the future role of technology in tackling educational underachievement
- case studies in supporting and improving educational attainment:
- policy priorities for driving achievement going forward.

Speakers include: Graham Archer, Director for Education Recovery, Department for Education; Paul Finnis, Chief Executive Officer, Learning Foundation and Digital Poverty Alliance; Ben Jordan, Senior Policy Unit Manager, UCAS; Neil Leitch, Chief Executive Officer, Early Years Alliance; Tom Bewick, Federation of Awarding Bodies; Lisa Capper, Nacro; Vanessa Linehan, Sandbrook, Hackney; Frank Norris, Northern Powerhouse Partnership; Dr Alicia Shaw, SHINE: Support and Help IN Education. Book [here](#).

**From 11 January 2022: Inclusive Engagement Workshops**

These Advance HE virtual [two-part workshops](#) will introduce the latest literature, practitioner learning, and sector insights to support participants in ensuring inclusivity for all as they embark on **co-production and partnership initiatives with students** in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. Participants will also have the opportunity to critically apply their learning to a 'live' initiative or proposal within their own institution.

**12 January 2022, morning: 'Next steps for the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework'**, Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference

[This conference](#) will examine next steps for the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) and the measurement of teaching excellence in higher education.

Attendees will have the opportunity to look at:

- latest thinking on the development of the new TEF framework
- OfS proposals for what the future TEF will look like and priorities for its implementation
- the future role of the TEF in improvement
- how to enhance its utility for providers and students.

Speakers include: Graeme Rosenberg, TEF Manager, Office for Students; Afua Acheampong, Nottingham Trent University; Professor Thom Brooks, Durham University; Professor Graham Galbraith, University of Portsmouth; Professor Janice Kay, University of Exeter and OfS; Dr Helena Lim, Evasys; Professor Catherine O'Connor, Leeds Trinity University; Professor Matt O'Leary, Birmingham City University; Steve Taylor, Warwickshire College Group and OfS; and Suellen White, The London Institute of Banking & Finance. Book [here](#).

**17 January 2022, morning: 'Freedom of speech policy and higher education**, Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference

[This conference](#), in the context of the Government's plans to legislate for freedom of speech in higher education with the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill currently progressing through Parliament, will be an opportunity for key stakeholders and policymakers to examine the likely impact of the proposed new regulations and statutory duties on HE providers and student unions; delegates will look at the priorities for managing risk and liability, how to avoid undue bureaucracy, and the ramifications for the free expression of ideas on campuses. Delegates will also consider the wider implications for the employability of graduates, protections for vulnerable groups, the rigour of academic research, and the autonomy of the sector and individual providers. Speakers include: Michelle Donelan MP, Minister of State for Higher and Further Education, Department for Education; Dr Joe Lewis, Further and Higher Education Policy Specialist, House of Commons Library; Jack Ballingham, Durham Students' Union; Professor Bobby Duffy, King's College London; and many others. Book [here](#).

**20 January 2022: Evaluating Outreach Work 2022**, NEON

First of [a programme of four full day training sessions](#) in London around the evaluation of widening access activities. Following sessions will be held on Wednesday 9th February, Tuesday 1st March and Tuesday 22nd March 2022.

Evaluation of outreach activities helps us understand the nature, and type, of activities that will best facilitate the transition to higher education for those from underrepresented groups. The programme offers continued support to improve their own policies and practice in this area of widening access. The events will be facilitated by Professor Graeme Atherton (Director, NEON & Head, Centre for Levelling Up, University of West London) and have been designed to cover key elements of the evaluation process.

**24 January 2021, morning: 'Improving support for care leavers - educational progression and employment, coordination, addressing long term challenges, and priorities for policy'**, Westminster Education Forum policy conference

[This conference](#) focuses on policy priorities for care leavers - discussing next steps for the provision of support, strengthening the system, and helping the workforce deliver improved outcomes. It will be an opportunity to consider the ongoing Independent Review of Children's Social Care and the outlook following publication of its interim report, the Case for Change.

Delegates will discuss progress in implementing a joined-up system of support for care leavers and how best to enable key agencies to work effectively together, as well as how to tackle long-term challenges faced by those leaving care, and improve access to future pathways into employment and further study.

Speakers include: Mark Riddell, National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers, Department for Education; David Graham, National Director, Care Leavers Association; Nick Smith-Patel, Head of Education, MyBnk; Jane Collins, Foster Support; Councillor Clare Curran, Surrey County Council; Jennifer Mohammadi, Live Unlimited; and Claire Preston, ENGIE UK. Book [here](#).

**24 January 2022, morning: 'Next steps for improving apprenticeship quality in England'**, Westminster Employment Forum policy conference

[This conference](#) will be an opportunity to discuss priorities for driving up quality, both in the wake of the pandemic - and following the recent changes to post-16 qualifications, which designate apprenticeships as one of the main options for post-16 progression alongside A Levels and T Levels. Delegates will assess remaining issues and next steps in light of the areas of emphasis highlighted in the IfATE apprentice guide to quality apprenticeships - with a focus on centring the perspective of apprentices in areas such as the apprentice induction process, partnerships between apprentices, training providers, and employers, training quality, end-point assessments, and supporting apprentice mental and wider wellbeing. The discussion will also consider lessons learned from past provision, looking at examples of best practice to inform future delivery. Book [here](#).

Speakers include: Simon Field, Director, Skills Policy; Jonathan Mitchell, Deputy Director, Portfolio and Partnerships, Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education; Thomas Burton, National Open College Network; Naomi Clayton, Learning and Work Institute; Kevin Davis, Ladder for Greater Birmingham; Caroline Larissey, National Hair and Beauty Federation; Cllr William McCaughey, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council; Jacqui Molkenhain, JEML Consulting; David Phillips, City & Guilds Group; Andrew Turner, Rochdale Borough Council; and a senior speaker confirmed from Association of Apprentices.

**26 January 2021, morning: 'Next steps for careers advice in England'**, Westminster Employment Forum policy conference

[This conference](#) will be an opportunity to discuss the Skills for Jobs White Paper and the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill and their implications for the careers landscape in England. There will also be wider discussion on the structure and organisation of careers advice, developing a long-term careers strategy in England, improving careers services in educational settings, and the implementation of the Baker Clause.

It will also be a timely opportunity for delegates to consider how the provision of careers advice in England can link with wider policy priorities, such as the Government's Levelling Up agenda, and contribute to social mobility, as well as helping to address labour market and skills needs.

Sessions in the agenda:

- policy priorities and key issues
- developing a long-term careers strategy
- progression to the job market
- careers services in educational settings
- looking forward.

Speakers include: Oli de Botton, Chief Executive, The Careers and Enterprise Company; Sir John Holman, Independent Strategic Adviser on Careers Guidance and Senior Advisor in Education, The Gatsby Foundation; Michael Houlihan, CEO, Generation UK; Ben Jordan, Senior Policy Unit Manager, UCAS; Paul Price-Hazlehurst, CEO, The Futures Group; Zac Aldridge, NCFE; Aweek Bhattacharya, The Social Market Foundation; Jan Ellis, Qdos Education; Ryan Gibson, Academies Enterprise Trust; Rachel Kitley, Cowes Enterprise College; Susanna Lawson, OneFile; Esther McVey MP, If Chloe Can; David Morgan, Career Development Institute; and Vikkie Morton, Education Partnership Northeast. Book [here](#).

**26 January 2021: Volunteer Management Conference**, Central London

Delegates are able to decide what they want to get out of the day, choosing their learning goals with three core areas to explore: Transformation and Leading change; The Future of volunteering; Recruitment, Retention and Management.

Though designed for the Voluntary sector [this conference](#) offers a day of practical sessions exploring the latest insights and practice from across the sector; looking to transform volunteering operations, looking at volunteering trends and demographics as well a volunteer management, recruitment and retention.

You will hear from speakers including the NCVO and Association of Volunteer Managers, and also be linked up in a team to develop an action plan for your organisation and share insights in a high-energy format featuring 9 workshops across the day.

**27 January 2022, morning: Priorities for the higher education admissions system**, Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference

[This conference](#) will consider priorities for the admissions system in light of the recent confirmation of the Government's intentions to move forward with post-qualification admissions reform, in collaboration with the sector.

This will also be an opportunity for delegates to assess the impact that COVID-19 has had on university admissions, with the OfS ban on 'conditional unconditional' offers, and research from UCL which found predicting A-Level grades to be a 'near-impossible task', and that it has harmed high achievers from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The agenda is structured to bring out latest thinking on:

- government priorities for admissions reform
- the challenges presented by PQA models and how best to overcome them
- supporting and empowering students throughout reform, and ensuring no one is left behind
- making sure reform is UK-wide and takes into account priorities for devolved nations, such as timetabling and qualification options.

Speakers include: Dr John Blakeley, Policy Advisor, Widening participation and Student Experience, Department for Education; John Cope, Director, Strategy, Policy & Public Affairs, UCAS; Rebecca Gaukroger, Director, Student Recruitment and Admissions, The University of Edinburgh; Jazreel Goh, Country Director, Malaysia, British Council; Dr Beth Linklater, UCAS; and Professor Graham Virgo, University of Cambridge

### **8 February 2022: 'Diversifying Leadership'**

Part of Advance HE's Race Equality in Higher Education programmes and events portfolio for 2021-22, [this Diversifying Leadership](#) programme is designed to address the issue of underrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic leaders in HE institutions in the UK at all levels, particularly at senior levels. The programme does this by exploring themes of power and influence, demystifying leadership, cultural identity and cultural capital, increasing participant visibility and authentic leadership. Participants build confidence, feel empowered and expand their professional strengths.

### **9 February 2022: Student Retention and Success Symposium**, Advance HE

Retention and attainment remain a key issue across the HE sector with providers engaged in a range of approaches and interventions to improve the learning experience and outcomes across different student groups. Based upon stimulus presentations and case studies, the symposium will provide attendees with a space in which they can exchange and disseminate new and different ways of thinking about retention as well as considering structures and culture that support and impact on student retention, transition, and success. [The symposium](#) will be preceded by a call for contributions inviting practitioners to submit an abstract on their work as a stimulus presentation or case study to support the discussions.

**15 February 2022, 'The Secret Life of Students 2002'**, Wonkhe, Business Design Centre, London Through the theme of 'Doing Diversity Differently', [this event](#) will be rethinking the model of designing learning environments based on an imagined "normal" student and then applying sticking plaster interventions based on diverse student characteristics. A new approach is needed to stay in step with how students think about diversity, experience higher education in diverse ways, and what a genuinely diverse student body might need from professionals, and each other to feel that they belong in higher education.

The event will reflect on the findings of the UPP Foundation's Student Futures Commission due out the same day, and consider developments in regulatory regimes for access, diversity and equality. Think through how engaging with students' lived experience can transform strategy, policy and delivery, and consider what students are experiencing and saying about harassment and discrimination, and the boundaries between security and freedom. And you'll hear from big names including Office for Students Chief Executive Nicola Dandridge. There will also be a wealth of new insight to share from Wonkhe's own research with students and higher education professionals and leaders.

Speakers include: Nicola Dandridge, CEO, Office for Students; Debbie McVitty, Editor, Wonkhe; Mark Leach, Editor in Chief, Wonkhe; Hillary Gyebi-Ababio, Vice President (HE), NUS; Mary Curnock Cook, Chair, UPP Foundation Student Futures Commission; Bobby Duffy, Professor of Public Policy and Director of the Policy Institute, King's College London; Sunday Blake, Associate Editor, Wonkhe; Jim Dickinson, Associate Editor, Wonkhe; Duncan Exley, Author, *The End of Aspiration? Social Mobility and our Children's Fading Prospects*; David Kernohan, Associate Editor, Wonkhe.

### **3 March 2022: Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference 2022**, Advance HE

It is increasingly recognised how important mental health and wellbeing is for staff and student success. Universities and colleges are fast developing 'whole institution approaches' to mental health and wellbeing, not only to improve academic outcomes and retention, but to provide a holistic and positive experience, even in the most challenging times. [This one-day conference](#), organised by the Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education Expert Group in collaboration with Advance HE, will discuss new ideas and will aim to provide a boost in motivation and a fresh vision for all delegates. It will explore established and successful examples from the sector, share good practice, discuss the challenges when looking at mental health and wellbeing, and review ways to overcome possible difficulties.

### **14-18 March 2022: Digital Universities Week UK**, Pullman Hotel, London St Pancras.

This in-person, week-long programme featuring speakers from Northeastern University, United Nations, UCL, Northampton University plus many more universities from across the UK as well as Minister Chris Philp who will detail what the UK government's new AI Strategy will mean for higher education as we enter a period of transformational change.

[The event](#) will feature a diverse range of market-researched discussions, including what a hybrid model of higher education really looks like, strategies to address student digital poverty, how we are responding to the UK's digital skills gap plus many more challenges that universities are currently facing. Panel discussions, exclusive roundtables, keynote talks and case studies.

### **16-17 March 2022: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference 2022: 'Inclusive Institutions in Action'**

In the last two years, we have seen a resurgence of voices protesting inequality (racial injustice and the Black Lives Matter Movement, the impact of Covid on existing inequalities, sexual harassment and violence) and a growing interest across the HE and FE sectors in responding to and working with this energy to create meaningful and sustainable change. Increasingly, we are asking what it looks like when

- institutions respond positively to the diversity of voices, energy and scholarship advocating for change?
- the voices from the margins are welcomed centre stage, and inclusion is at the heart of our approach to institutional culture?
- our leadership models and practices are truly inclusive?
- we seek out, develop, value and celebrate change agents from outside traditional hierarchies, talent pools and scholarship?
- the complexity of identity and intersectionality informs thinking and practice and shapes new approaches to inclusion and building belonging?

[This Advance HE conference](#) offers an opportunity to think deeply and creatively about what it means to be an inclusive institution, to explore models of inclusion that challenge traditional concepts of leadership and agency, and to share innovative practice around collaboration, co-ownership, allyship and solidarity.

### **24 March 2021, morning: 'Next steps for the Turing Scheme - implementation so far, growing international partnerships and the role of FE, and widening social and economic benefits',**

Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference

[The conference](#) will discuss priorities, challenges, and opportunities for implementation of the Turing Scheme, following the initial rollout of the UK Government's replacement for Erasmus+. The agenda also looks at the role of the Turing scheme in aiding social mobility and developing international partnerships. It takes place alongside recent initiatives from the DfE which aim to boost the teaching of languages - including increased funding for Mandarin, French, German, and Spanish - as well as measures to improve the accessibility of language learning.

Speakers include: Stephanie Harris, Head of International Engagement, Universities UK; Emma Meredith, International Director, Association of Colleges; Lise Bakke Brøndbo, Oslo Metropolitan University; Alizée Cordes, Teeside University; Professor Robin Mason, University of Birmingham; and Benthe Tanghe, Newcastle University and Newcastle University Students' Union. Book [here](#).

### **29 March 2022, morning: 'Next steps for SEND provision in England',** Westminster Education Forum policy conference

The SEND review, improving standards and coordination, and supporting progression into HE and employment. [This seminar](#) will be an opportunity to discuss the future for SEND provision in England, following the expected publication of the Government's ongoing SEND review. Delegates will consider priorities for improving provision in the context of a range of key developments, including the publication of the Government's [Disability Strategy 2021](#), Ofsted's 'SEND: old issues, new issues, next steps review', and the APPG for SEND report, ['Forgotten. Left behind. Overlooked'](#). Overall, the agenda will focus on:

- improving provision for children with SEND:
- assistive technology
- careers, post-16 advice, and future pathways - supporting progression into higher education and employment for students with SEND and ensuring adequate support post-16.

Speakers include: Andre Imich, SEN and Disability Professional Adviser, Department for Education; Professor Brian Lamb, Visiting Professor of Special Educational Needs and Disability, University of Derby; Maxine McDonald-Taylor, Specialist Adviser for SEND, Ofsted; Jeramie Sutton, Industry Adviser for Schools, Microsoft; Garry Freeman, Independent SEND Consultant; Cllr Graham Howe, Wokingham Borough Council; Clare Howard, Natspec; Stephen Kingdom, Disabled Children's Partnership and Pears Foundation Learning Hub; Dame Christine Lenehan, Council for Disabled Children; and Hend Rahman, Make it Happen. Book [here](#).

### **31 March 2022: Race Equality Colloquium 2022**

Part of Advance HE's Race Equality in Higher Education programmes and events portfolio for 2021-22 this [Race Equality Colloquium 2022](#) session looks at the continuing racial discrimination in higher education. With the sector's focus on structural and institutional racism, we see growing tensions arising from differing cultural, ethnic and other identities, both on campus and in wider society. By way of keynotes, panel sessions and workshops, this one-day virtual event will provide a safe space to discuss progress made, the challenges that lie ahead and the next steps that higher education institutions must take to address racial inequality in the sector.

### **4-6 April 2022: 2022 UKAT Annual Conference**

Based on collective recent experiences, and new ways of doing academic advising and personal tutoring, the [2022 UKAT Annual Conference](#) will explore how we might reimagine advising/tutoring so that it is more relevant to students, more effective at helping all students and institutions to achieve their intended outcomes, and more efficient in its operation. The conference will focus on five key themes:

- digital technology
- identity
- community
- equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- student-centred transformation.

The [Call for Proposals](#) is now open, **closing date: 6 January 2022.**

The 2022 UKAT Annual Conference will be an online conference to make it as accessible as possible to all who are interested in attending. For those who are able to meet in person, UKAT hopes to arrange in-person, one day pre-conference study day to be held on Friday 1 April. Delegate registration for the conference and study day will open early in 2022.

### **26 April 2022: Employability Symposium, Advance HE**

The Employability Symposium will provide attendees with a useful forum to encourage the exchange and dissemination of different ways of thinking about and new approaches to employability. It's inescapable; employability is a prominent feature of contemporary higher education. Globally, HE providers are examining the methods they use to enhance employability and increasingly there is a desire to strengthen and develop relevant activities due to a range of factors and influences such as graduate destination data, labour market detail, policy impact, and student expectations. [This symposium](#) aims to bring together cutting-edge examples of how employability can be embedded at school, faculty/college and/or institutional levels. The symposium will be preceded by a call for contributions inviting practitioners to submit an abstract on their work as a stimulus presentation or case study to support the discussions.

### **28 April 2022: Surveys and Insights Symposium 2022, Advance HE**

Surveys, measurement tools, metrics and insight have a key role to play in helping maximise the reach and quality of provision within the sector. [This symposium](#) provides an opportunity to discuss and debate the potential of insight from surveys, metrics, qualitative research and wider methods of capturing the voice of the student for driving excellence and enhancement within higher education. The conference will feature a keynote speaker alongside oral presentations and workshops from HE practitioners, survey officers and academics. A call for papers will open in December 2021.

### **29 April 2021, morning: 'Next steps for supporting disabled students in Higher Education', Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference**

[This conference](#) will discuss future priorities for supporting disabled students in Higher Education, including latest thinking around: the impact of the pandemic on the experiences of disabled students in HE; streamlining the transition process to university, improving student life on campus and increasing awareness of available support; priorities for educational attainment and future pathways to postgraduate study and employment. Book [here](#).

Delegates will consider what is needed to take forward the ambitions set out in the strategy and what more can be done to support students with disabilities as they transition from school to higher education - alongside steps which can be taken to increase the number of disabled graduates in employment.

Further sessions look at how the experience of the pandemic can inform best practice in provision for disabled students going forward, including in terms of blended learning and support such as funding, as well as how the sector can best dovetail its approach with that outlined in the Disability Strategy.

Speakers include: Nicola Turner, Policy Adviser, UCAS; Geoff Layer, Chair, Disabled Students' Commission; and Vice Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton; Helen Saelensminde, Chief Executive Officer, Snowdon Trust; Sean Cullen, Brunel University London; Geena Vabulas, Policy Connect; Anna Ward, University of Cambridge; Mette Westander, Disabled Students UK; and Danie Woodbridge, Buckinghamshire New University.

**12 May 2022: Student Engagement Conference 2022**, Advance HE

Student engagement has never been more important or more challenging. [This conference](#) will provide an opportunity for the sector to come together to review where we've been and to consider "where next?". It will focus on the engagement of students in all aspects of their higher education, from the 'classroom' to extracurricular activities including leadership and governance; asking what does it mean to lead student engagement, and how can we continue to improve our vision of student engagement? The conference will consider leadership of student engagement through a 360° lens including the role of all staff, the Student Union, and the community as well as considering how we ensure inclusive engagement and remove all inequalities.

**5-7 July 2022: Teaching and Learning Conference 2022: Teaching in the spotlight: Where next for enhancing student success?** Advance HE

Flagship [three-day conference](#) attracting HE practitioners involved in all aspects of HE teaching and learning from the UK and overseas. The focus on enhancing all aspects of teaching and learning remains a critical issue for those seeking to provide an outstanding student experience at all levels of taught provision – all positioned **firmly on teaching in a global context**. In particular, this year, the conference will explore how we are enhancing student success through all aspects of the student experience including transitions, curriculum design and development, enterprise and employability, assessment, engagement and inclusion, sustainability and much more. Join us to share and learn, network with passionate colleagues and work together to enhance the success of future HE students.

**12-16 September 2022: 'Bridges between disciplines: Gender in STEM and Social Sciences'**

The main aim of [this Conference](#), held in a safe hybrid environment (online and onsite), is not only to bridge the gap between what has been thought of as separate and decoupled fields of knowledge (STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics- and Social Sciences), but also to think about gender differences in Science(s) from an intersectional perspective. Any questions do not hesitate to contact Soledad De Esteban-Trivigno, PhD. at [communication@bridges2022.com](mailto:communication@bridges2022.com)

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## Vacancies

*When applying for any of these positions, please state that you saw the vacancy in the [Action on Access eBulletin](#), or one of our regular [Action on Access Jiscmail notifications](#). Thank you.*

### Student Recruitment Assistant posts, University of Sunderland

Our Post 16 Schools, Colleges and Partnerships Team are a highly flexible, highly professional outward facing student recruitment team who work across the North East region and the wider UK providing innovative and engaging outreach. We are now expanding our team and are looking for extremely motivated and effective [Student Recruitment Assistants](#) to join us.

You will become an integral part of this busy team and will plan and carry out a variety of student recruitment and outreach activity, both on and off campus, face to face and virtually. You will have outstanding attention to detail and excellent organisational skills as well as being able to engage with students of all ages. You will be self-motivated, able to work independently and able to help students build vital transferable skills and lay the foundations for a successful university experience.

To be considered for these posts you will be educated to degree level or equivalent relevant qualification; have demonstrable experience of working within a student recruitment or related function and of delivering outstanding presentations and workshops to post 16 age students within schools and colleges. For further information contact Carole Green, UK Student Recruitment and Partnerships Manager at [carole.green-1@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:carole.green-1@sunderland.ac.uk) for more information.

Full time, permanent posts. Salary: £21,461 to £25,630 per annum. **Closing date: 12 December 2021.**

### Student Recruitment Outreach Manager (Post 16), Widening Participation and Outreach, University of Nottingham

The [Student Recruitment Outreach Manager \(Post 16\)](#) will co-lead a team of Post 16 outreach officers and an administrator. You will be responsible for managing, developing, and evaluating an innovative programme of events and activities, aimed at encouraging students from all backgrounds to progress to higher education and specifically to make the University of Nottingham their preferred choice for study.

You will be able to demonstrate significant relevant skills and experience appropriate to the post, including experience in programme, event, and team management at a strategic level as well as excellent communication, interpersonal, presentation and organisation skills. In addition, you will require the ability to build and develop a strong rapport with academic staff, professional services colleagues, and students from across the University as well as staff from local and national schools and colleges. You will be a strong team player, have excellent IT skills and have the ability to manage a varied and demanding workload, working proactively under pressure to meet deadlines, and managing multiple projects and staff concurrently.

The role is based in the Widening Participation and Outreach Team at the King's Meadow Campus, but involves some travel to schools, colleges, and other venues around the UK. Some of these venues are rural and sometimes quite remote; therefore, you must have a full driving licence, access to your own transport and business insurance, unless a disability precludes this. This role also involves some evening and weekend work. Informal enquiries may be addressed to Peter Bruce, tel: 0115 84 67745 or at [peter.bruce@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:peter.bruce@nottingham.ac.uk)

Full-time, permanent basis, though applications are also welcome from candidates wishing to work part-time (minimum 29 hours per week). Salary: £31406 to £40927 per annum. **Closing date: 12 December 2021.**

### Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development, Institute of Education, University of Cumbria

Reporting directly to the Director of the Institute of Education, the [Head of Student Recruitment and Portfolio Development](#) will develop and implement the Institute of Education's Student Recruitment Plan and develop the Institute's Portfolio in line with the University's strategic plans for portfolio growth. You will also lead and manage the development and delivery of the Institute's Collaborative provision and play a significant role in developing and maintaining relationships with our external stakeholders. This role offers an ideal opportunity to contribute to the development and future direction of this successful institute.

Using your experience as a successful senior academic leader, you will have an academic background and the ability to lead others in the design and development, staffing and delivery of a range of programmes of study at various levels. You will also ensure the implementation of effective recruitment, widening participation and other relevant University strategies to ensure the provision of high-quality learning opportunities.

The ability to develop effective partnership working with colleagues involved in recruitment activity, as well as identifying and delivering effective linkages with a range of regional and national stakeholders, within the current teacher development landscape, form an integral part of the role.

Informal Enquiries: Ruth Harrison-Palmer, Director of the Institute of Education, [ruth.harrison-palmer@cumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.harrison-palmer@cumbria.ac.uk)

Permanent, full-time post. Salary: up to £63,083 per annum. **Closing date: 12 December 2021.**

### Head of Student Finance, University of Warwick

The University Finance Office is seeking to appoint a [Head of Student Finance](#) to lead the Student Finance function. Reporting to the Deputy Finance Director for Financial Control and Projects, you will be responsible for improving the overall performance and efficiency of collections processes, enhance fee generation methods and ensure continued financial control over c£350million of receipts. The purpose of the role is to develop and lead the Student Finance team to provide efficient and effective fee administration, financial control and Student Collection services to internal and external stakeholders while maintaining robust financial procedures; as well as developing systems, processes and reporting which enhance current levels of performance.

You will be a fully qualified accountant, ideally with strong experience in credit management and collection issues. Warwick is seeking a strong leader with excellent management, organisational and communication skills, you will supervise and monitor a Student Collections team of 7 staff in posts

ranging grades 3 to 6, a Student Finance team – eight staff in posts ranging grades 3 to 7, and dotted line reports from the PGR Funding and Student Funding teams to advise them on financial matters). The University is looking for proven experience of managing process change and improvements. Full time, permanent post. Salary: £51,799 - £60,022 per annum. **Closing date: 14 December 2021.**

### Outreach Specialist, Coventry University

The Outreach Specialist will be leading on an externally funded project working in collaboration with Coventry City Council, Fab Lab and bringing together other outreach programmes to support students who are 'Not in Education Employment or Training' (NEET) aged between 16-29.

[The Outreach Specialist](#) will support the transition periods between education from Level 2 to Level 3 and from Level 3 to university. This will be done through signposting to programmes and mentoring applicants as individuals to guide them through the processes to remove barriers to education.

The post-holder will work closely with the outreach, widening participation and regional recruitment teams and be responsible for delivering a range of activities across regions, as identified by the Outreach Manager. In doing so the Outreach Specialist will support the Coventry University Group's Access and Participation Plan that emphasises attainment raising activities in schools and colleges whilst supporting recruitment activity. The post-holder will deliver a suite of activities with schools and colleges and will support our work with strategic partners and networks, as well as working closely with academics and professional services staff to create and enhance local delivery to meet national direction and Group-wide targets.

Full time, 2-year fixed term post. Salary: c. £28,000 per annum depending on experience. **Closing date: 14 December 2021.**

### University Partnerships Officer, University Partnerships Team, The Brilliant Club

The [University Partnerships Officer](#) is a new role in the University Partnerships team to continually deliver exceptional university events for the pupils while they increase the scale of The Scholars Programme as set out in Join the Club.

The successful candidate will be highly experienced in organising and delivering widening participation events and enjoy event management. They will ensure that the design and delivery of university events are of a high standard and provide a rich, sector leading experience to pupils from a range of age groups. They will have excellent stakeholder management skills to develop positive working relationships with universities, ensuring that the partnerships remain stable and continue contribute the widening participation priorities of each of our university partners. They will be highly organised, detail-oriented and able to plan effectively for busy time periods. The Brilliant Club mobilises the PhD community to support students who are less advantaged to access the most competitive universities and succeed when they get there. Between 2021 and 2026, they will work with 100,000 students across the UK to help them to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to access the most competitive universities - this will result in an estimated 30,000 of these young people progressing to a competitive university.

The Brilliant Club exists to increase the number of pupils from underrepresented backgrounds progressing to highly selective universities. We think it is important that our charity reflects the lived experience of our beneficiaries, and we want to be an organisation where employees from any background can thrive. We particularly welcome applications from disabled, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans including non-binary (LGBTQ+) candidates, and candidates from low-income families. These groups are currently underrepresented at The Brilliant Club and we are committed to increasing representation and diversity at the charity

Further Details Please visit [www.thebrilliantclub.org](http://www.thebrilliantclub.org) or call Nato Asaturov on 020 3005 3341

Based One of our UK offices - London, Leeds, Birmingham, Cardiff, including frequent travel across the UK.

Full time, fixed term contract 12-months, some evenings and weekends required. Salary: £30,829 (plus £2,000 London weighting if applicable). **Closing date: 15 December 2021.**

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Northumbria University, Newcastle

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team is looking to recruit an [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) Manager](#) who will work with a team of EDI professionals within Human Resources to deliver transformational EDI initiatives which underpin the University strategy and which further our commitment to being a diverse and inclusive workplace. This role will be responsible for the effective

management and delivery of strategic programmes and projects across several portfolio areas within EDI and will specifically lead on LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Disability Inclusion.

You will have experience of working in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion ideally in large and complex organisations. You will have worked with colleagues at all levels and be able to build trusted relationships with key stakeholders to support a proactive approach to inclusion, to lead the delivery of strategic EDI initiatives and provide expert advice and guidance on creating sustainable change in reducing inequality.

This is an excellent opportunity for ambitious individuals to apply both their experience of leading in an EDI space and their knowledge of delivering against equality benchmarks and standards.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication skills, effective report writing skills and be comfortable in providing high-quality written communications using a range of channels and platforms. They will have experience of developing and managing multiple projects of work in alignment with organisational EDI priorities. For informal queries please contact Rachel Brown, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at [rachel.i.brown@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.i.brown@northumbria.ac.uk).

Full time, permanent post. Salary: £42,149 - £51,800 per annum. **Closing date: 15 December 2021.**

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Northumbria University, Newcastle

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team within Human Resources is looking to recruit two [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) Coordinators](#) who will take an active role within the EDI team to deliver EDI initiatives which underpin the University strategy and which further our commitment to being a diverse and inclusive workplace.

The EDI Coordinators will be responsible for the central support and effective coordination of a range of programmes and projects across faculties and departments. They will be confident in leading EDI initiatives and activities, and able to work productively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure EDI objectives are achieved.

You will be an organised and methodical coordinator, with excellent project support skills. You will have some experience of supporting the EDI agenda, ideally in large and complex organisations and will have experience of building trusted and effective relationships with colleagues at a range of levels.

This is an excellent opportunity for individuals with experience of coordinating plans and projects within a very busy and proactive team environment to utilise their skills to promote inclusion. You will have experience of monitoring and driving the delivery of actions and have knowledge of relevant EDI benchmarks and standards.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication skills, effective planning and organisational skills and be comfortable in providing high-quality verbal and written communications using a range of channels and platforms. For informal queries please contact Rachel Brown, Head of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at [rachel.i.brown@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.i.brown@northumbria.ac.uk)

Permanent full-time post. Salary: £28,981 - £35,223 per annum. **Closing date: 15 December 2021.**

### Student Employment Manager, Access, Participation and Inclusion, Kingston University, London

The post holder will work with HR and use an online portal to manage the recruitment, work allocation and payment policies and processes for over 1500 student workers employed in casual roles across the University. They will also collaborate with Careers to design and implement a development programme for our student workers.

The [Student Employment Manager](#) role will ensure that work and development opportunities are open to students from all backgrounds, and that student workers and colleagues employing them experience the highest quality service delivery. They will support objectives in our Access & Participation Plan, contribute to improving student employability outcomes and other university KPIs. They will work as part of a caring and enthusiastic Student Enrichment team that embraces opportunities for personal and professional development.

The successful candidate must have experience of managing student worker recruitment and development in a large higher education organisation. They will have excellent IT, project management, communication and teamwork skills, be highly motivated and able to use their analytical skills and initiative to solve problems. If you require further information, please contact [Julia Millette](#), Student Enrichment Manager.

Full time, permanent post. Salary: £39,343 - 42,751 per annum. **Closing date: 19 December 2022.**

### Inclusion and Learning Lead, EDI Team, SOAS

This role is responsible for delivering our central learning offer by providing technical, cultural and soft skills training to colleagues across SOAS. The post holder is responsible for designing and delivering learning curriculum as well as working with other members of the team to develop bespoke training for staff. The successful candidate should have the ability to apply practical experience and communicate effectively in a learning environment using different channels such as in person workshops, virtual classrooms, or self-administered learning options across different audiences. This role at its core needs to be attentive to the diversity and inclusion developments in the sector and in the institution and integrate them into the work. Working collaboratively with the Diversity and Inclusion Manager, the post holder will raise the profile of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues as they apply to staff and students and build an inclusive culture at SOAS. For an informal chat please contact Jumara Stone, Diversity & Inclusion Manager, at [js138@soas.ac.uk](mailto:js138@soas.ac.uk). Permanent, full-time post. Salary: £37, 920.50 - £44, 543.50 (including London Allowance). **Closing date: 2 January 2022.**

### Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions. University of Bath

The Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions is a new role and one that combines two former portfolios (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Recruitment and Admissions). This is a broad role, and the Director will be responsible for the operation of the following services: Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions, PGT Recruitment and Admissions, International Recruitment, Widening Participation, and the Learning Partnerships Office.

The Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions will shape and deliver a clear and ambitious strategy for the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office (SRAO). In line with the broader University strategy, the Director will adopt a creative approach to international and PGT recruitment, and they will seek to increase Bath's efforts to widen participation at all levels. They will embed the new team structure and ensure that the SRAO remains innovative, cohesive and efficient in its working. They shall work collaboratively with senior colleagues across the University, including the Director of Education and Student Services, the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education and the Chief Marketing Officer, to identify and then deliver on strategic priorities.

Strong candidates will bring leadership experience of developing and delivering student recruitment strategies. They will have experience of international recruitment and bring a creative and innovative approach to identifying additional routes of entry into the University. Strong candidates will have experience of leading change, and of managing capable multidisciplinary teams. They will possess excellent interpersonal, analytical and communication skills. They will be a team-player and capable of building relationships at all levels. Strong candidates will be approachable, empowering and inclusive.

Full time, permanent post. Competitive salary package. **Closing date: 12 noon, 4 January 2022.**

### Schools and Colleges Engagement Officer (Outreach), 2 posts, Corporate Marketing, Anglia Ruskin University

To support delivery against the targets set in the university's Access and Participation Plan, as well as their Education Action Plan, two Outreach Officers (one permanent and one 24 months fixed-term) are sought to join the growing Schools and Colleges Engagement team within the Directorate of Corporate Marketing.

Your primary responsibility will be to work alongside the team to develop a range of face-to-face, and virtual, activities that engage core target groups of primary, secondary and Further Education students both on and off campus. This includes but is not limited to, care leaver/experienced students, students with SEND, students from Military Families and students from Gypsy / Roma / Traveller Communities. Most activity programmes will be progressive, and all will focus on raising aspirations and increasing attainment.

With a degree or part qualified in a relevant professional qualification at degree level or demonstrable experience and evidence of CPD, you'll have experience of, and be passionate about, working with diverse groups of people from primary age students to mature students, as well as their parents/carers and teachers/advisors. You will be well-informed about progression routes to higher education and interested in supporting young people and mature learners take their next steps from school or college with confidence. With an enthusiastic and proactive approach, you'll be an innovative, creative thinker, patient and highly organised. You'll demonstrate excellent interpersonal, written and oral communication skills and you must be able to engage and inspire those around you.

It is important that you can develop and maintain relationships with a wide range of colleagues, partners and external stakeholders. Confidence with organising and presenting group activities is essential.

ARU has campuses in Cambridge, Chelmsford, London and Peterborough with around 2,500 staff and 35,000 students from 180 countries. Regular travel to schools and colleges, occasional travel between campuses, and occasional work outside of normal office hours is expected. Informal enquiries to Dr. Katie Groves, Outreach and Evaluation Manager, at [katie.groves@aru.ac.uk](mailto:katie.groves@aru.ac.uk)  
Permanent, fixed term (for 2 years) posts. Salary: £27,116 to £32,344 per annum. **Closing date: 4 January 2022.**

### **Graduate Access and Widening Participation Project Coordinator, Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office, University Offices, University of Oxford**

This is a new pivotal role to manage and deliver innovative and ground-breaking access and WP initiatives in graduate study. [The Graduate Access and Widening Participation Project Coordinator](#) will be responsible for two key workstreams. The first will be the management and delivery, working in close collaboration with the equivalent Project Coordinator at the University of Cambridge, of a joint project, partly funded by the Office of Students and Research England, to improve access to postgraduate research for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic students. The project aims to propose and test alternatives for the selection of research students. The second workstream will be Oxford-specific, and will include the development and management of some of Oxford's initiatives in graduate access and widening participation.

This would be an excellent opportunity for candidates who can demonstrate day-to-day project management experience on large or multi-stakeholder projects, and who have a genuine interest in, and commitment to, access and WP work. As this is an emerging area of interest for the collegiate University, this is an exciting time to be involved in these projects, and there will be ample opportunity for the post-holder to shape strategies and new activity.

Full time, fixed term for 4 years post. Salary: £33,309– £40,927 per annum. **Closing date: noon, 5 January 2022.**

### **Higher Education Liaison Officer (Study Higher), Marketing, Recruitment and Engagement, Oxford Brookes University**

The University is seeking a self-motivated and enthusiastic individual to work closely with secondary schools and FE colleges, designing and delivering aspirational activities for groups of young people. [The Higher Education Liaison Officer](#) will work closely with a small portfolio of schools and colleges in Swindon to increase participation in Higher Education for students from backgrounds currently underrepresented. The post holder will be responsible for managing relationships with a number of schools and colleges, delivering outreach projects and activities to target learners. The role includes: managing the Study Higher relationship with a portfolio of target schools and colleges in Swindon through developing relationships with key members of staff; designing and delivering creative aspiration and attainment-raising activities for groups of learners in target schools and colleges; providing 1-1 small group mentoring and other support to students; coordinating visits to partner institutions from groups of students in target schools and colleges; developing relationships with partners and other parties whilst using a strategic approach to advertise and support the broader Study Higher offer; collaborating with other Higher Education Liaison Officers working across Study Higher to deliver regional projects and activities; working predominantly with schools in Swindon, although also supporting delivery across the Study Higher region which includes Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Swindon.

The university is looking for: a comprehensive knowledge of the secondary, tertiary and higher education sectors; understanding and belief in the widening participation agenda; the ability to communicate effectively and persuasively with students, teachers and university partners; capability to work autonomously; a creative approach to your work and an enthusiasm to develop activities in a collaborative environment using current best practice.

Full time, permanent post. Salary: £27,924 rising annually to £30,497 per annum. **Closing date: 5 January 2022**

### Widening Participation Manager (Diversity and Inclusion), Communications & Marketing, Cardiff University

An exciting opportunity has arisen to join the Widening Participation and Outreach team as a [Widening Participation Manager \(Diversity & Inclusion\)](#). The aim of this role is to develop University outreach, access, and transition support offered to Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and learners from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Groups, initially focusing on scoping the barriers to Higher Education faced by these students. Following the scoping exercise, recommendations will be presented to the Widening Participation Strategy group to develop a programme of support covering outreach, access, and transition. The role forms part of the Widening Participation management team, and the postholder will provide specialist strategic, planning, and analytical support for the Head of Widening Participation, as well as offering strategic oversight across outreach, access and transition. This post is available immediately. Due to the nature of this project and the diversity of the local community the university particularly welcomes BAME female applications and those from other under-represented groups. If you would like to discuss the role, please contact Scott McKenzie, Head of Widening Participation, on [mckenziesd1@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:mckenziesd1@cardiff.ac.uk)  
Full-time, open-ended post. Salary: £34,304 - £40,927 per annum. **Closing date: 5 January 2022.**

### Faculty Education and Student Experience Senior Manager, university of Nottingham

We are expanding our Faculty Hub Team to support delivery of our Faculty Business Plan and the [Faculty Education and Student Experience Senior Manager](#) is a new role in the team. Join the Faculty Hub Team and work with experienced ESE leads in schools and faculties to enable improvements in the quality of education and student experience. You will have the opportunity to make a difference to thousands of students in the [Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences](#) who are studying to make a difference to the health of people and animals.

Working in partnership with the Faculty Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Student Experience you will develop and implement the education and student experience (ESE) elements of our Faculty Business Plan, which is aligned to the University's [ESE Strategic Delivery Plan](#). You will build a community of practice with school level and faculty level ESE leads to develop and share best practice. There will be scope to lead on projects and initiatives and manage key quality assurance and enhancement processes.

You will need a good understanding of the key issues, trends, opportunities and challenges in relation to ESE in the higher education sector as well as experience leading strategic projects. The ability to build effective, collaborative relationships is essential, as are strong influencing and problem-solving skills. A good honours degree (or equivalent) or extensive relevant work experience is essential, and a relevant professional qualification is desirable. You will be based in the Medical School Building, near University Park, but will be supported to work from a variety of locations (including from home) to meet the needs of the role. Part-time, minimum 29 hours considered. Informal enquiries to Katherine Tallant, email [katherine.tallant@NOTTINGHAM.AC.UK](mailto:katherine.tallant@NOTTINGHAM.AC.UK)

Full time, permanent post. Salary: £40,927 - £50,296 pa. **Closing date: 9 January 2022.**

### Head of Widening Participation (Fixed term), Widening Participation and Outreach, University of Nottingham

The University of Nottingham is seeking to appoint a [Head of Widening Participation](#) to lead the Widening Participation (WP) section of the Widening Participation and Outreach team. This fixed term maternity cover is an exciting and rewarding role, which contributes to the effective implementation of the University's student recruitment strategy and Access and Participation Plan (APP). The role holder manages a multi-disciplinary and dynamic team including delivery focussed staff, data analysts and a project manager. Harnessing the synergies that can be created through a multi-disciplinary team which works across multiple agendas is a crucial element of this cross-organisational role.

As the successful candidate, you will have operational responsibility for the team's outreach and recruitment work with underrepresented young people and mature learners. This involves using data to develop a co-ordinated, evidence informed approach for WP / APP outreach and recruitment across the university. Demonstrable experience of delivering change programmes within demanding time and budgetary constraints is a requirement of the role. The successful candidate will have the ability to think strategically, influence policy-making and manage cross institutional change in systems and procedures. Informal enquiries may be addressed to Emma Szembek, tel: 0115 8466468 or email [emma.szembek@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:emma.szembek@nottingham.ac.uk)

Fixed term, full time position. Salary: £40927 to £50296 per annum. **Closing date: 9 January 2022.**

### Deputy Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), central EDI Team, University of St Andrews

Deputy Head of EDI post reports to the Head of Equality & Diversity (line management). The role will support the Head of E&D to provide reporting and undertake meetings with members of the Principal's Office, on institution-wide progression of funding related accreditation, and statutory legal reporting. The Deputy Head of EDI will deputise for the Head of E&D on managing the EDI Team and its functions, which centrally leads, advises, guides and supports all functions of the University on equality, diversity and inclusion and human rights matters.

Expertise and knowledge of the post holder acts as a core central resource to deliver one of the four University Strategy themes: 'Diverse St Andrews', through line management by the Head of E&D. The post provides a strong strategic and operational service to all schools and units, with an enhanced level of service provided to HR teams in terms of data reporting, recruitment, and to HR Business Partners on legislative compliance regarding bullying, harassment, discrimination and policy development/review.

This post will primarily be based at the Eden Campus at Guardbridge, a state-of-the-art working environment for professional services units. Further information and informal enquiries may be directed to Sukhi Bains, Head of Equality & Diversity, email: [sb104@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:sb104@st-andrews.ac.uk), Tel: 01334 461649.

Full time, permanent post. Salary: £42,149- £51,799 per annum. **Closing Date: 31 January 2022.**

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NADP, National Association for Disability Practitioners. New vacancies being posted all the time. Further information on *NADP* vacancies: <http://www.nadp-uk.org/jobs/>