



Government
Events

Widening Participation 2020: Ensuring Access and Opportunity For All

Wednesday 21st October 2020
Event Guide





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For this Conference, you are entitled to 8 CPD points.



Welcome Letter

Dear Delegate,

Welcome to Widening Participation 2020: Ensuring Access and Opportunity For All.

While Universities have made considerable progress in widening participation in higher education in the last decade, the latest figures released by the Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) indicate that progress has stalled. Since 2013, the percentage of students from state school backgrounds entering higher education has only increased by 0.5 points. Additionally, the proportion of students from areas with low historical participation in higher education remains low, at 11.4%. These statistics signal that more must be done by universities, schools and central Government to engage students from disadvantaged backgrounds and develop robust and effective widening participation strategies.

The Government and the Office for Students have taken significant steps to enact change, with access and participation plans required from all higher education institutions from the 2019 – 2020 academic year. Meanwhile, the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework takes widening participation and access as a key element, signalling to universities that access must be central to their recruitment strategies. However, the challenges posed by Covid-19 threaten to derail progress made so far.

At Widening Participation 2020: Ensuring Access and Opportunity For All, you will have the opportunity to hear about the latest updates on widening participation policy and practice, featuring updates from key bodies and innovative case studies covering key topics such as engaging first generation scholars, effective engagement with schools, and improving the employability outcomes for widening participation students.

If you have any technical issues on the day, please click the 'live support' button for assistance.

We hope you have a rewarding and enjoyable day.

Yours Truly,

David Blake
Government Events



Agenda AM

- 09:00-10:00 **Online Registration**
- 10:00-10:10 **Chair's Welcome Address**
Rae Tooth, Chief Executive, Villiers Park Educational Trust
- 10:10-10:35 **Keynote Address: Generation COVID-19: A Confidence and Contact Challenge**
Carys Fisher, Senior Policy Executive, UCAS
- 10:35-11:00 **Keynote Address: Widening Participation Through Degree Apprenticeships: Key Challenges and Opportunities**
Greg Wade, Policy Manager – Skills, Employability and Degree Apprenticeships, Universities UK
- 11:00-11:20 **Question and Answer Session**
- 11:20-11:35 **Comfort Break**
- 11:35-12:00 **Breakout Networking Session**
- 12:00-12:25 **Keynote Presentation: Improving the Experience of Non-Traditional University Students to Widen Access to Higher Education Through Behavioural Insights**
Anna Bird, Head of Education and Skills, Behavioural Insights Team
- 12:25-12:45 **Case Study: Using Academic Support Programmes to Assist Young People From Disadvantaged Backgrounds to Progress to University**
Dr Rachel Carr OBE, CEO, IntoUniversity
- 12:45-13:05 **Question and Answer Session**
- 13:05-13:45 **Lunch Break**
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*Programme Subject to Change



Agenda PM

- 13:45-14:05** **Case Study: Partnering with Business to Improve Outcomes for Widening Participation Students**
Lindsey Shirah, Joint Acting Head of Careers and Enterprise & Programmes Manager, Queen Mary University of London
- 14:05-14:25** **Case Study: Adapting to Covid-19: Developing a Strategy to Maintain Support for Disadvantaged Students**
Dr Andrew Ross, Head of Widening Access and Participation, University of Bath
- 14:25-14:45** **Case Study: Supporting Students to Improve Retention of Disadvantaged Students**
Marie Muir, Head of Student and Community Engagement, Nottingham Trent University
- 14:45-15:05** **Questions and Answers**
- 15:05-15:15** Chair's Closing Address

*Programme Subject to Change



Speaker Biographies (A-Z)

Anna Bird

Head of Education and Skills, Behavioural Insights Team

Anna is Head of Education and Skills at the Behavioural Insights Team. Before BIT, she worked at the Social Mobility Commission, a group dedicated to tackling inequality across the education system, where she focused on fairness in higher education. She also led research on youth welfare policy at the Department for Work and Pensions. Prior to moving to Government, Anna spent 10 years at a global research consultancy. Anna holds an MSc in social psychology from The London School of Economics and an undergraduate degree from The University of Oxford.

Dr Rachel Carr OBE

CEO, IntoUniversity

Dr Rachel Carr OBE is the Chief Executive and Co-Founder of **IntoUniversity**. She has over twenty years of experience working with children and young people in the voluntary sector. Rachel began devising the **IntoUniversity** programme to address the scale of underachievement among Britain's most disadvantaged families and to support young people to reach their potential. Between 2002-2007, Rachel managed the programme in North Kensington before becoming CEO of the newly formed **IntoUniversity** charity where she has overseen its expansion from one learning centre to 31 and from being a local community project to a national solution for improving widening participation. Before setting up **IntoUniversity**, Rachel was a university lecturer and ran an English Literature Department for five years. She has a PhD in 19th Century English Literature.

Carys Fisher

Senior Policy Executive, UCAS

Since joining UCAS in October 2014, Carys has taken a lead role in understanding the impact of consumer rights reforms on us and our customers, as well as supporting new Tariff implementation and qualification reform readiness. Carys is currently leading a review of how UCAS supports universities and colleges with contextualised admissions.

Carys previously held the post of Postgraduate Admissions Manager at the alternative provider, Resource Development International (RDI), based in Coventry. A linguist by trade, graduating from the University of Bath with a first class honours degree in 2011, Carys also has a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration.

Marie Muir

Head of Student and Community Engagement, Nottingham Trent University

Marie Muir is the Head of Student and Community Engagement at Nottingham Trent University. Based in the award-winning Centre for Student and Community Engagement (CenSCE), Marie leads the outreach and engagement activity: a variety of evidence-based programmes that raise attainment and help students develop characteristics, social and cultural capital required to access and succeed at university and beyond.

With experience in outreach, school's liaison, community engagement and student experience, engagement and retention in different higher education institutions, Marie has developed and delivered programmes designed to support students overcome barriers to engaging with their education. These include targeted pre-arrival skills development interventions, enhanced institution wide induction programmes and continuous transition support.

Dr Andrew Ross

Head of Widening Access and Participation, University of Bath

As Head of Widening Access and Participation at the University of Bath, Andrew manages the strategic direction of the Access Team to engage under-represented with university. He also works across the University to coordinate and support on-course activity supporting APP targets. Originally from a deprived area of Derby, Andrew was the first in his family to go to university; he went on to complete a degree and PhD in Chemistry at the University of Sheffield. Andrew has a passion for helping disadvantaged students achieve their goals and in early 2013 he joined the world of Widening Participation. He has delivered many different projects in several roles at Bath through that time. Andrew is well known around the local area for his exciting liquid nitrogen shows and for his Guinness World Record for the fastest time to make ice cream.



Lindsey Shirah

Joint Acting Head of Careers and Enterprise & Programmes Manager, Queen Mary University of London

Lindsey Shirah has over 10 years' experience working in higher education Careers & Employability services. She is currently the Joint Acting Head of Careers and Enterprise at Queen Mary University of London, overseeing the employer engagement and student enterprise work.

During her time at Queen Mary, Lindsey has developed a number of employer-partnered work based learning programmes designed to increase student employability, with a particular focus on supporting students from underprivileged backgrounds. Of these programmes, the QConsult and QProjects initiatives have gone on to receive national and international recognition for innovation and the development of best practice around careers education and student employability.

Lindsey is experienced in building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with a range of external university partners, including employer hosts, community organisations and Social Corporate Responsibility funders.

Rae Tooth

Chief Executive, Villiers Park Educational Trust

As Chief Executive, Rae's role is to lead the organisation with the support of colleagues to ensure that Villiers Park makes a difference in the lives of the young people she works with and reach ever increasing numbers of them. She does this through strategic oversight and leading staff in the delivery of all our operations. Being able to rely on her fantastic team means that she can spend most of her time being externally focused, influencing policy makers and engaging with our supporters, as well as talking to their students to learn about what works for them.

Before coming to Villiers Park, Rae held a number of roles in the public sector, most recently as head of strategy and change at the Office for Students. She led the development and delivery national strategy relating to widening participation to higher education. Rae has worked with charities in different capacities as a trustee and a consultant, including mental health charities and local charities supporting recovering addicts.

She was lucky enough to benefit from the work of Villiers Park as a young student and attended one of the courses in the early 1990s. The experience was transformational, giving her new belief in herself and her ability to succeed. Now, as a lone parent of two primary aged children, Rae continues to see the way different forms of disadvantage impact on every aspect of life. She is inspired by her children's huge support and the shared belief in the possibility of making a difference to the lived experiences of others.

Greg Wade

Policy Manager – Skills, Employability and Degree Apprenticeships, Universities UK

Greg Wade is a policy manager at Universities UK leading on skills, employability and knowledge exchange. This work includes degree apprenticeships, higher technical education, partnerships with further education and the Knowledge Exchange Concordat as well as English devolution and local growth.

During his career at Universities UK Greg has led policy in areas such as leadership, management and governance, teaching and learning, teacher education and better regulation.

Before joining us Greg worked as a policy adviser in the predecessor to GuildHE, the Standing Conference of Principles leading on areas that included quality, estates, human resources and international issues.

Greg started his career as a quality assurance officer at the University of Surrey where for seven years he was involved in administering external examining reports, internal course validation and external accreditation as well as servicing numerous university and faculty committees and managing audit and quality assessment visits. Greg also supported the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) submission. Greg was an audit secretary for five institutional quality audit visits.



Delegate List

Birkbeck College, University of London, *NCOP Engagement Officer*
Birkbeck College, University of London, *NCOP Programme Manager*
Birkbeck College, University of London, *NCOP Engagement Officer*
Bishop Grosseteste University, *Pro-Vice Chancellor*
Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone, *Head of School, A Levels*
Brunel University London, *Student Support and Welfare Officer*
Central Saint Martins, *Foundation Lecturer*
Coleg Gwent, Pontypool Campus, *Lecturer and Curriculum Lead for Health and Social Care Doctor*
Ernest Bevin College, *Head of Careers Education*
Greenhead College, *Senior Personal Tutor*
Imperial College London, *Medical Outreach Coordinator*
Imperial College London, *Online Learning Project Coordinator*
Institute for Sport, Physical Education & Health Sciences, *Lecturer- Widening Participation Champion*
Manchester Metropolitan University, *Outreach Hub Lead*
New College Pontefract, *Business Teacher & Disadvantaged Co-ordinator*
New College Pontefract, *Go Higher Progression Officer*
Queen Mary University of London
Reigate College, *Associate Director*
School of Geosciences, University of Edinburgh, *Lecturer in Sustainable Livelihoods*
School of Geosciences, University of Edinburgh, *Lecturer in Geohumanities*
Sheffield, *Student Recruitment Manager*
The British Academy, *Senior Policy Advisor*
Uniac, *Management and Leadership Trainee*
United Colleges, *Lecturer Business and Access*
University College of Estate Management, *Student Outreach Manager*
University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, *Lecturer*
University of Bath, *Outreach Officer*
University of Bath, *Outreach Assistant*
University of Bath, *Widening Participation Office*
University of Birmingham, *Outreach Manager*
University of Greenwich Business School, *Senior Lecturer, International Business*
University of Leicester, *Student Recruitment Manager*
University of Reading, *Senior Admissions Manager*
University of Reading, *Widening Participation Officer*
University of Reading, *Head of Admissions*
University of Westminster, *Senior Tutor*
University of Worcester, *COP Graduate Ambassador Coordinator*
Victoria and Albert Museum, *Assistant Curator, V&A Museum*
William Morris Sixth Form, *HE Coordinator*



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26th January 2021, Online

[The National Apprenticeships Conference 2021](#)

28th January 2021, Online

[The National Pupil Premium Event 2021: Effectively Supporting Disadvantaged Children](#)

10th February 2021, Online

[Further Education Leadership: Delivering Excellence in Uncertain Times](#)

2nd March 2021, Online

For any enquiries, please call 0330 0947 344 or email event@govinfo.co.uk



Thank you for attending our conference.

We hope you found the day interesting and insightful. Speaker presentations will be made available to download on completing the post show survey which will be emailed to you within one week after the event.

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