



**NEON Summer
Symposium 2022
Agenda**

Day one: Thursday 16th June

10.15 Registration Opens – *Chancellor's Building*

11.00 Opening Session – *Westminster Theatre, Chancellor's Building*

Introductions: **Professor Graeme Atherton**, Director, NEON

Welcome: **Professor Mark Ormerod**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, Keele University

Keynote Address: **Jo Gideon MP** for Stoke-on-Trent Central

Keynote Address: **Saeed Atcha MBE DL**, CEO, Youth Leads UK, School Governor, Charity Trustee & Former Social Mobility Commissioner

12.25 Lunch – *Chancellor's Building*

13.20 Laboratory Sessions

Session 1: Widening Participation in Post Graduate Study

The working group aims to contribute to the depth and breadth of understanding of barriers to, and within postgraduate study, sharing research and considering intersections of disadvantage.

Louise Banahene, Director of Educational Engagement, University of Leeds

Chair – Mike Garnock-Jones, Director, Hepp

Session 2: Raising attainment

Hollie Baker, Deputy Head of Widening Participation and Outreach and **Rob Thatcher**, Senior Widening Participation & Outreach Officer, University of Surrey

Chair – Jenny Scannell, Progression Support Worker, Leeds Arts University

Session 3: Colleges and universities working together to widen participation

Eddie Playfair, Senior Policy Manager, Association of Colleges

Chair – Hannah Merry, Operations Manager, Higher Horizons

Session 4: Mentoring to Widen Access

This working group explores mentoring as a sustained intervention to help widen access to Higher Education.

Trish Nicolaidis, Head of Lifecycle, University of Southampton and **Lorraine Ballintine**, Widening Participation Officer, Futureworks

Chair – Anna Toyne, Head of Access Development, Sheffield Hallam University

Session 5: Supporting Access, Success and Progression for Vocational Learners

The working group focuses on sharing ideas and existing practice around work supporting pathways into and through HE for BTEC learners and learners following associated vocational qualification programmes – CACHE Diplomas, Cambridge Tech and T levels.

Chris Bayes, Programme Manager, Specialist Evidence, Evaluation & Research Service (by Applied Inspiration) and **Rebecca Sykes**, Educational Engagement Manager, University of Leeds

Session 6: Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners

This working group discusses current practice and experiences of supporting disabled learners into and through Higher Education. The group examines issues such as the respective benefits of targeted events versus inclusive events and the best approaches to making these events a success.

Geoff Paul, Assistant Director (Academic), University of Sunderland in London

Chair – Samantha Dunnett, Head of WP, University of Sussex

14.20 Refreshments – Chancellor’s Building

14.50 Paper Sessions

Session 1

Chair – Mike Garnock-Jones, Director, Hepp

- The Positive Effects of Belongingness: Kingston University’s Head Start transition programme *Head Start is Kingston University’s innovative Undergraduate transition programme. Our aim is to support under-represented students’ success by giving individuals the best possible start as they embark on their HE journey. Students who take part in Head Start feel more confident and better prepared for university, and student engagement with our events have a positive correlation to retention and progression.*

Hannah Law-Hing-Choy, Access and Transition Advisor, Kingston University

- Exploring how Uni Connect activities foster a sense of belonging at university *Informing Uni Connect learners about higher education comes with the need to foster a sense of belonging in an unfamiliar field. This paper explores how ‘belonging’ is experienced by young people and makes recommendations for how Uni Connect activities can increase young people’s sense of ‘fitting-in’ at university.*

Emma Baines, Evaluation and Evidence Manager, Higher Horizons

- The GO Wales: Achieve through work experience programme aims to help students develop their employability skills and improve their chances of obtaining sustainable, graduate level employment

The presentation will include an overview of the programme and demonstrate the impact it has had on students. We will also include case studies and feedback from students and employers, ideally in video format.

Joanne Jenkins, Business Partner and **Charlotte Miles**, GO Wales Project Manager, Cardiff University

Session 2

Chair – Jenny Scannell, Progression Support Worker, Leeds Arts University

- Empowering Student Race Equality Advocates to catalyse institutional cultural change *As Anglia Ruskin University moves into its 2nd year of implementation of an ambitious Race Equality Strategy, we reflect upon the success and challenges of the work we have done in partnership with our Student Race Equality Advocates, share the learning acquired, and our plans for the future.*

Katie Potts, Head of Diversity and Cultural Change and **Dr Linda Brown**, Academic Lead: Inclusive Learning Communities and Partnerships, Anglia Ruskin University

- Tale of Two Cities A community outreach project *A community outreach project between Leeds Arts University and a Syrian refugee group, ‘Damasq’. The project aims to develop creative storytelling skills. Also, to develop relationships between the women and our student ambassadors, as role models for HE progression. The film aims to raise awareness of the issues this community face.*

Jenny Scannell, Progression Support Worker, Leeds Arts University

- Sense of belonging and lived experience: how was it for you? *In this session, the University of Derby research team will explore their project to understand if (and how) the sense of belonging and lived experience of white and black students differs on programmes with consistently high awarding gaps, some unexpected initial findings, and invite questions and contributions from colleagues.*

Jo Astley, Evaluation and Evidence Manager and **Dan West**, Policy and Research Lead, University of Derby

Session 3

Chair – Emma Church, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP

- Progress to Success: A framework for working with schools to support attainment raising; achievement; and progression
The Progress to Success Framework, is an evidence-based, long-term, multi-intervention, outreach programme delivered with schools to achieve sustainable change. It is making a real difference in Derby city and Derbyshire by supporting learners to make informed progression choices, achieve grades which truly reflect their ability, and grow their self-belief.
Krishna Bainham, Head of Widening Access, University of Derby
- Using tracker data and UCAS Strobe to assess the impact of the Higher Horizons programme
A discussion of how Higher Horizons partnered with EMWPREP to use the UCAS Strobe service to assess the impact of their programmes using five years' worth of tracker data. Key findings include those who participated more intensively in outreach had higher application rates, and those who engaged with the programme had higher application rates than those who did not.
Hannah Merry, Higher Horizons Operations Manager, Higher Horizons Uni Connect and **Emma Church**, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP
- Embedding evaluation into delivery
This presentation will explain how we developed our evaluation toolkit, and have been using it to design and deliver evidence based activity over the past 2 years.
Deborah Fish, Evaluation and Partnerships Officer, Shaping Futures

Session 4

Chair – Jon Rainford, Associate Lecturer, The Open University

- Future Selves: Using learner voice to inform Hello Future outreach delivery
An innovative new approach to ensure learner voice is central to outreach delivery. Through a live stream, from data collected at baseline and follow up points, the team gain immediate insight into learner need. This supports informed decision making with key stakeholders and embedded impact evaluation from the outset.
Anna Bradley, Data, Evaluation and Research Manager & **Lisa Jackson**, Programme Manager, Hello Future and **Sarah Dirrane**, Director, Research and Strategy & **Dean Biddulph**, Senior Research Manager, Cosmos Ltd.
- Independent Evaluation A Game Changer?
Drawing on our experience in working in the WP space with universities, and small specialist HE providers in particular, the SEER team will unpick and unpack the recent OfS notion of independent evaluation, addressing how this might be effectively achieved.
Julian Crockford, Associate Director, SEER (Specialist Evidence, Evaluation & Research) Applied Inspiration and **Ruth Squire**
- Evaluating Outreach: A multi-stage analysis of Underrepresented Student Experience
Hannah Kent, Data Analyst & Evaluator, University of Gloucestershire

Session 5

Chair – Samantha Dunnett, Head of WP, University of Sussex

- APP and Uni Connect collaborative working at UEA
UEA's Outreach team has created one offer for schools and colleges through real collaboration between APP & Uni Connect staff. Come and see how this approach is enabling us to work more effectively with underrepresented learners and how it has led to less confusion in schools and colleges.
Katie Francis, Head of NEACO, University of East Anglia
- UniCast podcasting for smaller institutions

'UniCast' is a podcast aimed at pre-university students, and is a joint effort between the WP Outreach, Student Recruitment and Marketing teams at St Mary's University, Twickenham. We will explain how it started, what we learned, and aim to convince you of the potential value of podcasting in your work.

Nancy Bentley, WP & Outreach Manager; **Meg Griessel**, Student Recruitment Officer and **Sam Yarnold**, Communications and Public Engagement Manager, St Mary's University, Twickenham

- Seeking out and engaging with difficult to reach, disadvantaged groups, in a widening participation setting.

Uni Connects have been asked to work with disadvantaged groups. The problem for practitioners used mostly to working in educational institutions is knowing how to find these groups and gain access to them. This presentation discusses working with local services, relying on local knowledge and the unexpected benefits and pitfalls.

Richard Seymour, Project Officer and **Alex Sparrow**, Outreach Hub Manager, Higher Horizons

Session 6

Chair - Kizzi Keast, Outreach & Access Manager, University of Reading

- Investigating informed choice: what really is it and how do we measure it?
Join Natalie to explore and unpick the concept of 'informed choice' within widening participation. Drawing upon several influences, this session will present theoretical and practical ideas for the sector about what impact on decision-making looks like in practice.
Natalie Aldridge, Data, Evaluation and Impact Manager, Go Higher West Yorkshire
- 10 Years of Reading Scholars
Reading Scholars is 10 years old. Over the last decade it has supported almost 2,000 young people to consider a future in Higher Education. At this milestone we take time to reflect on our successes, mistakes and to hear the voices of the young people who have taken part.
Kizzi Keast, Outreach & Access Manager and **Tom Woolmer**, Student Recruitment & Access Officer, University of Reading
- What works? HeppSY Causal Analysis over five years of the Learner Survey Data
Over five waves of the Uni Connect CFE learner survey, HeppSY has collected 44,000 responses from students in South Yorkshire. To identify 'what works' HeppSY adopted a triangulation analysis approach. The presentation will clarify evaluation methods and the evaluation outcomes for widening access practice and make suggestions for 'what works'.
Helen Zhu, Evaluation and Data Manager, Higher Education Progression Partnership

Session 7

Chair – Anna Toyne, Head of Access Development, Sheffield Hallam University

- LEAPS: Success and impact in Scottish Widening Access
LEAPS is a unique partnership programme working to widen access to Higher Education in South East Scotland for over 25 years. This paper explores the partnership format, delivery, destinations of LEAPS school students, the changing WP landscape in Scotland and how this might inform other interventions across the UK.
Laura Kwiatkowski, Development Officer and **Rhona Scott**, Business Manager, LEAPS (Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools)
- Bright Carers Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges
In partnership with seven universities (and Uni Connect consortia) and with expert input from The Children's Society, Brightside designed and delivered an online mentoring programme targeting young carers. This session will provide insight into the design approach, the impact on this group and lessons learnt for future iterations.
Laura Gray, CEO, Brightside
- Belonging and Authenticity in Higher Education

Join us as we discuss the importance of psychological safety and belonging at NCG, and what happens when we let students set the agenda.

Gillian Bradley, Higher Education Achievement Coordinator, **Toni Phillips**, Learning Enhancement Coach and **Rachael Emmett**, Research and Student Engagement Coordinator, Newcastle College University Centre

Session 8

Chair - Martin Webster, Operational Consultant, NEON

- Parental Perceptions and Engagement

This session shares the findings and action taken from an insight project by neaco and Alterline to further understand the support needs of parents and carers of young people who are currently labelled 'hard-to-reach'. It explores barriers to engagement, alternative ways to earn trust and appropriate services to enable support.

Sharon Steele, Marketing & Client Communities Director, Alterline

- Delivering effective, HE focused staff CPD from a CEIAG perspective

HeppSY (South Yorkshire's Uni Connect) is in a unique position to inform influencers (school/college staff) and help them feel more confident having initial careers conversations with students. This will detail HeppSY's approach to staff CPD, how this has been adapted to reach more staff and identify 'what works'.

Amy Blenkiron, Senior Higher Education Progression Adviser and **Suzanne Wilks**, Senior Higher Education Progression Adviser, Higher Education Progression Partnership

- Parent Champions - Peer to Peer parental engagement

A practical guide to setting up a Parent Ambassador scheme, offering the space for critical reflections and leaving with a statement of intent for your institutions to drive forward parental work.

Daisy Robinson, neaco County Coordinator and **Caroline Rayner**, neaco County Coordinator, University of Suffolk

Session 9

Chair – Nik Marsdin, Development Manager (Schools), Lancaster University Students' Union

- Learning from a first attempt to deliver a multi-site visit day

We'll share our learning from Uni Connect Pathways' first attempt at planning, delivering and evaluating an in-person, multi-campus visit day for year-10 students from a challenging school. We'll share our successes, the pitfalls we encountered (so you can avoid them!), and how we plan to do things differently next time.

Emma Angell, Evaluation & Operations Manager and **Libby Hewson**, Outreach Assistant, Uni Connect Pathways

- Youth Work Methodology In HE: Going from participation to engagement

Don't Talk to Me About Aspirations.

Nik Marsdin, Morecambe Bay Curriculum Development Manager (Eden Project North), Lancaster University

- Raising Aspirations of Young Women: Enthusing, Inspiring and Empowering their pathways
A multi partner initiative, building a progressive and sustained programme for young women demonstrating lower than expected aspirations and attainment. This 10 week pilot programme took them on a journey of self-discovery and knowledge enrichment, ultimately raising confidence, empowering decision making and reigniting that passion in their futures.

Thamasin Young, HEON and WPO Delivery Officer, University of Surrey

Session 10

Chair – Ellie Rowley, Fair Access Programme Lead, UCAS

- School Relationship Management
An important element of school engagement and outreach delivery lies in fostering and maintaining positive relationships. This paper outlines strategies used to improve and consolidate relationships with secondary schools, aimed at promoting the Higher Education outreach offer and increasing engagement across schools in the Liverpool City Region.
David Maitland, Higher Education Progression Adviser, Shaping Futures
- Seeds and trees? Reflections on success from over a decade of school sponsorship.
This paper will explore the learning gained from twelve years of school sponsorship and partnership. Using a narrative approach to explore the University of Kent Academies Trust (UKAT) experience it will show that a blend of innovation and patient commitment can create the conditions for transformation.
Alex Martin-Carey, Outreach Curriculum Development Manager, University of Kent
- UCAS Fair Access Programme
Supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds is at the heart of UCAS' charitable objects. UCAS are committed to helping students access the post-secondary education, apprenticeship, or training option that is right for them. This session will share the developments from the UCAS fair access programme to support sector initiatives including data products, partnership and IAG development.
Ellie Rowley, Fair Access Programme Lead and **Nicky Turner**, Senior Fair Access Programme Adviser, UCAS

16.20 Afternoon Session Westminster Theatre, Chancellor's Building

Keynote Address: **Larissa Kennedy**, National President, National Union of Students

17.00 Paper Sessions

Session 11

Chair – Emma Church, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP

- Mature Undergraduate Student Recruitment
This session reveals valuable findings from a collaborative insight project undertaken by Alterline alongside six universities to better support mature student recruitment. With declining numbers of students the insight explores factors involved in decision-making, challenges faced in studying and ways to better support mature students.
Sharon Steele, Marketing & Client Communities Director, Alterline Research and Intelligence
- Translating evidence into practice: codesign of activity and resources for practitioners
Join Natalie and Nichola for a cross-specialism insight into applying evidence to widening participation practice. The session will introduce delegates to evidence-based resources and processes which benefit evaluators and outreach delivery professionals alike.
Nichola Casse, Area Manager (Projects) and **Natalie Aldridge**, Data, Evaluation and Impact Manager (project), Go Higher West Yorkshire

Session 12

Chair – Jon Rainford, Associate Lecturer, The Open University

- Supported decision making leads to good outcomes
Achieving academic potential and making high-quality decisions about what education pathway will lead an individual to a fulfilling and successful career is as much about guidance,

behaviours and attitudes as it is about academic prowess. This session will explore the gap between young people's aspirations and expectations of success as well as a link between supported decision making and retention.

Laura Gray, CEO, Brightside

- Who widens participation? Practitioners in context.
Widening access involves practitioners operating in varied contexts, with different experiences and knowledge. Despite their essential role, research tends not to focus on them specifically. We present findings from the most comprehensive survey of WP practitioners to date and explore who widens participation, in which contexts and why?

Ruth Squire, Researcher, Sheffield Hallam University, **Dr Jon Rainford**, The Open University and **Professor Colin McCaig**, Sheffield Hallam University

Session 13

Chair – Mike Garnock-Jones, Director, Hepp

- Ideas and creative ways to make workshops engaging and interactive for WP and Outreach
Let's share ideas on how we can leave a positive impression of HE. There's no sitting down in this workshop as we explore exciting new ice breakers and activities using a wide range of equipment and props. Ignite your creative thinking to get young people excited about their future prospects.

Liam Norton, Widening Participation Specialist and **Kayleigh Lampard**, Outreach Manager, Coventry University

Session 14

Chair – Hannah Merry, Operations Manager, Higher Horizons

- Ensuring Greatness: Black Caribbean and Black African Outreach in Lambeth
This paper presents a case study of an integrated school partnership approach to highly targeted Widening Participation delivery, working with the Black Caribbean community to support learners in the final years of secondary education and into HE. Ensuring Greatness is a long-term outreach programme from City, University of London in partnership with the Elm Green School, Lambeth.

Ben Copsey, Senior Widening Participation Project Officer and **Leanne Allen**, Widening Participation Project Officer, City, University of London

- Research Project to Programme: Supporting the Student Led Role Model Ambassador Programme at Lancaster University
This presentation will review the progress of the Role Model Ambassador Project, and how the work has adapted and evolved into a student led Programme. Additionally, one of the Role Model Ambassador Team will present on their experiences over the last year and the future for the programme.

Eleanor Dove, Widening Participation Officer; **Sayjda Talib**, Senior Teaching Fellow; **Hamza Dalvi**, Role Model Ambassador and **Iffat Mir**, Role Model Ambassador, Lancaster University

Session 15

Chair – Nik Marsdin, Development Manager (Schools), Lancaster University Students' Union

- Primary outreach - not a nice to have
If we're to achieve real systemic change in HE progression, primary outreach is no longer a 'nice to have'. Place based, progressive and mutually beneficial primary partnerships are key to ensuring real change. Hear about UEA's programmes and partnerships, and how to prove they work.

Steph Copsey, Outreach Manager and **Carrie Tooke**, University of East Anglia

- Trials, Tribulations and Targeting: Lessons learning from launching an access programme in a global pandemic.

Explore how the development and launch of a university access programme changes when mixed with a global pandemic. We'll explore the experiences, the lessons learned and the potential in the future for in-house schemes as the sector and widening participation evolve.

Jake Brown, Widening Participation Manager and **Jessie Whaite**, Widening Participation Coordinator, Lancaster University

Session 16

Chair – Ellie Rowley, Fair Access Programme Lead, UCAS

- The local and national WP impact of the National Saturday Clubs
The National Saturday Club team from Staffordshire University and Higher Horizons+ would like to discuss the positive impact that our work is having on widening participation, targeted learners in Stoke on-Trent and showcasing successful partnership work that is taking place to give young people a clearer pathway into Higher Education.
Gareth Hughes, Uni Connect Hub Manager (Staffordshire University), Higher Horizons+; **Lucy Harding**; **Natasha Hughes**, NSC Coordinator (Art & Design), **Kiera Dawson**, NSC Coordinator (Science & Engineering)
- Schools Plus: Ten Years of Tutoring by Student Hubs
Student Hubs is a national charity working with 5 UK university partners to deliver extracurricular and in-curricular community-based activities for students. Their flagship programme Schools Plus tackles educational disadvantage through student-led tutoring and activities in schools, and this session shares our reflections on 10 years of programme delivery.
Catherine Taplin-Thorpe, Southampton Hub Manager, Student Hubs

Session 17

Chair – Samantha Dunnett, Head of WP, University of Sussex

- Fostering a love of research: supporting level 3 project qualifications to smooth the transition to higher education
This presentation focuses on the benefits of supporting Level 3 project-based qualifications like the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) to aid the transition from FE to HE. The Learn with US Transition Programme has established support for learners over a number of years; providing bespoke support for students to enrich experiences of undertaking research prior to entering a HEI.
Becki Nash, Academic Skills Lead (Pre-Entry), University of Southampton
- [University access: the role of background and Covid throughout the application process](#)
We analysed the population of UCAS applications from the 2017 to 2020 cycles to pinpoint the stages of the application process that contribute most to the widening or narrowing of ethnic and socio-economic gaps in university access in 'normal years', and investigate the impact of COVID-19 on these inequalities.
Angus Holford, Research Fellow, ISER, University of Essex

Session 18

Chair – Jenny Scannell, Progression Support Worker, Leeds Arts University

- National Saturday Club presents a unique framework for higher education and further education institutions to engage local 13-16-year-olds in an extracurricular creative education programme that inspires, informs and nurtures young people on a national scale.
The National Saturday Club will share its findings on how the extracurricular programme has benefited young people for over 13 years. The National Saturday Club brings together the higher education, further education the cultural sector and industry, to engage 13–16-year-olds in an extracurricular, creative education programme that inspires, informs and nurtures young people on a national scale.
Liz Cowley, Research & Evaluation Manager and **Lucy Kennedy**, CEO, National Saturday Club

- After- School Clubs
Discover more about how we run after- school clubs, including an 'Introduction to Higher Education' and 'STEM' for target widening participation groups. We will share how we overcame barriers, the benefits of working with students in an informal and relaxed setting and how we worked with third parties to develop bespoke programmes.
Elizabeth Whalley, Hub Manager and **Charlotte Hughes**, Higher Horizons

18.00 End of Day One

19.15 Pre-Dinner Drinks Reception – *Keele Hall*

20.00 NEON Conference Dinner – *Keele Hall*

Day two: Friday 17th June

08.30 Tea and Coffee & Registration for Day Two - *Chancellor's Building*

09.00 Opening Session - *Westminster Theatre, Chancellor's Building*

Keynote Address: **David Morgan**, Chief Executive, Career Development Institute

09.35 Laboratory Sessions

Session 7: Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact

This working group is an on-going forum that is actively trying to support and shape how we prove the worth of our work. The working group advocates to policymakers, in particular The Office for Students, regarding how they can support those tasked with evaluation.

Emma Church, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP

Session 8: Widening Access for Mature Learners

This working group looks at barriers for mature learners and how the educational sector can support them to increase the participation of mature learners.

Charlotte Barratt, Student and Education EDI Project Manager, University of Leicester

Chair – Samantha Dunnett, Head of WP, University of Sussex

Session 9: Working at Primary Level

The group promotes working with primary age children as part of the widening access agenda, building on the Office of Students recommendation of an evidenced based approach to early sustained widening participation interventions.

Mark Gardner, Opportunities Co-ordinator (Children & Young People), Lancaster University

Chair – Nik Marsdin, Development Manager (Schools), Lancaster University Students' Union

Session 10: UCAS - Journey to a million

UCAS is forecasting 1 million undergraduate applicants by 2026 – this session will explore what this means for progression, widening participation, fair access, and what the experience of these students will be. This interactive lab session will involve

discussion around UCAS data, policy reports and the UCAS Fair Access Programme and how this information and insight can influence and inform your practice.

Ellie Rowley, Fair Access Programme Lead and **Nicola Turner**, Senior Fair Access Adviser, UCAS

Session 11: Working with parents and carers to widen access

This is a new working group, that is being launched at the Summer Symposium. This group will look at various strategies that are currently being used to embed parental and carer engagement within widening access work.

Martin Webster, Operational Consultant, NEON

Session 12: Addressing Differential Outcomes for Ethnically Diverse Learners

This working group serves to provide a space for addressing the challenges of establishing better outcomes for ethnically diverse learners in Higher Education and will be exploring innovative approaches to developing good practice in this area.

Emma Hall, Education Liaison Officer, Edge Hill University

Chair – Jon Rainford, Associate Lecturer, The Open University

10.35 Refreshments – *Chancellor's Building*

11.00 Paper Session

Session 19

Chair – Jon Rainford, Associate Lecturer, The Open University

- Empowering students to succeed
The Lancaster Success Programme is a coaching-informed programme for students from WP backgrounds. Now in its third year, the LSP has proved its impact both across the data sets and in outstanding individual student cases. This paper will provide an overview of the student-empowering activities, evaluation, and future challenges.
Cara Pinder-Emerly, Student Success Manager and **Joanna Gray**, Student Success Officer, Lancaster University
- Enhancing possible selves through coaching
Discussion of the positive impact of using the theory of possible selves within coaching to better support students from underrepresented backgrounds as they think about, transition into, or continue within HE.
Rose Sellman-Leava, Co-director, and **Jess Woodsford**, Co-director, Inclusive Futures
- How can the disaggregation of skills level the playing field between widening participation students and their peers?
It's common knowledge that learners from a widening participation background are less likely to have a support network who can guide them through University. The aim of the "Skills Glossary" is to level the playing field & ensure all students have the tools to understand and articulate their skillset professionally.
Alice Whitehouse, Digital Advisor Programme Manager, Keele University

Session 20

Chair – Emma Church, Partnership Manager, EMWPREP

- Third sector charities, how Universities can become a social and community outreach hub.
What does community outreach mean? How can Universities become more active in their local communities to outreach to groups most in need? Reflecting on the needs of the local town of Luton, this paper explores and details the provision of University of Bedfordshire's SMAH Summer Schools which supports the most vulnerable children aged 8-12.
Roisin Kendall, Access and Outreach Manager and **Sundip Sahota**, Access and Outreach

Support Officer, University of Bedfordshire

- The Evolving Nature of Hybrid Outreach Delivery - Creating a Best Practice Approach
Discuss and address ideas of best practice within hybrid outreach delivery. We will explore the evolving nature of online learning, using evidence to inform our approach with evaluation of outreach activities and training new members of staff.

Jason Jeevaruban, Outreach Officer and **Poppy Ring**, Outreach Manager, University of Greenwich

- Digital outreach and sandbox creativity: using Minecraft to deliver a digital summer school experience for young people with autism spectrum conditions
This session provides an insight into how Cardiff University's WP Team transformed their summer school programme into the digital 'Gŵyl eCampws Festival' and how Minecraft was used to teach autistic young people about university life, while also developing some of the essential skills needed for undergraduate study.

Emily Warwick, WP Manager, Strategy and Evaluation, Cardiff University

Session 21

Chair – **Mike Garnock-Jones**, Director, Hepp

- Championing student voice: Do you empower your students to drive change in the sector?
We highlight our experiences working at the forefront of the field in leadership roles and have creative freedom to make decisions alongside staff. We communicate the value of working WITH students rather than students working FOR institutions, from our unique viewpoint as students working within WPSM and PERu.

Clare Merivale, Student Interns and Ambassadors, **Holly Smeeton**, School-University Partnership Coordinator, **Josette Crispin**, School-University Partnership Coordinator, and **Tinashe Munyebvu**, Postgraduate Researcher, University of Southampton

- Setting-up for success: Evaluation of the CityCares Programme
Jasmin Burnage, Senior Student Project Officer - Research and Evaluation, City, University of London
- Reimagining Mentoring: The Social Mobility Network
Access to networks is a major driver of the progression gap. Inferior access to networks makes it harder to gain commercial awareness, relevant work experience and develop social and cultural capital. upReach will be sharing their learning from the Social Mobility Network: the network for those without a network.

Alex Webb, University Partnerships and Impact Manager, upReach

Session 22

Chair – tbc

- At home at university? Can stable, year-round, student housing be the key retention intervention for care experienced and estranged students?
Retention of care experienced and estranged students through housing stability - 10 years of data measures what works.
- Helen Arber**, Head of Operations, The Unite Foundation
- Reconceptualising Evaluation: A Journey
Exploration of how at the University of Cambridge evaluation personnel are trying to address the common misconception of evaluation as an 'end activity', seeking instead to conceptualise and develop understanding of evaluation as an embedded developmental process that commences at project initiation and is integration throughout its lifecycle. The paper will delve into the development of a collegiate University community of practice, launch of a new 6-Step Process for Evaluation and training provision, and explore the challenges and learnings that have arisen from this.

Rachel Bailey and **Andrew Avery**, University of Cambridge

- Implementing Quality Assurance in outreach: the process and its impact
In 2021/22, Hepp began collaborative work on designing and implementing a Quality Assurance (QA) programme for outreach activity to ensure all activity is consistently high quality, engaging and innovative. This workshop will describe the approach, clarify impact and provide practical guidance to others considering implementing a QA process.
Alex Bairstow, Operations Manager, Higher Education Progression Partnership

Session 23

Chair – Ellie Rowley, Fair Access Programme Lead, UCAS

- Parent Power – a pioneering parental engagement programme that harnesses the energy of parents, universities and schools and colleges to bring about real change.
Sam Kalubowila, Head of Greater Manchester Higher, **Najma Khalid**, Project Community Lead Oldham Parent Power and **Jimmy Pickering**, The Brilliant Club
- Covid and beyond – digital delivery and engagement
The pandemic and subsequent lockdowns pushed outreach teams across the UK to consider alternative formats of delivery. The University of Exeter developed a Discover University digital programme of activity which sought to reach out to students from across the UK. This session will reflect on lessons learnt and examine the role digital outreach may play in the future.
Dr Karl Devincenzi, Schools Relationship Manager and **Ashley Dozwa**, School and College Engagement Officer, University of Exeter
- A hybrid approach towards delivering summer schools?
Summer schools are established programmes of activities aimed at encouraging students to reflect on their experiences. The Elephant Group, in collaboration with the Universities of Exeter and Sheffield have delivered two digital experiences over the last two years This session will review the successes and challenges and look ahead to a new hybrid model for 2022.
Dr Karl Devincenzi, Schools Relationship Manager, University of Exeter and **Eireann Attridge**, Programme Manager, The Elephant Group

Session 24

Chair – Anna Toyne, Head of Access Development, Sheffield Hallam University

- Inspiring Minds Research-Engaged STEAM Outreach: How we can and should change our practice.
The OfS and academics agree “sustained” engagement is more effective, but not about what makes activity “sustained”, and not enough evidence to support the greater cost. We examine how we are building an evidence base, the pivotal role research relationships have played, and how the approach can be used elsewhere.
Stefan Colley, Project Manager, KAMCOP, Canterbury Christ Church University and **Finley Lawson**, LASAR Lead Research Fellow Outreach and Schools Partnership
- Comparing the Impact of Careers-focused IAG in Target and Control Year 10 cohorts
This presentation will explore the statistical evaluation of survey results from a project aimed at improving the careers knowledge and confidence in Year 10 learners from multiple institutions. The method of evaluation presented is expected to spark informal discussion on how to improve upon the approach.
Timothy Roebuck, Uni Connect Research and Evaluation Officer, Go Higher West Yorkshire
- Understanding the Free School Meal Attainment Gap
This session will share the findings from an insight project into the Free School Meals Attainment Gap. The university commissioned this innovative strategic research to further understand the GCSE Attainment gap, inform its ‘Surrey Stars’ outreach programme and facilitate a partnership of leaders to work towards closing the attainment gap.
Sharon Steele, Marketing & Client Communities Director, Alterline Research & Intelligence and **Hollie Baker**, Deputy Head of Widening Participation and Outreach, University of Surrey

Session 25

Chair – Samantha Dunnett, Head of WP, University of Sussex

- Learning from a first attempt to deliver a randomised controlled trial of a half-term art club
We'll share our learning from Uni Connect Pathways' first attempt at planning, delivering and evaluating a randomised controlled trial of our art club delivered virtually and in-person. We'll share our successes, the pitfalls we encountered (so you can avoid them!), and how we plan to do things differently next time.

Emma Angell, Evaluation & Operations Manager and **Joe Glover**, Outreach Assistant, Uni Connect Pathways

- The Brilliant Club: Lessons learned from 10 years of impact and evaluation
This presentation will focus on The Brilliant Club's use of evaluation in their university access and success work. We will share key insights from our programme evaluations and outline how we have used these insights to inform our programmes and develop new initiatives.

Katie Jones, Research and Evaluation Manager, **Lottie Norton** (Impact and Analysis Officer) and **Lauren Bellaera** (Chief Impact and Strategy Officer), The Brilliant Club

- Supporting adults to progress to HE: An evidence-informed approach
The role of Uni Connect Programmes in supporting adults to progress to HE: An evidence-informed approach to driving access and progression in South Yorkshire with insight into our approach, key findings and recommendations for future adult engagement.

Amy Blenkiron, Senior Higher Education Progression Adviser, Higher Education Progression Partnership and **Ruth Squire**, Researcher, Sheffield Hallam University

Session 26

- Access to Leeds: What does success look like for contextual admissions?
Leeds was one of the first Russell Group Universities to start a contextual admissions scheme. Over the last decade, we have consistently increased the number of under-represented students accessing and succeeding in higher education. Join this workshop to explore these achievements, the challenges faced and planned future innovations.

Jessica Burgess, Impact and Communications Officer and **Richard Kemp**, Educational Engagement Managers, University of Leeds

- Improving Student Engagement Using Nudge Theory

Geoff Paul, Assistant Director (Academic), University of Sunderland

- Embedding a culture of co-creation at the University of Sussex

The Connector Programme has established over 40 student and staff partnership projects, aiming to embed a culture of co-creation across our institution. In this session, we share the expertise gained from taking an institution-wide approach to co-creation, giving advice on implementing co-creation projects of varying scales in attendees' own organisations.

Maddie Taylor, Access & Participation Manager and **Anna Izykowska**, Co-Creation Manager, University of Sussex

Session 27

Chair - Martin Webster, Operational Consultant, NEON

- Going beyond consultation: Co-Production with WP students across the student lifecycle
This presentation will introduce the Edge Hill University Student Advisory Panels, which inform the design and delivery of a wide range of university initiatives and services. We will celebrate the successes and reflect on the challenges thus far.

Emma Hall, Widening Participation Officer (Continuation and Attainment), Edge Hill University

- Working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities

This paper will focus on the approaches, challenges and realities of delivering outreach activities to young people from the GRT community in Leeds and the work that University Centre Leeds and Go Higher West Yorkshire are undertaking to tackle underrepresentation of

GRT students in HE.

Sophie Clayton, WP and Outreach Deputy Manager, University Centre Leeds

- Including Higher Education links when linking outreach to the curriculum
Taking feedback from previous curriculum events and using this to inform future practice, re-planning events with additional content and then comparing evaluations. When running the same history curriculum event with increased yet subtle links to HE, evaluations showed an increase in participants understanding of and desire to attend HE.

Laura Tonge, Higher Horizons+ Keele Hub Manager, Higher Horizons+

Session 28

Chair – **Hannah Merry**, Operations Manager, Higher Horizons

- Supporting raising attainment differently in a schools-HE collaboration
This session explores an academy trust-university collaboration that adopts a more inclusive approach to supporting raising attainment, with an aim towards diversifying the pool of potential applications to more selective, research-intensive universities. Key findings from the research study will focus on teachers' experiences of the programme over two years.
Susila Davis, Senior Research Fellow, UCL Institute of Education, **Dr Samina Khan**, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, and **Alison Matthews**, Deputy Director of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Oxford
- Raising Attainment With Resilience (RAWR) An outreach intervention designed to tackle attainment inequality amongst test anxious pupils.
The RAWR programme aims to develop pupils' meta cognitive skills in order mitigate test anxiety and exam pressure. This session will cover the activities within the programme, three years' worth of data and provide participants with practical methodologies for creating outreach interventions that support school based attainment raising.
Alex Holland-Leavens, Widening Access and Outreach Coordinator and **Jon Hoskin-Campion**, Lead Research and Evaluation Coordinator, Nottingham Trent University
- Raising attainment: What we have learned at King's
This presentation draws together the different raising attainment programmes and interventions King's College London has delivered over the last six years. What has worked and what hasn't will be shared via a high-level overview of the varying approaches that we've tried.

Jo Marchant, Head of Social Mobility & Education, King's College London

12.30 Panel Session – *Westminster Theatre, Chancellor's Building*

John Blake, Director of Fair Access and Participation, Office for Students

Charlotte Hitchings, Chair of the Student Opportunity and Achievement Committee, HEFCW

Mark Lee, Director of Tertiary Education Reform, Department for the Economy Northern Ireland

Sir Peter Scott, Commissioner for Fair Access, Scotland

13.55 Lunch and End of Event – *Chancellor's Building*