

Admissions, choice and student diversity

A diverse student body is a benefit for any HEI but gaining a place on an undergraduate programme is a challenge for all students and more so for those without a family tradition of HE study. Choosing and applying for an undergraduate course requires a particular set of skills and knowledge about the range of courses on offer not readily available to all students. Added to this, subject choice at KS4 and KS5 has a significant impact on possibilities for future study at both post-16 and in higher education with some schools less resourced than others to provide their students with curriculum choices and advice. Meanwhile, research into national admissions data reveals serious inequalities in access between socio-economic groups. HEIs have responded in a range of ways from some focussing on concerns about students' capacity to study at higher levels if they are accepted with lower grades to others making unconditional offers.

Participants at this event will have the opportunity to:

- ◆ Understand how quantitative research can reveal systemic inequalities
- ◆ Consider the implications and benefits for individual HEIs in using contextual factors in admissions
- ◆ Explore a range of strategies for addressing inequalities in access and admissions and consider how best to evaluate their impact

Programme

- ◆ **10.00** Registration and Refreshments
- ◆ **10.30** **The NERUPI Framework and admission to HE**
Annette Hayton, Senior Research Fellow, University of Bath
- ◆ **11.15** Break
- ◆ **11.30** **Collaborative outreach to support student choice**
Rebecca Harland, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, NCOP York & North Yorkshire (FutureHY)
- ◆ **12.15** Lunch
- ◆ **12.45** **Using contextual data to widen access to HE**
Professor Vikki Boliver, Director of Research Sociology, Durham University
- ◆ **1.30** **The Lady Margaret Hall Foundation Year**
Esther Fisher, Foundation Year Project Officer, Oxford University
- ◆ **2.20** **Bristol Scholars**
Doug Jennings, WP and Student Recruitment Manager, University of Bristol
- ◆ **3.10** **Next Steps**
- ◆ **3.30** **Close**

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Case Studies and Workshop

In the afternoon, NERUPI members will present relevant case studies followed by practical workshop activities.

Collaborative outreach to support student choice

Rebecca Harland, Future HY NCOP

Rebecca will describe how the collaborative approach adopted by FutureHY NCOP has provided information and support to school and college students about future education choices. Based on the NERUPI Framework and closely aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks, this case study will be useful for all those involved in admissions outreach.

Bristol Scholars

Doug Jennings, Bristol University

Doug will set out the challenges for Bristol in increasing diversity amongst the student population and explain the key features of this sustained programme that runs across the transition stage of the student lifecycle from Year 12 to first year undergraduate.

The Lady Margaret Hall Foundation Year

Esther Fisher, Oxford University

Esther will explain how the LMH Foundation year attracts and supports students from under-represented groups. Through a combination of academic and personal support the course bridges the gap between students' previous experiences enabling them to progress on to full degree courses at Oxford and other universities.

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