



Evaluating & Researching University  
Participation Interventions

# Introduction to NERUPI

5 November 2025

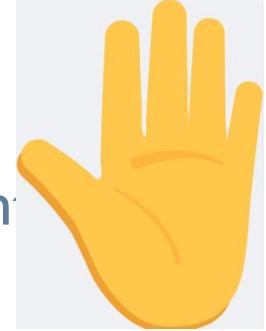
**Annette Hayton**, NERUPI Co-convenor

**Dr Sally Griffin**, NERUPI Research and Development Officer



# Welcome

- This session is being recorded
- We will be using live captions
- Please feel free to use the chat and the virtual feedback during this event
- Discussion and break out sessions will be included in this session
  - Please have cameras and Mics on if possible during discussion
  - if that's not possible please join in via the chat (let the group know you're there)
- Please turn-off cameras and Mics during the presentations
- The Powerpoint will be made available on the NERUPI website after event – we will let you know when it is ready



**If you have colleagues who can't attend do share the presentations and website resources with them**





# NERUPI Team



**Annette Hayton** convenes NERUPI. She was previously Head of Widening Participation at the University of Bath and at Goldsmiths. Has published books and articles on WP and is Innovative Practice Editor of WPLL



**Dr Clare Gartland** co-convenes NERUPI. She was previously an Associate Professor at Suffolk University and has researched and published widely on widening participation with a particular interest in STEM

**Dr Sally Griffin** is a Research and Development Officer. She was the Access and Participation Manager at Bath Spa University also serving on the Boards of Aimhigher, WIN Uni Connect and the Service Children's (SCiP) Alliance.



**Joanne Moore** is a Teaching Fellow. She had a background in policy research before coming to work in widening participation supporting practitioner led evaluation including developing evaluation tools and collaborative projects.



**Fatmata Daramy** co-leads the Student and Staff Race and Ethnic Equity working group (SsREE) and is part-time NERUPI Research Assistant. Having worked in various WP roles she is currently undertaking a funded PhD at Leicester



**Dr Jon Rainford** is a Lecturer at the OU and NERUPI Research Fellow. He has worked in education for over 10 years. Jon is a specialist in creative methods evaluation and supports the Creative HE Working Group.



**Jude Sutton** is a part-time NERUPI Administrator. Jude has a background in software engineering, followed by many years in Further Education, working in student support.



**Lauren Curtis** is a part-time NERUPI Administrator. Lauren worked as a Widening Participation Outreach Officer at the University of Bath for 6 years and in EDI roles at the University of Bristol.

# Introductions





## Academic Advisory Board

The board is chaired by Professor Nicola Ingram, University College Cork and also includes: Dr Andrew Bengry, Bath Spa University, Professor Paul Ashwin, Lancaster University, Professor Vikki Boliver, Durham University, Professor Matt Dickson, University of Bath, Dr Constantino Dumangane Jr, University of York, Professor Marie-Pierre Moreau, Anglia Ruskin University, Professor Richard Waller, UWE Bristol Dr Mark Walmsley, University of East Anglia, Dr Anna Anthony, HEAT

## Steering Group

Sumaya Ahmed, Lecturer, London South Bank University; Amy Burt, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, University of Kent; Naomi Prendergast, University of Hull; Sophie Cloutterbuck, Director of London Engagement, London Met University; Marva De La Coudray, Director of Teaching and Learning, London Metropolitan University; David Dobraszczyk, Lecturer in Education, University of Reading; Robyn Long, Senior Research and Evaluation Manager, University of Sussex; Naomi Prendergast, Access Manager Hull University; Amina Razak, Research Associate, Newcastle University; James Rew, Leeds Conservatoire; Tessa Reid, University of the Arts London; Iman Frederico Awi, Educational Engagement Officer, University of Leeds; Dr Helen Young, Independent, Claudia Lusardi, Outreach Projects Manager, Oxford Brookes University; Dr Ada Mau, Research Associate, Imperial College London; Dr Anna Varadi, Widening Participation Manager, Cardiff University

# Benefits of NERUPI

Members subscribe on an annual basis:

- Free attendance at online events for all staff at member organisations – and some in-person workshops
- Opportunities to collaborate and share best practice including participation in the annual NERUPI Convention
- Engagement in working groups and workshops to develop members' expertise and capacity in evaluation approaches and methods.
- Access to resources, tools and case studies from the members only section of the NERUPI members website

**EXCELLENT VALUE FOR MONEY**

# Events

## Three types of event:

- **general events** which combine insights from research and practice to provide a context for planning and evaluating activities
- **working group** events which offer presentations and discussion
- **in-person events** such as the **NERUPI Convention** or evaluators event

23  
OCT  
2025

### Mature and Commuter Students

ONLINE 13.00 - 15.30

Mature students and commuter students are both considered to be among the student characteristics that are most likely to indicate risks to equality of opportunity, and as such are included in the Office for Students (OfS) Education Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). This online NERUPI session is an opportunity to consider how universities can support access to and successful participation in undergraduate provision for these student groups.

21  
OCT  
2025

### Writing journal articles workshop series. Session 2: Drafting your introduction and literature review

ONLINE

This workshop was the second in a series of five workshop sessions led by Professor Vikki Boliver and Dr Clare Gartland. The workshops support NERUPI members in sharing and disseminating their research and evaluation around their vital work in WP and social justice. Participants have the opportunity to publish their work in a special edition of Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education.

20  
OCT  
2025

### Higher education and student refugees

13.30 - 15.30 ONLINE

For those forced to leave their countries and homes because of war, famine or persecution there is a pressing need for higher education to understand the specific challenges that displaced people encounter in engaging with higher education. This online NERUPI session was an opportunity to consider how universities can support access to and successful participation in undergraduate provision.

Screenshot

# Working Groups



## STUDENT AMBASSADORS & MENTORS

NERUPI Working Group interested in student ambassadors and mentors, both their impact on participants in outreach and student success initiatives and the impact of being part of a scheme on the ambassadors and mentors themselves.



## KNOWLEDGE, ATTAINMENT & PEDAGOGY

NERUPI Working Group interested in knowledge, attainment and pedagogy in widening participation.



## ENGAGING PARENTS & CARERS

NERUPI Working Group interested in activity and evaluation around engaging parents and carers in outreach and student success.



## STUDENT AND STAFF RACE AND ETHNIC EQUITY GROUP (SSREE)

NERUPI Working Group, formerly known as BAME Student Experiences Group, with a focus on the experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic students and staff in terms of access to higher education, student



## STUDENT VOICE WORKING GROUP

The primary focus of this group is to explore strategies to include the invaluable perspective of Student Voice in rigorous evaluation and analysis of widening participation and equity programmes

Screenshot



## CREATIVE HE WORKING GROUP

This new NERUPI working group is designed as a space for colleagues working in both specialist and larger HEIs to discuss issues and share practice related to the design, evaluation and delivery of interventions to support access, success and

## Focus on key topics for WP:

- **sharing experiences** to provide mutual support and insights amongst members working in these areas
- **presentation sessions** focusing on a particular topic of interest open to wider NERUPI membership
- **planning NERUPI events**
  - Beyond Decolonisation
  - How can higher education outreach in schools raise attainment?
- **collaborative research**
  - ambassador professional skill development
  - OfS Standards of Evidence
  - culturally sensitive curricula scales
  - experiences of outreach in the pandemic

THE REFLEXIVE CYCLE TOOLKIT

Basics ▾ Understanding Inequalities ▾ Planning ▾ Evaluating ▾ Sharing ▾

Welcome to the NERUPI Members' Area

This area of the site is exclusively for you, staff based at our NERUPI member organisations. As well as news and events for members, it provides a wide range of resources for designing, delivering, evaluating and researching widening participation and equity initiatives in higher education.

But this website is more than simply a collection of resources. It is a toolkit, bringing together practice and theory and structured around a reflexive cycle of context analysis, planning, evaluation and learning for access and participation interventions: the NERUPI Reflexive Cycle Toolkit. Click on Basics in the menu for an introduction to the Toolkit and the different elements of the reflexive cycle.

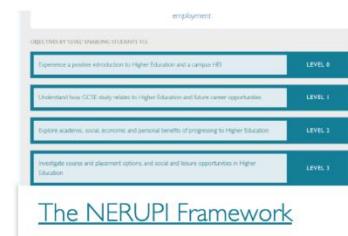
News and events for members



[Working Groups](#)



[NERUPI News](#)



[The NERUPI Framework](#)



[ALL UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



[Screenshot](#)

# Members' Website Area

# Getting Started

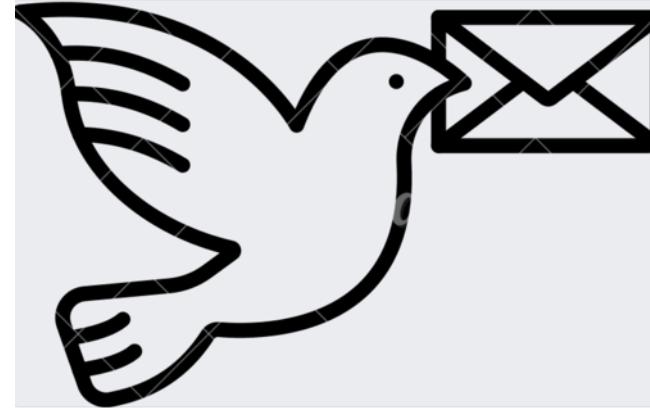
## Mailing lists

## Key contacts

- Detailed messages with advance warning of events
- Consultation about NERUPI plans
- Requests for renewal of subscriptions

## General mailing

- Information about events, working groups and resources
- Click on BECOME A MEMBER button



## Website

- Public area is open to all
- Members area requires people to be registered as user
- Resources, tools and information

## JISC MAIL

[NERUPIMEMBERS@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:NERUPIMEMBERS@jiscmail.ac.uk)

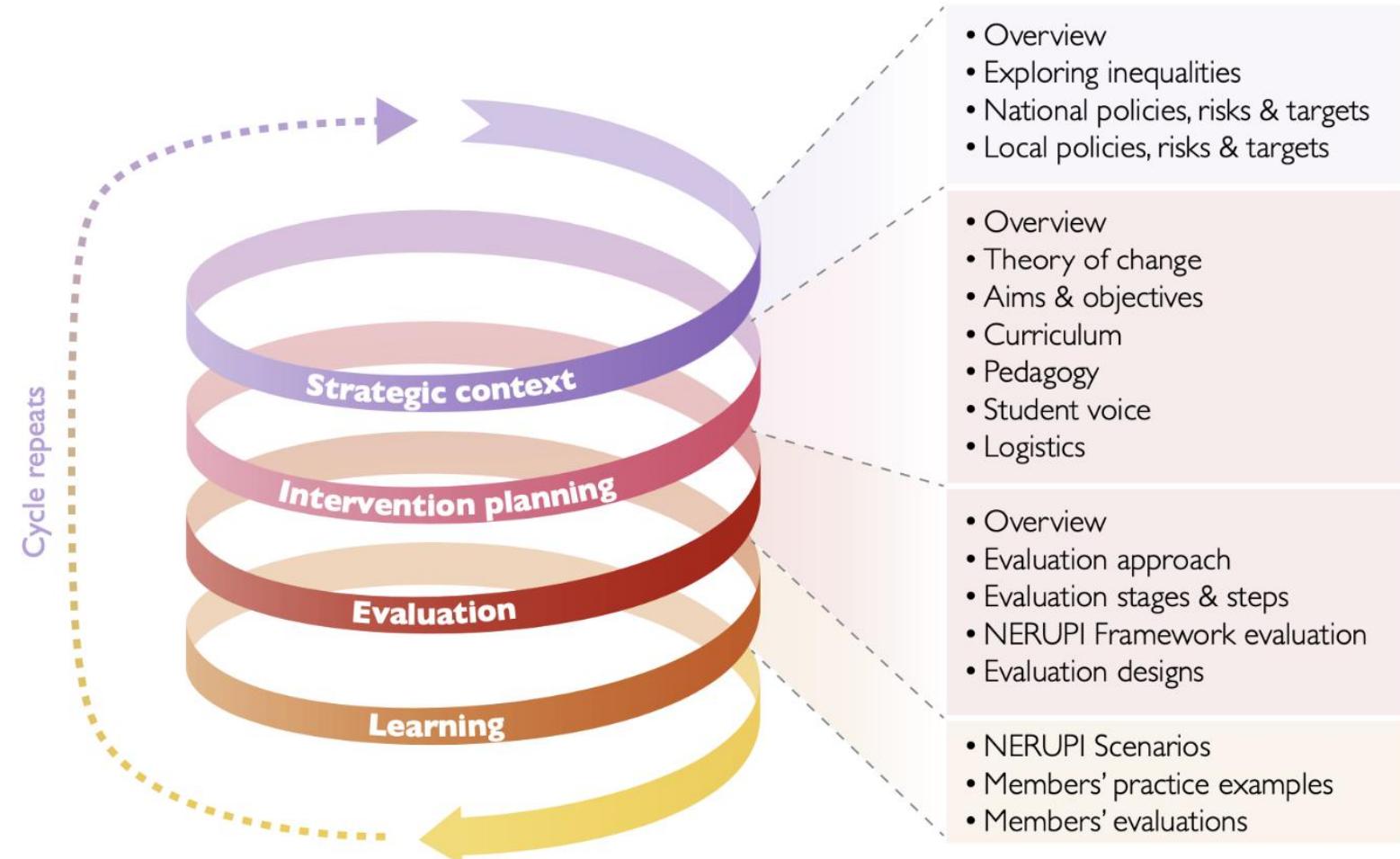
# NERUPI Framework

- Overaching set of Aims and Objectives informed by theory, research and practice
- Choice of appropriate methods according to context of intervention
- Can encompass specific intervention-based aims
- A common language for planning and reporting
- Encourages reflexivity to inform practice and theory
- Designed to underpin a mixed methods & action focused approach

# Reflexive planning cycle

**Theory & Practice**  
reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed

=  
**PRAXIS**



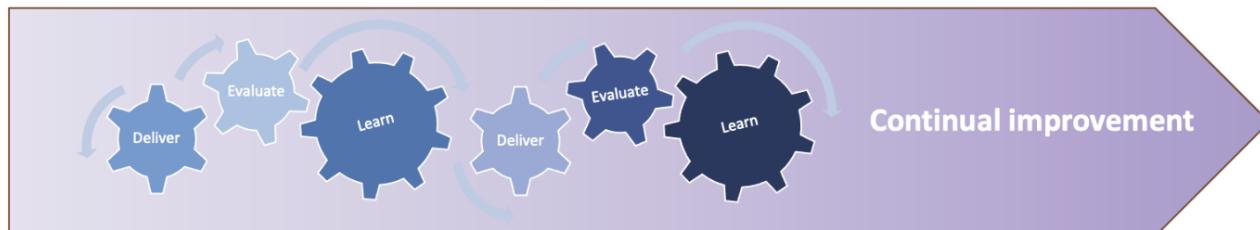
## Reflexivity

*Reflexivity is a process where researchers are considering their own assumptions about the research topic, and unpick how their personal beliefs and assumptions shape the research work they undertake. Nicole Brown, [Reflexivity and Positionality in Research](#)*



## The NERUPI Framework & Reflexivity

The NERUPI focus on planning, delivery and evaluation of interventions with a focus on short term benefits is designed to promote learning and reflexivity within [Praxis Teams](#) and organisations to improve understanding of inequalities and how to address them.



While we cannot change our backgrounds we can become more reflexive and question 'taken for granted' ideas and practices in a particular setting or field such as higher education. We can do this by:

- interrogating our own positions,
- recognising that others may have different standpoints
- exploring the perspectives of others.

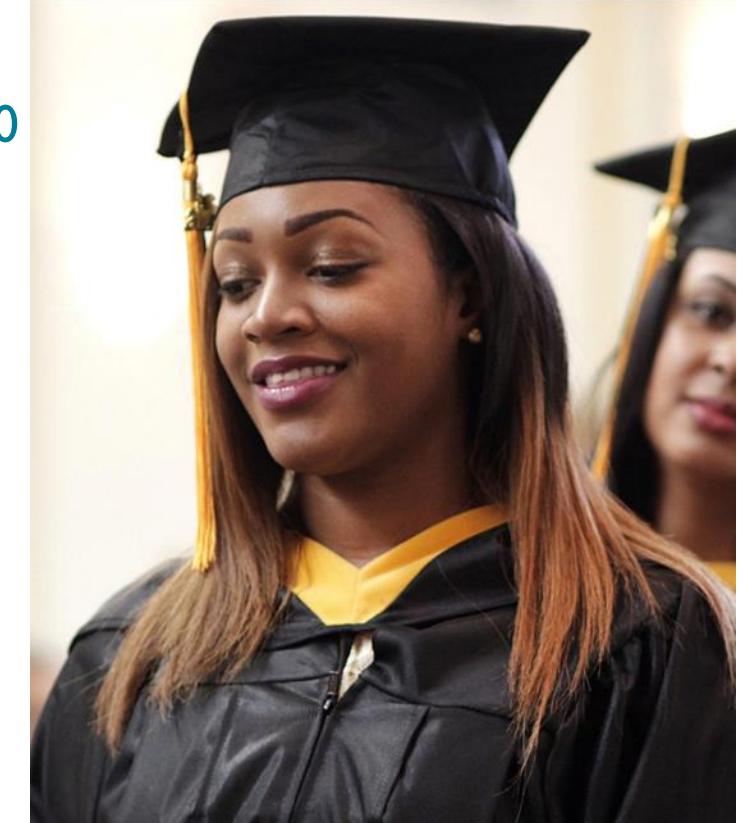
# Expansion of Higher Education

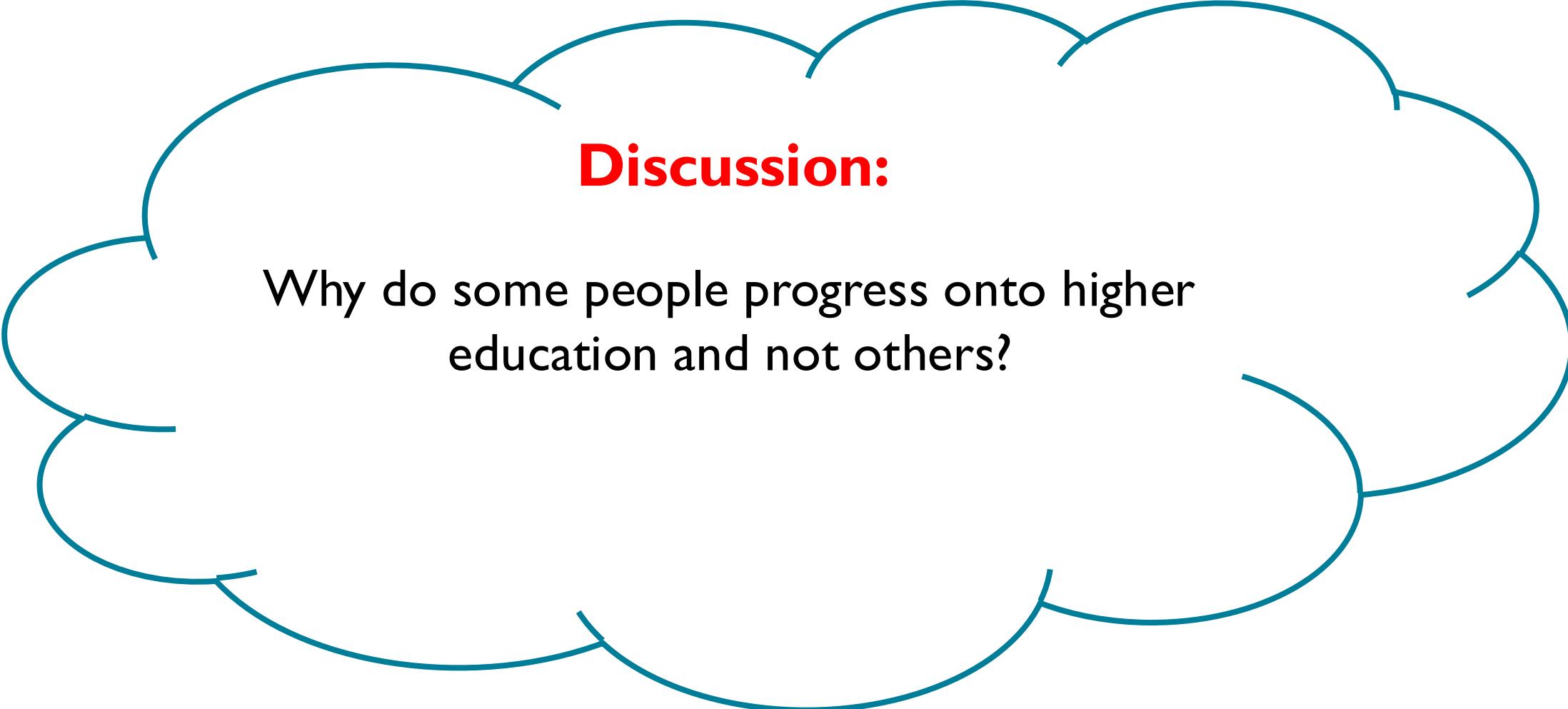
## At the turn of the 19th century

- there were only ten universities in England – five in Scotland!
- Undergraduates less than one per cent of the population
- only a handful of women
- very few students of colour
- curriculum very limited
- Majority of students sons of the ruling class and the new professional classes
- **Culture & curriculum of higher education designed for this group**

## In the 2000's

- Over 150 universities and 300 HE institutions
- About 50% of 18 olds go to university
- 57.5% are women
- a wide range of subjects can be studied at HE level
- increased diversity of the student population
- **Inequalities still exist**





## **Discussion:**

Why do some people progress onto higher education and not others?

**Economic capital**



**Cultural capital**  
– what you  
know

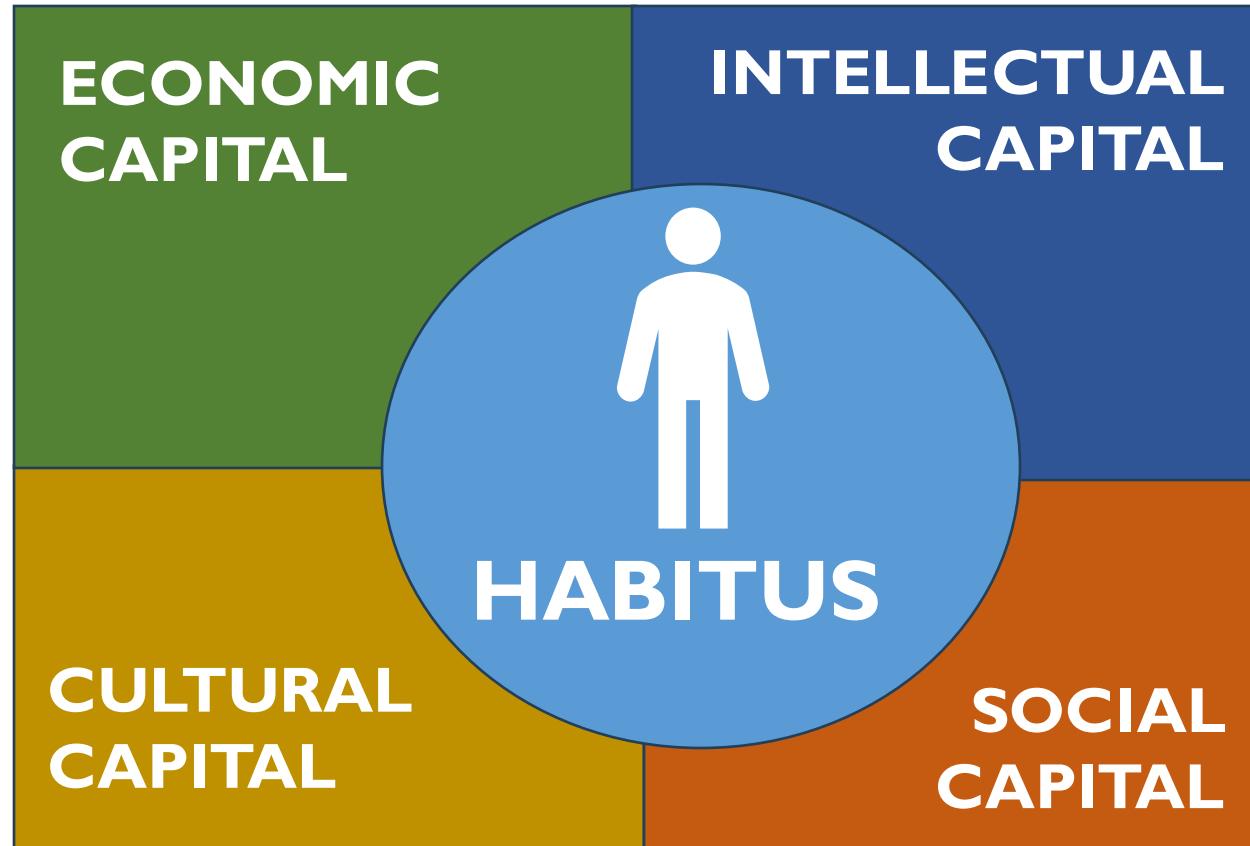


**Social capital** -  
who you know



Pierre Bourdieu

# Habitus



field



Rules of the game

# The NERUPI Framework

SOCIAL & ACADEMIC CAPITAL		HABITUS	SKILLS CAPITAL	INTELLECTUAL & SUBJECT CAPITAL	ECONOMIC CAPITAL
PROGRESSION CURRICULUM		STUDENT IDENTITIES	SKILLS CURRICULUM	KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM	ECONOMIC RESOURCES CURRICULUM
KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Develop students' knowledge & awareness of the benefits of higher education & graduate employment	Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education sector & make informed choices	Develop students' confidence & resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life	Develop students' study skills & capacity for academic attainment	Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge	Develop students' capacity for critically informed financial decision making & managing financial resources



## Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

### Intervention strategy 2: Improved access for care leavers

**Theory of Change:** Through the introduction of dedicated activities and prioritisation for the travel bursary and access schemes, we aim to increase the opportunities available to develop knowledge and skills, as well as to break down pre-conceived perceptions of higher education. In doing so, we aim to improve access to the University for care leavers.

#### Subject and skills-based workshops

A series of subject and skills-based workshops for students in Year 10 and 11.  
(New activity)

Staffing: £6,360.75 per annum.

Delivery costs: £5,000 per annum.

Students from targeted groups will be able to:

- Explore academic, social, economic, and personal benefits of progressing to Higher Education
- Explore differences between Higher Education Institutions and study opportunities within subject areas
- Increase confidence in their capacity to progress onto Higher Education.

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# NERUPI Framework by level

- Six overarching aims
- Seven levels
- Top Level objective for each level
- Specific learning outcomes for each objective

Level 0	Year 6-7
Level 1	Year 8-9
Level 2	Year 10-11
Level 3	Post-16
Level 4	Transition to HE
Level 5	Undergraduate
Level 6	Graduate progression

# NERUPI framework by level



Level 0	Year 6-7	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 1	Year 8-9	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 2	Year 10-11	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 3	Post-16	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 4	Transition to HE	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 5	Under-graduate	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
Level 6	Graduate progression	KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN

# Aim 1 Level 2: Objective & learning outcome

<b>Aim 1</b> <b>KNOW</b>	<b>Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment</b>		
<b>Level 2</b> <b>(age 14–16)</b> 	<b>Top-level objective</b>	<b>Explore academic, social, economic and personal benefits of progressing to higher education</b>	
	<b>Objectives or learning outcomes</b>	Discover academic and social benefits of higher education	
		Understand economic benefits of higher education and career opportunities for graduates	
		Explore benefits of higher education in terms of personal development and cultural enrichment	
		Discover study and research opportunities in higher education	

# Our NERUPI Unis

## PopU

### aka Poppleville

- converted from polytechnic to a university in 1992
- appears in the middle of university league tables
  - Inclusive entry requirements
- diverse student body with strong local recruitment
- unexplained awarding and progression gaps



- Old university with strong research base.
- appears near the top of league tables.
  - Highly selective
- Subjects largely academic; traditional curriculum & pedagogy
- Majority white middle class student body.
- unexplained awarding and progression gaps

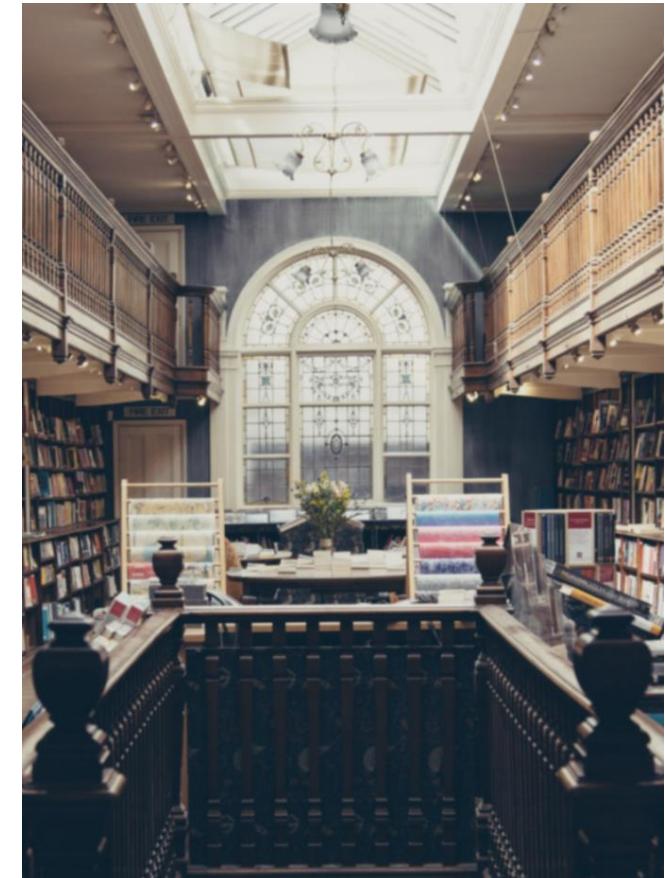
## Popple Arts

- small specialist provider for the creative industries.
- offers FHE in arts and design, performance, & media
- Students from Quintile 1-2 postcode and (IMD) are underrepresented



## About Pobblebridge

- older, established university with strong research base
- near the top of UK university league tables.
- subjects offered largely academic
- traditional approach to curriculum and pedagogy
- majority white middle class students and staff
- degree awarding gaps
- underrepresented groups don't feel they belong
- working hard to diversify its intake
- challenge to recruit from local schools and colleges
- reviewing curriculum and pedagogy
- refocussing student support offer
- working with SU to review social offer





	<b>Popplebridge Access Activities</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>AIM</b>
1	<b>Progression partnerships with target 6<sup>th</sup> forms and colleges nationally to deliver programme of student conferences for Year group 12</b>		
2	<b>Attainment-raising programmes in Poppleton and the region Years 7-9</b>		
3	<b>Residential summer schools in partnership with the Sutton Trust Year for Year groups 12-13</b>		
4	<b>Careers-based subject tasters for Year 9s choosing GCSE</b>		
5	<b>Primary school reading initiative for Years 4 and 5</b>		
6	<b>Student finance session for Year 10 students and parents</b>		

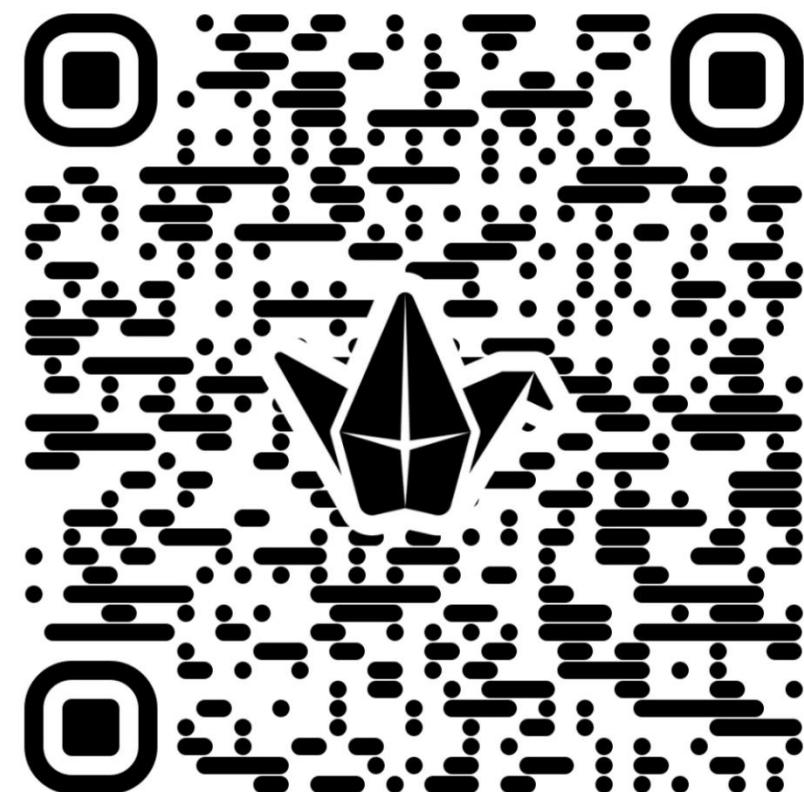
KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND	SUSTAIN
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<b>Popplebridge Access Activities</b>	
1	<b>Progression partnerships</b>
2	<b>Attainment-raising programmes</b>
3	<b>Residential summer schools</b>
4	<b>Careers-based subject tasters</b>
5	<b>Primary school reading</b>
6	<b>Student finance session</b>

<https://padlet.com/nerupi/intro-5-25-mapping-popplebridge-access-activities-2fdkb1gwn00bewot>



Popleville Success & Progression Activities	LEVEL	AIM
<b>Curriculum transformation will embed inclusivity principles and practice in curriculum and pedagogy</b>		
<b>Our Student Engagement Team will lead on the development of a Wellbeing Transitions Module</b>		
<b>Our Study Skills &amp; Support Hub plans to offer English and Maths workshops as our data shows that mature students and students with vocational qualifications need additional support</b>		
<b>We will develop a guide to inform students about financial support and help students manage their money</b>		
<b>The careers service will provide support in securing placements for students from under-represented group</b>		

**KNOW**

**CHOOSE**

**BECOME**

**PRACTISE**

**UNDERSTAND**

**SUSTAIN**



## Poppleville Success & Progression Activities

Curriculum transformation

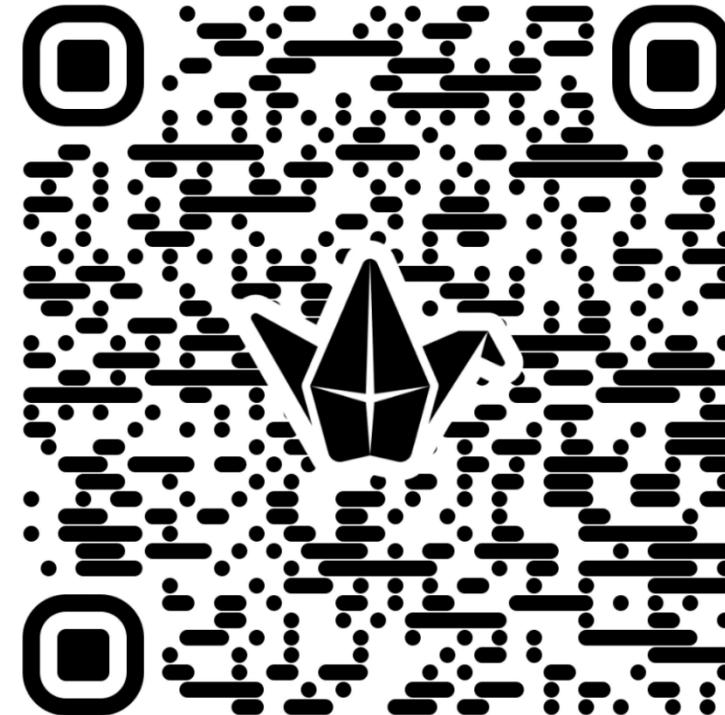
Wellbeing Transitions Module

English and Maths workshops

Financial support guide

Support for securing placements

<https://padlet.com/nerupi/intro-11-25-poppleville-success-progression-activities-hsoll4tnbkdk5w68>



KNOW

CHOOSE

BECOME

PRACTISE

UNDERSTAND

SUSTAIN

# Mapping to the EORR

## NERUPI Framework mapping templates (including Framework templates mapped to EORR risks)

Type: Template

The NERUPI Framework is available as an Excel template which you can use to map your programme(s) to the NERUPI aims and objectives and create a planning document which gives an overview of the programme and its evaluation.

Download Excel document for mapping purposes: [NERUPI Framework V.20 mapping template \(2019-20\)](#)

Download Excel document for mapping purposes: [NERUPI Framework V.20 mapping template with evaluation summary \(2023-24\)](#)

◀ RESOURCES

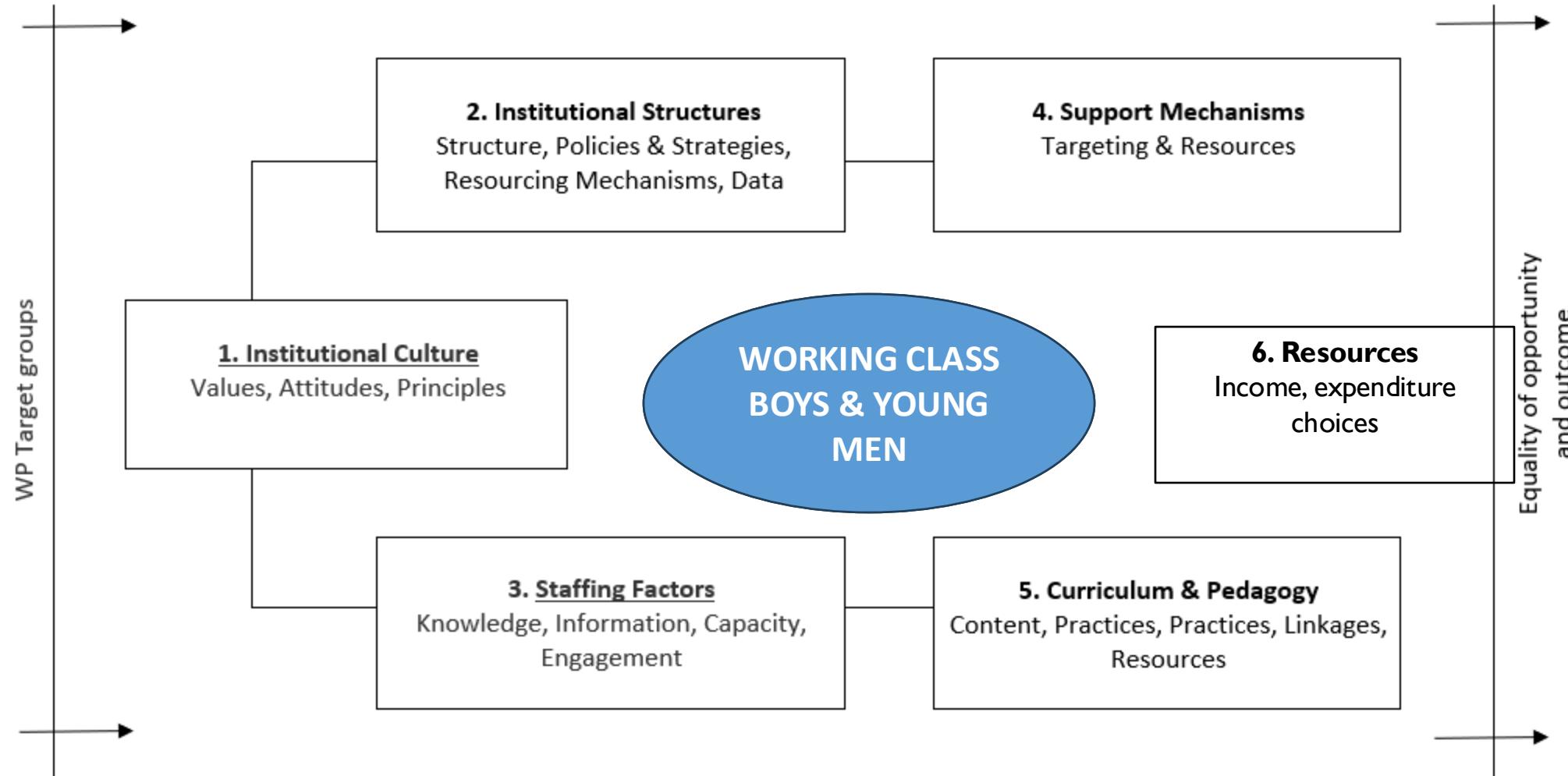
NERUPI Framework Level 3 (A-level and equivalent study / post-16)			
Objectives	Programme	Evaluation	Map programme to objectives
The main objectives are to be held with specific objectives below. Remember that an intervention does not have to include all the NERUPI objectives. You can also include additional objectives relevant to your intervention.	Write over the boxes below to give a brief overview of your programme and the individual interventions or activities within it which include the objectives.	Put the evaluation components you will use for this programme and add a brief description of evaluation methods.	Map programme to objectives
<b>Aims: KNOW</b> Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment Enable students to investigate course, placement options, and social & leisure opportunities in higher education	Programme description	Short Term Benefits	Medium Term Outcomes
Enable students to discover course and placement opportunities in higher education centre at NARPI-103	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	Long Term Impact
Enable students to find out about research areas, expertise and facilities in higher education and/or in NARPI (T-HEI) and vice versa of development	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	
Enable students to explore social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities in higher education centre at NARPI-103	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	
Enable students to discover career benefits of higher education and the employment opportunities at NARPI (T-HEI)	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	
Enable students to find out about academic and information services, facilities and resources at centre of HEI	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	
Additional objectives	What students value in programme	What evaluation method	
<b>Aims: CHOOSE</b> Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices Enable students to investigate course, placement options, and social & leisure opportunities in higher education	Programme description	Short Term Benefits	Medium Term Outcomes
What students value in programme	What evaluation method	Long Term Impact	

### Related resources

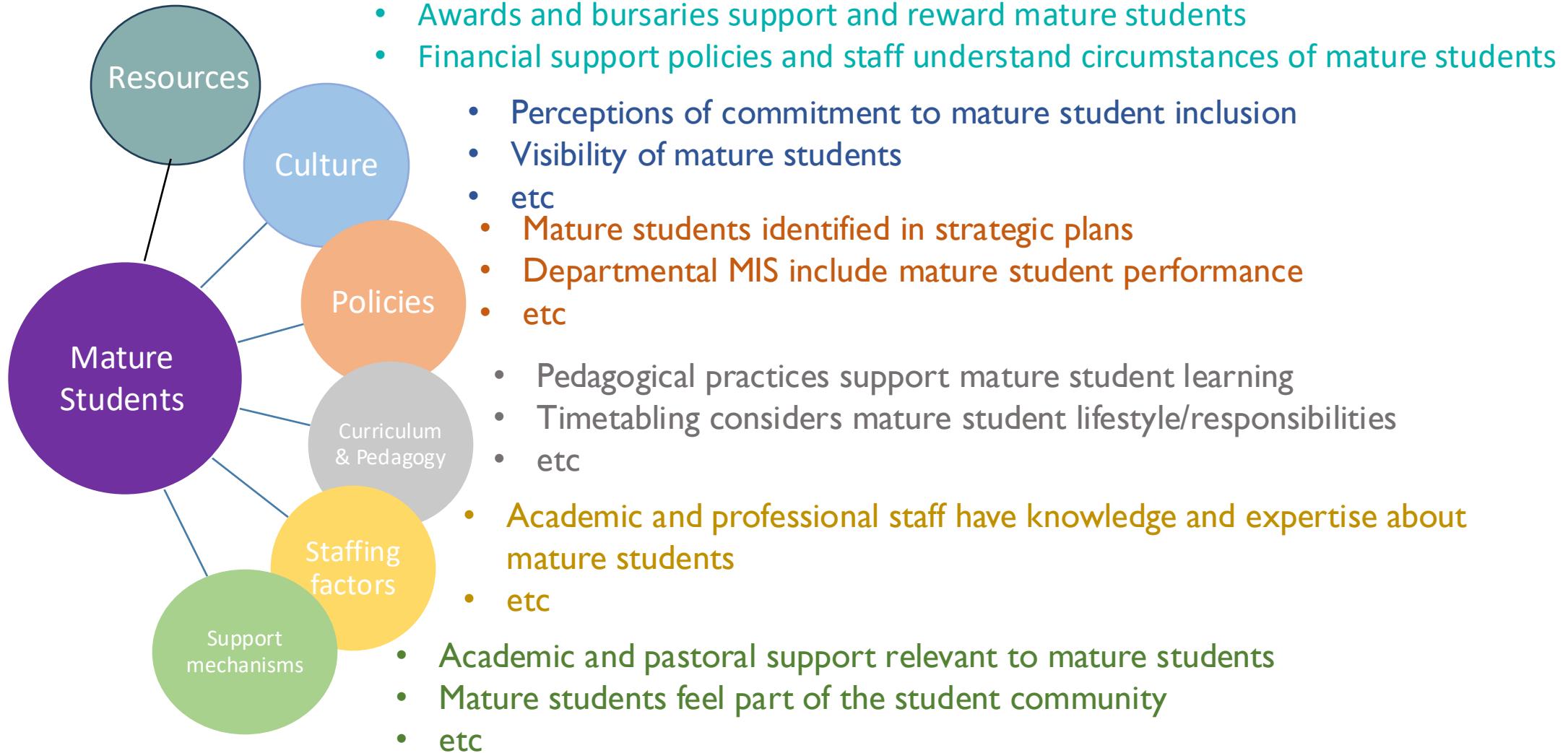


Programme planning:  
mapping aims and  
objectives

# Framework for organisational indicators



# Organisational indicators



# Organisational Aims

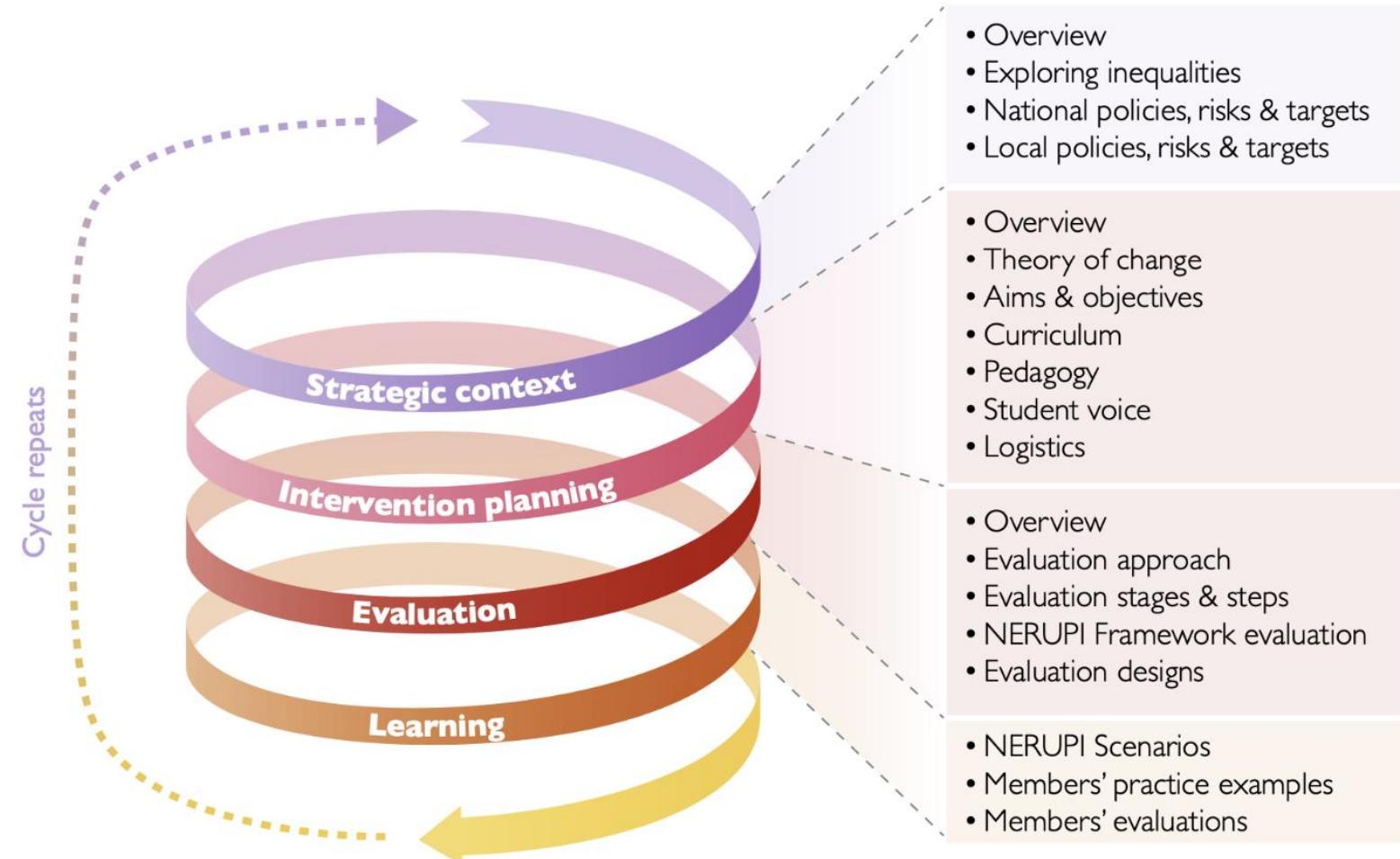
Culture, structures, policies & procedures	Staffing (incl. student staff members)	Curricula & Pedagogy	Mechanisms for student support	Economic capital
ENACT	ACTIVATE	EMPOWER	ENABLE	SUSTAIN
Embed a culture and ethos, backed up by policies, procedures, and resource mechanisms internally, which promote inclusivity, supportive values and behaviour, and promote participation and engagement for all	Embed staffing and professional development arrangements, support and rewards, which build the capacity, awareness and skills of staff members to support and promote equity	Support and extend approaches to curricula and pedagogy which ensure inclusivity, and promote innovation, co-creation and partnership arrangements	Identify and operationalise types and mechanisms of financial, academic and pastoral student support to enable full participation and engagement of diverse student groups and individuals	Include equity considerations into organizational decision-making & management of financial resources



# Reflexive planning cycle

**Theory & Practice**  
reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed

=  
**PRAXIS**



# Get involved



ALL UPCOMING EVENTS

BOOK  
NOW