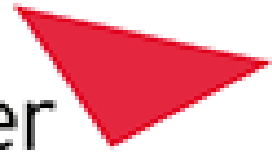


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Scotland

## Social Mobility, Widening Participation & Access to Higher Education

Debra Macfarlane, Quality Enhancement Manager, Quality Assurance  
Agency for Higher Education Scotland

Katrina Swanton, Head of Academic Quality and Enhancement, Edinburgh  
Napier University

# Scotland's Higher Education Institutions



15 Universities



2 small specialist institutions



1 tertiary institution



The Open University in Scotland



# Who are our students?

 253,475 students

 Including 64,320 postgraduates

 23% students from outside the UK

Source: HESA (2018-19)



# Core elements: national and institutional strategies

- National Performance Framework
- Blueprint for Fairness: the final report on the Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) 2016
- Scottish Framework for Fair Access
- Scottish Funding Council: Outcome Agreements
- Quality Assurance Agency: Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)



# Scottish Government National Performance Framework and the Four Capitals



# Commission on Widening Access A Blueprint for Fairness (2016)

In 2014-15, the Government set out the ambition that a child born at that time in one of Scotland's most deprived communities should, by the time of leaving school, have the same chance of going to university as one born in one of the country's least deprived areas.



# Scottish Framework for Fair Access, 2019



- [Framework for Fair Access toolkit website](#) which provides evidence on activities universities and others can undertake to support access into and through HE.
- Scotland's Community of Access and Participation Practitioners (SCAPP) - a forum to share and develop best practice in access support across Scotland.

# Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Outcome Agreements (OAs)



- Allow universities to demonstrate their distinct contribution to the Scottish Government's priorities.
- Demonstrate what universities deliver in return for public investment.
- Complement and support an institution's own strategic ambitions.
- Align with an institution's strategy so that it enables the institution to negotiate its contribution toward sector level impacts according to its mission and strengths.

OAs focus on: Widening Access, High Quality Learning and Teaching, World Leading Research & Innovation



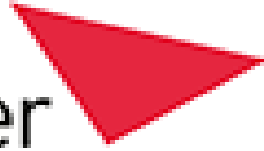
# Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

- An evidence-based cyclical peer review (including student peers) of universities.
- Judgement and a set of commendations and recommendations relating to the way a University secures academic standards and improves the student experience, and to which the universities must respond.
- ELIR specifically considers the evidence available on institutional approaches to **recognising and responding to equality and diversity in the student population, including widening access** and mode and location of study.



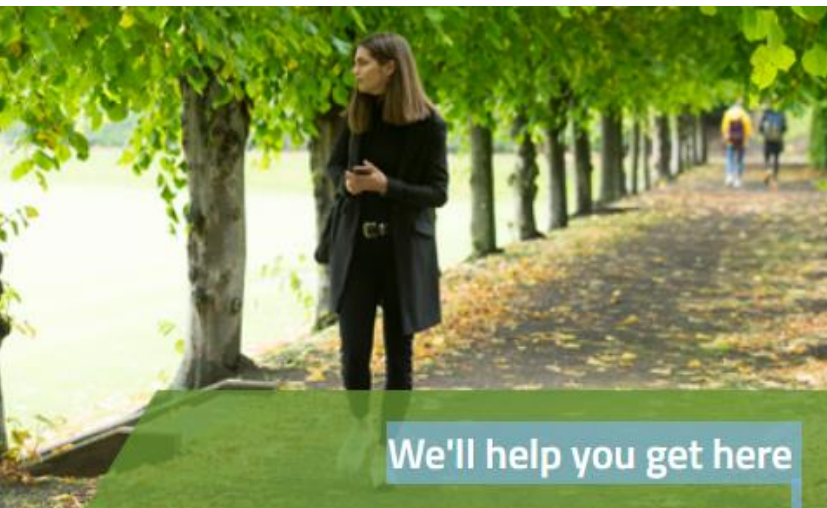
# Links between national and institutional level

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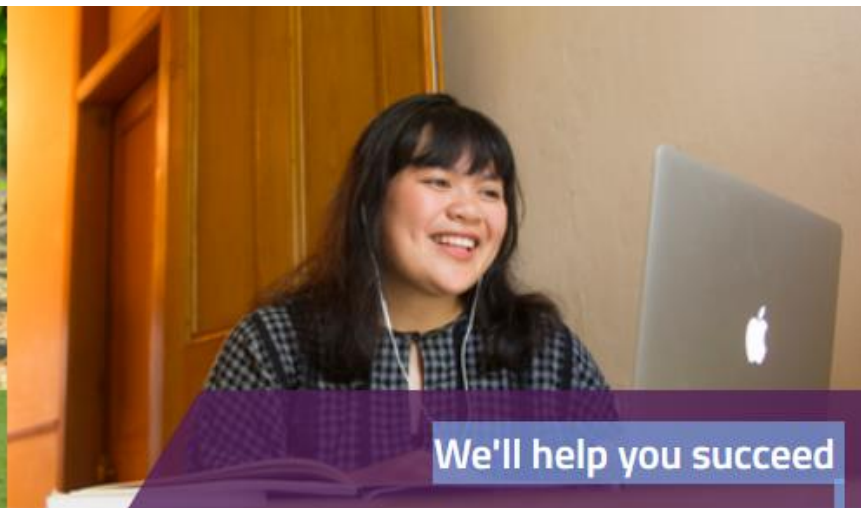


The sustained, strategic, systematic and evidence-based approach to widening participation and direct entry which is having a continued positive impact on the number of widening participation students admitted to and progressing through the University. Effective interventions are evident at all stages of the learner journey from pre-admission through contextualised admissions arrangements to induction, transition and on-campus support. These include the student-led and University supported peer network of students from a widening participation background (Establish), the Countdown to Zero induction programme and introduction of dedicated widening participation student ambassadors.

- Outcome Agreement
- Institutional initiatives
- ELIR commendation



We'll help you get here



We'll help you succeed



Students helping students



# National Enhancement Themes

The Enhancement Themes involve the whole higher education sector in Scotland. Staff and students collaborate on one or more topics to improve strategy, policy and practice.

- 2003-2004: Responding to Student Needs; Assessment
- 2004-2006: Flexible Delivery; Employability
- 2005-2006: Integrative Assessment
- 2005-2008: The First Year
- 2006-2008: Research-Teaching Linkages
- 2008-2011: Graduates for the 21st Century
- 2011-2014: Developing and Supporting the Curriculum
- 2014-2017: Student Transitions
- 2017-2020: Evidence for Enhancement
- 2020-2023: Resilient Learning Communities

# Covid-19 response

- Scottish Funding Council call for evidence
- Universities Scotland response
- Focus on social and cultural as well as economic recovery
- Micro credential work
- Institutional priorities – wellbeing, digital poverty, balance of blended and online learning



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