

## Editorial

So, what do we have in this month's **Action on Access** Information Hub and **eBulletin**?

We are still processing students and digesting information about this year's A levels and Clearing, so you will find the latest news from UCAS. And we have important information from Prospect's (Jisc) Early Careers Survey reflecting on students' growing interest in apprenticeship routes as an alternative to more traditional A level and BTEC routes into and through Higher Education. We also include items on student wellbeing and their experience at University or College; the impact of the cost of living on students; their aspirations and their choices.

And complementing the Schools and Colleges information, **Action on Access** has included items in the **eBulletin** on some of the work going on in Schools and Colleges, specifically from our Network members: Unitaster's Teachers Guide to University and their Leadership Training Course; the Sutton Trust's Teacher Champions and Pathways to Professions programmes; UCAS's updated Adviser Toolkits; and the Elephant Group's *Meta Method*, a metacognition-based programme designed to help students build the skills and confidence needed to succeed academically.

Also and relatedly, we have interesting reports and items on, or from, several **Action on Access** member institutions and organisations: NNECL's Inspire Project; Carers Trust Westminster petition; Sheffield Carers package of Careers support at Sheffield Universities; the elucidatory articles in the latest (and special) edition of the OU's *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*; the Institute for Equity's NCFE-accredited programmes in Equity, Inclusion & Organisational Diversity; and Leeds University Student Success' Student Development Coaches scheme.

We include some national policy and statistical reporting: changes in responsibilities and roles for DfE and the DWP; record numbers from UCAS of applicants to Higher Education in England and Scotland; the annual DfE statistics on young peoples' participation in Higher Education by student characteristics; the OECD's *Education at a Glance* report; and the new Civil Service Apprenticeship scheme.

You will also find in this month's **eBulletin**, some perhaps surprising, reminding or maybe confirming information, for example:

- the realities of class-based exclusion and how institutions can respond - class can sometimes get lost in the plethora of student identities
- the New ONS data revealing 160 HE students lost to suicide each year - which is at a lower rate than in the general population
- the OECD's report that nearly 60% of young adults in the UK now hold a Higher Education qualification (well above the OECD average) and with England, in particular, having made strong progress in widening access AND with completion rates being among the best globally
- the King's College, HEPI and The Policy Institute Report reveals that the public hugely overestimate how many graduates regret going to university; they significantly underestimate the importance of higher education to the UK economy and there are widespread misunderstandings about tuition fees, student loans and the financial returns from a university education.

The **eBulletin** contains two Guest Articles this month. The first on the Elephant Group's *Meta Method*, a metacognition-based programme designed to help students build the skills and confidence needed to succeed academically with a focus on university transition. It teaches students how to develop awareness and regulate their own thinking and learning.

Our second Guest Article is from Jon Down (Grit) and Ailsa Wilding (Sheffield University) and explores and explains how universities can help White working-class boys see themselves in Higher Education and improve the educational outcomes of these young men. The rate of progression to Higher Education for White working-class boys remains one of the sector's most persistent and intractable challenges. This article describes some solutions delivered by the Coache programme which was developed with Grit at the University of Sheffield.

If you don't know of them, Grit delivers intensive personal development and coaching programmes in Universities across the UK. You can find more about them [here](#).

**How you can support the *Action on Access* Network.**


If you would like to write and share an article about the successful, innovative or just plain interesting work you do at your University, College or stakeholder/third sector organisation for future issues of the *eBulletin* (currently we have opportunities for the November 2025 *eBulletin* onwards). Please do contact the editor at [a.rawson@actiononaccess.org](mailto:a.rawson@actiononaccess.org) or [contact@actiononaccess.org](mailto:contact@actiononaccess.org).

Please also continue to share with the Network all your information: job vacancies, events; reports; news; and projects.

We love your feedback on the *eBulletin* – please keep it coming.

We are proud to have reached 1,100+ people registered to use our ***Action on Access* Information Hub and Email Briefing Service**. Please feel free to share the *eBulletin* with colleagues who are not yet aware of our Network or not registered (register [here](#)). And do encourage any colleagues you know (in another University, College, or an institution or organisation) to take out a subscription.

Cheers,

 Andrew