

## Editorial

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Welcome to the April 2026 edition of the *Action on Access eBulletin*.

If you are new to the *Action on Access* monthly *eBulletin* a personal welcome. The *eBulletin* goes out to over a thousand Network registered in their range of roles: Widening Participation, Outreach, Admissions Student Services, Student Engagement and Success, Evaluation, EDI, Policy, Research and so on - and is the primary mechanism through which we keep everyone abreast of the constant, important, pertinent changes across the sector. Through this *Action on Access Hub and Email Briefing Service* we collate and publicise smart and up to the moment information on job vacancies and relevant events, as well as the very latest news on Government policy and initiatives. Our Information Service additionally facilitates sectoral calls for papers and proposals for conferences; contributions to surveys and research and consultations. Our *eBulletin* boosts interest in courses and programmes; vacancies and events. We are the only service of its kind, delivering continual, current information direct to your Inbox.

Please note that our work is partly dependent on you sharing information with colleagues so do think of sending your news and items of interest to me at [contact@actiononaccess.org](mailto:contact@actiononaccess.org).

I am sure you will find the April *eBulletin* both informative and useful with information specifically helpful to your role but also in giving you the wider context of what is going on in the sector - as it affects you. For instance, did you know that the DfE has made Ofsted (rather than the Office for Students) responsible for quality assurance in the increasing number of degree and higher-level apprenticeships in more than 100 Universities and Colleges? Are you aware of the rich and healthy ecosystem of Third Sector and other supporting organisations that surround and work with Higher Education Institutions? Namely: Become, Carers Trust, DiINN, FACE, NNECL, HEAT, IntoUniversity, the Royal Society, Student Minds, the Sutton Trust, UniTasterDays, Unite Foundation, Unipol, UPP Foundation, Wellcome -- as well as AdvanceHE, GuildHE, NEON, NERUPI, Ofsted, QAA, RAISE, the Russell Group, the Student Loans Company, TASO, UCAS, Universities UK and UniConnect partnerships. These represent a small (but major) percentage of the wider landscape and all of which appear in this month's edition of the *eBulletin*.

The information contained in this month's *eBulletin* may appear at first glance disparate but reveals a set of common themes:

- Inclusive Universities and Colleges
- How to fix student finance
- How to fix and build another financially stable and resilient HE sector
- The wider value of Higher Education beyond the data, impact statistics, risk mitigation and key performance measures
- How HE enables/facilitates upward social mobility
- The changing students' experience in 2026, what and how they study (including adults and international students)
- The network of Third Sector and other supporting organisations outside Higher Education Institutions working with institutions
- A healthy job market - especially in Outreach and Recruitment, Student Engagement and Experience, Student Support and Wellbeing and leadership/management roles.

We have two Guest Articles this month. '*Beyond the Noise...*' arguing for a research-led approach moving the EDI narrative from ideological diversity initiatives to one concerning leadership capability, governance and workforce retention, linked to professional training, performance indicators and operational necessity. The Institute for Equity, University Centre offers a suite of qualifications, consultancy services and a professional standards hub for serious practitioners.

Our second offering '*Dismantling the Barriers to Higher Education....*' by Lucy Haire, Director of Sector Engagement at the UPP Foundation, begins with a story. Her article draws the conclusion that familial and community expectations can stifle talent before it reaches the application to HE stage and urges us all to move policy rhetoric into reality; supporting initiatives necessary for individuals in closed communities to reinvent themselves.

Finally, do not be tempted to skim over the Opportunities and Calls section of the *eBulletin* with its grants and funding initiatives; calls for evidence; invitations for conference presentations and speakers; opportunities to contribute to research, to consultations and to policy initiatives and decision making; calls to create working groups and networks; and to share information with those you work with in schools and colleges (such as: the UCAS Guide for careers advisers working in schools and colleges; and UniTasterDays' Students' Guide to University 2026 and their survey on guidance on HE in schools and colleges).

In conclusion, there is plenty here to inform and enlighten.

Also, it's bluebell season and, as a keen observer of wild plants, I hope you can make time to get out into the woods to see these wonderful carpets of Spring flowers which have bloomed early due to the mild Spring.

Warmly,  
Andrew.