

## Editorial Action on Access eBulletin May 2026

Sadly, there was nothing I could discern of direct relevance to Higher Education in the King's speech in Parliament this week - the headline education legislation is the Education for All Bill which states that it will raise standards in schools and introduce generational reforms of the special educational needs system and has a special emphasis on SEND. With regard to Apprenticeships, the Government will continue to invest in these and in measures that tackle youth unemployment but, in the speech, placed this within a broader passage on welfare reform suggesting a continued focus on the NEET problem with pathways into work for groups furthest from the labour market. There is a suggestion of future Government intention to further prioritise and develop the pace and contribution of vocational qualifications and training.

In this month's *Action on Access eBulletin* we reflect some of the breadth and context of Widening Participation-related materials: collecting and collating news, information, resources and requests for contributions - all across many of the usual themes:

- musings on the health and effectiveness of our sector
- sectoral and student finances
- student success
- fairness and equality of support for all students but especially those we describe as under-represented or disadvantaged
- student health and wellbeing
- accessing, listening to and including the student voice and perspective in all relevant conversations
- the changing students' experience in 2026 and their study patterns
- lifelong learning
- evaluation
- a healthy job market (Vacancies) and listing of webinars and conferences (Events).

May's Guest Article has been contributed by Wendy Fowle, Associate Professor and Dean, Student Outcomes at Oxford Brooks. The article, entitled, *Belonging as a Driver in Student Success: a case study*, discusses their aim of creating a transformative university experience for students using high-level institutional theories of change alongside their theory of change underpinning interventions. She discusses how this approach - respecting and responding to students' individual strengths, needs and identities - led to the emergence of Belonging as a core objective to deliver student success.

Please note that the scope of *AonA's Information Hub and Email Briefing Service* 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).

Kind regards  
Andrew.

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