Editorial

Many of the items in last month's ***Action on Access eBulletin*** seemed to be asking lots of questions and pondering undesirable outcomes; this month's ***eBulletin*** is providing answers and critically useful information.

For instance, many of us are looking at how best to develop the views and voices of students into institutional and organisational practice. In this month's informative Guest Article, Hajra Babariya, Director of Student Life & BPP Students' Association at BPP University (another one of our valued subscribing institutions) nicely sets out the context and rationale at the University. This comprises: cross-institution, integrated student voice, participation and partnership; raising and bringing out the challenges around connection, belonging and participation; describing a coherent structure or pattern stitched throughout the BPP Departments; the importance of responding visibly to what students tell us, building it into routine decision - making it so that students SEE change as a result of student conversations; and showing how the University is always moving beyond consultation towards genuine partnership.

This month's almost 70-page ***eBulletin*** reflects the last four weeks' policy plethora, complemented by many varied commentary and thought pieces. There have been many thought-provoking and diverse reports and valuable resources for you to absorb and use, especially as the Government under new leadership is flexing its muscles and setting out its stall.

Policy items in this month's *eBulletin* to bring to your attention:

- Labour Party Conference speeches already seem a long time ago but you can read recent political aspirations and commitments from the new PM and from the Minister for Skills and Higher Education in this month's ***eBulletin***
- you can see Chris Millward, Interim Director of the Office for Students' priorities for access and participation specifically in relation to the development and roll-out of regional access partnerships in 2027-28; the evolving role of access and participation plans; and regional collaboration and persistent barriers to HE
- a new UK Government's innovative 'Class Unit', (abolishing the Social Mobility Commission) marks a significant shift in the UK Government's approach to social mobility and socio-economic inequality - promising as it does to seek to redress the balance in terms of the intersection of class and the wider equality and diversity agenda which has become organised around identities such as race, gender, disability and sexuality
- the "fundamental change" to the education system to put hands-on education on an equal footing with academic education from 14 years-old - building on the reforms to introduce rigorous new V Levels (which will be available from September 2027) to provide high-quality vocational training for 16 to 19-year-olds
- complementing this, there is to be an expansion of the regional and local Apprenticeship scheme to be led by Mayors
- updated Government guidance confirms that applications for England's Lifelong Learning Entitlement will open later this month, covering eligible courses and modules starting from January 2027
- the House of Lords Library briefing 'Skills and post-16 education policy', still available in the ***eBulletin's*** 'What's Still current section' comprehensively brings together current policy on HE, FE, apprenticeships, disadvantage, skills shortages and regional devolution and economic growth
- the Review of Higher Education in Wales and first annual report of the Medr tertiary education and research system; and QAA Scotland's **Thematic Review** of Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review outcomes during academic years 2024-25 and 2025-26 both point the ways to a more integrated cross-sector structure and architecture.

In the ***eBulletin*** you will see almost 50 events going forward - as far as September next year - for your attention along with 21 new job vacancies. We seek to represent here the widest range and variety of job opportunities and events. For example, AdvanceHE's Governance CPD is included, as I know a number of our readers also work as Governors in school, colleges or their own institution.

Enjoy this month's ***eBulletin*** which I am sure will enlighten and invigorate. Stay current, updated and ahead of what is happening; stay aware of what is being considered; how that is being dealt with or planning for; and indeed, how to make it happen - to the greater benefit of you, charities, third sector stakeholders, institutions and students. As always, we value the information you share with us.

A subscription to the ***Action on Access*** *Information Hub and Emailing Briefing Service* absolutely pays dividends – as many of you consistently attest… so please share the value of a subscription to colleagues outside your institution or organisation.

Mid-Autumnal greetings from,
Andrew.