

With over a year since the publication of *A Blueprint for Fairness: The Final Report of the Commission on Widening Access*, The Open University in Scotland is hosting an extended seminar to explore adult learning in the widening access landscape.

Date and Time

Thu 25 May 2017

09:45 – 14:40 BST

IET Glasgow, Teacher Building 14 St Enoch Square Glasgow G1 4DB

The place of adult learning in widening access to Higher Education: exploring current policy and practice in Scotland

The seminar welcomes the Commissioner on Fair Access, Professor Sir Peter Scott, who will be discussing, *Fair access, lifelong learning and social justice*, followed by practitioner-led workshops to allow delegates to the space to explore both the policy environment and widening access practice in contemporary Scotland in relation to adult and lifelong learning.

Event programme

09.45-10.15: **Registration and refreshments**

10.15-10.30: ***Welcome***

Susan Stewart, Director of Open University in Scotland

10.30-11.15: ***Fair access, lifelong learning and social justice***

Professor Sir Peter Scott, Fair Access Commissioner of the Scottish Government

11.15-11.35: **Break and refreshments**

11.40-12.55: ***The opportunities and challenges of reaching adult learners from all backgrounds and communities (Choice of workshop):***

Workshop 1

a) Using open online courses to support transitions from informal to formal learning

Facilitator: Dr Pete Cannell, Opening Educational Practices in Scotland, Project Co-Director

Since 2014 the Opening Educational Practices in Scotland Project has included the development of activity exploring the role of open education in widening access which will inform the focus of this workshop.

b) Supporting adult and lifelong learning through Scottish Union Learning

Facilitator: TBC

Scottish Union Learning will be facilitating a session which explores the role of trade unions in accessing skills and lifelong learning opportunities for their members that contribute to collective prosperity, fairness and equality, for workers across Scotland.

Workshop 2

c) No qualifications, no problem – a discussion of the challenges and opportunities faced by our adult students returning to higher education from our most deprived communities

Facilitator: Kenny Anderson, Scottish Wider Access Programme West, Director

The workshop will explore the work of SWAP West and allow the space for a broader discussion on the many benefits to Universities in embracing adults returning to education.

d) Progression routes from the community to college to higher education: the role of part-time and full-time accredited courses and the Adult Achievement Awards

Facilitator: Marian Docherty, Newbattle Abbey College, Depute Principal

Newbattle Abbey College, 'Scotland's Life-Changing College', supports adults to return to education. Join Depute Principal Marian Docherty to explore progression routes from communities to higher education as she reflects on the work of accredited courses and the college's Adult Achievement Awards within such progression routes.

Workshop 3

e) Widening access and adult participation: an overview, thoughts on the future and some questions

Facilitator: Dr Muir Houston, University of Glasgow, Senior Lecturer (Social Justice, Place and Lifelong Learning)

This workshop will begin with an overview of recent developments in relation to adult education in further and higher education in recent years. It will chart the relative decline and suggest some ways in which the decline may be addressed. Questions will be posed to initiate a discussion around strategies to support adults accessing opportunities to upskill and gain relevant qualifications to enable career progression.

13.00-13.40: ***Panel discussion and reflections***

Chaired by Dr Liz Marr (Director of Teaching, Learning and Teaching Innovation, The Open University)

13.40-14.40: **Networking lunch**