## Session abstracts

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### Storytelling and courageous conversations

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Ignite and Soapbox session (19 March 2020: 15.45 – 16.45) Room: Dunedin

**IG3a: Mind the gap: Tackling the BTEC attainment gap in higher education**, Dr Hannah Holmes, Manchester Metropolitan University

**IG3b: From the sticky floor to the glass ceiling and everything in between: Preliminary results from a systematic review and qualitative study of (gender) inequality in clinical academic careers**, Jennifer Brown, University of York and Professor Gabrielle Finn, Hull York Medical School

**IG3c: Behaviorally informed interventions to improve attainment**, Vanessa Todman, King's College London

**IG3d: Queer STEM: Systems engineering as queer pedagogy in railway engineering education**, Dr Holly Foss, The University of Birmingham

**IG3e: Creating an inclusive environment for first years where all can flourish**, Dr Roselina Alerhi and Dr Anthony Rossiter, University of Sheffield
Session 7.1: Storytelling and courageous conversations
Martell Baines, Leeds Arts University; Professor Kate Chedgzoy, Newcastle University; Dr Rachel Forsyth and Professor Claire Hamshire, Manchester Metropolitan University; and Leza Soldaat and Dr Danielle Fontaine-Rainen, University of Cape Town

Belonging and safe place
**Panel session, Room: Dunedin 1**
This session will focus on collective narratives from students, staff and practitioners allowing for a more personal view of EDI issues, and in particular some of the barriers we need to overcome. The session will include a practitioner research study from Leeds Arts University on widening participation, underpinned by the findings of the Children’s Commissioners ‘Vulnerability’ Report (2018); examples from the creative and voluntary sector of feminist interventions that used personal narratives to support vulnerable women working for change; and comparisons of staff perceptions of first generation at Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Cape Town.

Session 7.2: Approaches to addressing inequitable outcomes for students from black African and black Caribbean backgrounds
Wendy Fowle, Dr John Butcher and Darren Gray, The Open University

Belonging to a safe place
**Interactive breakout session, Room: Dunedin 2**
This workshop will present an approach to challenges in addressing gaps in outcomes for black African and black Caribbean students within a distance learning HE environment. It focuses on curriculum design and assessment. Literature was reviewed and interviews undertaken with students, in order to elicit the student voice. The workshop will present delegates with the opportunity to engage in debate in relation to the issues that the project identified with a view to informing future practice. They will also engage in a practical activity to apply the ‘inclusive curriculum tool’ developed to be embedded within curriculum design at the case study institution.

Session 7.3: Parental equality and working flexibly
Dr Katie Thirlaway, Cardiff Metropolitan University; Clare Matysova, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; Dr Angharad Davies, Swansea University; and Dr David Brown, Cardiff Metropolitan University

Bridging the gaps
**Panel session, Room: Canongate 1**
In this session we will be discussing issues around parental responsibilities and equity across the family unit, alongside flexible working policies that can help to support families. We will hear about an initiative at Cardiff Metropolitan University around equal benefits for maternity, shared parental and adoption leave; how shared parental leave, having been available since 2015, has not impacted significantly on the number of women taking the main caring responsibilities in the home; how the NHS still falls behind the HE sector in its treatment of maternity leave; and a study by Cardiff Metropolitan University looking at how immediate line managers impact on the uptake of flexible working hours.

Session 7.4: TBC
TBC
**Thinking forward**
**Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 2**
TBC.

Session 7.5: The role of the tempered radicals: Experiences of making changes in our organisation
Melissa Highton and Dr Dominique Green, University of Edinburgh

Skills building for EDI change agents
**Interactive breakout session, Room: Holyrood**
‘Tempered radicals’ are individuals who are committed to and identify with the organisations in which they work and yet are also committed to a cause or ideology which is fundamentally at odds with the dominant culture in that workplace. Debra Meyerson has written about how these change agents make tactical decisions to effect change without making trouble (Debra E. Meyerson, 2008; Debra E. Meyerson & Kolb, 2000; D. Meyerson & Scully, 1995). If you think you too may be a tempered radical, this is the session for you.
Session 8.1: Institutional approaches to EDI
Paul Neville, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance; Marcellina Fogarty and Rory Carey, University College Dublin; Dr Miriam Lynn, University of Cambridge; and Siobhan Morris and Dr Olivia Stevenson, University College London
EDI and leadership
Panel session, Room: Dunedin 1
This panel session explores some of the initiatives currently being used in HEIs to completely embed EDI into policies and practice. We will hear about a strengths-based approach employed by Trinity Laban to promote its new Equality Objectives; how University College Dublin believe that the elimination of discrimination and promotion of EDI is central to decision-making and policy/process development; how the University of Cambridge are breaking the silence and speaking out against harassment and sexual misconduct; and how University College London are no longer shying away from the need to work intersectionally and tackle attitudes to effect everyday change.

Session 8.2: TBC

Session 8.3: Listening matters and listening works: Effective and meaningful institutional change through friendship conversations and democratic decisions.
Dr Emma Heron and Helen Parkin, Sheffield Hallam University
Bridging the gap
Interactive breakout session, Room: Canongate 1
After a brief background explaining the two qualitative, complementary methods of Listening Rooms and Round Table Analysis, participants will be given an opportunity to experience both methods in real time with the aim of revealing how institutional change can be brought about through key values. By the end of the session, participants will be able to understand how qualitative methods used in higher education can bring about meaningful change to the lives of students and staff, and how the methods in and of themselves bring about a positive and transformative experience.

Session 8.4: Persistent inequalities: Tackling the negative experiences of LGBTQ+ students in higher education
Amy Norton and Dr Gary Downing, Office for Students
Belonging to a safe place
Interactive breakout session, Room: Dunedin 2
Inequalities persist for LGBTQ+ students in HE, negatively affecting their ability to negotiate and achieve successful outcomes. This OfS-led workshop will explore the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ students in HE environments, and the impacts of these challenges across the lifecycle.

Session 8.5: How culturally competent are our students? Exploring cultural awareness, knowledge and sensitivity through inclusive conversations
Rhianne Sterling-Morris and Dr Mark Smith, University of Lincoln and Lauryn Tamou, University of Lincoln’s Student Union
Skills building for EDI change agents
Interactive breakout session, Room: Holyrood
Cultural competence is a critical, yet under-represented, skill in student development. Needed by all students, we have a role to play in preparing learners for careers and citizenship in a diverse society. To start this journey, cultural awareness, knowledge and sensitivity must be woven into our conversations. This workshop aims to evoke these and act as a catalyst for change. By growing awareness of cultural competence, our position amongst one another, and how students of the past may be different to those of the future, we will reflect on our own views to explore cultural competence within practice.
Session 9.1a: Anti-racist pedagogy and practice in higher education
Dr Anil Awesti and Dr Meleisa Ongo-George, University of Warwick
EDI & Leadership
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1
Various reports on student attainment and experience in higher education have shown a clear and substantial difference in the attainment, progression and overall experience of students who identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) compared to those who identify as White. In 2018 an ‘Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Process in Higher Education Learning Circle’ was established at the University of Warwick which aimed to inform institutional deliberations on issues of BAME student experience and attainment. In this session, we will present the work, successes and challenges, of the Learning Circle including the process of developing an institutional training course focused on anti-racist pedagogy for academic and professional services staff.

Session 9.1b: We’re in a real bind here: Elite women Humanities and Social Science scholars’ experiences of higher education policy interventions
Anna Bradshaw, The British Academy
EDI & Leadership
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1
Higher education and research policy increasingly involves large interventions that emphasise measurement, audit, transparency and technicality, like the REF, TEF and KEF, and the Athena SWAN Charter. While there is significant scholarship looking at how these kinds of ‘new managerialist’ approaches can be gendered in the public sector, there has been less scholarship looking at universities. This session will present the findings from new qualitative research into how elite women scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences experience these kinds of interventions, and will make recommendations for policy and practice based on the findings.

Session 9.1c: Going for Stonewall: Developing LGBT+ inclusivity at BCU
Ross Strong and Dr Andrew Hollyhead, Birmingham City University
EDI & Leadership
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 1
This presentation will be led by Ross Stone, the newly appointed Project Manager for our Going for Stonewall Project. In this talk we discuss the context for accreditation, both in terms of time and place, with specific regards to the recent issues experienced regarding LGBT+ teaching in Birmingham schools. We reflect upon the importance of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and conclude with a group discussion identifying the key stakeholders who need to be engaged.

Session 9.2a: An exploration of the views of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) UK business leaders and their experiences of glass ceilings and career progression
Richard Dunston Brady, University of Huddersfield
Belonging to a safe place
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2
This presentation will challenge the assumption that people who identify as being LGBTQ holding leadership positions have been treated fairly and equitably in terms of their employment and career opportunities and the impact of glass ceilings on their career trajectory. A group of leaders from the public, private and SME sectors based in the UK were interviewed. How does a leader negotiate internal and external political factors and break through the glass ceiling? How does intersectionality and being an LGBTQ leader, impact the glass ceiling. Initial findings suggest that the culture of the organisation must tangibly demonstrate their support for LGBTQ people.

Session 9.2b: On difference and the Academy: A cabaret
Dr Kieran Fenby-Hulse, Teesside University
Belonging to a safe place
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2
In this performative paper, I explore notions of critical race theory (Collins, 1999), outsider theory (Eburne, 2018), and queer theory (Ahmed, 2006, 2012) to question current approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion within higher education (Smith, 2015). Drawing on my own lived experience as a researcher-practitioner working in
the area of inclusivity in research, this interactive cabaret seeks to dismantle some of the mythology that surrounds diversity work. I will explore the role individuals, leaders and institutions can play in fostering more inclusive research environments and argue that for the academy to become inclusive, it must be driven by difference.

Session 9.2c: Do rainbow lanyards make a difference? Findings from a study in an academic setting  
Dr Nuno Nodin, Royal Holloway, University of London
Belonging to a safe place  
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin 2
Members of staff in many industries use rainbow lanyards to display openness and support to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and other sexual minorities (LGBT+). Despite the increased uptake of these symbols of inclusivity across many environments, including in many universities in the UK, there is limited evidence about the impact of such initiatives. This project aimed to determine to what extent introducing rainbow lanyards and providing guidance to staff about how to support sexual minority students in an academic department had an impact on perceptions about openness and confidence in addressing student questions about sexuality and sexual identity.

Session 9.3a: Reverse’ Mentoring: A knowledge sharing study between BME Psychology students and senior university leaders  
Dr Kathryn Waddington, Dr Deborah Husbands and Bryan Bonaparte, University of Westminster
Bridging the gap  
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1
This presentation will discuss the findings of a pilot ‘reverse’ mentoring scheme involving five black and minority ethnic (BME) Psychology students who mentored five senior leaders - including the University’s Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer. Apostrophes are used to draw attention to potentially problematic aspects of reverse mentoring as it currently appears in the literature. The pilot scheme used Nancy Kline’s Thinking Environment™ model, which places value upon diversity and the concept of ‘equal thinking partnerships’. The presentation will report on evaluation of the scheme, and relevance of Forward Mentoring as a means of enabling courageous conversations and institutional change.

Session 9.3b: Re:Tension: Using film and the aftermath debate to tackle racism in higher education  
Syra Shakir and Ricardo Barker, Leeds Trinity University
Bridging the gap  
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1
Using Film and The Aftermath Debate to Tackle Racism in Universities. The first step is accepting there are problems, then doing something about it. This training toolkit is to be used alongside the film 'Re:Tension'. It clearly outlines the role and responsibility of peers in accepting the existence of racism, then acting on this because they know it is wrong and challenging others who perpetrate discrimination and enforce the silence upon individual people of colour in not speaking out about their experiences. The poem is used immediately after the screening of the film and captures key themes emerging.

Session 9.3c: Inclusive Nepotism: UCL’s experience of creating a positive action sponsorship programme for BME staff  
Vicki Baars and Ash Talwar, University College London
Bridging the gap  
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1
Inclusive Advocacy is a UCL institution-wide positive action sponsorship programme for BME staff at Grade 7 (research/teaching fellow/coordinator) and Grade 8 (lecturer/manager) and is open to professional services, early career researchers and academic staff. UCL’s Race Equality Charter application highlighted a plethora of issues around BME staff promotion, progression and satisfaction with career support. Inclusive Advocacy is driven by evidence-based research, which shows that the daily experiences of working relationships and managerial support and encouragement are significant matters for career advancement (Mullins, L.J., 2007). This presentation will highlight how the programme was established and how it is progressing through a two-year pilot.

Session 9.4a: Generating EDI dialogue between research and practice in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences  
Megan Todman and Samantha Aceto, Newcastle University, Dr Gretchen Larsen, Durham University and Dr Rachel Carroll, Teesside University
Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2

This session explores the opportunities and challenges in generating dialogue between research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and EDI practice, in interdisciplinary, intersectional and inter-organisational spaces. We will explore the role of collaborative networks, how to translate research into activism, 'calling in' non-engagers, developing research-led curriculum content and anything else that participants choose to highlight. The session will be hosted by members of HASiEN (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences: The Equalities Network), a real-world and virtual network of academic and professional colleagues committed to contributing our discipline-specific expertise and insights to enrich the equalities landscape in universities.

Session 9.4b: TechUP Women: Our journey

Professor Alexandra Cristea and Professor Sue Black, University of Durham

Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2

The TechUP programme takes 100 women from the Midlands and North of England, particularly from under-represented communities, with degrees or experience in any subject area, re-trains them in technology and then gives them the opportunity to interview with a company for an internship/apprenticeship/job. The re-training programme, developed by the partner universities in conjunction with industrial partners, has modules at level 6/7 and includes: Technology: coding, data science, cyber security, machine learning, agile project management, and Workplace readiness skills: public speaking, clear communication, working as a team. The session will discuss the successes we have had so far and the overall lessons learned.

Session 9.4c: The power of networks for equality: Creating influence through collectives

Jordan Kirkwood, Aston University and Dr Sammy Li, University of Birmingham

Thinking forward

Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2

The LGBT+ Network of Networks in Higher Education was created in 2017 as a means of sharing best practice between 220+ members from LGBT+ staff networks and E&D teams of about 90 universities and research institutions in the UK. This session will reflect on the journey of establishing a national network for empowering EDI change agents to broaden their reach and collective power in the HE sector. We will explore the opportunities and challenges faced by such a peer-support model and aim to open up a wider conversation about super-networking of other protected characteristics.

Session 9.5a: Let's talk about race: Exploring race, culture and identity through literature

Dr Karen Lipsedge, Kingston University

Skills building for EDI change agents

Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

The Kingston University Reading Group was created as a means of facilitating discussion on culture and identity to promote race equality and enhance the University's work to embed EDI at the heart of our institution. Our session will demonstrate how our initiative is expanding its work to equip our staff to recognise the value of a diverse student population and honour and promote cultural competence and inclusivity in their teaching and learning. Talking about race, equality and identity is challenging. Our session will reveal how reading groups can provide a safe, informal space, in which to have courageous conversations about race and disrupt dominant narratives.

Session 9.5b: TBC

Dr Jan Moorhouse, University of Roehampton

Skills building for EDI change agents

Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

This session will explore the lived experience of BME students. Our research identifies the problems of BME commuter students who are predominantly first generation in family that current Roehampton Business School undergraduate programmes fail to address and we suggest micro- and meso-level changes. Using Alvesson’s concept of grandiosity (Alvesson, 2013) and Ritzer’s notion of disenchantment (Ritzer, 1999) we posit that the problems BME students encounter have their roots in the marketised
expansion of HE as a positional good. We argue that we need to re-engage more authentically with BME students to help them navigate through and beyond a world of imagology to a genuinely emancipatory university education (Freire, 1970 (1993)).

Session 9.5c: Walking the Talk: The University of Sheffield’s Student Anti-Racism Training Programme
Dr Rachel van Duyvenbode and Santhana Gopalakrishnan, The University of Sheffield and Albert Attom, University of Loughborough

Skills building for EDI change agents
Oral presentation session, Room: Holyrood

The University of Sheffield launched its first ever institution-wide student anti-racism training programme in September 2019, reaching more than 3000 newly arriving students across 52 timetabled sessions during intro week. The talks, delivered by trained Race Equality Student Champions, with the support of staff co-facilitators, constitutes the first phase of our collaborative approach to working with students to develop the content and pedagogy of race equality training. In this presentation, we will discuss how and why we developed our programme at Sheffield; share findings from the student evaluation of anti-racism training; and offer insights from the project team about the challenges, risks and rewards of putting into practice effective anti-racism student training.

Session IG3a: Mind the gap: Tackling the BTEC attainment gap in higher education
Dr Hannah Holmes, Manchester Metropolitan University

Ignite & Soapbox
Ignite session, Room: Dunedin

This session outlines a project at Manchester Metropolitan University incorporating targeted support for students from feeder colleges with the largest number of vocational entrants by programme, who currently do not succeed in line with non-vocational students, to improve their transition experience, leading to better progression. The aim is to report initial findings to inform broader practices, behaviours, and informed adaptations across the sector. The objectives are to inform curriculum (re)designs, improve understanding of the prior learning experiences of future students, meet the transition needs of this significant class of our future intake, and help institutions to deliver transformational impact.

Session IG3b: From the sticky floor to the glass ceiling and everything in between: Preliminary results from a systematic review and qualitative study of (gender) inequality in clinical academic careers
Jennifer Brown, Centre for Reviews & Dissemination, University of York and Professor Gabrielle Finn, Hull York Medical School

Ignite & Soapbox
Ignite session, Room: Dunedin

In academic medicine and dentistry, women are more likely than men to be “stuck to the floor” and struggle to get their careers up and running. When they build a career, they often hit the “glass ceiling” and find themselves unable to progress beyond a certain point. We will present preliminary findings from a systematic review and qualitative interviews into enablers and barriers faced by women and minorities wishing to pursue a clinical academic career. We hope to engage with participants to brainstorm potential interventions to address issues identified and to explore and confirm key dissemination channels and strategies.

Session IG3c: Behaviorally informed interventions to improve attainment
Vanessa Todman, King’s College London

Ignite & Soapbox
Ignite and soapbox session, Room: Dunedin

Using a cutting-edge project combining robust evaluation methods with behavioral insights we will show how psycho-social factors which can affect attainment, such as sense of belonging and social capital, can be positively influenced to help close attainment gaps.

Session IG3d: Queer STEM: Systems engineering as queer pedagogy in Railway Engineering education
Dr Holly Foss, The University of Birmingham

Ignite & Soapbox
The term queer is now widely accepted across multiple levels of society and scholarship. In the context of education this has been adopted within the concept of queer pedagogy, referring to inclusive practice that reconsiders normativities of both content and method. Promoting ambiguity, disruption, and questioning in and through education poses a particular challenge within STEM subject areas. This session considers how systems engineering and engineering habits of mind intersect with queer pedagogy to facilitate inclusive teaching and learning activities, in both classroom practice and curriculum design.

Session IG3e: Creating an inclusive environment for first years where all can flourish
Dr Roselina Alrehi and Dr Anthony Rossiter, University of Sheffield

The authors will present an overview of the induction and delivery practices that have been pioneered in their department over a period of about 10 years. These are of particular interest because, out of all the departments in their faculty and indeed, contrary to national trends, in the authors’ department black and ethnic minorities (BAME) have been slightly over-performing for each of the last five years, rather than under-performing. The consistency of this statistic suggests that the good practice being adopted has significant factors which could be useful elsewhere and thus are worth disseminating and discussing. These include a strategic approach to pastoral support, induction, and mentoring, presented as a coherent single framework.