Advance HE EDI Conference 2020

Courageous conversations and adventurous approaches: Creative thinking in tackling inequality

17 March 2020
The Radisson Blu, Edinburgh, UK

Session abstracts

For ease of reference to the session abstracts, simply click on the title of the session you wish to view and you will be automatically taken to the abstract in this document.

Parallel session 1 (17 March 2020: 11.35 – 12.35)		
Positive action	Breaking the taboo	Breaking the taboo
Room: Dunedin	Room: Canongate 1	Room: Canongate 2
1.1 Panel session	1.2 Interactive breakout	1.3 Interactive breakout
Positive action: Addressing underrepresentation and inequality through targeted initiatives	**Spilling the T on my degree: The student experience through a race lens**	**Care experience: Exploring the web of connections**
Professor Ruth Falconer, Abertay University Marie-Claire Isaaman, Women in Games Dr Ross Woods, Higher Education Authority Dr Angie Pears, University of Leicester	Sherry Iqbal and Ahmed Ali, Leeds Beckett Students' Union	Fiona Morrison and Dawn Clark, Fife College

Parallel session 2 (17 March 2020: 13.30 – 14.30)		
Breaking the taboo	Positive action	Leading change
Room: Dunedin	Room: Canongate 1	Room: Canongate 2
2.1 Panel session	2.2 Interactive breakout	2.3 Interactive breakout
Hidden gender inequalities	**Using positive action to bring about a step change in race equality**	**Harnessing diversity in governance: A multi-dimensional model**
Melissa Highton, University of Edinburgh, Ruth Cochrane, Edinburgh Napier University, Andrea Cameron, Abertay University, Dr Emma Watson and Victoria Murphy, Imperial College London	Aloma Onyemah, University Hospitals of Leicester	Clare Fraser, West College Scotland

Ignite session (17 March 2020: 14.35 – 15.20) Room: Dunedin
IG1a - Associate student project: Facilitating computing students' transition to higher education, Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Dr Khristin Fabian and Debbie Meharg, Edinburgh Napier University **IG1b - Intersectionality: Targeting men from deprived areas in Scotland,** Anne Farquharson, The Open University in Scotland **IG1c - Intersectionality: Targeting women with caring responsibilities,** Anne Farquharson, The Open University in Scotland **IG1d - Study smarter with technology for all,** Portia Bentley, Staffordshire University **IG1e - Advocacy in action: How a university shared reading project reaches homeless readers in Scotland,** Avril Gray, Edinburgh Napier University

Parallel session 3 (17 March 2020: 15.45 – 16.45)		
Breaking the taboo	**Positive action**	**Positive action: Student engagement**
Room: Dunedin	**Room: Canongate 1**	**Room: Canongate 2**
3.1a Oral presentation	3.2a Oral presentation	3.3a Oral presentation
Bye, bye taboo? Hello, LGBT+ inclusive learning spaces: An Ayrshire approach	**Exploring female surgeons' intersecting personal and professional identities: A case study of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) surgical trainees**	**Diverse nursing workforce and being inclusive: Should nursing as a profession be much more inclusive and be actively recruiting students with a physical disability?**
Sara Turkington, Ayrshire College	Dr Gozie Offiah, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland/University of Dundee	Michelle Walters and Pamela Young, University of the West of Scotland
3.1b Oral presentation	3.2b Oral presentation	3.3b Oral presentation
Normalising the discourse about race and racism at the University of Cambridge	**Courageous Leaders: Promoting and supporting diversity in education leadership development**	**Gender action plan: A student-centric approach**
Dr Joanna Jasiewicz, University of Cambridge	Dr Catherine Lee, Anglia Ruskin University	Anne Farquharson, The Open University in Scotland and Sayana Coulson, Equate Scotland
3.1c Oral presentation	3.2c Oral presentation	3.3c Oral presentation
STEM Equals: Creating more inclusive STEM communities	**Enhancing the employability of students with autism: A pilot initiative**	**Student mental health and wellbeing: A learning and teaching perspective**
Dr Jessica Gagnon and Dr Marco Reggiani, University of Strathclyde	Rachel Mulholland, Catriona Mowat and Danny Gallacher, Glasgow Caledonian University	Stef Black, Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland and Kate Lister, The Open University

Session 1.1: Positive action: Addressing underrepresentation and inequality through targeted initiatives

Professor Ruth Falconer, University Abertay Dundee, Marie-Claire Isaaman, Women in Games, Dr Ross Woods, Higher Education Authority, Dr Angie Pears, University of Leicester

Postive Action

Panel session, Room: Dunedin

This panel session will give a brief overview of some recent initiatives where positive action has succeeded in addressing underrepresentation and inequality followed by a Q&A session from the audience and a wider discussion on positive action. It will include: how the not-for-profit organisation Women in Games, partnering with industry and HEIs across the UK and abroad, has raised the profile of women in the heavily male-dominated area of games programmes; how the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) launched in Ireland aims to accelerate gender balance at senior levels of Irish HEIs; and how the University of Leicester have implemented a Positive Action in Recruitment initiative to address the unequal ratio of BAME staff to students.

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Session 1.2: Spilling the T on my degree: The student experience through a race lens

Sherry Iqbal and Ahmed Ali, Leeds Beckett Students' Union

Breaking the taboo

Interactive Breakout session, Room: Canongate 1

Through open, honest conversation with BAME students, we aim to take participants on a journey through the real, lived experience of BAME students in higher education. The objectives of this session will be to highlight and draw attention to the struggles faced by BAME students at university, identify ways in which universities can improve the student experience and seek commitment from higher education colleagues to shoulder some of the emotional labour experienced daily by BAME students.

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Session 1.3: Care experience: Exploring the web of connections

Fiona Morrison and Dawn Clark, Fife College

Breaking the taboo

Interactive Breakout session, Room: Canongate 2

If you work with care-experienced students then this workshop should be top of your list! Prepare to have your perceptions around the life of a care-experienced student challenged, and to explore the barriers and stigma that they deal with on a daily basis. This workshop aims to provide you with a deeper understanding and enhanced awareness of how your professional practice can impact positively – or negatively – on a student. Bring a tissue – you might need it!

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Session 2.1: Hidden gender inequalities

Melissa Highton, University of Edinburgh, Ruth Cochrane, Edinburgh Napier University, Andrea Cameron, Abertay University, Dr Emma Watson and Victoria Murphy, Imperial College London

Breaking the taboo

Panel session, Room: Dunedin

This panel session aims to break taboos around the hidden gender inequalities of maternity, breastfeeding, period poverty and menopause, with a summary of current initiatives in this area followed by Q&A and a wider discussion on the subject. It will include details of: a collaboration between Hey Girls, Wire Media and Edinburgh Napier University that responded to the Scottish Government initiative to provide free, accessible sanitary products for all girls and women in Schools, Colleges and Universities; how the University of Edinburgh and Imperial College London are attempting to promote menopause-friendly workplaces and address the impact this has on women staff; and how university policy at practice at Abertay around student pregnancy has been informed by the narratives that emerged when investigating the student experience of the perinatal period.

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Session 2.2: Using positive action to bring about a step change in race equality

Aloma Onyemah, University Hospitals of Leicester (formerly Sheffield Hallam University)

Postive Action

Interactive Breakout session, Room: Canongate 1

This session is essential for HEI and FE college delegates who would like to implement innovative, high-impact positive action interventions to address racial disparities in their workforce. The objectives of the session are: to identify how positive action can enhance your workforce race equality objectives; to explore the legal measures which underpin positive action; and to evaluate case study examples of positive action interventions and their application to your own institutional context.

Session 2.3: Harnessing diversity in Governance: A multi-dimensional model

Clare Fraser, West College Scotland

Leading change
Interactive Breakout session, Room: Canongate 2
Gender is one of the many attributes that contribute to the perspective that a director brings to the boardroom. Traditional approaches to board recruitment have tended to focus on one or two specific variables at a time. This workshop presents how West College Scotland benefited from a more holistic, multi-dimensional view. This approach acknowledges that a wide range of perspectives is critical to effective corporate governance and allows the Board to better anticipate and consider the diverse perspectives of stakeholders.
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Session IG1a: Associate Student Project: Facilitating computing students' transition to higher education
Dr Ella Taylor-Smith, Dr Khristin Fabian and Debbie Meharg, Edinburgh Napier University
Ignite & soapbox
Ignite & soapbox session, Room: Dunedin
The Associate Student (ASP) project supports Computing students who study two years at a Further Education college (achieving an HND) then transfer directly into third year, studying for two more years to complete an honours degree (BSc or BEng). Students have access to university facilities throughout the four years (online and offline), plus workshops, lectures, and events to get them ready for university, and through their degree. The first associate students started in 2014 and we can now present quantitative and qualitative results that indicate the success of the project, including degree outcomes, students' perceptions, and graduates' experience.
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Session IG1b: Intersectionality: Targeting men from deprived areas in Scotland
Anne Farquharson, The Open University in Scotland
Ignite & soapbox
Ignite session, Room: Dunedin
Analysis of our student data indicated a significant proportion of men from the most deprived areas in Scotland have an interest in computing courses. We developed a marketing campaign to target this audience using paid social media.
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Session IG1c: Intersectionality: Targeting women with caring responsibilities
Anne Farquharson, The Open University in Scotland
Ignite & soapbox
Ignite session, Room: Dunedin
The Open University in Scotland (OU in Scotland) created a campaign to increase the number of students recruited onto degree programmes directly from Further Education colleges in Scotland. Many of these students are women with caring responsibilities, who are unable or unwilling to travel due to these commitments. By increasing our recruitment of these students, we would help the OU in Scotland meet its Outcome Agreement targets for widening access both in relation to articulation (students utilising the credit from their HND/C) and recruitment of students from SIMD20/40 (most and second most deprived areas).
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Session IG1d: Study Smarter with Technology for All
Portia Bentley, Staffordshire University
Ignite & soapbox
Ignite session, Room: Dunedin
Study Smarter with Technology is an online resource available to all students and staff at Staffordshire University. It provides information about useful digital tools that enable the individual to use technology to study more effectively. Information relating to a range of existing institutional digital tools is provided together with guidance on how to maximise their use. All recommended software is available on Student PCs, as a free download or as a mobile phone app. Free access is available here: http://libguides.staffs.ac.uk/studysmarter
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Session IG1e: Advocacy in Action: How a university shared reading project reaches homeless readers in Scotland
Avril Gray, Edinburgh Napier University
Ignite & soapbox
Ignite & soapbox session, Room: Dunedin
This paper provides genuine insight into the rationale for an approach to inclusivity that penetrates to the very edges of society. It underpins the need to find better methods to reach readers beyond the boundaries, for whom "books are more important than food". Working with 28 organisations supporting homeless people, and connecting with charitable trusts, community projects, government

bodies, and industry, this paper explores how a university shared reading initiative moved beyond the campus onto the streets to make a concentrated commitment to diversity and inclusion with some of society's most vulnerable, yet challenging, human beings. The initiative has attracted institutional partners across Scotland and as far afield as Australia.

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Session 3.1a: Bye, bye taboo? Hello, LGBT+ inclusive learning spaces: An Ayrshire approach
Sara Turkington, Ayshire College
Breaking the taboo
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin
Section 28 is gone. But, for some, it still looms large, dictating the openness of conversations in the classroom. The classroom is now meant to be an inclusive learning space, no matter what sexual orientation or gender identity, yet at the same time, these still matter in regards to educational experiences and attainment. In response to this, Ayrshire College and East Ayrshire Council created the Ayrshire LGBT+ Education Network. The Network remains the only one of its kind in Ayrshire, if not in Scotland, and has been praised by many high profile organisations including LGBT Youth Scotland. This session will provide an overview of the creation, development and facilitation of the Network and reviews its successes and impact.

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Session 3.1b: Normalising the discourse about race and racism at the University of Cambridge
Dr Joanna Jasiewicz, University of Cambridge
Breaking the taboo
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin
This presentation focuses on the journey that is being undertaken at the University of Cambridge to sustain institutional change through normalising the discourse on race, racism and whiteness. This process involves an ongoing negotiation over the language used and the degree of institutional openness about race and racism. It also involves creative attempts at shifting the narrative to focus the institutional attention on the harm made to BAME people as well as on the advantages afforded to white people.

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Session 3.1c: STEM Equals: Creating more inclusive STEM communities
Dr Jessica Gagnon and Dr Marco Reggiani, University of Strathclyde
Breaking the taboo
Oral presentation session, Room: Dunedin
STEM Equals is a four-year, mixed-methods project at the University of Strathclyde. Funded by EPSRC within the Inclusion Matters initiative, the project focuses on working cultures, including better understanding and addressing systemic inequalities faced by women and LGBT+ people in STEM. This presentation will provide an overview of the project's aims, research, initiatives and activities. Additionally, it will outline the outreach and dissemination strategy of the project including social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook @STEMEquals) and the project website (www.stemequals.ac.uk) which showcases profiles, blog posts, podcasts and updates from the ongoing research.

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Session 3.2a: Exploring female surgeons' intersecting personal and professional identities: A case study of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) surgical trainees
Dr Gozie Offiah, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland/University of Dundee
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1
While the general populations in Ireland and Scotland have grown increasingly diverse, the surgical workforce fails to reflect this diversity. Previous studies have illustrated a lower representation of female consultants in surgery compared with other specialities, plus a lower representation of racial, ethnic and gender minorities in some surgical sub-specialties (e.g. plastic surgery) compared with other surgical sub-specialties. While previous research has illustrated challenges and barriers for women in surgery, this current research explores perceptions of female surgeons, as well as female surgeons' colleagues and patients. Indeed, the current work aims to provide multiple views on female surgeon identity constructs.

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Session 3.2b: Courageous Leaders: Promoting and supporting diversity in education leadership development
Dr Catherine Lee, Anglia Ruskin University
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1

This presentation examines the effect of the UK's first LGBT School Leadership programme. Based on the values of authentic leadership, promoting inclusion, celebrating diversity, accepting difference, challenging the status quo, and achieving social justice, the Courageous Leaders programme provides mentoring, training and support for LGBT teachers aspiring to become leaders. Utilising social phenomenology as a methodological framework, the presentation considers the written reflections of a single cohort of ten lesbian and gay teacher participants, to reflect on the way in which Courageous Leaders affected their professional identities and behaviours and helped them secure promotion.

Session 3.2c: Enhancing the employability of students with autism: A pilot initiative
Rachel Mulholland, Catriona Mowat and Danny Gallacher, Glasgow Caledonian University
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 1
It is recognised that students with autism face more barriers getting into graduate-level jobs than other groups. The Disability Service, in collaboration with GCU colleagues, students and external partners, designed and delivered a pilot development and work experience programme for students with autism. It aimed to prepare the students to successfully complete real-world work experiences. Initial evaluations indicate that increased confidence and understanding of their capabilities were evident. It also helped employers recognise the skills and strengths that the students brought to the workplace.

Session 3.3a: Diverse nursing workforce and being inclusive: Should nursing as a profession be much more inclusive and be actively recruiting students with a physical disability?
Michelle Walters and Pamela Young, University of the West of Scotland
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2
Over the past decade the nursing profession has striven to improve and strengthen the various roles that nurses undertake through differing career pathways. Yet nursing as a profession appears not to emulate the diversity of society. Acknowledging the valuable contribution nurses with disabilities can make to a modern workforce could enable nursing as a profession to be truly representative of a diverse and inclusive profession.

Session 3.3b: Gender action plan: A student-centric approach
Anne Farquharson, The Open University and Sayana Coulson, Equate Scotland
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2
Removing gender imbalance from subject areas including STEM and healthcare is one of the key objectives of The Open University in Scotland. Working closely with Equate Scotland, our approach is to consider the issue from the perspective of the overall student journey, looking at every touchpoint to identify the key areas of influence where we can really make a difference and ultimately meet the gender imbalance targets set by the Scottish Funding Council.

Session 3.3c: Student mental health and wellbeing: A learning and teaching perspective
Stef Black, Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland and Kate Lister, The Open University
Postive Action
Oral presentation session, Room: Canongate 2
Student wellbeing is not just the responsibility of student support or counselling services. A whole-institution approach is required to have the most impact. This session will explore two new projects set up independently of one another, but with similar goals; one by sparqs and the other The Open University. Both look at student wellbeing through a learning and teaching lens, offering an alternative and new approach to addressing existing challenges around student wellbeing from within the curriculum. Delegates will have the opportunity to engage with some of the methods and approaches that each project has employed to gather data and develop interventions, as well as exploring the mini-projects that are being tested by departments and institutions as part of the work.