Mapping Exercise

Purpose

1. This paper provides an overview of information gathered through the recent SFC Access and Bridging Programmes mapping exercise, key themes to emerge, and how these may impact the progression of APSG key aims and objectives, as well as fulfilment of CoWA Recommendation 4.

Background

2. At the first meeting of both the APSG and BPAG, and tying in to a need to clarify terminology and the role of the Steering Group, members noted a need to understand current access provision across Scotland.

3. Although mapping exercises have previously been conducted by other organisations; Robertson Trust, Universities Scotland etc., it was felt that with the fast-paced changes in the landscape in response to CoWA, a snapshot of current provision was essential to ensuring the APSG and BPAG had relevant and up-to-date information to feed into Group discussion.

4. The mapping exercise was shortened to ensure minimal time commitments on those completing the templates, and only sought to gather information on key areas which both groups had described as essential to understanding to progress with CoWA Recommendations 4 & 7. This included;

    a. Partnerships created to deliver the programme

    b. Regional spread of a programme

    c. Targets and measures used for selection of programme participants

    d. The aspects making up the programme (e.g. mentoring, summer schools, skills workshops etc.)

    e. Whether any future developments are planned.

    The Access mapping template is included under Appendix item 3.

    A Bridging Programme mapping template was provided which added questions around the use of programme participation in the admissions process.

5. In the first wave of information gathering, the mapping template was sent to university and agency/organisational contacts, identified from previous

mapping exercises and website trawls. An initial email was sent to contacts on 29 March 2019 and followed up with two subsequent reminder emails.

Access Programme Mapping Summary

6.   Of the 19 universities the mapping exercise was sent to, 16 responded with examples of either Access or Bridging programmes run (sometimes in partnership) by their institution, however, only 14 university returns have been included due to lateness. Returns were also received from Forth Valley College, all four SHEP programmes, SWAP and the Brilliant Club.

7.   Submissions were not received from; Heriot-Watt University, University of the Highlands and Islands or SRUC. Submissions received but not yet included in analysis are from the University of Edinburgh and University of the West of Scotland.

8.   A total of 54 individual Access Programmes and 24 Bridging Programmes were submitted as part of the mapping exercise from 14 institutions. These details a range of programmes which have a total of 84,735 engagements (there is likely crossover on individuals participating in one or more of these programmes, therefore the number does not represent the total number of pupils engaged with) with primary school pupils through to adult returners/mature learners across Scotland.

Partnerships created to deliver the programme

9.   27 of the 54 returns (50%) reported a partnership delivery model in conjunction with other institutions, organisations or industries. Local authorities alone were not counted in this number. However, joint institutional approaches were not common, and where these existed, this was often based on funding requirements; e.g. SFC funded AHDP programmes. Other partnerships primarily revolved around previously existing national programmes and charities (e.g. Children's University, MCR Pathways, Sutton Trust etc.).

Regional spread of a programme

10.   Over 50% of the programmes submitted under the Access template are available to individuals within the Glasgow and Lanarkshire regions. This is likely due to the density of Access provision in the West due to geographically condensed access to HE institutions.

11.   The most underrepresented regions were Borders (30% of programme submissions are available in this area), Forth Valley (33%), Highlands, Islands and Moray (35%), and Orkney and Shetlands (35%). These percentages may be impacted by the institutional responses; i.e. the University of Edinburgh are likely to have interventions in place in the Borders and Forth Valley, and UHI are likely to have interventions in the rural areas. These areas also present issues in

rurality and geographical distance to HE institutions.

Targets and measures used for selection of programme participants

12. In regards to participation and selection, low progression school or attendance at a low progression school was the most popular selection criteria for programmes, with 61% indicating this was taken into consideration for involvement in the programme. For 5 of the programmes, this was the only mandated selection criteria.

13. For 13 of the programmes, there was no contextual information used to select participants.

14. SIMD20 (59% of programmes) and care experience (56%) were the next two commonly used selection criteria, which ties in with Outcome Agreement targets and Scottish Government priority areas.

15. EMA and estranged (both 19%) were the least likely to be taken into consideration of the measures given in the template.

16. Asylum seeker / refuge was not a given check box on the template, however, multiple institutions/agencies mentioned this in 'other' criteria.

17. With conversation now progressing around Multiple Equality Measures, with a focus on the potential use of Free School Meals as a contextual indicator, only 28% of the programmes indicated that they currently would take this into consideration during the selection process (less than first generation, at 30%).

18. In regards to which stage of the learner journey interventions were targeted at; 24% of returns had programme elements targeted at Early Years or Primary School aged pupils, 63% had programme elements targeted at S1-S4 pupils (in many cases, this was centred around S3/S4), 56% had programme elements targeted at S5-S6 pupils and 9% had programme elements targeted at learners returning to education.

19. Programme availability from S3-S6 is particularly strong, with early years, primary and mature student/adult returners needing further development in some areas to create a strong pipeline of activity.

The aspects making up the programme

20. Of the types of activities listed, the aspects which were least included in access programmes were those based on raising pupil's attainment; academic-based project work (30%) and tutoring/subject specific study support (35%). Similarly, only 28% of programmes contained a summer school element; this may be attributed to resource constraints.

21. Of the 54 access programmes templates, the most popular elements were

linked to supporting pupils to gain knowledge and enter a specific course; 61% included specific subject based workshops, 31% included shadowing opportunities and 43% included personal statement/application support.

22. Programmes listed as access also place an importance on the learning of study skills (46%) and mentoring (44%).

Future Developments

23. 23 of the 54 programmes indicated that future scale-up development will take place. In most cases, this would take the form of increased numbers (either using the same or different criteria), increased geographical spread or increase in the number of schools engaged with.

Summary of key themes

Partnerships created to deliver the programme

24. Although there are some partnerships apparent in the delivery of access programmes, these tend to be linked to funding requirements (e.g. Reach partners) or between an institution and an agency/organisation. Programmes with more than two partners inputting into a specific programme, and those with more than one institution involved, are few.

25. **Members are asked to consider what the strengths and barriers are to partnership working and ways this may be encouraged moving forward.**

26. **Members are asked to consider what different partnership working may look like (i.e. what are the roles of funders, institutions, SFC funded national programmes, existing national programmes).**

Regional spread of a programme

27. The availability of access programmes seems to correlate in most cases to access to HEI's in the area. This creates difficulties in more rural areas where individuals are distanced from a 'local' institution. However, the mapping has shown that there is access to at least one programme in all regional areas of Scotland, therefore there is a basis from which provision can be consolidated and built on in all areas.

28. **Members are asked to consider ways in which we can achieve parity of access to opportunities for all disadvantaged learners across Scotland.**

Targets and measures used for selection of programme participants

29. The mapping shows that programmes are targeting learners in relation to guidance which has been issued by SFC and the Scottish Government, with an emphasis on low progression schools, SIMD20/40 and care experienced.

30. However, the mapping has also shown that access programmes are still in the preliminary stages of moving from a school based approach, to working with specific pupils with certain contextual criteria.

31. The mapping also demonstrated that less than one third of current access programme provision takes Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility or first generation as an indicator of disadvantage into consideration during the selection process, although these have been shown in numerous studies, including those by the OECD, to impact on life chances and learner outcomes.

32. Conversations around Multiple Equality Measures are ongoing, however, until the feasibility of these are decided upon and new guidance is received on what areas will be measured by Outcome Agreements, there is still ambiguity in how to proceed with targeting audiences for access programmes.

33. The mapping exercise also revealed that most activity viewed as an access programme is clustered around the S3-S6 stage of the Learner Journey. Expansion of engagement will require further development to meet the overarching needs of CoWA, and to support a pipeline of activity across the Learner Journey.

34. **Members are asked to consider how access programmes target audiences moving forward, taking into consideration;**

    a. **Selection Criteria**
    b. **Equality and Diversity Measures**
    c. **How information will be gathered**
    d. **Who will make decisions on selection**

35. **Members are asked to consider what interventions may be most relevant at particular stages of the Learner Journey.**

The aspects making up the programme

36. Mapping showed that there is an array of different approaches to offering support through access programmes. This ranges from highly specialised subject specific support, to general information, advice and guidance.

37. Although it has been recognised that regionally, different barriers may necessitate different programme delivery models, the underpinning format of access programme delivery has many commonalities. This is proven by the low differential range between the percentage of programmes embedding each mentioned element; although the range covers summer schools (28% of programmes) to specific subject based workshops (61%), all other programme elements fall within a range of 30% (academic based project work) to 46% (study skills workshops). Similar programme elements are being run across all regions.

38. With the introduction of the Framework for Fair Access, as per CoWA Recommendation 3, there is a new emphasis on research and evaluation within access. The online Toolkit (https://www.fairaccess.scot/the-toolkit/) shows that there is still very limited evaluative information available on programmes supporting access to Higher Education. At present, the Toolkit has four areas which have been evaluated, all four of which may have a positive impact;

    • Attainment Support (Access) - A moderate to very high cost intervention,

with limited evidence, which suggests it may have a positive impact.

- <u>HE Information, Advice and Guidance</u> - A low to moderate cost intervention, with moderate evidence, which suggests it may have a positive impact.
- <u>Mentoring (Access)</u> - A moderate to very high cost intervention, with moderate evidence, which suggests it has a positive impact.
- <u>Taster Summer Schools</u> - A very low to low cost intervention, with limited evidence, which suggests it has a positive impact.

39. By comparing this to the elements incorporated into current access programme activity, we can see that most of the work being done may be having a positive impact, however, the sector must strengthen the evidence base moving forward. Therefore, a national approach to access must take this in to consideration.

40. Therefore, discussion may wish to focus on the efficiency of each programme element as opposed to impact. Factors to take into consideration may be; cost per pupil, resource and time management, partnership delivery etc.

41. **Members are asked to consider the barriers at present to enhanced evaluation of programme activity.**

42. **Members are asked to consider how a national approach to evaluation could be structured in the future.**

Future Developments

43. As discussed above, over one third of programmes actively plan to expand in the coming year. With this, the pressure of CoWA and focus of the Scottish Government on creating more clearly communicated Learner Journey's, the present time creates an opportunity within the landscape for change.

44. **Members are asked to consider what they feel are priority areas for action moving forward with the APSG.**

45. **Members are also asked to consider how information from the group is communicated within their regions or with key stakeholders.**

46. **Members are asked to reconsider whether outcome based remits or subgroups would be beneficial**

Further information

47. Contact: Pamela Forbes, Senior Policy/Analysis Officer, tel: 0131 313 6501, email: pforbes@sfc.ac.uk

Appendix

1. Institutional and Agency Responses to Definition and Mapping Exercise

University	Returns
University of Aberdeen	Returned
Abertay University	Returned
University of Dundee	Returned
University of Edinburgh	Late return
Edinburgh Napier University	Returned
University of Glasgow	Returned
Glasgow Caledonian University	Returned
The Glasgow School of Art	Returned
Heriot-Watt University	
University of the Highlands and Islands	
Open University	Returned
Queen Margaret University	Returned
Robert Gordon University	Returned
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	Returned
SRUC	
University of St Andrews	Returned
University of Stirling	Returned
University of Strathclyde	Returned
University of the West of Scotland	Late return

Agency	Returns
LiftOff	Returned
AspireNorth	Returned
FocusWest	Returned
LEAPS	Returned

Causeway Education	
SWAP	Returned

The Robertson Trust	Conversation
The Prince's Trust	
Street Law	
The Rank Foundation	
EY Smart Futures	
Social Mobility Foundation	
MCR Pathways	
The Brilliant Club	Returned
Sutton Trust	
Nuffield Foundation Research Placements	
ICAS	Conversation
Childrens University	Conversation

2. Access and Bridging Programme Definition Drafts

Draft Definitions of Access and Bridging Programmes

Definition of Access Programmes:

"Access programmes are tailored programmes of activity which are designed to encourage individuals from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds to understand, make a competitive application to and support them to succeed in gaining a place in Higher Education. Typically these are sustained programmes of activity which include more than one point of intervention or continuous support. Skills gained on access programmes are transferable across the sector and are not specific to one institution. These programmes will usually include activities based on one or more of the following;

- Aspiration building
- Attainment raising
- Academic development
- Information, advice and guidance on HE admissions and the application processes
- Build individuals knowledge of the Higher Education environment"

Comments on Access Programme Definition:

Definition of Bridging Programmes:

"Bridging Programmes create a 'bridge' between an institution in one sector of the education landscape and another in a different sector.* In the context of school to university transition, bridging programmes are run during the senior phase (S5-S6) and are aimed at pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. They include a significant element of academic preparation which can be recognised as credit in admissions processes and may have SCQF Level 7 accreditation."

*Note: the focus of the SFC Bridging Programmes Advisory Group will be on the school to university transition at this stage.

Comments on Bridging Programme Definition:

3. *Access Programme Mapping Template*

Access Programme Information Template

The following proforma has been designed to allow the Access Programme Steering Group (APSG) to gather relevant and current information in order to map access activities across Scotland. This will allow the group to work towards implementing Recommendation 4 of the Commission on Widening Access Report;

Recommendation 4: Universities, colleges, local authorities, schools, SFC funded access programmes and early years providers should work together to deliver a coordinated approach to access which removes the duplication and provides a coherent and comprehensive offer to learners.

Recommendation 4a: This should include the development of mechanisms by which access programmes undertaken at one institution, or in one part of the country, can be recognised by other institutions, while also serving institutional and local needs. Credit rating programmes on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) should be considered where appropriate.

Each institution/agency is asked to complete the following proforma for each access programme run by their institution/agency. Please complete all sections fully.

Please return all proforma to the email address below by Friday 17ᵗʰ May 2019.

Should you have any further questions, please contact Pamela Forbes, pforbes@sfc.ac.uk, 0131 313 6545.

Name of access programme:	
Institution(s) or agency(ies):	
Additional partners: *Please note that only one template should be completed for each access programme.*	
Key contact(s) for this programme:	Name: Position: Institution/Organisation: Email address: Phone number:
Does the programme have any additional funding partners, other than your own institution/agency?	
Which area(s) do you feel this programme covers:	☐ Early Years / Primary School ☐ High School (S1-S4) ☐ High School (Senior Phase, S5-S6) ☐ Returners to Education ☐ Other _____
How many individuals participate in the programme each year?	
Geographical regions covered by this programme *(please check all which apply):*	☐ Aberdeenshire, Orkney and Shetland ☐ Ayrshire ☐ Borders

	☐ Dumfries and Galloway ☐ Dundee and Angus ☐ Edinburgh ☐ Fife ☐ Forth Valley ☐ Glasgow ☐ Highlands, Islands & Moray ☐ Lanarkshire ☐ Lothians ☐ Perthshire ☐ West
Please list all schools the programmes works with:	
Which (if any) of the following criteria are taken into consideration on initial application to the access programme?	☐ Attend a low progression school ☐ SIMD 20 ☐ SIMD 40 ☐ First generation ☐ Free school meals ☐ Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) ☐ Care experienced ☐ Young Carer ☐ Estranged ☐ Academic criteria (please list what these are) ☐ Other criteria (please list what these are)
Briefly describe the selection process:	
Are there any plans to develop / scale up	

this programme? Please detail:	
Please provide a brief description of the programme:	
Please tick all of the components listed opposite which are included in the programme:	☐ Mentoring ☐ Tutoring/subject specific study support ☐ Specific subject based workshops ☐ Study skill workshops ☐ Academic based project work ☐ Summer school ☐ Personal statement/application support ☐ Shadowing ☐ Other (please list what these are)