

Related Commission on Widening Access Recommendations

Purpose of paper

1. This paper sets out related and relevant Commission on Widening Access Recommendations for consideration alongside Recommendation 7.

Background and introduction

2. A Blueprint for Fairness contained 16 recommendations on which SFC had lead responsibility. Overlap can be identified in some of those recommendations and, for the Bridging Programmes Advisory Group, the related ones are:
 - Recommendation 4 (4a) – Access Programmes
 - Recommendations 8, 9 and 10 - Articulation
3. There are also recommendations for which SFC is not the lead, yet may still impact on the Steering Group's considerations:
 - Recommendation 16 – School Attainment
 - Recommendation 17 – Information, Advice and Guidance
 - Recommendation 18 – Access to Key Subjects
4. The outline recommendation, as written in A Blueprint for Fairness, for these recommendations is included at Annex A and the next section of this paper focuses on overlap with specific SFC led recommendations.
5. Additionally, there are associated national policies that may influence access and outreach programme activity, which should be taken account of during the lifetime of the Bridging Programmes Advisory Group's work, such the Scottish Government's Learner Journey work and the Gender Action Plan. These are discussed later in this paper.

Related Commission on Widening Access recommendations

Recommendation 4 (4a) – Access Programmes

6. The SFC is chairing an Access Programmes Steering Group to progress recommendation 4 and 4 (a) of the Blueprint for Fairness.

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.

6. This group had its first meeting on the 21 January 2019 and we have ensured that there is cross over in membership between the two groups. The action note from the first meeting is provided in Annex B and the template for delivery is provided in Annex C.

Recommendations 8, 9 and 10 - Articulation

7. SFC led recommendations 8, 9 and 10 are being taken forward on a separate work stream. This is managed through a tri-partite post between SFC, Colleges Scotland and Universities Scotland, and any relevant findings will be delivered to the Access Programmes Steering Group for consideration. The action plans for each of these recommendations is available to members on request.

*Recommendation 8: The SFC should seek more demanding articulation targets from those universities that have **not traditionally** been significant players in articulation.*

These targets should have a clear focus on the benefits, both to learners and the public purse, of awarding full credit for prior study.

In establishing new articulation pathways, colleges and HEIs should build upon best practice models already in place to secure the curricular alignment necessary to ensure that learners are equipped with the necessary prior learning and academic skills to enable them to succeed in degree level study.

For the purposes of more effective IAG, the SFC should develop, or commission, an articulation 'map', setting out all of the available pathways across Scotland. (8a)

Recommendation 9: Universities, colleges and the SFC should closely monitor the expansion of articulation to ensure it continues to support disadvantaged learners to progress to degree level study. Should this not be the case, a proportion of articulation places should be prioritised for disadvantaged learners.

Recommendation 10: The Scottish Funding Council, working with universities and colleges, should explore more efficient, flexible and learner centred models of articulation which provide learners with the choice of a broader range of institutions and courses.

8. **Members are asked to note these related COWA recommendations and invited to discuss them in relation to the delivery of Recommendation 7.**

Associated national policy drivers

9. Alongside the related COWA recommendations, there are a number of associated drivers that are expected to have an influence or bearing on the work of the Access Programmes Steering Group.

Scottish Government's 15-24 Learner Journey

10. The report on the 15-24 Learner journey was published in May 2018¹, and cuts across several COWA recommendations as well as other national policy agendas such as Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Community Learning and Development (CLD) and Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). It also links onto work around information, advice and guidance, attainment, and articulation. Linda McLeod is the lead SFC officer for Learner Journey, and is working closely with Scottish Government and SFC colleagues to ensure relevant work is shared.

Gender Action Plan

11. Following guidance on the Gender Action Plan (GAP)² issued by SFC in 2016 on addressing gender imbalances, all colleges and universities have a plan in place. As the work of the Steering Group progresses we will be mindful of how outputs can support those plans, as well as wider Equality and Diversity matters, particularly intersectionality.

Articulation

12. As noted above, the COWA recommendations on articulation are being taken forward through a separate work stream. However, part of the considerations for that work is around broadening the definition of articulation. The current definition is focused on the Higher National qualifications and transition between college and university. The SFC is committed to exploring how to extend this definition to include other qualifications at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7 and 8. We will also look at how credit transfer for previous SCQF level 7 and 8 study can be applied from different institutions, such as university to university, and Advanced Higher from school to university. This reflects SFC's own findings on articulation as well as the Learner Journey review.
13. **Members are asked to note these associated national policies and invited to discuss them in relation to the delivery of COWA Recommendation 7.**

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/15-24-learner-journey-review-9781788518741/pages/3/>, 10 May 2018

² <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications-statistics/corporate-publications/corporate-publications-2016/SFCCP052016.aspx>, 12 August 2016

Further information

14. For further information, please contact Fiona Burns, fburns@sfc.ac.uk, 0131 313 6517.

Recommendation 16: School Attainment

Universities, working with schools, should take greater responsibility for the development of the pool of applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds by delivering academically based programmes to support highly able learners, who are at risk of not fulfilling their academic potential.

Recommendation 17: Information, Advice and Guidance

SDS and schools should work together to provide a more coordinated, tailored offer of information, advice and guidance to disadvantaged learners at key transition phases throughout their education.

Recommendation 18: Access to Key Subjects

Universities, colleges and local authorities should work together to provide access to a range of Higher and Advanced Higher subjects, which ensures that those from disadvantaged backgrounds or living in rural areas are not restricted in their ability to access higher education by the subject choices available to them.

Access Programmes Steering Group – 21 January 2019

SFC note

Fiona Burns – acting as Chair – welcomed all members to the Access Programmes Steering Group (ASPG) and invited round-table introductions.

The following was noted as goals for participation in the APSG:

- To take forward and implement COWA recommendation four
- Ensure support for learners was available at all stages of their journey; including earliest years and mature learners
- Engage school, colleges and universities in the process
- Seek cross-over and collaborative approaches be taken across all other relevant steering and advisory groups
- Future proofing any work that arose from the APAG and COWA recommendations
- Coordinate approaches to support learners regionally and nationally

An overview on the purpose of the Bridging Programmes Advisory Group (BPAG) was provided. This is an advisory group that is being established to take forward and implement COWA recommendation 7; it is tasked with looking at bridging programmes specifically (as opposed to recommendation 4, which looks at all access programmes). Bridging Programmes are taken to be primarily summer schools that enable learners to move from school to university, and some members sit on both APSG and BPAG to enable this specific transition point to be covered in more detail.

Paper 19_01 – Purpose of Access Programmes Steering Group

The broad timeline for the work of the APSG is:

- By June 2019 – establish what we have
- By September 2019 – establish what we want
- By December 2019 – evidence and outline how it will operate (alongside the Toolkit for Fair Access)
- By April 2020 – agree how to take forward a coordinated approach

The related work already being carried out under the School Engagement Framework (SEF) and Framework for Fair Access, alongside recent research (A Blueprint for Fair Access in the Glasgow region (BFG)) was noted, and SFC will seek to align all work from the APSG with that existing work.

Through discussion, the members noted the following key points:

The need to clarify what access programmes will be included? They must be defined.

The need to look beyond school leavers and consider all age groups (early years and mature learners as well)

Mapping of what exists is essential:

- Resources include: SFC's own work, BFG mapping, and Universities Scotland's mapping.
- This should be circulated to the members
- Need to consider what is included in the projects: e.g. travel; subsistence

Communicate what is learned from the mapping in terms of available and relevant projects to learners, parents/carers

Agree an outcome-based remit and agree what successful outcomes will be for the working groups that keeps within the recommendation.

SFC WILL OUTLINE A DEFINITION OF ACCESS PROGRAMMES AND PRESENT TO THE STEERING GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

SFC WILL PRODUCE OUTCOME-BASED REMITS FOR THE WORKING GROUPS AND PRESENT TO THE STEERING GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

Structure of APSG and working groups

The following were proposed:

Mapping

Early years and schools

School to college and university

Returning to Education

Members advised that Articulation and Returning to Education both be included in Group 3.

Overarching remit for both APSG and working groups should recognise that it is not about more groups, but smarter working together and ensuring knowledge of outreach/access activity. Scotland's Community of Access and Participation Practitioners (SCAPP) which is being established through the Framework for Fair Access will serve to support and inform this element.

Looking for action and practical solutions – therefore it was suggested that the working groups may not necessarily focus on transition points but consider all element of the noted journey where access programmes are in place.

Equality and diversity must be a key focus on the remit of all groups, with intersectionality being considered as a factor for inclusion on access programmes.

It was agreed that mapping was the most important element at this point in the process; as this would then determine what must be done; by whom and where. It is also likely to shape the work and form of the other working groups.

SFC WILL DRAW TOGETHER ALL KNOWN MAPPING AND PRESENT TO THE STEERING GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

Paper 19_02 – Scope of Commission on Widening Access Recommendation 4

Members put forward discussion and views on the initial question of: what is an access programme?

Key points noted were:

Consider who the recipient is:

- Students with the potential to go onto HE study
- Based on First Minister aspiration of a child born in the most deprived postcodes.

Consider who the delivery is from:

- Includes delivery from partners such as SWAP, as well as other stakeholders with a focus on providing information, advice, guidance (IAG) and support for learners into HE

Consider access to HE (colleges and universities) as a priority, but not as the only channel

- Articulation
- Access courses

The main focus and outcome for the APSG is on agreeing what an access programme is, and where duplication is necessary or not; and then how to coordinate that at a local and regional level in a way that delivers the national objective.

There needs to be better communication of the work, to ensure improved awareness and a more equitable spread of provision.

SFC WILL PRODUCE A DEFINITION OF ACCESS PROGRAMMES AND PRESENT TO THE STEERING GROUP FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

AOB

It was proposed that a Parents' Group be represented. To try and ensure that school pupils and students are represented it was also suggested that the SFC informs the Scottish Youth Parliament about this work and discusses how to engage young people (not covered by NUS Scotland). This may be a possible invite to attend the group.

SFC WILL APPROACH POSSIBLE GROUPS FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

It was asked that papers be circulated as early as possible.

SFC WILL ENDEAVOUR TO SHARE PAPERS WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW REPORT	
Recommendation 4 and 4a	<p>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 duplication and provides a coherent and comprehensive offer to learners. (Rec 4)</p> <p>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 Qualification Framework (SCQF) should be considered where appropriate. (Rec 4a)</p>
Lead Delivery Partner	<p>SFC [information owner Fiona Burns]</p>
Stakeholder(s)	<p>SFC, SFC funded access programmes, early years providers, Schools, Scottish Colleges and Universities, third sector organisations and charitable trusts (such as The Robertson Trust, Sutton Trust, MCR Pathways, Causeway Education, School Leaders Scotland), SCQF and students.</p>
What will successful delivery look like?	<p>The access offer across Scotland will be comprehensive and coherent with no unnecessary duplication. Access programmes will be given credit where appropriate and be recognised across institutions where-ever possible.</p>
What are the 5 key milestones to implementation and when will they be completed?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SFC will establish and chair a steering group which will bring together all relevant parties to deliver recommendations 4 and 4a. (by Dec 2018) <p>Membership will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. universities and colleges, b. students, c. local authorities and schools, d. early years providers, e. SFC funded access programmes , f. SCQF, and; g. Third sector organisations and charities i.e. Robertson Trust, Sutton Trust, MCR Pathways, Causeway Education.

	<p>2. SFC, in partnership with key stakeholders, will agree the scope of the recommendation. This will include determination of what constitutes an access programme in the context of these recommendations. (by March 2019)</p> <p>3. SFC, Universities Scotland and the Robertson Trust will review relevant access programme mapping exercises which have already been undertaken and will establish what, if any, further mapping needs to be done in the context of the scope of this recommendation. They will provide advice on this and, if appropriate next steps, to the Steering Group. (by May 2019)</p> <p>4. The Steering Group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. establish an understanding of the current landscape informed by the work of the SFC, US, Robertson Trust working group. (by June 2019) b. agree the principles of what coherent support is and how it will be assessed and monitored. (by Sept 2019) c. establish the steps required to remove duplication, align programmes to the Framework for Fair Access, and promote 'what works'. (by Dec 2019) d. Agree the mechanism to support transferability of programmes and credit rating of programmes, as appropriate, on the SCQF Framework. (by April 2020) e. Agree how best to take the work forward across Scotland i.e. regionally, nationally and who is best placed to lead this. (by April 2020) <p>5. The steering group will develop a timetable for roll out. (by May 2020)</p>
When will/did implementation start?	February 2017 (AIC discussion on SFC National School Programme)
When will delivery be complete?	By April 2020