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Submission title:

Introducing the Widening Participation Strategy

Abstract:

This session will introduce Edinburgh Napier University's new Widening Participation Strategy, 2016-2020. The Strategy has been developed to deliver upon the ambitions outlined in Strategy 2020, support external drivers such as the targets and measures for under-represented groups outlined in the SFC Outcome Agreement and gender action plans, and to respond positively to the recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access' Blueprint for Fairness (March 2016)¹.

The Strategy outlines the University's aim of becoming the sector leader for widening participation in our communities, facilitating the future success of all students, irrespective of background, through a focus on access, engagement and attainment. To achieve our aim the University will:

1. Raise expectations and drive increased attainment in our communities
2. Provide tailored transitions: moving in, moving through and moving on
3. Embed reporting and evaluative practices to ensure an evidence-based approach

In delivering the Strategy, the University will develop a holistic, institution-wide approach, focussing on the journey students take as they move in, move through and move on from the University. At the heart of this approach, is a recognition that whilst the definitions used within this Strategy reflect the disadvantages and barriers experienced by certain groups, all students are individuals with their own identities, experiences and talents which they bring to our community.

Participants in this session will have the opportunity to discuss the Strategy, and what actions they are currently taking, or can take in the future, to support its implementation.

1 Commission on Widening Access (2016a). A Blueprint for Fairness: The Final Report of the Commission on Widening Access

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/1439/downloads#res496535>