

Working with First Generation Students

◆ **13.00 Introductions**

◆ **13.15 Research Insights on the Experience of First-generation Students**

Keynote Speaker: Dr Jessie Abrahams, University of Bristol

In this session Jessie will draw attention to several issues facing first-generation students in seeking to access and engage with HE. Jessie will draw on evidence from two qualitative research projects: *Schooling Inequality* and *Paired Peers*. The former focusses on three distinct secondary schools in England; highlighting the everyday structures and practices which reproduce social class inequalities, especially regarding the point of access to HE (and in particular elite HEIs). The second is a longitudinal study which focusses on the experiences of HE students from different social-class backgrounds. Here she highlights some key findings in relation to inequalities facing first-generation students. This session will include time for audience participation and discussion, especially around strategies to respond.

◆ **14.15 Break**

◆ **14.30 Working with First Generation Students in Practice**

First Generation Student experiences at the University of Bristol

Dr James Watts, University of Bristol

James will talk about some of his experiences in the network and will comment on the First Generation experience, particularly of students in the School of Humanities at the University of Bristol. This is based on his own experience as well as discussions with students at First-Generation Network events around issues of the elitism of the University of Bristol, something which particularly comes out in University halls, negotiating seminar experiences, balancing work alongside studies, and concerns around job expectations and what we might term social capital.

The First Generation Student Experience at Durham University

Dr Andrea Lambell, Durham University & Abigail Lewis, Durham Students' Union

In summer 2022 a student-led research project invited Durham University's entire undergraduate and postgraduate community to complete a survey on various aspects of their perceptions and experiences of life at the university. It was identified that UK students from less-privileged backgrounds, the North of England in general, and the North-East more specifically, appeared to suffer systematic exclusion. In this presentation, Andrea will outline their methodology and findings, explain how positive relationships with key individuals in senior management helped advance the project, and describe how the university has adopted the report and its recommendations.

Introducing a new institutional framework to support student belonging

Dr Jumy Okoya & Regina Everitt, University of East London (UEL)

This presentation will discuss the evolving UEL approach to enabling student belonging using an institutional belonging framework that guides students through their journey from initial connection to their course community to being empowered to take charge of their own learning and careers. The framework is underpinned by the UEL values of courage, passion, and inclusion and the activities and evaluation are informed by a Theory of Change model.

◆ **15.15 Panel Discussion**

◆ **16.00 Close**