

OU-APS Seminar Series

Intersectionality: how the multiplier effect divides and reduces student success



- X 4 new presentations from across the HE sector
- X Student experiences shared
- X Time for discussion and networking
- X Practical focus on solutions in actions
- X Open and honest insight into success and failure



The Open University

Online webinar:

9.30am-12.30pm, 30th September 2021



Presenter's bio and pic

Presentation 1: The Open University

Rehana Awan – Staff tutor in Open and Access



Rehana Awan is a Staff Tutor in Open and Access and is Co-Chair of the OUs BME staff network and Chair of the task and finish group for mental health declarations and Black students. She tutors for FASS and Access and is undertaking doctoral research into the degree awarding gap at the OU alongside her other scholarly interests, which include educational development, young students and online and distance learning.

John Butcher – Professor of Inclusive Teaching in Higher Education



Professor John Butcher is Director, Access, Open and Cross-curricular Innovation at the Open University. He is responsible for the university's UK-wide Access Programme, is Deputy Director on the Open Programme and leads the Access Observatory (the OU's research centre for Widening Participation). He is the Managing Editor of the international journal Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning. He recently published a report for the Higher Education Policy Institute 'Unheard: the voices of part-time adult learners'

<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2020/02/06/unheard-the-voices-of-part-time-adult-learners/>.

Darren Gray – Senior manager, Access Participation and Success



Darren Gray is a Senior Manager in the Centre for Access Participation and Success (APS). He joined The Open University in 2016, firstly working in the Assessment Programme, and from April 2018 in his current role where he manages research projects exploring barriers faced by students from underrepresented, disadvantaged and discriminated-against groups. Darren is leading the development of an Inclusive Curriculum Tool, and associated training for staff and student reviewers, emanating from his research in 2018 with students self-identifying as Black. He leads the annual APS series of seminars, the biennial APS International Conference, and many other events disseminating scholarship learning.

Darren previously worked in Local Government for more than 25 years in roles including: sports development, play provision, economic development, regeneration, and co-ordination of major infrastructure projects. His previous roles involved community engagement, project management, and strategic planning. In a voluntary capacity Darren has been a sports coach for adults and juniors for nearly 40 years, gaining great experience of working with many diverse groups and from beginners to elite performers.

Presentation 2: University of South Wales

Rebecca Breen – Student Recruitment Officer



Rebecca is a member of the Schools and Colleges Liaison Team, providing information, advice and guidance to students, their parents/ carers and their teachers and advisers on all aspects of the higher education process. Rebecca leads on HEIAG activities for schools in Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. Rebecca also leads on schools and colleges liaison activity for two of the University's academic schools; the School of Psychology and Therapeutic Studies and the School of Education, Early Years and Youth Work. Rebecca is also a member of the Widening Participation Team and provides support to Service children and their families, and students with additional learning difficulties, including autism and dyslexia, to access higher education.

Danielle Webb– Pre-16 Outreach Officer



Growing up with a disability, there was a time that Danielle didn't think HE was a possibility for her, especially being the first in her family to attend higher education. But now, through what she has learned during 4 years of academic study on her BA (Hons) Youth and Community Work degree, plus her MA in Working for Children and Young People at the University of South Wales, Danielle uses her own experiences to educate and inspire others- whilst promoting a positive HE experience for under-represented groups.

Presentation 3: The Open University



Catherine Pestano is an OU Associate Lecturer since 1998, teaching across health, social work and youth work subject areas, as well as on management, leadership and creativity (OUBS), at under graduate and postgraduate levels. Catherine is research active at the Open University with a research sandpit project open to all looking at the Menopause Transition – all areas. She contributed to course production in this area of menopause. Other areas of interest include Mental health and LGBTQ* matters and the use of music and arts for wellbeing & social justice. Catherine is writing about Change management for an OU postgraduate course. Find out more about Catherine’s wider research activity via her blog

[My Blog](#) or contact c.pestano@open.ac.uk

Presentation 4: The Open University

Andrew Potter – Deputy Associate Dean, Academic Excellence



Diane Butler – Associate Dean, Academic Excellence



Afua Acheampong – EDI Manager



We are Diane Butler (Associate Dean, Academic Excellence), Andrew Potter (Deputy Associate Dean, Academic Excellence) and Afua Acheampong (EDI Manager) from The Open University’s STEM Faculty. Together we lead the Faculty’s activity in Access, Participation and Success. Across the HE sector, STEM disciplines have particular challenges in under-representation, and so our STEM Faculty focuses our APS activity accordingly. Building an inclusive curriculum, supporting women in STEM, and reducing awarding gaps for black students and disabled students are particular areas of focus for us. We also celebrate inclusion in STEM both at and beyond events such as Black History Month and LGBT+ History Month.