**Workshop W1A**

**Proposal for “Unearthing the hidden voices: intersectionalities in higher education”**

**Thursday 20th June 2019**

**Title:** Taking an intersectional approach to Access and Participation Plans: An OFS perspective

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**Workshop proposal synopsis**

The OFS’ ambition is to eliminate inequality in higher education in 20 years. We have set the following targets for the sector to eliminate:

1. the gap in entry rates at higher tariff providers between the most and least represented groups
2. the gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups
3. the gap in degree outcomes between white and black students
4. the gap in degree outcomes between disabled and non-disabled students.

One of the key drivers for achieving this is through Access and Participation Plans, in which providers set their own stretching targets for working towards these goals.

In our regulatory guidance documents[[1]](#footnote-1) we provide an overview of underrepresented groups and emphasise the individuality of each student. We expect providers to take an intersectional approach to eliminating equality gaps, and to consider the ways in which characteristics combine to increase disadvantage. This approach enable providers to more accurately identify gaps in access, success and progression for particular groups of students, and to target their activity more effectively.

To support providers with this we have been developing new data:

* An access and participation data dashboard[[2]](#footnote-2)
* A new intersectional equalities measure for each stage of the student lifecycle
* Experimental data on sexual orientation, religion and gender identity[[3]](#footnote-3)

In our workshop we would present our approach to intersectionality. We would structure a discussion with delegates regarding how they are approaching intersectionality, and how they are using data to identify intersectional equalities gaps within their providers.

1. Regulatory notice 1: Access and Participation plan guidance: OFS 2019:05; Regulatory advice 6: How to prepare your access and participation plan: OFS 2019.06; A to Z of effective practice in access and participation (https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/a-to-z-of-effective-practice-in-access-and-participation/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/equality-and-diversity/experimental-data/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)