



# The Scottish Widening Access Professional Accreditation Scheme for Widening Access and Participation Practitioners

Practitioner Consultation Presentation 24 and 28 June 2021

Welcome and Introductions

# SCAPP Aims



1. To provide a **practitioners' network** to support the development and professionalisation of **a strong WA and WP community** in Scotland
2. To be **inclusive** and system wide
3. To be sustainable and **member-led**



## How does it link to SCAPP's Objectives?

- Raise the profile of WA and WP, articulate and share practitioner knowledge and best practice and celebrate success.
- Promote and support continuing professional learning and development of staff working in WA and WP.
- Help to build practice-based research and evaluation capacity amongst WA and WP professionals within the sector.
- Provide individuals with a measure of success.
- Provide individuals with a clear understanding of enhancements needed to continually professionally learn and develop and improve provision to support WA and WP/.



# Why Develop a Professional Accreditation Scheme for WA and WP Practitioners?

- Provide professional recognition for **individuals** working in widening access and participation (WA and WP) and a route to professional accreditation.
- Provide a WA and WP Professional Accreditation Scheme that can be incorporated into institutional professional learning and development processes,
- Enable WA and WP Practitioners, with agreement and support from their line manager, to gain professional accreditation in WA and WP through the submission of an evidence-based portfolio.



# What benefits does it provide to WA and WP Practitioners?

- Professional recognition for your work and achievements in widening access.
- Enhances the quality of practice in WA and WP and endorses the value and experience of your professional practice.
- Rewards your commitment to widening access and illustrates the impact your work has had to enable those most marginalised in society to reach their potential.
- Provides a vehicle for you to benchmark your practice against national widening access/participation standards and evidence quality assured professional practice to employers and other key stakeholders such as funding bodies.
- Enhances your Professional Learning/CPD portfolio and provide opportunities that allows you to stand out in a competitive job market by being able to evidence the contribution you have made to the development of WA and WP.
- Provides an opportunity for you to learn and keep up with the latest professional practice.
- Provides an opportunity for you to engage with and contribute to a growing community of WA and WP practitioners in Scotland and beyond and to current research and practice.



# The Professional Standards Framework

- The Scottish Widening Access Professional Standards Framework sits at the centre of SCAPP's professional accreditation scheme.
- It has been developed to provide a comprehensive set of professional standards against which you can self-evaluate your widening access work and produce evidence to demonstrate a personal commitment to professionalism in WA and WP.
- The Framework can be applied to a diverse range of WA and WP professional roles and environments both in Education or within related organisations.



# The Professional Standards Framework

- Sets out professional practice in widening access and participation under three inter-related themes:
  - What we **VALUE.**
  - What we **DO**
  - What we **KNOW and UNDERSTAND**
- Each theme contains a number of statements setting out the breadth of professional practice expected from those working in a WA and WP role.

# What we Value



**V1 Actively promote and advocate for fair access and participation in HE.**

**V2 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, evaluation and continuing professional development.**

**V3 Actively promote social justice and equality of opportunity and outcome for all.**

**V4 Respect for and awareness of diverse individual and community experiences.**



# What we Do



**D1 Design, plan and delivery of activities, programmes and/or support networks specific for WA and WP cohorts.**

**D2 Provide appropriate, effective and accessible information, advice and guidance to relevant stakeholders.**

**D3 Engage in continuing professional development, using evidence led approaches to enhance practice.**

**D4 Demonstrate a collaborative approach to the development and delivery of activities.**

**D5 Develop and apply sustainable evaluation practices.**

**D6 Leading, championing and progressing theories, innovations and developments to inform policies, practices and activities**



# What we Know and Understand

**KU1 Our learners and their communities and what barriers they may face in accessing HE.**

**KU2 Up-to-date knowledge of the wider policy and strategy context for WA and WP in Scotland that is informing WA and WP practice.**

**KU3 Knowledge and engagement with different individuals/groups/networks who support WA and WP practice.**

**KU4 Appropriate safeguarding policies and practices to protect all learners.**

**KU 5 Engagement with learning technologies and their effective application to develop and deliver WA and WP activities.**

**KU6 Reflective and pedagogical/theoretical understanding of what makes impactful and successful WA and WP activities.**



# Accreditation Levels

- The scheme has three levels of accreditation:
  - Affiliate Level
  - Practitioner Level
  - Leadership Level.



# Affiliate Level

Individuals who work in affiliation with HEI's, colleges or related organisations.

- These individuals will have an interest in promoting and supporting WA and WP and are able to demonstrate that they provide support for WA and WP learners as part of a wider remit/role within their organisation. Typically, applicants will have a **minimum of one year** experience
- Examples: Student ambassador/Buddy/Mentor, Guidance/Support Worker, lecturer, research assistant, admissions, volunteer, intern, administrator, teacher, lecturer – in a WA and WP department or capacity or where role is non substantive but part of wider job



# Practitioner Level

For WA and WP professionals with a substantive role/remit for WA and WP in an HEI, college, school or related organisation.

Typically, applicants will have a **minimum of two years'** experience of working in a WA and WP role.

Applicants can use evidence and experience from past WA and WP roles up to a maximum of 3 years before being employed in their current role.

Examples: WA and WP Officers, Coordinators, Inclusion and Diversity officers, Student recruitment/admissions officer, researcher/evaluation, school teacher – in in a WA and WP department or capacity where role is substantial part of job



# Leadership Level

For WA and WP professionals with a substantive role/remit for influencing and/or leading WA and WP in an HEI, college, school and/or related organisation.

Typically, applicants will have a **minimum of two years' experience** of leading/influencing in a WA and WP role.

Applicants can use evidence and experience from past WA and WP roles up to a maximum of 3 years before being employed in their current role.

Examples: Head/Manager of WA and WP or Inclusion and Diversity/Student Services, Senior Researcher or Evaluators



# How do you evidence that you meet the standards?

- Those of you approved to take part in the Scheme (more about applying and approval later) will be expected to prepare a **portfolio submission** evidencing how you meet the standards relevant to the Level of Accreditation you are working to.
- Each Level has a 'descriptor' setting out specific elements of the WA and WP professional standards framework that you will need to demonstrate evidence of meeting.



# Descriptor Example (Affiliate)

Applicants applying for this level of accreditation must be able to demonstrate an understanding of specific elements of widening access/participation in your own context. You should be able to demonstrate evidence of:

1. Effective engagement with and application of at least two of D1, D2, D4, D5, D6, statements of the 'What we do' theme of the Professional Standards Framework.
2. Appropriate knowledge and understanding of at least KU1 and KU2 statements of the 'What we know and understand' theme of the Professional Standards Framework.
3. A commitment to all statements (V1-V4) of the 'What we Value' theme of the Professional Standards Framework.
4. Engagement in professional learning and development (D3) related to your widening access/participation roles and responsibilities.

Examples of Roles relevant to this level of accreditation

This level of accreditation is designed for individuals who work in affiliation with HEI's, colleges or in related organisations.

You should have an interest in promoting and supporting WA and WP and are able to demonstrate that they provide support for WA and WP learners as part of a wider remit/role within their organisation.

You will typically have a minimum of one year experience of leading/influencing in a WA and WP role

Examples of the types of role that would be eligible for this level include:

- Lecturer, Tutor, Guidance and Support Adviser, Career Advisers, Admissions and Recruitment Officers, Counsellors, Librarians, Support Workers, Development Officers/Fund Raisers, Ambassadors, Facilitators, Recruitment and Admissions Administrators, Faculty/School/Departmental Administrators, Coaches and Mentors working within an HEI or related/partner organisation.

- Student Ambassadors/Mentors/Buddies, PhD Research Students





# What's in the Portfolio Submission?

- A **Context Statement**. A brief summary of your experience of working in WA and WP. **(400 Words)**
- A **Reflective Statement**. A personal account of your work in WA and WP and should focus throughout on your own professional practice. It requires you to gather and present evidence of your practice and reflect on how effective your work has been on the development of widening access and participation in your organisation/institution and its impact on the learner experience. **(WORD Count Varies depending on level)**.
- **Case Studies ( Leadership Level only)** Two case studies, each of approximately 1,500 words in length. Provide reflective accounts of two specific contributions/ experiences which you have led and/or managed that have had a significant impact on the development of WA and WP and/or the professional development/ support for others working in WA and WP.
- **Line Manager Supporting Statement** provided by your line manager should confirm that your portfolio submission is a fair and accurate reflection of your current (or recent) WA and WP practice **(400 Words)**

# Piloting the Accreditation Scheme



Before rolling the Accreditation Scheme out nationally, we are planning to pilot the scheme in AY2021-2. Our thinking at present is:

Launch Pilot and Invite Applications (from August 2021)

Invite Peer Reviewer applications and appoint and Induction workshop (from August- September 21)

Applications close (October 2021)

Review of Applications /Selections (October- November 2021)

Results communicated to applicants (November 2021)

Induction Workshop (December 2021)

Portfolio Submission –Evidence Gathering and Write Up (Jan – May 2022)

Portfolio Review and Outcomes (June 2022)



# Pilot Parameters

- Number of Participants – 10 (2 Affiliate, 5 Practitioner, 3 Leadership, Min of 1 from College Sector, Min of 1 from School Sector, Min of 1 from voluntary/third sector, Min of 1 from HE Sector)
- Number of Peer Reviewers in Pool - 10
- Only one application date during pilot (more over the year when the scheme is launched fully).
- Only one submission date ( again there would be more per annum once the scheme is launched fully).

# Selection of Applicants for the Pilot



In the spirit of openness and transparency – all SCAPP member organisations or members on an individual basis would be invited to submit one application to the pilot, noting that all applications will be subject to scrutiny by a review panel and that there are only 10 places available in the pilot.

In addition to the selection criteria set out in the peer review handbook, for the pilot, the review panel will aim to select applicants to meet the pilot selection profile of 3 Affiliates, 5 Practitioner and 3 leadership level participants with a minimum of one participant from across the HE/College/ School/ Voluntary sectors.

Those applicants that satisfy the application selection criteria but who are not offered a place on the pilot, will be held in reserve and offered a place should the scheme continue beyond the pilot without having to re-apply.



# Costs and commitments

- There would be no charge to institutions/individuals participating in the pilot
- However, a 'contribution in kind' commitment would be required by the Institution and this should be taken into account before encouraging a member of staff to apply. We anticipate that time will be required by individual participants to:
  - Attend a half day Induction Workshop
  - Gather evidence for their portfolio
  - Participate in other activities to support participants
  - Participate in pilot evaluation activities with the external evaluator.

# How would you apply to take part in the pilot?



Stage 1 Determining  
which level  
to apply for

Stage 2 Gaining  
support  
from your  
Institution/  
Line  
Manager

Stage 3 Submitting  
an  
Application



# Who Reviews applications and portfolio submissions?

- Peer reviewer will be drawn from a ***pool of approved reviewers*** who have been selected on the basis of their high standing as specialists in widening access/participation.
- Call out for people to apply to become peer reviewers (Guidelines on how to apply to become a peer reviewer)

# Peer Reviewers – Essential Criteria



- WAP practitioners with an active track record in widening access/participation who are held in esteem by their peers.
- Understanding of the national context and structure for WAP in Education in Scotland.
- Experience of influencing the development of WAP organisationally/ institutionally and/or nationally.
- Highest levels of professional integrity.
- Ability to work as part of a team and meet deadlines.
- Strong levels of both written and verbal communication.
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# Peer Reviewers – Desirable Criteria



- Experience of participating in decision-making panels or committees.
- Involvement in WA and WP activities on a national level (e.g. members of national committees, working groups and/or initiatives).



# Why Become a Peer Reviewer?

- Share your widening access and participation knowledge and expertise with peers from other institutions
- Provides you with an opportunity to support the professionalism and quality enhancement of WA and WP in Scotland.
- Build your professional networks and knowledge of WA and WP.
- Gain invaluable insight into the peer review process.
- Gain a more detailed understanding of how review panels work and insight into the range of evidence that is submitted in support of an application for accreditation across the three levels of the Professional Accreditation Framework.



# Portfolio Re-submissions

- Participants who receive a 'Do not award' judgement will be given an opportunity to re-submit their portfolio highlighting what has been done to address any conditions and/or revisions.
- The re-submitted portfolio will be considered through 'Convenors Action' by the Convenor of the Review Panel.



# Questions and Comments

We are really interested in your feedback about the Accreditation Scheme:

- What's your reaction to the planned scheme so far?
- Do you have any queries you would like answered?