



The National Schools Programme: Pathways to Success



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

Erica Russell-Hensens & Mary Macgowan



Agenda

- Background and strategic goals
- The first two years
- Structure of the National Schools Programme
- Future direction



**THE NATIONAL
SCHOOLS
PROGRAMME**

“We recommend SFC develops a **National Schools Programme** for Scotland to enhance access to the tertiary system for pupils in the Senior Phase of school, working closely with experts across universities, colleges and schools, and taking account of recent reviews.”





SFC Strategic Plan 2022-27

Priority 1.1

We will **promote fair access, clear pathways and transitions**, considering the way we measure and invest funds, set targets and track widening access; and we will work with students and institutions to secure efficient and successful learner journeys, while respecting institutional diversity

Underpinning Themes

Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion with the institutions we fund can help address pressing and persistent inequalities, so we will set expected outcomes and track impact to strengthen and mainstream a focus on fulfilling our equality duties across all areas of our work, and in terms of our own organisational obligations.



Commission on Widening Access

Official progress to AY 2021-22 and sector challenge to deliver CoWA - Scottish domiciled full time first degree entrants from 20% most deprived areas





National Schools Programme – first two years





National Schools Programme

Unify **existing successful projects** into a cohesive national approach based around 4 foundational pillars:

1. Impartial information, advice, guidance, and support
2. A visit to a campus or a residential experience
3. A recognized university and study skills development course, often accompanied by SCQF credit points
4. Specialist support regarding access to the high demand professions





Component Programmes

SHEP

Schools for Higher Education

AHDP

Access to High Demand Professions

RCS

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Transitions Programme

AHH

Advanced Higher Hub at Glasgow
Caledonian University



PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

Student Eligibility Criteria

SIMD20/40

Care experienced

Protected or underrepresented backgrounds

- Refugee or asylum seeker
- Young carer
- Estranged
- Underrepresented in Higher Education

Scale of NSP

355

SHEP & AHDP activities delivered in 355 schools 2022-23

~39,000

Students participated in NSP activities 2022-23

£4.4M

SFC provided approx. £4.4 million to NSP in 2022-23

16.5%

Scottish-domiciled full-time entrants to university from SIMD20 in 2021-22



Activity – SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats



What do we need from a National Schools' Programme that will take us to the CoWA target of 2030 and beyond?

What needs to change within the current and potential future work of a National Schools' Programme to meet that need?

Discussion Questions



Mary Macgowan –
mmacgowan@sfc.ac.uk

Apex 2 • 97 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh • EH12 5HD
T 0131 313 6500 • www.sfc.ac.uk
🐦 @ScotFundCouncil