

EORR and Care Experience: an initial mapping of practice from the NNECL Quality Mark

The following table provides examples of effective practice drawn from NNECL Quality Mark submissions and other relevant initiatives, mapped against the risk areas identified in the Office for Students' Equality of Opportunity Risk Register. Further work is being taken forward via the Care Leaver/Experienced and Estranged Students in Higher Education Group (CLEESHE). Contact info@nnecl.org for details.

Risk Area	Explanation	Impact	Effective practice, data and research examples
<p>Risk 1: Knowledge and skills Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions.</p>	<p>Differences over access to a high quality education, and the resources needed to fully engage with it (including time and support), may limit opportunity.</p> <p>Students may have less chance to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for successful higher education, or to achieve grades that reflect their knowledge and skills.</p> <p>It may also limit the range of subject and course options available, for example, at Key Stage 5.</p> <p>Factors that influence this can include (but are not limited to) a student's home circumstances, the school that they attend or the area where they live.</p>	<p>Low attainment at Key Stage 4 and 5, and/or limited subject choice at Key Stage 5 for students from certain areas, schools or with certain characteristics.</p> <p>This is likely to subsequently impact progression rates to higher education.</p> <p>Where students are accepted into higher education courses, it may also have a detrimental impact on their on-course success.</p>	<p>Examples of some more intensive and sustained outreach activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Star Scholars • Choices Together, NERAP • MyLACES, Ulster University • Greater Manchester collaboration via GM Higher • Kent and Medway Progression Federation <p>Offering Foundation level options for progression</p> <p>Provision of study skills and academic support when on course</p>
<p>Risk 2: Information and guidance Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or</p>	<p>A student's home circumstances, their school and access to resources in their local area may affect the amount and the quality of information that they receive about higher education options and future career progression.</p> <p>This can occur early on in a student's education and affect aspects such as their Key Stage 4 and</p>	<p>Low quality, or a lack of, information and guidance may result in differential application patterns for different groups of students, and lower application success rates even where prior attainment has been controlled for.</p>	<p>Named contact or team supporting care experienced students (CES) from early outreach</p> <p>A range of outreach activities in place, some specific to CES and others part of broader widening participation (WP)</p>

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to make informed choice about their higher education options.	Key Stage 5 course choice, or it may apply at the point of application, and limit both the choice and quality of a student's application.	<p>This may subsequently result in lower progression rates to higher education overall, and to highly selective providers and/or certain course types for some groups of students.</p> <p>It may result in lower on course attainment, continuation and completion rates.</p> <p>It may also result in differences in labour market outcomes, where poor guidance on Key Stage 5 subjects and/or university course choice subsequently results in a narrowing of options for certain student groups.</p>	<p>work (as not all CES wish to be identified as such). Making sure information for CES is included in general information sessions for prospective students.</p> <p>Training and information for foster carers and local authority/virtual school staff.</p> <p>Dedicated transition support working with feeder schools, local authorities (LAs) etc.</p>
<p>Risk 3: Perception of higher education Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.</p>	<p>Even where a student has the grades and information or guidance required to choose a particular course or provider, they may not apply.</p> <p>This can be due to a number of factors, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial or familial circumstances • perception of the provider • limited course provision (such as having no part-time courses). 	<p>When attainment is controlled for, a reluctance to apply for certain providers and/or courses by some students can lead to lower application rates to certain providers and/or courses by students with certain characteristics, and subsequently lower progression rates.</p>	<p>Specific admissions policy/section relating to CES</p> <p>Contextual offers, typically one or two grades lower</p> <p>Accreditation of Prior Learning/Work for mature entrants</p> <p>Financial bursary/support provided</p>
<p>Risk 4: Application success rates Students may not be accepted to a higher education course, or may not be accepted to certain types of providers within higher</p>	<p>For courses or providers that are competitive, students may not have equal application outcomes despite having the same attainment at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 as another student.</p>	<p>Differences in the way that an application is assessed, even where two students have the same prior attainment, may result in lower acceptance rates (measured in the</p>	<p>Contextual offers, typically one or two grades lower Guaranteed offer if meet minimum requirements (as per the Scottish HE sector guarantee)</p>

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<p>education, despite being qualified.</p>	<p>This can be due to admissions practices (such as the way a personal statement or interview is assessed, or the use of entrance exams), or the way in which a student makes an application.</p> <p>It may also be due to students applying in greater numbers to certain subjects, or differences in the perceived quality of qualification types.</p>	<p>proportion of offers made to applicants) and subsequently lower progression rates to certain courses and/or higher education providers for students with particular characteristics.</p> <p>This impact may also be felt where students with certain characteristics apply in greater proportions to certain subjects, causing a ‘funnel affect’.</p>	<p>Support for drafting personal statements and interview preparation</p>
<p>Risk 6: Insufficient academic support Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome.</p>	<p>Whatever the grades that a student has when they enter higher education, different students may require different levels of academic support.</p> <p>This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their individual circumstances, such as personal health issues, special educational needs (SEN) diagnosis or home difficulties that impact on a student’s ability to engage to the fullest extent with their academic studies • differences in educational experiences before university that did not equip them with the same level of relevant skills or knowledge as other students. 	<p>If a student does not receive the necessary personalised academic support, they may achieve a lower degree attainment than they could have achieved, or they may withdraw from a course.</p> <p>Students may also experience poor mental health.</p> <p>Students may have less time to devote to non-academic activities than other students.</p> <p>These may subsequently further impact on progression rates through to graduate study or to employment.</p>	<p>Supportive systems in place for CES, including sharing information with tutors etc. if permission given by student</p> <p>Building in consideration of care experience as part of Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) course review</p> <p>Effective CPD programmes for staff in range of different roles including academics/personal tutors</p> <p>Study skills/catch up modules</p> <p>Priority for mental health support</p> <p>Funding to support work placements/Turing etc.</p>
<p>Risk 7: Insufficient personal support Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-</p>	<p>Although many students are able to receive personal support from external sources, experiences of this will be different for some</p>	<p>Students who do not receive sufficient personal support on course, including (but not limited to) mentoring, advice, counselling and access to extracurricular</p>	<p>Named contact or team</p>

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<p>academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome.</p>	<p>students. This may have a negative impact on their wellbeing and academic success.</p> <p>Non-academic support comes in many different forms, from personal tutors or mentors to access to sports facilities or accommodation support.</p> <p>For many students, extracurricular activities are a core part of the higher education experience but these are not equally accessible.</p>	<p>activities may be more likely to report lower wellbeing and/or sense of belonging, experience poor mental health, achieve lower-than-expected on-course attainment and lower continuation rates. These may be experienced for all students, but may be experienced more acutely by students with certain characteristics.</p> <p>Differential access to personal support relating to careers progression and/or less time to participate in enrichment activities may lead to differential outcomes in terms of progression into further study and employment.</p>	<p>Contact or team offer informal catch-ups over coffee, social events, sending birthday/Christmas cards and gifts</p> <p>Signposting to, and liaison with, pastoral support services</p> <p>Free or subsidised gym membership</p> <p>Support with accommodation depending on type of institution (ranging from all-year accommodation to support with travel/subsistence costs for students at non-residential institutions)</p> <p>Developing peer mentoring/support</p> <p>SU support for CES Society etc.</p> <p>Funding to support work placements/Turing etc.</p>
<p>Risk 8: Mental health Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Students may experience mental ill health that makes it hard to cope with daily life, including studying. These difficulties may be pre-existing, or may develop during higher education study.</p> <p>Some students may have difficulties that are not formally diagnosed or treated, and may experience delays in receiving a diagnosis, treatment or support. Some students may not report mental health difficulties.</p>	<p>Where students experience poor mental health, this may result in:</p> <p>lower continuation rates and lower course attainment</p> <p>it may also lead to lower progression rates into further study or the labour market.</p>	<p>Regular check-ins and proactive communications particularly at difficult times of year</p> <p>Bespoke support plans and/or fast-tracking to support</p> <p>Support for physical health alongside mental well-being</p>

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	Where students do have an existing diagnosis, the transition point between adolescent and adult services may lead to delays in treatment.		
<p>Risk 10: Cost pressures</p> <p>Increases in cost pressures may affect a student's ability to complete their course or obtain a good grade.</p>	<p>This is likely to be due to multiple factors, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some students undertaking more paid work than is feasible alongside full-time study • students experiencing poorer mental health as a result of financial concerns • students having to support families. 	<p>Increasing costs of living, if not adequately addressed, may result in an increasing number of students undertaking part-time or full-time employment alongside their studies, poorer mental and physical health for students, reduced attendance on-course, and less time to study.</p> <p>Together, these may increase the risk of lower on-course attainment rates and lower continuation rates.</p> <p>The cost of living crisis may also impact on access to university, as students may be less likely to apply to higher education and/or limit their higher education choices according to financial need (e.g. a student may only apply to a provider near their home, or may limit their choice to part-time courses).</p>	<p>Financial bursary/other financial support provided</p> <p>Opportunities for appropriate levels of part-time work as a student ambassador, for example</p>
<p>Risk 11: Capacity issues</p> <p>Students may not have equal opportunity to access limited resources related to higher education, such as suitable accommodation.</p>	<p>Increasing student numbers may limit a student's access to key elements of their expected higher education experience. This could disproportionately affect those without the financial resources or wider support to react appropriately.</p> <p>For example, where appropriate student accommodation is limited, students with less money or who are accepted at a late stage in the</p>	<p>An increase in capacity issues may lead to issues such as lower quality teaching, less academic and personal support and low availability and/or quality of accommodation for students.</p> <p>These in turn may lead to poorer mental health for students, worse on-course degree attainment and lower continuation rates.</p>	<p>Bursaries/access to other financial support such as hardship funds.</p> <p>Support with accommodation depending on type of institution (ranging from all-year accommodation to support with travel/subsistence costs for students at non-residential institutions).</p>

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	application cycle, may not be able to secure suitable housing.	Concerns over accommodation issues may also lead to changing application patterns for some students (i.e. increasing propensity to apply to home/close providers). It may also lead to worse labour market outcomes for students, if there are reductions in relevant services.	Providing guarantor support for private accommodation. If providing free or subsidised university accommodation, consider extending this to CES living in private accommodation.
Risk 12: Progression from higher education Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.	Some students do not have equal opportunity to access certain outcomes from higher education, such as further study or progressing into employment that is reflective of their qualification levels. This can be due to factors such as financial position, access and time to undertake extracurricular or supra-curricular activities, and lack of information and guidance.	Differences in equality of opportunity relating to progression may lead to lower progression to further study for students with particular characteristics. It may also lead to low diversity in specific areas of the labour-market, lower earning for students with certain characteristics, and lower levels of job satisfaction.	Preferential access to work experience/employability initiatives Postgraduate bursaries Named careers contact and regular engagement throughout programme of study Provide accommodation over summer for transition period out of HE into employment

NB: Risks where care experience is not currently highlighted as a characteristic:

- Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode: Students may not have equal opportunity to access a sufficiently wide variety of higher education course types.
- Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus: Students may be affected by the ongoing consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.