

Russell Group Conferences 2026

A conference for Teachers and Advisers, hosted by University of Sheffield on 4th June and Queen Mary University of London on 22nd June

9:30 - 10:00

Registration and refreshments

10:00 - 11:00

Welcome and opening remarks from Advancing Access and our host universities
What is the Russell Group and why does it matter?

11:00 - 11:10

Break

Workshop one
11:10-11:55

Preparing students for admissions tests

Widening participation in practise

Helping students craft stand-out personal statements

Workshop two
11:55 - 12:40

Helping students to make a competitive application

Widening participation in practise

Helping students craft stand-out personal statements

12:40 - 13:30

Lunch and Exhibition

Visit stalls hosted by Russell Group universities

13:30 - 14:00

Roundtable networking with Russell Group representatives

Roundtable discussions to share best practise, and explore collaborative approaches to outreach

Workshop three
14:00 - 14:45

Preparing students for Admissions Tests

Preparing students for Degree Apprenticeships

Upcoming Changes in Student Finance and the LLE

14:45 - 14:55

Break

14:55 - 15:30

Keynote from UCAS: Insights into applicant data and trends
Closing remarks and thank you by Advancing Access

Session title	Session description	Presenters
<p>Preparing students for admissions tests</p>	<p>This session will provide an overview of the admissions tests delivered by UAT-UK (University Admissions Tests UK), including TMUA, ESAT, and TARA. It will cover key changes, what the tests assess, how they are used in admissions and practical ways to support students in preparing effectively.</p>	<p>UK-UAT</p>
<p>Widening participation in practise</p>	<p>Discover how to turn widening participation into action. This session combines key insights on access and barriers with practical tools to help educators engage students, make the most of university partnerships, and navigate contextual admissions.</p>	<p>University of Birmingham and London School of Economics</p>
<p>Helping students craft stand-out personal statements</p>	<p>This session explores practical approaches to supporting students in crafting effective personal statements. It will focus on how super-curricular activities can be strategically integrated to showcase intellectual curiosity, motivation, and depth of understanding, helping students strengthen the overall quality of their university applications.</p>	<p>University of Edinburgh and Newcastle University</p>
<p>Upcoming changes in Student Finance and the LLE</p>	<p>This session will provide an overview of the Learning Loan Entitlement (LLE), outlining key policy rules, timelines, and implications for students. Delegates will gain insight into how these changes will affect student finance and funding, and what support schools and colleges can provide to help students understand and navigate the new system.</p>	<p>University of Edinburgh and Newcastle University</p>
<p>Supporting students to make a competitive application</p>	<p>Learn what competitive universities look for in a UCAS application. This session breaks down key components, including academic references, and explains how they are assessed. Gain practical tips to help your students showcase their strengths and maximise their chances of success. This session will also explore the key differences for Oxbridge applications.</p>	<p>University of Cambridge</p>
<p>Preparing students for Degree Apprenticeships</p>	<p>This session highlights effective approaches to supporting students interested in degree apprenticeships. It will cover how to help students identify suitable programs, understand employer expectations, build relevant skills and experiences, and prepare strong applications that combine academic ability with workplace readiness.</p>	<p>University of Exeter and Durham</p>