

Educational attainment and inequality in Scotland: How does Scotland compare with the rest of the UK?

Date & time: 13:30-16:30, Wednesday 28th August 2013

Venue: [Seminar Rooms 1 & 2, The Chrystal MacMillan Building, University of Edinburgh,
15a George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LD](#)

Floor plan & parking: [A Guide to Access & Facilities](#) (PDF, see pp.4 & 10)

Scotland's devolved education system fares equally well in comparison to the rest of the UK (and internationally), however there are a number of key concerns. A-level and GCSE attainment in England has increased rapidly over the last few years, while pupil attainment in Scotland has apparently remained stable. Moreover, there are still large numbers of Scottish children leaving school without sufficient qualifications for entry into higher education. Perhaps the most serious issue – which affects all countries in the UK – concerns the high levels of inequality that still exist at all levels of the Scottish education system.

This seminar will take place at the School of Education, University of Edinburgh, and is jointly hosted by the Centre for Research in Education Inclusion and Diversity, Edinburgh University, and the Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics.

We will first consider the evidence from ESRC-funded research on attainment and inequality from Dr Gill Wyness, London School of Economics, and Professor David Raffe, University of Edinburgh. This will be followed by responses from Education Scotland, and the Scottish Widening Access Programme. We hope to unpick such important issues as:

- What do home international comparisons tell us about the relative performance of school children in Scotland?
- What can Scotland do to tackle inequality in educational outcomes?
- How will Curriculum for Excellence tackle these issues?
- Does Scotland's system of one year Highers discourage staying on?
- What are the implications of educational inequalities for higher education and what actions can universities and colleges take to promote greater equality in HE participation?

The seminar is aimed at policy makers, politicians, local authorities, educational practitioners and academics.

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Programme

13.30 – 14.00	Registration and coffee
14.00 – 15.00	<p><i>Education in Scotland: performance in a devolved policy area</i> Dr Gill Wyness, Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics</p> <p><i>Comparing Scotland with the rest of the UK: What are the implications for Scottish education policy?</i> Professor David Raffe, Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>
15.00 – 15.15	Tea and coffee
15.15 – 16.30	<p><i>Addressing Inequalities through Curriculum for Excellence</i> Dr Bill Maxwell, Chief Executive Education Scotland</p> <p><i>Supporting access to higher education for young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds</i> Kate Davidson, Director SWAP-East</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>