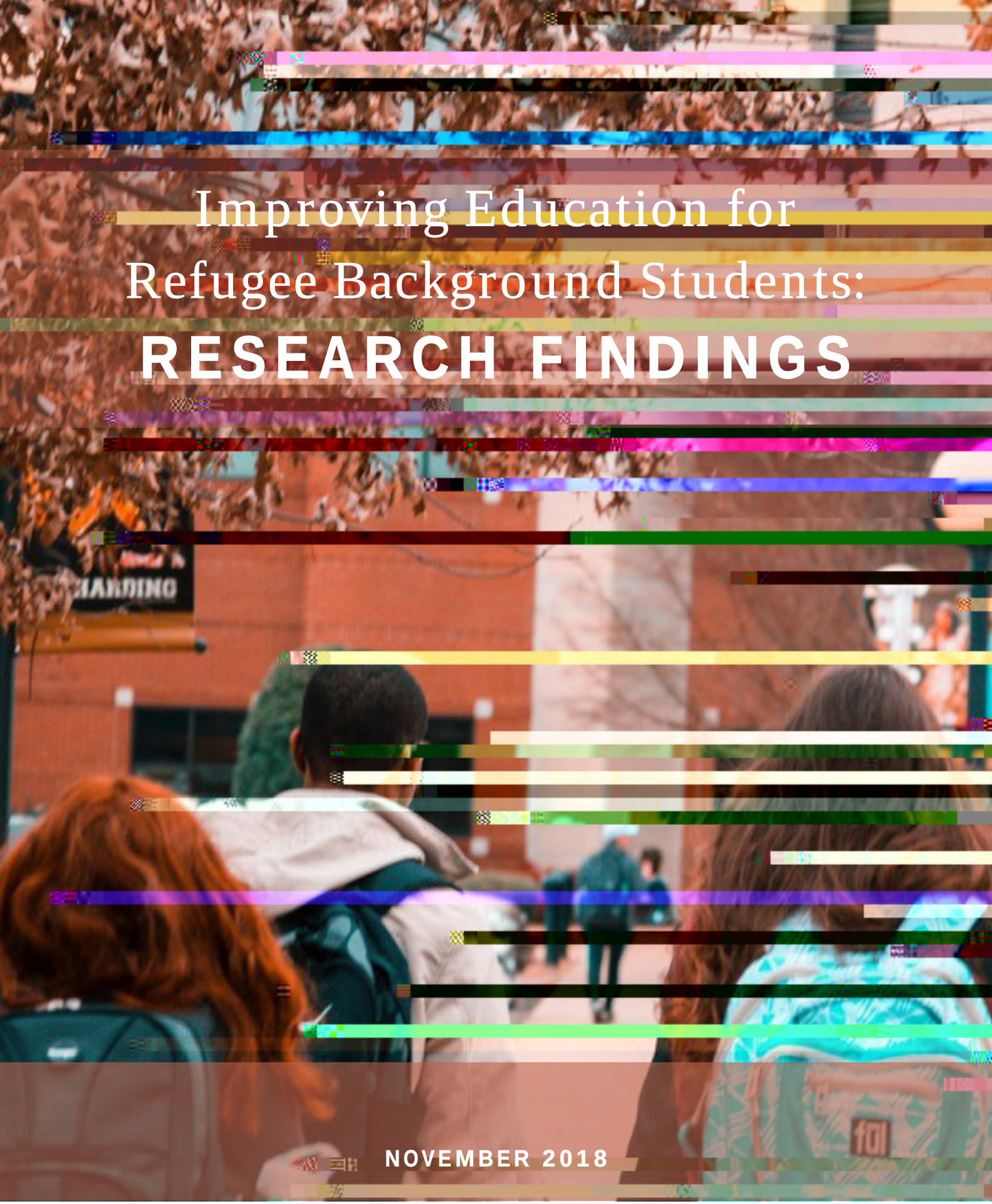

Improving Education for Refugee Background Students:

RESEARCH FINDINGS

NOVEMBER 2018

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

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Summary of Research Findings

career paths. However, some RBS have struggled to find the right academic path and/or the right

how the education system works, and inflexibility of the education system.

Introduction

their perceptions of the difficulties and challenges they face in moving through the education system.

professional and practice-based perspectives, these have helped to shape the findings presented here.

The Context

(UNESCO 2016: 8)

participate fully and thrive in society. However, as this study indicates, there are signifcant challenges

take a step back and to consider the global context of refugee education. Recent fgures from UNHCR (2018) estimate that just 61% of refugee children globally attend primary school, the fgures for

Higher Education (HE). In the light of such stark global fgures, it is very likely that children and young

In 2017, there were 2,206 asylum applications by unaccompanied children in the UK (Home Office,

family are more difcult to estimate. The Refugee Council estimate that 5,655 under 18-year olds

20,000 refugees affected by the Syrian confict by 2020. A smaller programme resettles around 750

1 UK G : G P P S V P R S . U UK; UK B .

fnish. Nobody I have asking to... [...] Nobody, no, nobody asking me, no, what you going to do, no, because, uh, when I go to college frst I telling, uh, teacher I don't like doing business

impossible, given the gaps in their education and the diffculties they are encountering in learning the

II Support provided to RBS in schools or colleges

to fee, others were preparing to go to university. Some, particularly those who had travelled alone to

or college. One student with very limited English proficiency said he receives one hour of extra support

in those classes. This further exacerbated feelings of being ‘stuck’ in ESOL classes and of not

2 Print literacy

school. They therefore arrived with little or no print literacy skills which presented a signi f cant barrier to

presentations or anything. So when I went to the Access course, I remember when I did my frst because they learn how to do essays and assignments or presentations. So at the frst two subjects. It makes you like in doubt of your skills if you can pass it and honestly the frst two

Level 2 in the frst year but the teachers say no, one year in Level 1, another year Level 2.

greatly benefted from extra suppor

6 Social and emotional dimensions of education

7 Racism and bullying

8 Mental health and education

Mental health issues, particularly related to asylum claims or to trauma, have a signifcant and ongoing

school at this diffcult time, such as help with assignments and writing letters to the Home Office in

Support for families and carers

Universities

Admissions offices to recognise the non-standard backgrounds of refugee students and consider flexible entry requirements. For example, consider alternatives to GCSE English, alternative means of assessing competences where there are gaps in an applicant's profile, and recognise qualifications from overseas.

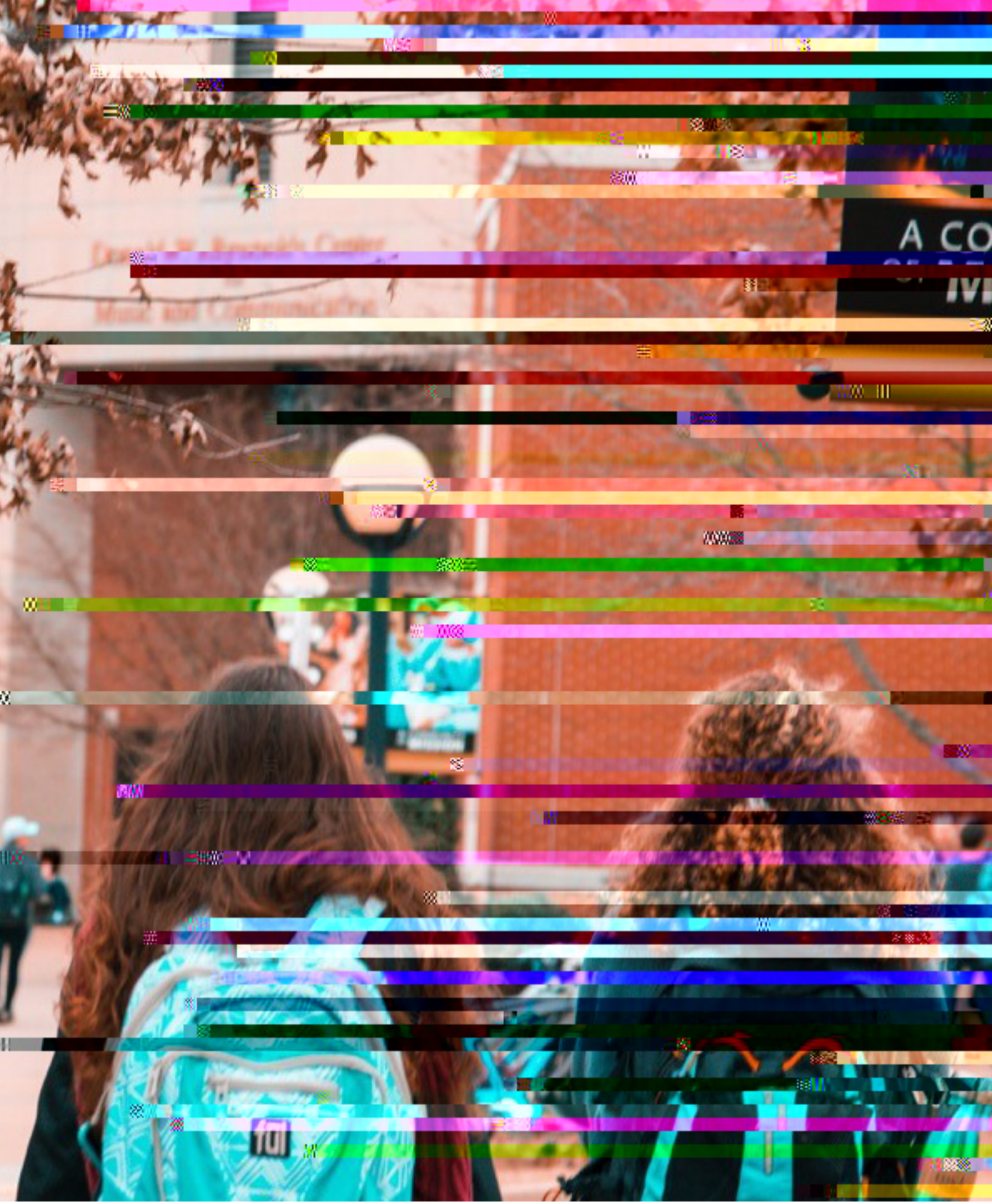
Universities to simplify information about financial support available to refugee background

applications and finances.

Universities to consider outreach activities which support RBS to 'catch-up' with academic content

Annex: Advisory Group Members

Bibliography



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