



We have widening participation, increased access, retention and achievement of students at the heart of our mission;
'To educate, to advance knowledge and to serve the common good'.

Summary Statement

We value the wealth of experience, skills and knowledge that students from diverse backgrounds bring to the experience of other students and staff of the University.

We will continue our work to improve the rates of access, success and progression amongst target groups where participation in higher education is low. Success in this work depends on continuation of our successful partnerships and collaboration with schools, colleges, local authorities, other universities and charitable organisations.

Our Student Body

Number of students in 2017/18 – the latest data available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency:

- **Number of students:** 7,942
- **Undergraduate students:** 6,486 (82%)
- **Postgraduate students:** 1,456 (18%)
- **Full-time:** 6,862 (86%)
- **Part-time:** 1,080 (14%)
- **Male:** 2,799 (35%)
- **Female:** 5,133 (65%)
- **International:** 497 (6%)

The Office for Students have released a publicly available data dashboard providing data on student populations and outcomes for students from recognised groups under-represented in Higher Education and considered target groups for access and participation activity. Below are the student entrants in 2017/18 of these recognised groups at the University of Winchester.

2017/18 full-time undergraduate first-degree UK-domicile entrants:

- **Students from low-participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Q1 or 2*):** 575 (30.9%)
- **Students from the most deprived neighbourhoods (English IMD Q1 or 2*):** 400 (19.3%)
- **Students with a declared disability:** 445 (21%)
 - *Those with specific learning differences:* 135 (6.4%)
 - *Those with mental health conditions:* 135 (6.5%)
- **Mature students (21 years old or above on entry):** 245 (11.7%)
- **Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority students (BAME):** 5215 (10.3%)
 - *Black students:* 50 (2.4%)
 - *Asian students:* 85 (4.1%)

* POLAR stands for Participation of Local Areas, and is a set of classification groups of areas across the UK based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education (HE). Quintile (Q)1 has the lowest participation rates and Quintile 5 has the highest. POLAR4 is the most recent version in use.

** English IMD stands for English Index of Multiple Deprivation is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. Quintile (Q)1 has the highest rates of deprivation and Quintile 5 has the lowest – could be considered affluent areas.*

Our Strategy

As a values-driven institution committed to *social justice and sustainability* we strive to ensure that *every individual matters* and *commit to closing the gaps* in students access and participation, with a key focus on the persistent gaps in student degree outcomes.

Our new strategic vision and plan demonstrates our continued commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and we acknowledge our collective responsibility to ensure 'quality education' and 'reduce inequality'.

The University of Winchester commits to monitoring and evaluating the impact of its widening participation activities on the access, success and progression of students from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. This enables us to evidence our commitments to ensuring fairness of access and participation in higher education in accordance with the University's Strategic Plan and Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Strategy.

Our Ambitions

Access and Outreach

We are proud of our track record in access and outreach. However, we realise we can still improve our work and will be looking to work more closely with partners in targeted communities.

- We will work to continue increasing the Young Progression Rate of learners engaged on our access and outreach programmes.
- We will work with our partners in our targeted regions to increase attainment rates of 5+GCSEs (A*-C equivalent including English and Maths).

While we continue to attract students from diverse backgrounds in line with national benchmarks, we recognise that there is room for improvement in increasing the diversity of our student body.

- We aim to target student recruitment activity at sixth forms and colleges with higher proportions of students from low-participation neighbourhoods and BAME backgrounds.

Success

We are proud of our progress in reducing gaps in continuation for students from under-represented backgrounds.

- We will seek to continue ensuring students from low participation backgrounds are as likely to continue their studies as their peers from high participation backgrounds.

We recognise that there are large gaps in degree outcomes for students from backgrounds traditionally under-represented in higher education and that this is a social injustice that needs to be addressed. We are particularly aware of the stark gap in

outcomes for those from areas of deprivation; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students, and acknowledge there is a new and growing attainment gap for the increasing number of students with mental health difficulties. Tackling these gaps will be an institutional priority.

- We will close the gap in degree outcomes for students from the most deprived backgrounds (as measured by English IMD), BAME students and those with a mental health difficulty to zero by 2030.

Acknowledging the complex relationship between student access, retention, continuation and progression we will be developing strategic measures that aim to primarily address attainment but have also been linked to positive outcomes in other areas of the student lifecycle for these WP groups. In addition, we will continue to ensure we target our activity at those most in need across the student lifecycle accounting for intersectionality and individual difference.

Progression

Employability is a key institutional priority for all our students however we must ensure, that as we seek to improve progression outcomes for all, we continue to narrow the gaps in progression for students from backgrounds shown as less likely to progress into graduate employment or further study, The following targets align with our Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Action Plan:

- We will seek to close gaps in progression to graduate level employment or further study between males and females, with a view to closing the gap in progression outcomes by 2025.

Our Partners

The University continues to work in partnership with a range of agencies and organisations to achieve its widening participation goals, including (but not exclusively):

- Winchester Student Union and our student body.
- Compact Partner colleges and schools with whom we hold Compact Agreements.
- Employers.
- Hampshire Children's Services and other local authorities.
- Targeted primary and secondary schools who are partners in our 'UWIN Aspire' access and outreach programme.
- Other universities.
- Voluntary sector agencies.

We consider our students as key partners in our activity to widen access and participation. Student engagement is a priority in the institutional strategy to ensure innovation in the educational experience and we consult with students on the development of all our strategic plans and policies including the Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Strategy, Equality and Diversity Policy and the Access and Participation Plan.

We value the benefits of working collaboratively and are proud to be associated with the following groups and networks:

- The Article 26 Network
- The Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)
- The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL)
- The Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance
- The Southern Universities Network (SUN)

Our Activity

Access and Outreach

We will continue to:

- Deliver high quality widening participation outreach, building on our successful record through our impartial 'UWIN Aspire' programme targeting primary and secondary schools in North Hampshire, and young people in those schools from Year 5 to Year 11.
- Deliver targeted and bespoke access and outreach activities, including on-campus taster days and residential visits for: children in care and care leavers, young adult carers, disabled young people, young people from ethnic minorities, asylum seekers and refugees, and children from military service families.
- Support schools to develop raising attainment activities and targets.
- Encourage applications from students from under-represented groups through our Compact Scheme with partner schools and colleges.
- Work with our partners, both locally and nationally, to support the educational progression of young people from under-represented backgrounds, and those professionals supporting them.
- Provide financial support for those from low-participation neighbourhoods, and other under-represented backgrounds, to be able to attend open-days and interviews.

In addition, as the lead sponsor of the University of Winchester Academy Trust, we will:

- Work towards opening our flagship primary schools, the Barton Farm Academy (Winchester) and Chestnut Avenue Primary School (Chandler's Ford), to provide highly innovative and sustainable school environments in areas where levels of disadvantage are higher than other surrounding areas, and where new developments include high proportions of affordable housing.

Success and Progression

We will:

- Continue to work towards providing a fully inclusive campus where all our students are able to flourish; reviewing and developing our learning environment, learning curriculum and learning technology to be more inclusive and accessible.
- Develop initiatives that support under-represented students to engage in university life and develop 'a sense of belonging', thus increasing their potential to achieve and progress. Examples of these initiatives include (but are not limited to):
 - Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), SMART Buddies and other forms of peer mentoring/learning
 - Student Fellows Scheme and Winchester Research Apprenticeship Programme
- Improve and expand the provision of mental health support.
- Provide employability and progression opportunities for students from under-represented backgrounds with an emphasis on supporting students to access volunteering, work experience, driving lessons and mentoring schemes. This will include an increased focus on progression initiatives into higher (professional or managerial) levels of graduate employment through increased volunteering and work placement opportunities across the curriculum.
- Research and explore the differential outcomes of students from under-represented groups whilst studying to inform how we develop future widening participation initiatives to address this.

Financial Support

We will:

- Provide an effective package of financial support to students from low-income backgrounds and low-participation neighbourhoods, to care leavers and to young adult carers, so that our recruitment of students from these backgrounds remains strong.
- Develop an effective support package for estranged students* and sign up to the Standalone Pledge.
- Continue to support students whose immigration status does not allow access to Student Finance through our Sanctuary Award. We have formed a working group and aim to establish a research centre committed to research and support for forced migrants.
- Explore the provision of financial support in the form of travel grants to support the high proportion of commuting students who come from under-represented backgrounds in Higher Education.

Often students are unaware that they are classed as an under-represented student and are able to access the support available. To enable students to better understand and acknowledge the support available to them we plan to develop a calculator tool that not only helps students to identify levels of financial support they are eligible for but other support and initiatives that they may be able to access, based on the widening participation characteristics they input.

Please note, full details of our current access bursaries can be found on our website, and will be detailed in our Access and Participation Plan and within our previous Access Agreements.

** Estranged students are those who have no communicative relationship with either of their living biological parents and often their wider family networks as well.*

Our Achievements

We are proud to have been awarded the following acknowledgements in recognition of our commitment to widening access and participation, equality and diversity, social justice and impact:

- Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme (Bronze Award)
- National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) commendations in the 2019 Awards for HE Institution of the Year and Partnership of the Year
- Social Enterprise Gold Mark
- Stonewall Diversity Champion
- Teaching Excellence Framework (Silver)
- Times Higher Education Awards, Widening Participation of Outreach Initiative of the Year (Winner, 2016)

Review of this statement

We review this Access and Participation statement annually as part of our regular review of policies. We will update and re-publish this policy annually as required by condition A2 of the Office for Students Regulatory Framework. This version of the Access and Participation Statement was published on 13/08/2019.