

De Montfort University's strategic approach to access

1. At De Montfort University (DMU), we are proud of our record in widening access to our courses and promoting student success. Last year we launched our new equality and diversity charter, DMUfreedom. It sets bold targets for what we want to achieve . our game changers . and our objectives until 2020. Fairness, equality and inclusion are therefore central to our mission and extend from our strategic framework throughout our teaching activities to the wider student experience.
2. Our student population directly reflects the broad ethnic mix in Leicester, with just over half coming from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups. Our continuing activity in community outreach projects (such as DMU Local), and our strong local popularity among under-privileged and/or BAME sections of the population ensure that we will continue to meet our benchmarks. For example:

We offer high quality access opportunities which are attractive to mature students. We currently have 440 students claiming Access to Higher Education scholarships.

The percentage of new entrants recruited from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPNs) increased from 13.2% in 2014-2015 to 13.4% in 2015-2016, demonstrating the impact of our innovative community engagement project. Our performance gap against our *location adjusted benchmark* has closed from 0.7% in 2014-2015 to 0.4% in 2015-2016 and we aim to exceed benchmark in f

Our Equality and Diversity strategy

6. Our objective is simple . that we put inclusivity at the heart of everything we do.
7. DMUfreedom is founded on three principles . freedom to be, freedom to inspire and freedom to succeed.
8. In 2016, we launched DMUfreedom, our equality and diversity charter for 2016-2020.

Equality Impact

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Our Access Specific Programmes and Projects

18. We manage our strategic change using a programme and project portfolio process. This director-level governance - through a strategic portfolio board - ensures good practice from a wide project management network and allows us to manage, deliver and evaluate the change activities that we are delivering.
19. In addition, all our projects and programmes are scrutinised using an equality impact assessment at a variety of stages of the project lifecycle to en

Freedom to Achieve

28. We have established our *Freedom to Achieve* programme in response to our attainment gap between UK domiciled BAME and white students achieving a 1st or 2:1 at undergraduate level (first degree). Between 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 we saw this attainment gap close from 14.9% to 9.3%. In 2015-2016, however, the gap has risen to 14%.
29. Alongside five other HE Institutions and one FE College we have been awarded £500,000 by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to increase the number of BAME students who achieve good honours degrees. Freedom to Achieve, which secured the maximum amount of funding available from the Catalyst Fund, will help identify why fewer BAME students achieve 1st or 2:1 degrees compared with white counterparts . a discrepancy known nationally as the BAME attainment gap.
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they face;

Engage with these students on enrolment to facilitate access both to mainstream careers and employability and other skills development opportunities with the provision of some bespoke support;

Support these students to transition successfully to either further study or high quality employment at the end of their course.

Healthy DMyou

37. We want a healthy and resilient community in which all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Successful health and wellbeing activities have been incorporated into *Healthy DMyou*, our new university-wide approach to create and promote positive health and wellbeing benefits for all of our students.
38. *University Mental Health Day*, for example, attracted more than 300 students last year and growing numbers are engaging with information regarding alcohol awareness and smoking cessation support.
39. Our *Campus 330* initiative encourages students to increase their activity level and meet the health recommendation of doing 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise at least three times a week and helps them to get involved in non-competitive sport for free. Attendance at these activities increased four-fold from 178 in 2014-2015 to 818 in 2015-2016 and is set to grow again in 2016-2017.

Embedded Institutional Activities

40. We are committed to supporting students from all backgrounds to enter higher education and to succeed once they are here, both in their studies and beyond. We carry out a wide range of outreach activities, including many in collaboration with other providers in the local area through the National Collaborative Outreach Project. We are also committed to providing high quality support to students, enabling them to fulfil their potential, achieve their qualifications and progress into positive outcomes. This section details the work that we carry out, embedded as core activities carried out across faculties and departments at DMU.
41. Our data shows that 75% of our students are OFFA-countable. We know from the WP literature that integrated approaches and activities that are offered to whole cohorts rather than targeted at individuals are more effective. For these reasons, the on-programme interventions as described in this section are aimed at whole cohorts and data is provided to show how effective they are for WP and OFFA-countable students.

Outreach Activity... DMU Local

42. DMU Local is our innovative volunteering programme that delivers more than 100 activities and projects. During 2015-2016, more than 2,500 of our students across 462 programmes volunteered and they develop skillsets that we know will help them to assimilate seamlessly into working life. DMU Local has been recognised as an exemplar programme, and has won multiple national and international awards, including a Guardian University Contribution to Local Community award in 2014 and The Mahatma Gandhi International Award in 2013. We were highly commended for a Times Higher Education Award 2013 in Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community.
43. DMU Local has recently expanded its geographical remit to include new areas of Leicester and Leicestershire, offering a wider range of projects and activities to engage traditionally hard to reach groups and low participation backgrounds here at DMU.
44. Consisting of multiple projects designed in consultation with the community, DMU Local includes our widening access commitments, creating a whole institution approach to both community engagement and widening participation. Activities now include:

An enhanced suite of youth activities, to engage hard to reach young people outside of school settings. These include HE campus based activities for both children and parents, accredited dance programmes worth 35 UCAS points, and off campus and in school STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) focused activities.

IT Training activities which provide comprehensive support to Primary and Secondary schools in Leicester, with 400 children a week being taught how to code through ÖT WŠ [& a] [* ! a { ^ . ÖT WŠ [& a] [, , [rking with Hewlett Packard with a particular focus on encouraging school girls into technology related

45. Annually 2,500 students now support and contribute to DMU Local projects and activities, through both course basent15()-4(sup)3(po)3(rp)3(porko)36(pj)]aceoe(i)5(b)1

REACH (www.reach.ac.uk), we will use NCOP funding to further enhance the partnerships programme of activities. We will do this by creating a series of collaborative events for schools, focusing around a number of different themes (skills development, STEM, sports etc.). The result of this new collaborative programme will see more effective engagement with under-represented groups, in particular, white working class boys.

52. As part of this activity in March 2017 we established a mass student and academic mentoring project, providing support to targeted WP children on the C/D GCSE borderline using trained DMU students.

55. In addition to the above, we continue to deliver, monitor and evaluate a range of aspiration raising activities in partnership with regional schools and colleges, including:

Our broader award-winning programme of IAG outreach with regional schools and colleges, offering comprehensive guidance to students, parents and local advisers regarding higher education options, applying to university and student support.

This year our placement team has started participating in outreach events to raise awareness of the importance of gaining early work experience and where to look for opportunities.

56. We are committed to supporting students to achieve their potential and transition from education to employment. From our extensive resource support mechanisms through to our new Employer Engagement Strategy, launched in March 2017, we give students from all backgrounds the best possible opportunity to gain positive outcomes from their time here.

Support, Achievement and Success... Enhancing Employability

57. Following a review of provision in early 2014, our

September 2014, more than 50% of the student population has activated and used their MyGateway account. Bespoke online workflows have been developed to

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engagement at individual level including sorting participation data by different WP characteristics. An online skills award has also been piloted to enable students to undertake effective reflection and evidencing of key employability skills as part of their co-curricular activities.

67. Finally, DMUglobal is our international experience programme that was launched in 2013-2014. DMUglobal aims to enrich studies, broaden cultural horizons and develop key skills valued by employers. Through #DMUglobal, we offer a wide range of international opportunities including Erasmus+ and international exchange, academic-led trips, student-led trips, summer schools, internships and volunteering, as well as UK and on-campus activities. These activities are aligned to institutionally agreed competencies and the majority of academic-led trips are embedded into academic programmes. The opportunities take place overseas and in the UK to ensure full inclusivity to all students, and students are supported financially.

Support, Achievement and Success... Academic Facilities Support and Resources

68. Our Mathematics Learning Centre (MLC) is open daily for any student to obtain individual maths help. More structured sessions are provided for course areas including Engineering, Pharmacy, Nursing and Midwifery. The MLC offers specialist support for students with dyslexia, dyscalculia and other neurodiverse learning styles as well as for those who are highly anxious or maths-phobic. We have also rolled out accessible online maths and statistics material to support part-time and distance learning students.

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73. Our online self-assessment exercise (e-SAE) allows all new level 4 students to assess their confidence (pre-entry) in 7 skill areas: Information (Library) Skills; Digital Literacy; Verbal Communication; Academic Writing; Reading; Numeracy; and Employability. In 2015-2016, 4470 students have logged on to the site and 95% have completed all or part of it. Students can take feedback to personal tutor meetings, and electronic programme level overviews are available to lecturers.

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80. As part of our WP

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Targets and milestones

101. We have set targets using both external and internal data. Externally measured targets have been maintained in-line with the 2017-2018 Access Agreement, with revisions of those targets that have already been reached. Initially, we aim to be at least in line with our HESA benchmark for retention-related measures, but are also mindful of the absolute performance measures and have benchmarked ourselves in this regard against a group of similar universities. For new initiatives the targets have been set incrementally. Any existing initiative has had its target reviewed and the target profile reset if performance has exceeded target.
102. We work in collaboration with the East Midlands Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP). EMWPREP provides a much enhanced monitoring and evaluation database, allowing HEI partners including ourselves to rigorously monitor activity, track participants, evaluate our widening participation projects and share good practice.
103. EMWPREP continues to provide us with a comprehensive data set to allow for monitoring participant demographics for all of our WP activities. Data is obtained for all participants leading to evaluation from the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), the NS-SEC (National Statistics Socio-economic Classification) and the Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) data. We also analyse all attendees by gender and parental experience of higher education. Comparisons are made with the previous academic

Monitoring and Evaluation

105. We understand the importance of monitoring and evaluating our activities so that we are able to recognise good practice and fund future activities accordingly. We are currently rolling out a new approach to measuring and monitoring impact on all DMU projects and programmes, managed by the Benefits Management Advisory Group (BMAG). This ensures that all project managers are supported in setting and agreeing impact measures, which are approved by the SRO and project board. All projects and programmes that are included in our OFFA access agreement will therefore be evaluated in this way going forward.

106. Other Access Agreement monitoring and evaluation activities include:

Provision of information to prospective students

107. We place emphasis on promoting and communicating our support packages, tuition fee policies and payment arrangements to students. This is achieved through our website,

Consulting with students and our Student's Union

115. The Student's Union continues to enhance the student experience, supporting students in their cultural, artistic, sporting, specialist and media related endeavors, whilst providing the all-important student voice on campus, ensuring the needs, wants and ideas of the student population are heard by the university.
116. The Student body is consulted widely on initiatives throughout the University and conducts extensive surveys of students. Changes to our Access Agreement offerings are made based on these evaluations and in consultation with the DSU through the

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Representative Coordinators (SRC) have been selected, trained, and have been representing students at various University Committees. The SRCs have also been supporting the Course Rep Scheme which saw 218 Reps attend the Rep Conference in November 2016.

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Institution	Mode	Level	Fee
Soccer Coaching Ltd	FT	UG	£6,000
National Design Academy998 22343.15 759.24			