

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2019 – Western Sydney University

1. **Equity outcomes and strategies:** for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background.

a) **Outcomes for improving access and performance for equity groups**

In 2019 Western Sydney University will consolidate its position as a leader in educational partnerships with schools across Western Sydney with the support of their communities, to prepare, motivate and engage young people to participate and succeed in higher education throughout their student lifecycle.

To achieve this overarching outcome, we will design and implement strategies that:

- improve students' academic preparedness
- increase students' awareness, confidence and motivation toward higher education
- build student, teacher, school and community capacity
- broaden students' family knowledge about higher education
- develop and sustain effective community and stakeholder partnerships.

b) **Strategies for achieving the outcomes**

Western Sydney University will use HEPPP funds to further develop strategies which enable successful participation in higher education by people from non-traditional backgrounds. These outcomes will be achieved by focusing on the following:

PRE-ACCESS AND ACCESS

- Continue to build aspirations and awareness of higher education in collaboration with partner schools and community organisations, which enable the delivery of sustainable awareness, aspiration and access programs.
- Further develop and grow an evidence-based model of practice for promoting higher education access to targeted equity groups and build their academic capability and engagement with Western Sydney University.
- Continue to grow academic enrichment opportunities, particularly in STEAM subjects, for students in years 5-12.
- Continue to identify high school students from years 9-12 to support raising achievement, awareness and access to tertiary study through focused ongoing support.
- Broaden the support and resource base for widening participation programs at Western Sydney University by strengthening existing relationships and exploring new partnerships within the University's schools, Institutes and service units.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTAINMENT

- Support Western Sydney University's Schools, Institutes and service units in the development and delivery of retention programs.
- Continue to provide focused ongoing support for students entering Western Sydney University, particularly at the key stage of transition to university, including peer mentoring, engagement opportunities and targeted workshops (academic, personal and career development).
- Provide easy access for low SES groups to library resources and technologies, and information literacy programs, to support student participation and success.
- Promote and deliver student support services that meet the needs of targeted equity groups.
- Provide academic and financial support for students through equity scholarships and transition programs.
- Ensure widening participation activities relating to academic skills and career development consider the specific needs of low SES students.

2. **Key activities:** which will deliver an increase in the access, participation and success of people from a low SES background.

Activity	Equity Initiatives Framework: student life cycle stages				Activity Type
	Pre-Access	Access	Participation	Attainment	
Fast Forward	✓	✓			Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Pasifika Achievement To Higher Education (PATHE)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Widening Participation Student Ambassadors			✓	✓	Employment support – pre-completion/professional development

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External Partnerships, (Studiosity, The Smith Family, Gibber Theatre)	✓	✓	✓		Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
First Foot Forward	✓				Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
HSC Study Sessions		✓		✓	Academic preparation/support
Community Engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parent/community information/support
New and Emerging Community engagement (Refugee/Asylum seekers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Transition Success		✓	✓	✓	First year transition program
Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)			✓	✓	Mentoring, peer support
MATES (Mentoring)			✓	✓	Mentoring, peer support
Student Grants/Scholarships		✓	✓	✓	Scholarships
Jobs on Campus			✓	✓	Employment support – pre-completion
Women in Science & Engineering (WISE)			✓	✓	Inclusive design/pedagogies
Heartbeat	✓				Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Pathways to Dreaming	✓	✓	✓		Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Blended Learning			✓	✓	Enhancing program implementation
Disability Advisory Service			✓	✓	Enhancing program implementation
Indigenous Outreach via Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Student Outreach via Schools Engagement	✓	✓	✓		Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience

3. Evaluation: *How the University plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the equity strategies.*

Evaluation includes the collection of qualitative and quantitative data to assess components of each activity, i.e. individual events, as well as the overall program (encompassing all activities) evaluation.

All Western Sydney University activities funded through HEPPP are required to prepare an internal annual plan outlining agreed impact and outcome measures, and an annual report which tracks the success of these measures through evaluative processes undertaken post activities. These reports demonstrate how these activities have contributed to University outcomes as well as improving access to higher education and increasing participation of students from a low SES background. University Schools, Institutes and service units also report on the impact of activities focusing on attitudinal shifts, percentage changes in offers to study at a university, as well as access, retention and success rates to inform the future direction and planning of HEPPP-funded activities.

Regular feedback from key stakeholders complements the internal evaluation process. Research, documenting best practice and the use of focus groups informs the direction of continual program enhancements.

4. Partnerships and collaboration: *who the university will partner and collaborate with, and how this will improve equity performance.*

Programs are underpinned by strategic partnerships with the NSW Department of Education and local Catholic Education Offices. Over 150 schools participating in the Pathways To Dreaming, First Foot Forward, PATHE and Fast Forward programs enter into agreements as educational partners with Western Sydney University.

Western Sydney University will continue to build on extensive existing partnerships with community organisations, industry and the professions to deliver support services for pre-access programs, e.g. Studiosity and Gibber Theatre in Schools, as well as access and participation programs e.g. The Smith Family. We will continue to work with partnering universities on identified joint ventures and funding grant submissions. Furthermore, we will develop new corporate partnership opportunities with refugee/asylum seeker NGOs (e.g. Settlement Services International, CORE Community Services, Navitas, SydWest Multicultural Services, and Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander industry and community organisations.