

Access and Participation Plan 2020

University of Tasmania



Equity outcomes and strategies:

for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background

- All Tasmanians can aspire to higher education
- Access to, participation in and success of University study is not limited through location or background.

Situation: 37.2% of Tasmanians are in the most disadvantaged SES quintile of Australians (ABS, 2017). The 2016 census identified that only 16.2% of Tasmanians had a Bachelor degree or above (compared to a national figure of 22%), and almost 28% of Tasmanians adults had an educational attainment of year 10 or below. Only 73.2 % of students remain at school until year 12 in 2018 (RoGS, 2020). All of these figures are geographically nuanced with rural, regional and remote communities with significant levels of disadvantage.

Our access and participation strategies span three phases:

Pre-access: Design, implement and evaluate a programme of purposeful access and participation initiatives (in-reach and out-reach) that encourage a love of learning, build aspiration and connect young people and families to the University of Tasmania.

Access and Transition: Enable students' access to, and preparedness for, university study through an orientation and transition experience that recognises a diversity of student backgrounds; address barriers to participation in higher education in regional communities with targeted, evidence-led programs; reach more people through a place-based approach to curriculum development and pedagogy working with diverse communities, industries and schools across regions.

Retention and Success: Provide an inclusive, supportive and engaging environment to enable students to succeed in their university studies.

Key activities are outlined on the table overleaf. Evaluation is embedded into programs and go beyond numbers to investigate impact through data connection and longitudinal tracking.

Key University Level Plans

[University of Tasmania Strategic Direction](#)
[Student Experience Strategy 2016-2020](#)

[University Strategic Plan 2019-2024](#)
[Strategic Plan of Aboriginal Engagement](#)

Partnerships and collaborations: who the University will partner and collaborate with and how this will improve equity performance

The University partners and collaborates with a wide range of organisations in delivering its Access and Participation Plan and key strategies. These include:

- State Government through the partnership agreement; and the [Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment](#)
 - The Tasmanian Department of Education (DoE) inclusive of Learning Services (North and South), My Education Team and Educational and Performance Review; Libraries Tasmania, [Study Hub West Coast](#)
- Schools, Colleges and skill centres across the public, catholic and independent sectors;
- TasTAFE - joint outreach activities, pathways and articulation arrangements
- Community groups including; TasCOSS, Smith Family, Salvation Army (Communities for Children), Social Action Research Centre (SARC), Beacon,
- Industry and Business through Course Advisory Committees, research and student work placements, scholarship support
- Local government including Launceston and Hobart City Deals, Devonport Festival of Learning, Burnie, West Coast and Kingborough council.
- Over 200 [public learning destinations for Children's University](#)

These partnerships improve equity performance through joint work in identifying low SES learners who can benefit from programs, design and implementation of programs and activities, targeting of initiatives and joint bids for development and project funding. External partners also participate in University committees (e.g. Schools and Community Engagement and Peter Underwood Centre Advisory Committees and the North West Advisory Board).

Key Activities and Evaluation

	Strategy	Key Activities: which will deliver an increase in the access, participation and success of people from a low SES background.	Evaluation: how the university plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the equity strategies.
Pre-access	Design, implement and evaluate a programme of purposeful access and participation initiatives that encourage a love of learning, build aspiration and connect young people and families to the University of Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's University <i>Yrs 4-8 focus on low SES/rural schools</i> A-Lab outreach through Peter Underwood Centre with DoE <i>Low SES and regional focus</i> UTAS Connect program of activities <i>Discovery days, school visits, campus visits, tours, open days, option evenings, access to university resources</i> Discipline specific aspiration raising activities eg Science Engagement Schools and Community; Science and Engineering Investigation awards – State-wide 	<p>Longitudinal mixed methods evaluation and data linkage with DoE (including attendance data at school); Children's voice research.</p> <p>Surveys and student/school feedback; Reach and participation figures; longitudinal follow up re impact</p> <p><i>Plus (for all initiatives):</i> Monitoring of patterns of engagement of individual schools and longitudinal patterns of applications and enrolments at University</p>
Access and transition	<p>Enable students' access to, and preparedness for, university study through an orientation and transition experience that recognises a diversity of student backgrounds</p> <p>Address barriers to participation in higher education in regional communities</p> <p>A place-based approach to curriculum development and pedagogy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Connections Program/High Achiever Program Year 11/12 <i>State-wide</i> School-based Uni Hubs <i>Claremont College; Newstead College</i> University Preparation Program <i>Builds skills and confidence to prepare student for university study</i> murina Program <i>Preparation program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</i> Foundation Units <i>To achieve necessary pre-requisites</i> Welcome program Transition support through UniStart Student Advisors West Coast initiative Scholarship program VC's Access Scholarships Global Leaders Scholarship Old Hobartian Centenary Scholarship; Tall Foundation Expansion of offering in the North and the North-West through the academic transformation program University College programs <i>New pathways into tertiary study</i> 	<p>Student numbers; Schools involved; Surveys, feedback from students/school; applications and enrolments from of students; success of students</p> <p>Student numbers; Transition into university from access programs; Success of students from access programs; Student feedback.</p> <p>Student numbers; Student feedback/ annual student services quality survey; % of students retained to census and succeeding</p> <p>Student numbers; Transition into university from access programs Retention and success of students from access programs and scholarships; Student feedback.</p> <p><i>Plus (for all initiatives):</i> Numbers of low SES and equity students accessing pathways into university.</p>
	Provide an inclusive, supportive and engaging environment to enable students to succeed in their university studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for learning Studiosity – 24/7 online study support Student Success program – phone and email campaigns PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) Peer mentoring and support via Drop-In Services and UTASLife Student Advisers <i>Monitoring student engagement; Early intervention</i> Student Advice and Mentorship program (SAM) (Attached) Support for equitable access for learning through disability services Student Learning Librarians supporting information literacy Riawunna A culturally safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to study, access academic and cultural support and be a part of a dynamic community. Leadership and volunteering opportunities Employability and career development 24/7 Library access Student lounges with cooking facilities 	<p>Monitoring of student progress through Business Intelligence (BI)</p> <p>Leveraging BI to identify need for early intervention, and monitoring success.</p> <p>Numbers of students accessing services; Student feedback (eg eVALUate; Service Quality; Library survey)</p> <p>Academic performance and retention of students accessing services</p> <p>Longitudinal data on number of students graduating from low SES and equity groups</p>

Overview: Student Advice and Mentorship (SAM) Model

As extracted from the University of Tasmania staff intranet site:

The SAM model is an initiative of the *Retention Taskforce*, convened in late 2019 to drive priority projects to help address attrition and improve retention for University of Tasmania students.

SAM focuses on students in core undergraduate and pathways courses who fall into one or more demographic risk groups as identified in analysis by *Strategy and Planning* in 2019 as at significant risk of attrition. These include part time, Distance mode, International, mature age and low ATAR students.

Under the SAM model, from semester 1 2020, students in one or more of the demographic risk groups above are targeted for proactive, phone-based support at 5 key points in their transition to university, aiming to:

- prepare students for study;
- ensure students are connected and engaged;
- provide students with early and actionable assessment feedback;
- re-engage with students after mid-semester break when large assessment tasks due to guide preparation and submission; and
- identify those in need of intervention as part of the Academic Progress Review process due to a first semester of failure of 50% or more of their total enrolment.

These interventions are coordinated centrally using a common methodology and recording process and are undertaken collaboratively involving College academic and the Academic Division professional staff. Details of the aims of each touchpoint and the teams involved are outlined below.

- Touch point 1 is undertaken prior to semester start by Student Success, and International and Domestic Student Recruitment. It focuses on welcoming and enrolling students and ensuring they are well prepared for study.
- Touch point 2 is undertaken in weeks 2 and 3 of semester by Student Success and focuses on ensuring students are off to a good start in semester, are accessing MyLO and are aware of supports.
- Touch point 3 is undertaken in weeks 4 and 5 of semester by academic staff teaching in the College the students are enrolled in and focuses on the critical first assessment period to determine if students are engaging with their learning, know about support if having difficulties and, if not, are referred to advice on the right program of study.
- Touch point 4 occurs in weeks 6 – 9 and is undertaken by Student Success. It focuses on engagement with the second half of semester, when larger assessment pieces are due, fatigue can set in, and support needs become more apparent.
- Touch point 5 occurs just after results release and is undertaken by academic staff and Student Advisers. It focuses on students who have been identified as part of the Academic Progress Review process due to failure of half or more of semester enrolment and establishing individual support strategies for those students where needed.