



HEPPP ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

Please note that whilst the outcomes of this plan remain unchanged, changes are pending to delivery methods due to the transition of Western Sydney University programs to online delivery in the COVID-19 environment. Whilst the response to COVID-19 has not been detailed extensively in this plan, consideration is continually provided to the support of low socio-economic students through the impacts of COVID-19 on the delivery of outreach, support and success programs.

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 2020 Western Sydney University will continue to consolidate its position as a leader in educational partnerships with schools across Western Sydney and with the support of their communities, 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:

- increase students' awareness, confidence and motivation toward higher education
- improve students' academic preparedness
- build student, teacher, school and community capacity for progression to higher education
- broaden students' family knowledge about higher education
- support students transition to, and success within, the university environment
- develop and sustain effective community and stakeholder partnerships.

Western Sydney University will also support the improvement of employability outcomes for students from equity groups by implementing strategies to:

- Encourage and support students from low socio-economic backgrounds in accessing key employment opportunities and paid work experiences that contribute to positive graduate outcomes
- Develop and deliver an employability strategy which recognises the wide range of capabilities students possess, with a particular focus on diverse range of experiences of students of a low socio-economic backgrounds
- Develop strategies for low socio economic students in developing a strong graduate capability profile throughout and upon completion of their studies.
- Work with industry to advocate for more inclusive recruitment strategies that recognise and legitimise the diverse range of experiences of students from low SES backgrounds.

b) Strategies for achieving the outcomes

Western Sydney University will use HEP PP 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 (OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES) and ACCESS (PRE-ENTRY AND ADMISSION)

- 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 8-12 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 (TRANSITION AND PROGRESSION DURING STUDIES)

- 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 support for students through transition programs.
- Ensure widening participation activities relating to academic skills which consider the specific needs of low SES students.

ATTAINMENT (SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION AND PREPARATION FOR GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT)

- Ensure widening participation activities relating to career development skills which consider the specific needs of low SES students.
- An employability strategy and online platform which enables students from diverse backgrounds to reflect, develop and communicate their full range of employability capabilities with a "whole of person" approach.

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 (High School Program)	✓	✓			Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Pasifika Achievement To Higher Education (PATHE)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Engagement Student Ambassadors			✓	✓	Employment support – pre-completion/professional development
External Partnerships, (Studiosity, The Smith Family, Gibber Theatre, AIME)	✓	✓	✓		Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
First Foot Forward (Primary School Program)	✓				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)	✓	✓	✓	✓	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 (Primary School Program)	✓				Aspiration raising – pre-entry university experience
Pathways to Dreaming (High School Program)	✓	✓	✓		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
Employability Strategy			✓	✓	Employment support – pre-completion

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 project plan outlining agreed impact and outcome measures, and an annual project 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, Heartbeat, 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, participation and attainment programs e.g. The Smith Family and AIME. We will continue to work with partnering universities on identified joint ventures and funding grant submissions. Furthermore, we will strengthen 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.