

Manchester Access Programme 2025/26 Research Evaluation Study - Participant Information Sheet

As an applicant to the Manchester Access Programme (MAP) you are invited to support our evaluation of the programme through completion of three surveys (January 2026, October 2026 and March 2027). If you are selected to participate but choose not to attend, we will send a survey to understand why you decided not to take part. A small selection of applicants will also be invited to take part in interviews in 2027 to discuss your educational motivations and aspirations. We aim to collect data from both successful and unsuccessful applicants to MAP. This research will help the University to understand the impact of MAP for local pupils during their time in sixth form or college and if it has helped improve access to university for participants. This programme is run by the University of Manchester (UoM) Monitoring and Evaluation Team, based within the Access and Student Success Team.

About the research

➤ **Who will conduct the research?**

The surveys and interviews will be carried out by the Principal Investigator, Jack Walker, Division of Student and Academic Services with support from other members of the Monitoring and Evaluation team within Access and Student Success.

➤ **What is the purpose of the research?**

This research will help the University to understand the impact of MAP for local pupils during their time in sixth form or college and if it has helped improve access to university for participants. We hope to engage prospective students while they are in further education and applying to university to improve our understanding.

➤ **Am I suitable to take part?**

We plan to gather the experiences of prospective students who have applied to MAP. We hope to survey and interview applicants regardless of whether they attend MAP to better understand the experiences of local prospective university students. If you have applied to take part in MAP 2025/26 and meet our essential grade criteria, have not attended a fee-paying school and are studying qualifications equivalent to three A Levels in Greater Manchester, you are eligible to take part.

➤ **Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

We plan to publish the findings from our research in an academic journal and present the findings at conferences. A summary of our outcomes will also be presented in our annual Access and Student Success Impact Report. Those who take part will be forwarded any publications of the results from the study.

➤ **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check**

The Principal Investigator of this study and all supporting staff within the Access and Student Success, Monitoring and Evaluation team have completed an enhanced DBS check within the last two years.

➤ **Who has reviewed the research project?**

This project has been reviewed by The University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee 1 and reviewed by Professor Steven Jones on behalf of the Manchester Institute of Education.

What would my involvement be?

➤ **What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

Your name and email address will be used to contact you regarding surveys and interviews. If you consent, your name date of birth and school details will be shared with HEAT to track your educational outcomes. Your subject(s) of interest, GCSE attainment and eligibility for free school meals, pupil premium and the 16-19 bursary will be used to compare educational outcomes between those who have not taken part in MAP and those who have taken part. Results from the study will be anonymised but grouped by ethnicity, gender and eligibility for financial support to identify if any trends appear.

The survey will ask about your current level of confidence studying and learning new information, your attitudes towards university, what you would like to gain from MAP and your plans for future study. If you complete MAP, you will be asked to provide feedback on the programme. Our final survey will ask if you applied to university and how you found the university application process. We will collect similar data through our interviews about your experiences in sixth form or college, whether you have applied to university and how you found the process.

Those who are interested in being involved in interviews will be invited to select a time appropriate to attend online via MS Teams by emailing the principal investigator. The researcher completing the interview will give a brief introduction on an MS Teams call before asking a series of questions about your experiences, confidence and aspirations. We anticipate that these interviews will take up to an hour.

➤ **Will I be compensated for taking part?**

Survey recipients will be entered into a prize draw for a £50 voucher for each survey they complete and participants in our interviews will each receive a £20 voucher for taking part. The benefits of taking part in this study also include knowing you are having an impact on improving the future design of MAP. There are no expected risks associated with the interview; however, if at any point you feel uncomfortable and/or wish to stop, please let the facilitator know.

➤ **What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are under no obligation to take part. If you choose to participate but later change your mind, that's completely fine. Should you wish to withdraw before the interview, please don't hesitate to contact us using the details below. If you feel uncomfortable at any point during the interview you can leave the MS Teams call at any time or ask the facilitator to stop the recording. You can withdraw from the study up to one month after your interview has taken place before a transcript has been made. You can request the deletion of any survey data you have submitted up until one month after the completion of each survey, after this point analysis of all survey data will be conducted and your answers will be part of the results used.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

➤ What information will you collect about me?

If you consent to take part, this study will use the following data from your application.

- Name
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Nationality
- Ethnicity
- Home address
- Email address
- School history
- GCSE attainment
- Degree programme(s) the applicant is interested in
- Free school meal eligibility
- Pupil premium eligibility
- 16-19 bursary eligibility

Survey responses will be collected through Qualtrics and stored on The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS). The responses will be deleted from Qualtrics once they have been downloaded.

Interviews will be recorded through MS teams and stored on The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS) before being shared with Lawson Hardwick Secretarial Services for transcription via a secure portal one month after the final focus group has taken place.

➤ Under what legal basis are you collecting this information?

You will only be part of this study if you say yes (give your consent) when you fill out your application form. We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with UK data protection law which protect your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is “a public interest task” and “a process necessary for research purposes”. We only collect and store data which participants have consented to sharing for this research.

➤ What are my rights in relation to the information you will collect about me?

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example, you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings.

If you would like to know more about your different rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our [Privacy Notice for Research](#).

➤ Will my participation in the study be confidential and my personal identifiable information be protected?

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

- You will receive a unique link to complete each survey. Your responses will be indirectly identifiable to the researcher using a unique ID code with your name and digital signature removed. This unique ID code will allow the principal investigator to compare how your results change over time and compare these against educational outcomes obtained through HEAT.
- Averages of educational outcome data obtained through HEAT will only be shared in our findings which will adhere to [HESA rounding regulations](#) to ensure that no individual is identifiable. Survey data will be aggregated, and any personal names of people or places will be removed during analysis to preserve anonymity.
- Any names of people, schools, colleges or places present in the audio recording of the interviews will be removed during transcription to preserve anonymity.
- Transcription will be completed using Lawson Hardwick 1st Class Secretarial Services, a provider recommended for transcription of research data by the Research Data Management (RDM) team, which is part of the Office for Open Research. Data will be handled in accordance with their [data policy](#). This company will complete a confidentiality agreement before receiving and handling the data.
- Access to audio recordings will be limited to the principal investigator, Lawson Hardwick and supporting members of the M&E team. Everyone must complete a confidentiality agreement before handling this data.
- The audio data will be deleted after transcription has taken place. The transcription will be saved securely.
- Personal data collected for administrative purposes and focus group data will be stored using a secure research data storage service with access limited to the principal investigator and M&E Team. All members of the M&E team who access the data must sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Survey data will be analysed a month after each survey closes. After this point you will no longer be able to request the deletion of your survey data from the final results.
- Interview recordings will be taken using MS Teams. This recording will be stored securely using The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS) and transferred to Lawson Hardwick 1st Class Secretarial Services via a secure portal. The recording taken will be deleted by Lawson Hardwick 1st Class Secretarial Services and the researcher within one month of the transcripts being completed.
- Anonymised survey and interview data will be stored for up to 5 years after the completion of the study on The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS). At the end of the project, we will deposit a fully anonymised dataset in an open data repository where it will be permanently stored. We will use Figshare at the University of Manchester Library. Researchers at other institutions and others can access the anonymised data directly from the repository and use it for further research or to check our analysis and results.

| | Survey data | Interview data |
|---------------|--|--|
| Personal data | The survey data may contain the names of people and places but this will be removed by the | The audio data may contain names of people, schools, colleges or places. The |

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| | <p>researcher before any analysis is conducted. No identifiable data will be present in the findings of the study.</p> | <p>transcript will be fully anonymous with all names of people, schools, colleges and places removed.</p> |
| <p>Storage</p> | <p>Survey data will be collected through Qualtrics. This data will be downloaded within one week of each survey closing and stored on The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS).</p> | <p>The audio file will be stored using The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS) until transcription is complete.</p> <p>Audio data will be transferred to Lawson Hardwick Secretarial Services for transcription via a secure portal one month after the final interview has taken place. After this point participants will not be able to request their omission from the study.</p> <p>The transcript will be returned to the Principal Investigator of this project via a secure portal.</p> <p>The transcript will be retained on a secure University server for the length of the research and five years after using The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS).</p> |
| <p>Retention</p> | <p>One month after each survey closes the full data set will be deleted from Qualtrics and the copy stored on The University of Manchester Research Data Storage Service (RDS) will be anonymised.</p> | <p>The audio file will be deleted within one month of the final transcript being produced.</p> <p>Lawson Hardwick will also delete the audio file within one month of transcription.</p> <p>The transcript will also be retained permanently on Figshare an open data repository.</p> |

Potential Disclosures

If an interview conversation you reveal any information which means you may be at risk of harming yourself or others, we will be required to break confidentiality in order to put you in touch with the

correct support. This may involve signposting you to relevant support services, calling a family member or friend or calling emergency services.

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected for this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

What if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint about this study, please contact the Principal Investigators Jack Walker or Steven Jones by email using the contact details below. If you wish to make a complaint to someone independent of the research team, this should be the RGEI Manager as listed below.

Contact details for complaints

If you have a complaint that you wish to direct to members of the research team, please contact: JACK.WALKER@MANCHESTER.AC.UK OR SJ@MANCHESTER.AC.UK

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact

The Research Ethics Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 306 8089.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information](#) Tel 0303 123 1113

Contact Details

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part, then please contact the researcher(s)

Name: Jack Walker

Email: JACK.WALKER@MANCHESTER.AC.UK

OR

Name: Steven Jones

Email: SJ@MANCHESTER.AC.UK

