

Widening Participation Strategic Assessment

June 2009

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Section One:

Widening participation strategy

1.1 Introduction

Embedded into The University of Manchester's strategic plan is our commitment to being an open, meritocratic institution that pro-actively seeks out people capable of benefiting from higher education, removes barriers to their participation and in so doing contributes to the expansion of higher education opportunities, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We therefore welcome the opportunity this new Widening Participation Strategic Assessment offers to communicate the breadth and scale of our commitment to expanding equity of access to higher education.

The University of Manchester was founded on 1 October 2004 following the dissolution of The Victoria University of Manchester and The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). This Manchester "merger" afforded an opportunity to re-think the idea of a major research-led university in the early 21st Century. Our founding vision was of a powerful, new institution mobilized around an agenda driven by the pursuit of ambitious "step change" transformation. That transformational vision became the *Manchester 2015 Agenda*, a strategic blueprint for positioning Manchester not only among the top 25 universities in the world by 2015, but also as an institution renowned for its exemplary commitments to expanding opportunities for participation in higher education¹.

We have placed our priorities to expand access to higher education within the context of the profound and interconnected role that major research-intensive universities play in the development of knowledge, the economy and wider society. Premier universities are key national and international institutions, not only in advancing education, discovery and innovation, but also more broadly in enriching the culture and enhancing the quality of public life in the societies they serve. Since the inception of the new University in 2004, expanding equity of access to higher education, nationally and internationally, has been accorded the highest strategic priority. A range of specific, measurable goals were set out, underpinned through the largest investment in the Russell Group of universities into packages of equity and merit scholarships and educational outreach work facilitating progression into higher forms of learning for talented students from all backgrounds.

Building on these achievements we have recently re-developed our strategic plan - *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda*². This looks beyond 2015 to the challenges of building on the progress of our first decade and maintaining strategic momentum over the longer term. Within our three new goals – Research, Higher Learning and Transforming Societies - there has been an opportunity to refine and develop our commitment to wider participation in higher education as a proper and necessary development in a society committed to social inclusion and equality of opportunity. Within this context the University will be firmly engaged in the unfinished task of creating genuinely fair admissions policies and practices and providing access for all those capable of benefitting from higher education, irrespective of their personal or familial capacity to pay.

Each of the Goals within *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda*, including those pertaining to wider and expanded access to higher education, have been translated into a number of implementation strategies that are sufficiently focused to be broken down into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), both at the overall University level, and at the level of individual Faculties,

¹ From the outset, the University identified the annual Shanghai Jiao Tong "World Universities Ranking" as the most accurate and meaningful ranking of the world's leading research-intensive universities, and therefore the measure of our progress towards our "top 25" objective.

² See www.manchester.ac.uk/2015

Schools and/or Professional Support Directorates and Sections. A “Stock Take” report is produced annually against the University’s Strategic Plan and is approved by the Board of Governors and circulated to the HEFCE and other key stakeholders. Furthermore, progress against this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment will be monitored by the University’s Planning and Resources Committee (PRC). PRC serves, *inter alia*, as the primary source of advice to the Board of Governors and the President and Vice-Chancellor on matters relating to the development and allocation of resources of the University and has overseen the submission of this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment and its associated Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). An outline of cognate working groups and structures pertaining to widening participation is included in Appendix A.

1.2 Vision

This Widening Participation Strategic Assessment is placed within the context of our wider institutional vision.

Our Vision is of The University of Manchester as a world renowned institution harnessing virtuosity for the enduring benefit of humankind.

Our commitment to expanding opportunities for participation in higher education stem from our vision of Manchester being:

- **A meritocratic institution** that is open to talented students from all backgrounds, and seeks to remove barriers to their participation in higher education;
- **A learning institution** committed to providing all its students with rich and stimulating learning environments supported by relevant, purposeful curricula, personalised learning experiences and cutting-edge learning technologies;
- **A people-centred institution that** attracts, values and develops as staff and students many of the most able people in the world, and provides them with a richly stimulating intellectual environment in which they realise their full potential;
- **A socially responsible institution** that engages, through its education programmes, its research, its wider alumni networks and its international partnerships in the great challenges facing humankind in the 21st century;
- **A Manchester institution** committed to enriching the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of Manchester and the region – yet conscious that the most important thing that the University can do for its City and region is to be internationally competitive and internationally renowned;
- **A research-led institution** that engages world class researchers in a pioneering research culture that values the creation of knowledge both for its own sake, for enriching higher learning and for the cultural and material benefits it confers on humankind;
- **An innovative institution** that values, encourages and facilitates the transfer of knowledge and technology into solutions that improve the quality of human life, address issues of environmental sustainability and promote the development of the knowledge economy.

1.3 Values

Our commitment to wider participation in higher education is also reflected in our institutional values.

We value the idea of our University as a scholarly community committed to the creation, application and transmission of knowledge through open, disciplined, rational inquiry.

This is distinguished by:

Equality and diversity as reflected in policies, practices and support systems that encourage talented people, whatever their background, to work and study at The University of Manchester on the basis of equality of opportunity³;

Social engagement that is reflected in an institutional culture and learning environments that encourage all staff and students to engage in the civic life of their own societies and as members of the wider human community in building just, inclusive, economically viable and environmentally sustainable civil societies;

Academic freedom that allows all staff and students to engage in critical inquiry, intellectual discourse and public controversy without fear or favour;

Exemplary ethical standards in relation to all our activities and objectives;

Institutional autonomy that while accepting the need for accountability to Government and to other external stakeholders, but preserves the academic self governance of the University and allows peers in the “invisible academy” of international scholarship to be the final arbiters of academic quality and research excellence;

Sustainability as a principle guiding the management and development of the University towards “best practice” in all aspects of energy use and efficiency, waste management and environmental responsibility; and

Collegiality exemplified in policies, practices and an institutional culture that makes the University a safe, rewarding workplace in which all staff are respected for the roles they fulfil, and encouraged and enabled to realise their full potential and to add value to the University’s core mission.

1.4 Mission

Finally, expanded and widened participation in higher education is core to our overall mission.

Our Mission is to make The University of Manchester one of the top 25 universities in the world by 2015 and to remain thereafter a world-leader in the quality of the higher education we offer, the excellence and impact of the research we undertake and the value of the contributions we make to the economic, social and cultural life and environmental sustainability of the wider society.

³ We believe that respecting diversity and the differences between people will contribute to a richer, more creative and productive working and learning environment. In light of changes to equality legislation - and a desire to drive even further forward with this agenda - we are working to develop a Single Equality Scheme (SES) that will bring all areas of equality together in one strategic document.

1.5 High level Strategic Objectives

Our commitments within this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment reflect, and are subsumed within, the three fundamental Goals set out in our new Strategic Plan *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda*. These represent the considered judgment of the University community about the best means of accomplishing the Mission of making Manchester one of the 25 strongest research universities in the world by 2015. We understand these essential priorities of the University to be:

Goal One: Research

To develop and sustain Manchester as a leading international research university in which postgraduate research training, translational research, knowledge transfer and research-based innovation, wealth creation and policy advice are accorded parity of esteem with basic research and curiosity-driven discovery.

Goal Two: Higher Learning

To provide superb higher education to outstanding students from all backgrounds and to produce graduates distinguished around the world for their professional employability, leadership qualities and broad liberal education.

Goal Three: Transforming Societies

To address the key social, economic and environmental problems and opportunities facing humankind in the twenty-first century by engaging in the development of the wider society, by encouraging academic staff to take seriously their responsibilities as public intellectuals and by preparing and challenging our graduates, as citizens, to exercise civic leadership and environmental responsibilities wherever in the world they choose to live.

Our more specific goals to widen participation, ensure fair access and admissions and promote student success for learners are placed within this overall context.

Section Two of this Strategic Assessment expands on these more specific strategies, policies and practices.

Section Two:

Widening participation policy & practice

The *Manchester 2015 Agenda* has positioned the University as a leader in the national drive to extend and widen opportunities to participate in higher education (HE). This was given substance by the largest investment in the UK Russell Group of universities into scholarship and bursary packages and educational outreach programmes to open up opportunities for talented students from all educational backgrounds to benefit from higher forms of learning. Our new strategic plan, *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda*, has given the University community an opportunity to look beyond the 2015 horizon to sustain this position and make further progress within our three fundamental Goals – Research, Higher Learning and Transforming Societies.

We recognise that tackling deep-rooted inequities in access to higher education is a complex issue that must be addressed by a range of societal agencies including, importantly, universities themselves. Since the inception of the new University of Manchester we have developed a sophisticated and extensive programme of work with primary, secondary and further education learners and their influencers that has been designed to expand opportunity for progression into higher education generally, wherever that might be. This work is particularly important within our local communities in Greater Manchester and the North-West region, where progression rates into higher education still fall significantly below the national average. At the same time we are determined to make further progress in ensuring that The University of Manchester is itself able to identify, attract and support exceptional national and international students, including those who have not enjoyed equality of opportunity to good primary and secondary education, onto our degree programmes. These processes will be underpinned by one of the most generous, merit-based and needs-focused bursary and scholarship programmes in the UK to ensure that Manchester is accessible and attractive to all talented students, irrespective of background or financial situation. Upon admission we then set out to provide superb higher education to students from all backgrounds, and to produce graduates distinguished around the world for their professional employability, leadership qualities and broad liberal education.

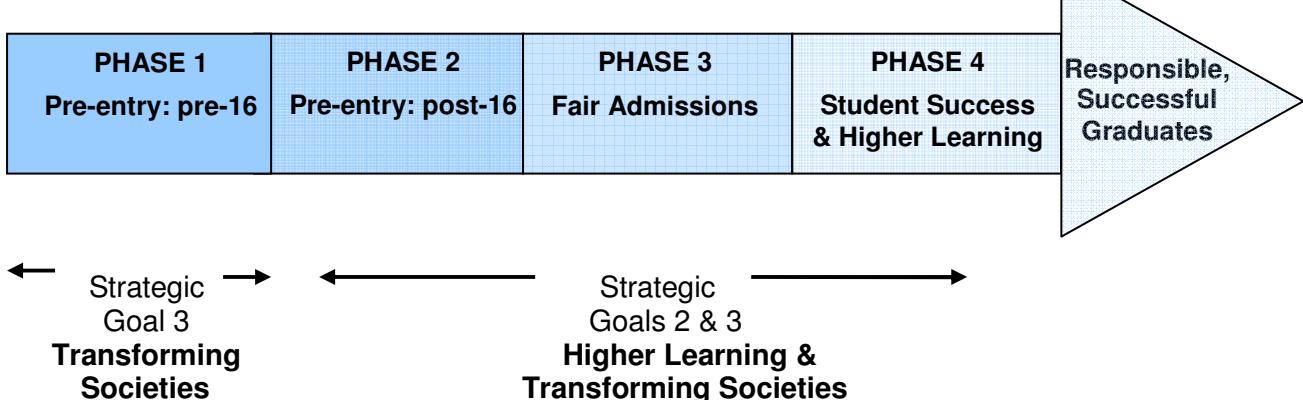
In this context, we have developed a multi-faceted, learner-centred approach, that recognises widening access and participation must be addressed at different phases of the ‘student lifecycle’. This Widening Participation Strategic Assessment will present our overall Strategic Goals within *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda* through the concept of an ‘Extended Higher Education Progression Framework’, as outlined in Figure 1. This builds on recent work of the HEFCE in developing a national Higher Education Progression Framework⁴, but extends this by recognising that widening access continues within and beyond higher education entry.

For The University of Manchester, each of these distinct phases has different aims. This section of our Strategic Assessment will therefore outline and describe our approach to widening participation within the following four phases:

- Phase 1: Pre-entry activity: pre-16
- Phase 2: Pre-entry activity: post-16
- Phase 3: Fair Admissions
- Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning

⁴ Available at www.actiononaccess.org/ download.php?f=1148

Figure 1: University of Manchester Extended Higher Education Progression Framework



Each of these distinct phases of the student lifecycle fit within two of our fundamental goals – that of transforming societies and providing superb higher education.

Taking such a learner-focused, lifecycle approach to widening participation means that a range of other Supporting & Enabling Strategies facilitating learner progression into higher education are outlined alongside the progression framework in section 2.5. These include:

- Strong links with Schools and Colleges
- Collaborative work and partnerships
- Research

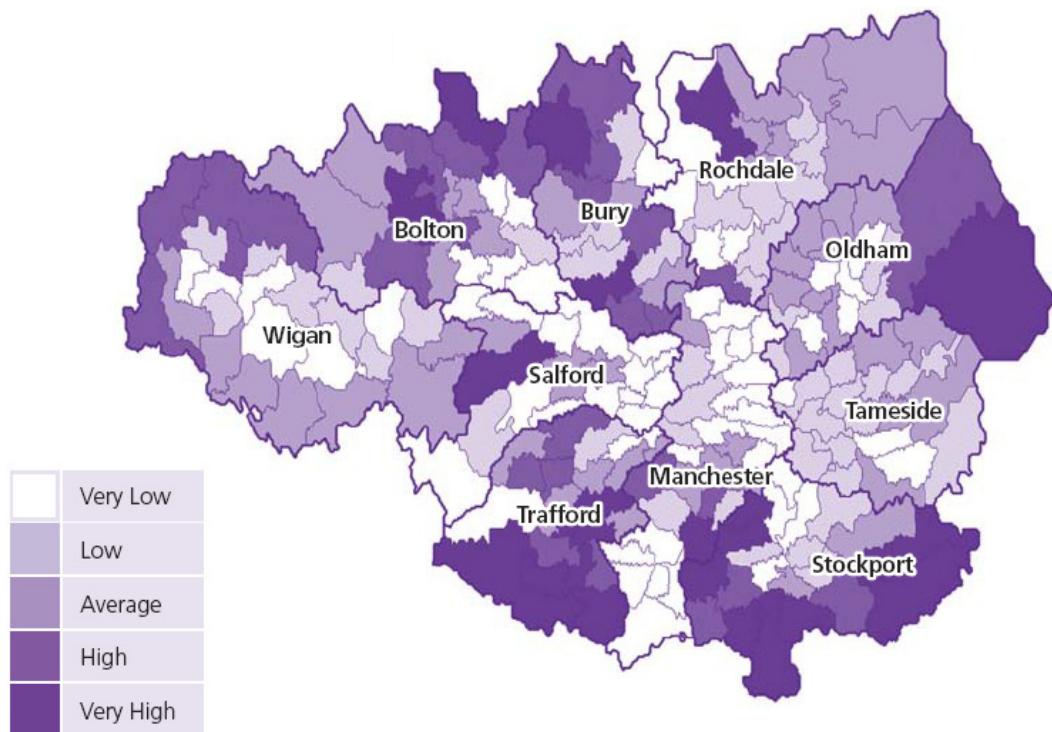
2.1 Pre-entry: pre-16

As an institution that has placed equality and social engagement as founding values, we view the dramatic inequities in HE participation based on locality, schooling and other socio-economic factors as inherently unjust. We therefore take seriously our role in reaching out to younger learners and their key influencers, particularly in local primary and secondary schools, to raise awareness and capacity for progression into higher education through a coordinated programme of outreach work promoting progression to higher education more generally. As Figure 2 shows, the University is situated close to areas with some of the lowest HE participation rates in the country and where levels of economic deprivation are high. We are deeply committed to harnessing the full potential of our staff and student body to help improve the educational outcomes and opportunities for young people within these local communities. To this end we have developed an extensive ‘pre-16’ programme of outreach work consisting of mentoring, campus visits, student ambassador activity, summer schools and curriculum enrichment and enhancement.

The University records, monitors and evaluates all of its interactions with primary and secondary schools, particularly those within our most local communities. As in previous reports to the Office for Fair Access⁵ we will be keen to communicate, each year, the enormous scale of these interactions in subsequent monitoring reports.

⁵ For example, see <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/undergraduate/WP-report.pdf>

Figure 2: Young Participation Rates (POLAR2) across Greater Manchester



Source: Greater Manchester Aimhigher

2.1.1 Working with Primary Schools to raise awareness of higher education

The aim of our activity with Primary Schools is for young children to view university as a natural progression to their education - real and achievable - regardless of family background and home circumstances.

The Children's University of Manchester provides a vehicle through which these goals have been pursued. It aims to provide an insight into, and awareness of, higher education through exploration of the people, the subjects and the social/cultural aspects of university. There are four main elements and schools may take up some or all of these:

- interactive, web-based curriculum enrichment activities that extend the Key Stage 2 curriculum through the pioneering research activities and teaching and learning practices within The University of Manchester.
- higher education awareness days which take place on campus
- "roadshow" activities in schools
- "primary placement scheme" where undergraduate students are placed in local primary schools as classroom assistants.

Further information about these activities can be found at
www.childrensuniversity.manchester.ac.uk/

A range of additional work with primary schools is also undertaken through our Special and Cultural Assets (see 2.1.3) and in partnership with Manchester City Council and the Centre for Urban Education through the innovative Higher Futures 4 U initiative.

2.1.2 Working with secondary schools to support progression

Our key initiative for engaging with secondary school learners is The University of Manchester **Gateway Programme**. Targeted at local young people from lower socio-economic groups in Years 7-11 and their parents and teachers, it provides a coherent and progressive series of academic enrichment and HE awareness activities. By working with a specific cohort of learners over a five year period, pupils have an opportunity to broaden and deepen their knowledge and awareness of HE, the range of courses available and to develop the skills which will help to prepare them for further study. As well as generic content, the programme has three academic enrichment strands:

- Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM)
- Medical, Human and Biological Sciences
- Humanities

The programme consists of:

Year Group	Activity	Content
7	Familiarisation Visit	Generic introduction to university together with subject-specific taster sessions offered in one of the three academic enrichment strands.
8	Familiarisation Visit	Explores different courses and aims to familiarise learners with the range of subjects. There is a choice of curriculum taster sessions in one of our three academic enrichment strands.
9	Exploration Visits	Focusing on GCSE choices, progression and student life followed by sessions employing Enquiry/Problem-Based Learning techniques to explore a themed project from one of a selection of academic subject area perspectives.
10	Futures Conferences	Focuses on progression routes and graduate careers as well as developing learners' skills in communication and team work through career- and subject-related workshops.
11	Study Days	Explores further the range of courses available in Higher Education. Learners are offered a choice of either a Science or a Humanities Study Day, which aims to develop key subject-specific study skills.

Complementing and extending this Gateway programme are a range of additional activities and opportunities that include:

- Mentoring
- Summer School placements
- Additional curriculum enrichment
- Work with parents and teachers

The University also undertakes work with **Gifted & Talented learners** through the *Young, Gifted & Talented* North-West Excellence Hub. These activities engage young people in Years 7-11 through a range of subject-specific activities designed to enrich the curriculum and challenge and extend particularly able learners, many of whom are from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education.

Further information about all of these activities, including the Gateway Programme, can be accessed at www.manchester.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges/

2.1.3 Special & Cultural Assets

An innovative and distinctive feature of The University of Manchester's approach to widening participation is the extent to which our special and cultural assets contribute to opening up opportunities to engage young people and the community in forms of higher learning. The Manchester Museum, Whitworth Art Gallery, Race Relations Resource Centre, John Rylands Library and Jodrell Bank are unique resources with dedicated staff committed to providing additional 'gateways' to the University through curriculum enrichment activity and providing access to collections, specialist knowledge and research resources.

Each of the special and cultural assets works very actively with schools and colleges through their own educational programmes developed and led by specialist staff and through joint working with the University's Undergraduate Recruitment and Widening Participation team. Some brief examples with links to further information are now outlined:

- **The Manchester Museum** offers an array of opportunities for pupils to engage with collections and experts across a variety of subjects. Knowledgeable staff offer sessions tailored to the needs and interests of Early Years, of Key Stages 1 through to 4, and post-16 learners. See www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/ for more information.
- **The Whitworth Art Gallery** is home to some of the UK's finest collections of art and design including modern and historic fine art, prints, textiles and a rare collection of wallpapers. Its dedicated, specialist staff work with school-pupils from Early Years, focusing on art, music and movement, right through to post-16 portfolio development. See www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/ for more information.
- **The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre** provides a wide range of resources and outreach programmes aimed at encouraging self-confidence and pride in black and ethnic minority people and promoting educational progression opportunities. The Centre's resources include dedicated educational staff, books, journal and magazine articles, video/audio tape and posters. The Centre regularly organises conferences and visits for schools, community groups and students. See www.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/ahmediqbal/ for more information.
- **Jodrell Bank Observatory** is a world class facility and offers a wide range of educational outreach activities and programmes for schools through its Visitor Centre and web site. See www.jb.man.ac.uk/ for more information.
- **John Rylands Library** offers reference facilities at its Main, Joule and Precinct Libraries to North West region Level 3 and adult learners and their teachers to help with A-level, AVCE, Extended Project and Access-to-HE coursework. Additionally, The John Rylands Library in the city centre houses some of the most significant books and manuscripts ever produced and undertakes outreach work with school children and the local community to engage local people with its collections. See www.library.manchester.ac.uk/ for more information.

2.2 Pre-entry: post-16

Our post-16 programme of activity concerns itself with proactively identifying students of outstanding achievement and potential for progression to Manchester and consists of, amongst other things:

- three University-wide Undergraduate Open Days a year, which provide an excellent opportunity for students, parents and teachers to find out more about all of our undergraduate programmes of study, as well as allowing potential applicants to visit the University and facilities;

- UK-wide attendance at HE Events, Fairs and Conventions for learners considering higher education;
- a programme of presentations on HE choices, the application process, student finance and student life for schools and colleges, which can be arranged upon request;
- weekly campus-visit opportunities, including special sessions for adults returning to education;
- targeted events for adult returners to HE, students with disabilities and looked-after children;
- a regular programme of events for teachers and careers advisors, both locally and regionally.

For more information about these activities see www.manchester.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges

In addition, we deliver our flagship equity initiative, the **Manchester Access Programme** (MAP), to support outstanding students from underrepresented groups in Greater Manchester to successfully progress into The University of Manchester or another research-intensive university. The two-year programme consists of a series of structured pedagogic and aspiration-raising activities to address the fact that, even when they have similar qualifications, students from underrepresented groups are less likely to apply and be successful in entering institutions and courses with the most demanding entry qualifications. MAP students complete an academic assignment with support from University academic staff and successful completion of this equates to 40 UCAS points towards entry onto a degree course at The University of Manchester. This scheme has more recently expanded with support from the *Your Manchester Fund*⁶ - generous financial support from the University's alumni and friends who wish to assist high-achieving students from underrepresented backgrounds to progress to the University, especially those from our local communities in Greater Manchester.

The Manchester Access Programme has expanded each year since its inception in 2005 and now plays a key role in supporting social mobility for talented young people from non-privileged backgrounds across Greater Manchester. Further information about the programme is available at www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/map

2.3 Fair Admissions

Our strategies to enhance fair access and admissions are placed within our wider fundamental goal of Higher Learning – to provide superb higher education to outstanding students from all backgrounds and to produce graduates distinguished around the world for their professional employability, leadership and broad liberal education.

The University of Manchester is the largest single-site university in Britain and we receive more undergraduate applications than any other UK University. We are committed to ensuring that our process of student recruitment, selection and admission is professional, transparent, fair and able to identify outstanding students from all educational backgrounds. All of our selection criteria and processes are published in recruitment literature (e.g. prospectus and brochures) and on relevant websites (e.g. the University website and the Entry Profiles on the UCAS website). Applicants are treated equally based on qualifications, experience, abilities and potential in relation to the chosen programme of study. The University's admissions practices are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice⁷. General entry requirements are available at: www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/howtoapply/generalentryrequirements/

Our admissions policy, which is reviewed and revised on an annual basis, is made publically available on our website at

www.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/undergraduate/student_admissions_policy.pdf

It aims to provide prospective applicants and their representatives with clear and transparent information. This will include information for enquires and applicants; recruitment and outreach;

⁶ See www.manchester.ac.uk/alumni for more information

⁷ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section10/RecruitmentandAdmissions.pdf>

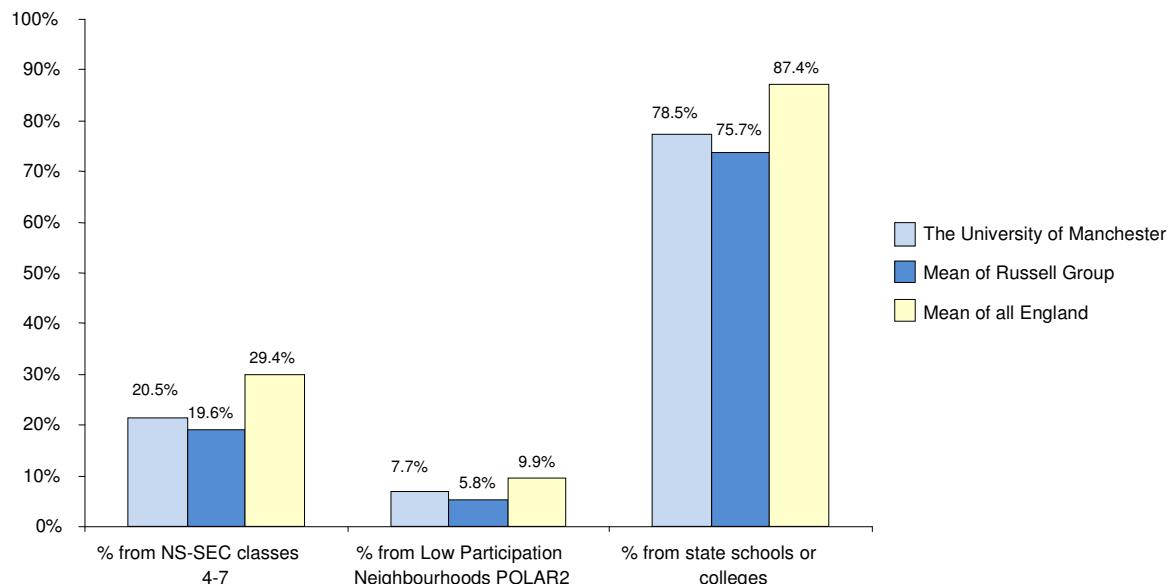
selection criteria and assessing applications with detailed information for different applicant groups such as those with additional support need and returners to education; how feedback is provided on admissions decisions and how the University uses applicant data.

Without compromising the essential idea of a university as a meritocracy, we are firmly engaged in the unfinished task of creating genuinely fair admissions policies and practices and providing access for all those capable of benefiting from higher education, irrespective of their personal or familial circumstances or capacity to pay. In this work, upholding the principle of entry on the basis of merit is the single most important thing we can do for our students and the UK: our overriding purpose is to attract the very best learners from around the UK and the rest of the world and offer them a world class education. This is, though, a complex challenge because we know that some of the brightest young people in the UK – and potentially some of the best graduates – come from disadvantaged backgrounds, where they have not enjoyed equality of opportunity to good primary and secondary education.

So that the University is able to identify the most exceptional and outstanding students from all educational backgrounds who merit a place at Manchester, we have embarked on piloting new approaches to inform student recruitment and selection. These new proposals, which will involve the use of contextual data in admissions, will be developed by September 2010 for implementation for 2011 entry. It is envisaged that these measures will ensure greater transparency and fairness in the recruitment and admissions process.

We are also aware of our position in relation to the proportion of students we currently recruit from HEFCE Widening Participation groups.

Figure 3: Comparison of The University of Manchester with UK HE sector mean and the mean of Russell Group of universities for young full-time degree entrants



Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Performance Indicators 2007/08

As demonstrated in Figure 3, The University of Manchester recruits a higher proportion of students from lower socio-economic groups, low participation neighbourhoods and state schools and colleges than the Russell Group mean. We are also aware, from new evidence released by the Office for Fair Access, that we recruit a significant proportion of our students from the lowest household income brackets. As shown in Figure 4, in 2007/08 21% of Manchester undergraduates were from families with household incomes of less than £17,910 – the second highest proportion across the English Russell Group of universities. However, we are conscious that we do not meet two out of three of our individual, institutional Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

benchmarks for widening participation and, as part of our commitment to genuinely fair access and admissions, we will endeavour to meet or exceed these over time.

Figure 4: Proportion of students from the poorest backgrounds (currently defined as <£17,910 per annum) within the English Russell Group of universities for 2007/08 entrants

	% learners	Numbers
Liverpool	22	1308
Manchester	21	2292
Birmingham	18	1471
Southampton	18	1095
UCL	18	730
Imperial	17	418
Kings	17	1044
Leeds	17	1802
LSE	17	250
Sheffield	17	1250
Warwick	17	860
Nottingham	15	1260
Bristol	14	815
Newcastle	14	972
Cambridge	12	576
Oxford	12	683

Source: Access Agreement Monitoring: Outcomes for 2007-08

Finally, in addition to our targeted Manchester Access Programme, the University is committed to developing and expanding alternative progression programmes for particular subject areas. Some of these are run in partnership with a local FE institution, Xaverian College, and others by the University itself. These aim to attract home students from diverse educational backgrounds or with untypical qualifications onto our degree courses through completion of a 'Year 0' Foundation Year programme. Upon successful completion, these facilitate student progression directly onto Year 1 of our relevant undergraduate programmes. Further information about these programmes can be found by following the links below.

Medicine with Foundation Year (with Xaverian College)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/courseswithafoundationyear/course/?code=01430

Dentistry with Foundation Year (with Xaverian College)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/courseswithafoundationyear/course/?code=00399

Pharmacy with Foundation Year (with Xaverian College)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/courseswithafoundationyear/course/?code=07958

Life Sciences with Foundation Year (with Xaverian College)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/atoz/course/?code=00456

Engineering with Foundation Year (within our Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/atoz/course/?code=00428

Science with Foundation Year (within our Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences)

www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search/atoz/course/?code=00660

2.4 Student Success & Higher Learning

The University is committed to providing superb undergraduate teaching, learning and support facilities for all students. To accelerate the pace of progress towards this goal, a major *Review of Undergraduate Education* was instigated in September 2007 to develop transformational strategies that seek to design fundamentally new approaches to teaching, learning and support for the undergraduate student experience. The emphasis has been on a “root-and branch” analysis of how we are performing currently and what we must do to secure the “step change” improvement we seek. The approach has been to identify international best practice in relation to all key aspects of undergraduate education, and to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for working towards these benchmarks. Eight separate Taskforces were established, and some twenty-eight different recommendations were made with the overall aim of ensuring that undergraduate students would be provided with an educational experience and with educational outcomes and qualifications comparable with the best in the world. The Review reported in February 2008 and can be accessed at www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/tlao/Pres-review-t&l/interim-report-review-ug-ed-jan-08.pdf. We are currently in the process of implementing its recommendations and many of these have informed this section pertaining to student support and success.

2.4.1 Scholarship & Bursaries

We know that many prospective students are deterred from seeking access to a university because of fear of student debt, or because of the opportunity cost of remaining out of the full-time workforce during their student years. The University of Manchester has taken seriously the potential impact that the introduction of variable tuition fees may have on students from under-represented groups and, within the Russell Group of universities, has invested the highest amount in the UK into merit-based and needs-focused bursary and scholarship programmes to ensure that Manchester is accessible and attractive to students from all backgrounds (see Section 2.7). We have also invested our own resources into an international programme of bursaries and fee waivers designed to allow access to higher education for students from economically deprived parts of the world.

We actively promote scholarship and bursary uptake through a range of different strategies⁸ and our generous package of awards include:

- **Manchester Guarantee Bursary** - £1,250pa for UK students with residual household incomes of up to approximately £25,000 per annum⁹ (and includes the minimum standard bursary¹⁰ for UK students who are receiving maximum state support).
- **Manchester Advantage Scholarship** - £3,000pa for UK students with residual household incomes of up to approximately £25,000 per annum¹¹ who attain three A grades at A-level or equivalent¹².
- **Manchester Achievement Scholarship** - £1,750pa for outstanding students progressing successfully through our two-year Manchester Access Programme. Some Manchester Achievement Awards are also targeted at local mature students progressing onto specific study programmes via an Access to HE route¹³

⁸ Further information about these can be found at www.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/undergraduate/WP-report.pdf

⁹ Assessment and income bands will be revised in accordance with criteria used by the DIUS and SLC.

¹⁰ For 2008/09 this figure was £310 although this will be revised in accordance with criteria used by DIUS and the SLC

¹¹ See note 8.

¹² See <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/home/criteriaofexcellence/>

¹³ See <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/home/scholarships-0910/> for more information

- **Manchester Success Scholarships** - £1,250pa for students performing at the highest level of academic excellence progressing onto specific degree programmes¹⁴.
- **International Equity and Merit Scholarships** – awards covering full fees and living costs for students in developing countries. A total of 17 awards in 2006/07 and 2007/08 were awarded to Ugandan undergraduate and postgraduate students studying on courses that were likely to be of greatest benefit to their home country. In 2008/09 these are being further rolled out to facilitate access to HE for students in Bangladesh. Again, the *Your Manchester Fund* generously supports these awards¹⁵.

Additionally the University offers a number of **Accommodation Awards**, whereby the Trustees of a University Hall of Residence, Hulme Hall, meet the full accommodation costs of a number of local students from less privileged backgrounds, who would otherwise be prevented from experiencing the residential aspect of university life.

2.4.2 Teaching & Learning

The University of Manchester also positions its work to expand fair access within the context of distinctive education it can offer its students. As a major provider of undergraduate education, the University accepts its profound long-term responsibility to prepare generations of outstanding young people not only to be internationally mobile professionals of the highest quality, but also to serve as informed, thoughtful, globally responsible citizens wherever in the world they choose to live. It is clear that the key decision-makers in 21st Century societies – whether as leaders or supporters – will be highly educated citizens capable of making informed judgments about complex issues. Such people will, broadly speaking, be graduates of major universities around the world.

The University is committed to offering a world class learning experience to *all* its students. In this context we are concerned that over many decades *per capita* funding has not kept pace with the growth of enrolments in UK higher education, and we will use all the means at our disposal, including an openness to highly innovative technological, pedagogic and organisational solutions, to maintain the kinds of rich, personalised, highly interactive learning environments within which undergraduate education thrives. We wish to build our reputation for providing students with a learning experience founded on outstanding teaching, superb libraries, classrooms, laboratories, lecture facilities and informal learning spaces, personalised academic support, and access to cutting-edge on-line learning in a safe, highly supportive social and cultural environment.

Following our *Review of Undergraduate Education* we have developed and agreed a Statement on the **Purposes of a Manchester Education**, which is now being embedded in all our taught programmes. Within this wide-ranging development, two transformational strategies will be highlighted with respect to this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

i) The introduction of a broad-based undergraduate curriculum for all undergraduate students allowing them to develop non-discipline specific skills which will enhance their employability, social responsibility, broad understanding of society, leadership qualities and sense of global citizenship

It is perhaps the highest priority of a contemporary university to be dedicated to producing graduates who are not only superbly prepared professionals but also informed, ethically aware, socially responsible citizens, capably of thinking globally and equipped to assist in the creation and

¹⁴ Full information is available at <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/home/scholarships-0910/>
<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/home/criteriaofexcellence/>

Assessment and income bands will be revised in accordance with criteria used by the DIUS and SLC

¹⁵ See <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/international/country/africa/display/index.htm?id=106068> &
<http://www.yourmanchester.manchester.ac.uk/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1008&srcid=424> for more information

maintenance of just, prosperous, sustainable civil societies. The University of Manchester understands and accepts this grand challenge.

In pursuing this Goal, the University will seek to increase the scale and availability of the Manchester Leadership Programme (MLP). This programme allows Manchester students to make a contribution to the local community while supporting their personal and professional development through combining voluntary work with an accredited Leadership in Action unit. We are seeking to make the MLP available to all undergraduates at some stage during their undergraduate career. The University will also translate its Statement on the *Purposes of a Manchester Education* into a formal Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) which will indicate the full range of professional and personal value-adding that their Manchester education has conferred.

For more information about the Manchester Leadership Programme see
www.manchester.ac.uk/mlp

ii) To ensure that student have frequent personal contact with academic staff, including academic tutors, mentors and advisors, and to provide proactive contact with any student at risk of disengagement

A distinctive feature of the Manchester education will be the highly personalised nature of the learning experience, even within the context of mass higher education. The University believes that a constructive partnership between teachers and learners is a key way to enable students to achieve their potential and, as well as support from academic staff involved in delivery of teaching, each student will have frequent contact with personal tutors, mentors and/or advisors.

Following our Review it has been set out that all undergraduate students will have weekly contact with an Academic Adviser who provides information and guidance on academic matters and assists students with the planning of short-term and long-term targets for development. These principles also require that all students should have access to peer support during their studies. The University is already internationally recognised as the UK benchmark for supplemental instruction and houses the National Centre of Peer Assisted Study. We provide a programme of training and support for peer mentoring (non-academic peer support with a particular focus on assisting with orientation and socialisation in Year 1) and a Peer Assisted Study Scheme (PASS), where higher year students facilitate lower year students, in groups, to reflect on their learning and to help develop study and learning strategies.

Further information about PASS and Peer Assisted Study Scheme are available at
<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/>

2.4.3 Student Support

The purpose of student support at Manchester is to enable students to access the full Manchester Education described in section 2.4.2 above. We recognise that students may, from time to time, require additional financial, academic and welfare support and our services, facilities and initiatives are aimed at helping students overcome such challenges. In all aspects of student support, our philosophy is one of supporting students in their independent decision making and in their handling of challenging circumstances which they may encounter during their studies. Retention rates within the University are well above the national average. We currently meet our HESA institutional benchmarks and in particular exceed the benchmark for retention of students from low participation neighbourhoods.

Direct support for students is located primarily in their academic School, with additional support provided by the specialist services within the Professional Support Services (primarily through the Office of Student Support and Services, and Sport, Trading and Residential Services (STARS)).

These specialist support services include the Disability Support Office, the Counselling Service, the Academic Advisory Service and Pastoral Teams in Residences. These services are promoted to all students, and are also a valuable source of information and advice to staff working in student support roles.

In addition to providing an academic advisor to support students through their academic experience as described in 2.4.2 above, Schools are encouraged to have a dedicated student support officer or member of staff with specific responsibility for student welfare who can work closely with the central services in providing co-ordinated support for students. The Office of Student Support and Services provides a dedicated training programme for staff who are currently working in, or wish to develop their career in, the provision of professional support for students. To date, 5 cohorts of staff (approximately 70, from across all Schools in the University) have completed the *Supporting Students* training programme which is accredited by the Staff Education and Development Association (SEDA).

Whilst our services are aimed at *all* our students, in the context of this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment, the following are highlighted in particular:

- (i) The University of Manchester has well-established provision of support for students with **disabilities**. There is a dedicated Disability Support Office that provides confidential advice and support to applicants and students with additional needs arising from a disability, a medical condition or specific learning difficulties. The number of students with disabilities at the University has increased significantly in recent years and there are now more than 3,200 currently studying at the University. As a consequence, the staffing resources in the Disability Support Office have been increased in order to enhance further the quality of the service to students and to supplement support provided in Schools.
- (ii) The Academic Advisory Service in the Student Advice and Information Hub is the location for support for applicants and students from **care-experienced backgrounds**. A protocol for providing support to Care Leavers, both through the applications process and also whilst on their course has been developed in close consultation with Barnardos, who manage Manchester City Council's Leaving Care Service. The protocol is available online at <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/documents/display/?id=124073&off=ReqSec-%3ESSS>.

There is a named contact point for care-experienced students, with all applicants being offered a 'new student advisory meeting' to ensure they are aware of the full range of support which would be available to them (including access to University accommodation on a 52 week basis), and to facilitate discussions with their prospective School, if requested. Work is now beginning with current students who joined the University from a care background to evaluate the support on offer.

- (iii) Recognising the particular needs of students who have **responsibility for children or other dependents**, we have also designated the Student Advice and Information Hub as the point of contact for applicants and students who need information about attending University whilst also managing caring responsibilities.
- (iv) Through the *Undergraduate Education Review*, the University has reiterated its commitment to the provision of **university-managed accommodation**, recognising it as a significant element in support of the student experience. This is achieved primarily through the development of learning and social communities in residences and by helping students in their transition between living at home and achieving independence. Pastoral care is provided in all University managed accommodation and is professionally managed as part of the STARS management structure. Wardens, supported by teams of tutors, also work with student Residents' Associations to develop social and learning communities within the residences.

Overall, the Office of Student Support and Services, working with other parts of the University as appropriate, aims to ensure that our student-related policies, strategies and initiatives contribute to equipping students to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them by The University of Manchester. Examples of specific initiatives in 2008/9 include:

- working with academic Schools to enhance their activities in the area of induction, transition and the first year experience;
- reviewing the extensive support information for students on the University's intranet and redesigning it so that it is more accessible and intuitive;
- research into the barriers faced by typical high-achieving entrants and how these were overcome, with the intention of using this information to inform policy and good practice;
- further developing a rolling programme of training for staff on student-related issues (e.g. drugs and alcohol, mental health, suicide awareness).

Details of all the services provided by Office of Student Support and Services can be accessed at www.manchester.ac.uk/studentsupportandservices.

2.5 Supporting & Enabling Strategies

Thus far our Widening Participation Strategic Assessment has been set out through a learner-focused Higher Education Progression Framework. However, it is also necessary to outline a range of other strategies and initiatives that support and enable this learner-journey into higher education, namely:

- Strong links with Schools and Colleges
- Collaborative work and partnerships
- Research

Our work to expand access to higher education must be understood within The University of Manchester's broader and conscious attempt to address the key social, economic and environmental problems facing humankind in the 21st Century. Through our third Strategic Goal, Transforming Societies, we recognise our special responsibilities to the City of Manchester, the Greater Manchester region and England's North West, as well as to the UK more broadly. We are also, like any great university, essentially a global institution, with important responsibilities serving the global community.

The University was awarded its status as a Beacon for Public Engagement in 2008 and, with its partner institutions, is committed to becoming a leading proponent of Public Engagement nationally and internationally and to ensuring that all those who visit the campus, our cultural assets and visitor attractions, have a positive and rewarding experience. With the work of the Manchester Museum, Whitworth Art Gallery and Jodrell Bank, and events in the concert hall and theatre, the University can already claim to be distinctive in the extent of its commitment to engagement with the local community and, in particular, priority groups such as schoolchildren, people from lower socio-economic groups and ethnic minorities. Through the overarching Beacon, this work will become embedded in the core activity of the University and will allow many different aspects of engagement to prosper. For further information about the Beacon see www.publicengagement.ac.uk/beacons/manchester/

Internationally, we are also endeavouring to ensure that the University's engagement in the provision of higher education to international students, and its research into the causes and consequences of poverty, translate into practical, responsible programmes designed to ameliorate poverty and create educational opportunities in developing countries. The University is very

explicitly committed to the fight against world poverty. Through the world-leading Brooks World Poverty Institute, we are engaged with tackling the causes and consequences of poverty worldwide – see www.bwpi.manchester.ac.uk/ for further information. Additionally, the University is investing its own resources into a fully-funded programme of international equity and merit scholarships and fee waivers designed to allow access to higher education for students from economically deprived parts of the world.

2.5.1 Strong links with Schools and Colleges

The nature, volume and purpose of our different work with schools and colleges is wide-ranging. We have forged long-term strategic links with schools and colleges, locally, regionally and nationally. These close links facilitate professional development, training, a sharing of knowledge, expertise and direct experience and foster greater understanding of issues such as wider and fairer access, university admissions policies and progression from school to university. We also support the work of schools, colleges, their staff and leaders through programmes of work in our School of Education, particularly within schools and colleges in our local community where there are high levels of socio-economic deprivation and low participation rates in HE. A selection of examples of the many and varied ways we have identified and supported schools and colleges to advance educational attainment and progression include:

- hosting the region's training programme for the national **Teach First** initiative, which aims to address educational disadvantage by placing excellent teachers into some of the most challenged UK schools. For further information see www.teachfirst.org.uk ;
- being one of the UK's leading providers of **teacher education**, where we train and place students in around 200 local primary, secondary and further education institutions. For further information see www.education.manchester.ac.uk ;
- housing the regional, TDA-funded **Student Associate Scheme**, which offers Manchester students opportunities to make a contribution to local schools whilst giving a realistic insight into the role of a teacher by providing them with a three week employment opportunity in a local primary or secondary school. For further information see www.universityofmanchester-sas.org.uk ;
- the development and publication of a '**Manchester Prioritisation Model**'¹⁶ for Schools and Colleges based on statistical weightings of key socio-economic and geo-demographic variables relating to under-representation in HE. This tool is used by outreach workers across the whole University for the Area Level Targeting recommended by the HEFCE¹⁷ and has provided an objective basis for targeting engagement with schools and colleges across Greater Manchester since 2004 ;
- recruiting young leaders from schools and colleges across Greater Manchester to form a **Young Persons' Forum**. The University receives the Forum's views and opinions on its outreach activities in order to ensure we are responsive to the needs of young people. This also allows young people the opportunity to develop their sense of leadership and decision-making. For further information see www.manchester.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges ;
- the organisation of a termly **School and College Forum**. Through this forum a group of school and sixth-form careers advisors and teachers meet each term on campus to discuss best practice in their field, find out more about the University and our activities and the support we

¹⁶ for further information see Skyrme, J. & Crow, M. (2008) 'Targeting Outreach Activity: A Prioritisation Model' in F. Ferrier & M. Heagney (Eds) *Higher Education in Diverse Communities: Global Perspectives; Local Initiatives*; or visit www.actiononaccess.org/download.php?f=639

¹⁷ Higher Education Funding Council for England *Higher education outreach: targeting disadvantaged learners* http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2007/07_12/07_12.doc

can provide. The Forum is supported by a regular ‘Schools and Colleges’ e-newsletter. For further information see www.manchester.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges ;

- an annual programme of **Teacher and Adviser Conferences** that aim to advance the continuing professional development of staff involved in providing advice to learners seeking to access higher education. For further information see www.manchester.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges .

2.5.2 Collaborative work and partnerships

The University works closely with a range of organisations and partners on the local, regional, national and international stage. Within respect to broadening access to higher education in our locality, we are an integral part of the Manchester City-region and work closely with other local organisations to support the social, economic and cultural development of Manchester. Examples include, *inter alia*:

- supporting the governance, strategic and operational activity of the **Greater Manchester Aimhigher** programme, a partnership of all schools, colleges, further and higher education providers in Greater Manchester. Our operational work includes:
 - campus visits for pupils in Year 10 and Year 12;
 - curriculum enrichment activities;
 - the Aimhigher Associates national pilot to recruit undergraduate students to work with pupils to raise aspirations and develop self-confidence;
 - residential Summer School for Year 10 pupils.
- providing leadership for the **Greater Manchester Challenge** through the secondment of one of our leading Professors of Education, Mel Ainscow, as Chief Adviser. We are also contributing to operational activity by providing opportunities for gifted learners to access research-intensive HE institutions through the Challenge’s *City GATES* initiative and providing revision and exam support to targeted Challenge schools;
- supporting the governance and operational activity of the **North West Young, Gifted & Talented ‘Excellence Hub’** - a partnership between the universities of Manchester, Liverpool and Lancaster. The Hub organises activities for young people in the North West who are identified by their teachers as gifted and talented. A key aspect of the NW Excellence Hub is the focus on supporting children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and families with no tradition of higher education;
- supporting the governance, strategic and operational activity of the **Greater Manchester Strategic Alliance** – a partnership of all the universities, colleges, work-based learning providers and other stakeholders in Greater Manchester, whose collaboration is making higher education in the region increasingly innovative and employer-led;
- membership of **Manchester City Council’s** Transforming Education Partnership – a key strategic mechanism for harnessing the intellectual capital that will drive up educational outcomes, opportunities and access across the City of Manchester;
- supporting the governance of the **Russell Group Widening Participation Association** – a collection of twenty of the UK’s research-intensive institutions whose widening participation leaders share best practice in promoting access to research-intensive institutions, including work to engage teachers and advisers specialising in Information, Advice and Guidance for learners;

- working with a group of 11 research-intensive HEIs under the **Realising Opportunities** initiative, who are seeking to pilot a national ‘Compact Scheme’ to encourage the ‘most able least likely’ students to apply to research-intensive universities.

2.5.3 Research

Our primary goal of research is to develop and sustain Manchester as a leading international research university in which postgraduate research training, translational research, knowledge transfer and research-based innovation, wealth creation and policy advice are accorded parity of esteem with basic research and curiosity-driven discovery. Reflecting our traditions at Manchester we therefore give a strong commitment to applied research, innovation and the transfer of knowledge and technology into wider society. Manchester is already an international research powerhouse and in 2008 was ranked 40th in the Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities – a rise of thirteen places since our merger, placing the University 6th in Europe and 5th in the UK. The results of RAE2008 have further confirmed the progress made since our merger, with any analysis of the results placing Manchester in the top four or five research universities in the UK.

There is a huge range of research initiatives at Manchester that contribute to informed and applied understandings of issues of social policies and processes that impact on equity in education more broadly. Some examples of these include:

- the **Centre for Equity in Education**, which involves practitioners, policy makers and researchers in collaborative development and research projects that seek to have a direct impact in improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners. Furthermore, in order to ensure the relevance of its activities, the Centre organises a 'Think tank' of senior Local Authority officers, headteachers, policy makers and academics, all of whom have track records of innovation in relation to the Centre's agenda. See <http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/research/centres/cee/>
- the **Centre for Educational Leadership** (CEL) – a well established centre of leadership development and change management at The University of Manchester. It has an outstanding reputation as a high quality, integrated centre with significant expertise in research, programme design, development and delivery and consultancy. For further information see www.cel.manchester.ac.uk/
- the **Centre for Local Governance** (CfLG) supports innovation, improvement and transformation in local governance across the North West and elsewhere. It facilitates access to a wide range of academics across the North West covering community engagement, economic sustainability, transformational government, social care, organisational development and local politics. As an academic partner the University is contributing by providing external challenge grounded in research to co-produce and disseminate warranted knowledge. See www.cflg.manchester.ac.uk/home/index.html
- the **Institute for Political and Economic Governance** (IPEG) is a multi-disciplinary research institute that aims to connect research, policy and practice, and provides a focus for debate and research around the general theme of governance: political, economic, international, regional and local. Its main research themes include: civil renewal, neighbourhoods and community engagement; Behaviour change; Local and regional governance; Public service reform; Regional and urban economics; Innovative research methods. See www.ipeg.org.uk/index.php
- the **Centre for Urban Policy Studies** (CUPS) has an established reputation for policy-relevant research on the evaluation of area-based urban policy initiatives, regional development, spatial planning and housing, and the measurement of neighbourhood dynamics. See <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/cups/about/>

- The **Institute for Social Change** (ISC) is an interdisciplinary research Institute which is dedicated to furthering our understanding of the causes and consequences of social change, and how policy can be used to maximise the benefits of change while reducing the costs. As part of this Institute a “Social Change: A Joint Project of Harvard and Manchester Initiative” (SCHMI) was established with Robert Putnam as Visiting Professor and Director. See www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/socialchange/aboutus/
- The **Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures** (RICC) which undertakes research within a context of a world in which global restructuring and growing inequalities are fueling conflicts and growing national anxieties, as well as movements for social justice, reconciliation, interconnection, and the development of common perspectives, particularly among city residents. See www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/ricc/
- The **ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change** is a major international Research Centre analysing socio-cultural change. It is the first major research centre in Britain to develop a broad, empirically-focused account of cultural change and its economic, social and political implications. See www.cresc.ac.uk/
- The **Centre for Urban Regional Ecology** (CURE), which aims to improve environments in which people live. See www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/cure/research/

2.6 Targets, Milestones & Evaluation

The following targets and milestones have been set as part of this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment. These build on and subsume those outlined in our Access Agreement with OFFA and additionally set out a range of new challenges cognisant with our wider Strategic Goals in *Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda*.

Strategic Goals : Advancing the Manchester 2015 Agenda	Phase within Extended HE Progression Framework	Targets	AA/WPSA
Goal 3 Transforming Societies: to work closely with City authorities and other local organisations to support the social, economic and cultural development of Greater Manchester, particularly by expanding higher education opportunities and supporting a wide-ranging outreach programme designed to raise the aspirations of local students to progress to higher education	Phase 1: Pre-16 work	i. Each year regional progression performance to HE will be analysed and the University's contribution in achieving change, through its extensive links with local Schools and Colleges, will be assessed.	Shared with AA milestone i.
Goal 3 Transforming Societies: to advance public understanding of science, technology and the human heritage more generally as a means of enriching the cultural lives of our local communities and raising awareness of the great challenges facing humankind.	Phase 1: Pre-16 work Phase 2: post-16 work	ii. Through the work of our Cultural Assets – the Manchester Museum, the Whitworth Art Gallery, the John Rylands Library, and the Jodrell Bank Observatory - the University's distinctive commitment to engagement with the local community and, in particular, priority groups such as schoolchildren, people from lower socio-economic groups and ethnic minorities, will be assessed each year through visitor statistics.	WPSA
Goal 2 Higher Learning: to pursue exemplary fair access and admissions processes to identify and attract the very best students to Manchester, regardless of background.	Phase 2: Post 16 work	iii. To continue developing the quality and numerical impact of the University's Manchester Access Programme to support fair access to The University of Manchester and other research intensive HEIs.	WPSA
	Phase 3: Admissions Phase	iv. To maintain our current strong position in relation to performance against the three available "access indicators" set out by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.	Shared with AA milestone iii.
	Phase 3: Admissions Phase	v. By 2010-11, to have developed appropriate and defensible quantitative measures allowing the University to recognise the most exceptional applicants to its undergraduate degree programmes from all educational	Development of AA milestone iv.

		backgrounds.	
Goal 2 Higher Learning: to ensure that all students have frequent personal contact with academic staff, including academic tutors, mentors and advisors, and to provide for proactive contact with any student at risk of disengagement.	Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning	vi. To increase the number of trained peer mentors and PASS (Peer Assisted Study Scheme) leaders.	WPSA
Goal 2 Higher Learning: in consultation with students, to improve the quality, range and responsiveness of student support services and facilities	Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning	vii. To improve the experience of disabled applicants and to raise awareness of support for disabled students.	WPSA
	Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning	viii. To improve year on year progression rates in order to increase the percentage of undergraduate students completing the degree for which they are enrolled in the minimum amount of time. This will entail undertaking an annual statistical analysis to identify students most at risk of non-completion.	Shared with AA milestone vi.
	Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning	ix. To produce a specialist publication, keep webpages updated and offer a designated point of contact in the University for prospective students to ensure accurate financial information is accessible.	Shared with AA milestone v.
Goal 3: Transforming Societies / Goal 2: Higher Learning To give high priority to challenging students to develop strong personal value-systems in relation to their responsibilities as educated citizens	Phase 4: Student Success & Higher Learning	x. To actively promote student engagement and leadership in the community through involvement of undergraduate and postgraduate volunteers and ambassadors in widening participation activities	Shared: AA milestone ii.

The following principles will be used to assess the success of our widening participation strategies and progress against targets and milestones:

- ascertaining the starting point/baseline position;
- development of a monitoring and evaluation plan so that opportunities to collect important evidence are identified;
- collection of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation evidence.

2.7 Investment in widening participation

Our priorities to broaden access to higher education through the Manchester 2015 Agenda have been given substance by one of the largest packages of investment in equity measures in the UK as the table in figure 5 illustrates.

Figure 5: Projected and Actual Expenditure from 2007/08 Access Agreements by the English Russell Group of Universities

	Scholarships and Bursaries			Outreach Actual £000s
	Actual %	Projected %	Actual £000s	
Oxford	33.4	32.6	3,634	0
Imperial	31.9	29	1,759	74
Manchester	28.5	29.2	5,703	380
Warwick	27.1	30.1	2,657	634
Liverpool	25.9	23.5	2,834	263
UCL	24.6	20.7	2,018	350
LSE	24.3	23.8	647	150
Cambridge	24	29.2	2,501	0
Birmingham	20.6	20.7	3,072	254
Kings	19.3	22.4	1,797	54
Nottingham	19.2	19.8	2,939	385
Bristol	16.5	19.1	1,780	426
Leeds	15.7	20.1	3,082	200
Newcastle	14.6	18	1,915	1,200
Southampton	14	19.3	1,642	370
Sheffield	13.3	13.5	1,809	823
Total			39,789	5,563
English Russell Group Average	22.1	23.2	2,487	348

Source: *Access Agreement Monitoring: Outcomes for 2007-08*

Additionally we set aside all of our HEFCE widening participation allocation and the additional outreach resource within our Access Agreement into outward-facing work with under-represented groups to facilitate progression into both higher education generally and The University of Manchester.

Building on these levels of investment the University has also been successful in developing additional programmes of work with partners sharing our goals to enhance equity of access to higher education. These partners include, for example, Aimhigher Greater Manchester, the Greater Manchester Strategic Alliance, the Greater Manchester Challenge, the Sutton Trust, the Ogden Trust and our own alumni amongst others.

We understand more specific financial reporting guidance will be issued by HEFCE later in 2009 in advance of the annual round of monitoring.

Appendix A - Reporting Mechanisms and Committees/Working Group Structures pertaining to widening participation

Reporting mechanisms and committee structure	Details
Planning and Resources Committee (PRC)	PRC serves, inter alia, as the primary source of advice to the Board of Governors and the President and Vice-Chancellor on matters relating to the development and allocation of resources of the University. Chaired by the President and Vice-Chancellor, its membership includes the Faculty Vice-Presidents and Deans, the Policy Vice-Presidents, the Registrar and Secretary, the Director of Finance, Director of HR, the Head of the Planning Support Office and the General Secretary of the Students' Union. PRC has overseen the submission of this Widening Participation Strategic Assessment and its associated Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA).
Annual 'Stock Take Report'	An internal report, produced annually, on progress against the University's Strategic Plan, which includes promoting fair access and expanding higher education opportunities. The report is approved by the Board of Governors and circulated to the HEFCE and other key stakeholders.
Undergraduate Review Strategy Group (URSG)	To shape, direct and manage the implementation of the outcomes of the Undergraduate Education Review. The Group has a particular focus on curriculum design, development, delivery and assessment, and the re-personalisation of student learning. Chaired by the Vice-President for Teaching and Learning.
Widening Access Working Group	Oversees strategic direction in relation to Widening Participation. Chaired by the Associate Vice-president for Equality and Diversity and with academic representation across 4 Faculties and Director of Student Recruitment, Admissions and International Development (SRAID).
Recruitment and Admissions Management Group (RAMG)	Oversees strategic direction and University policy in relation to the administration of recruitment and admissions issues. The Group consists of senior staff across the University with responsibility for recruitment and admissions.
Network meetings	Practitioner-based fora for the sharing of best practice in widening participation, recruitment and admissions.