

Widening Participation Strategy

Everyone deserves an equal opportunity to study at Edinburgh. Higher education, and a student experience at Edinburgh, has the power to transform lives, not just of those who come to study with us, but their families and communities.

Building on our values, and our commitment to having a positive impact on our local and global community, we are working to ensure that students from a wide range of diverse backgrounds thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

We have made great strides, but there is still much to do

For decades, the University has taken a leading approach to widening participation and has helped pioneer many different types of access programmes, including the Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS) in the 1990s, which are now common across the higher education sector.

The University has also exceeded its initial Commission on Widening Access target that 10 per cent of new full-time Scottish degree students be from SIMD20 areas by 2021, due to our longstanding outreach programmes, scholarships, and support throughout the application process and students' transition into the University.

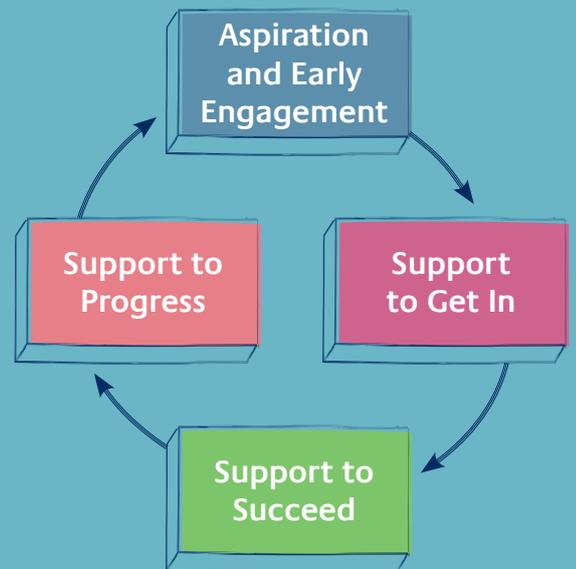
We cannot, however, be complacent about our role in widening participation in higher education and that is why we are bringing forward a new strategy.

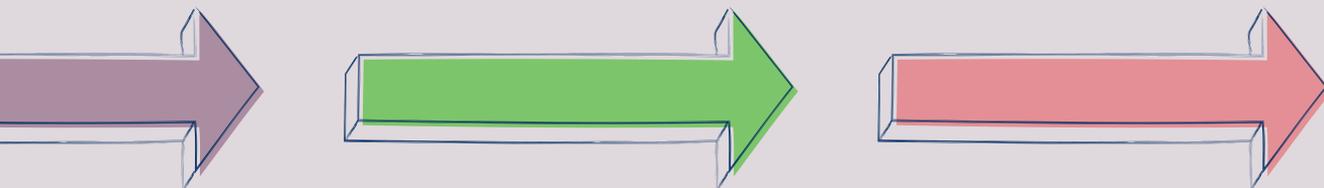
We all have a role to play to make this happen

The University of Edinburgh's Widening Participation Strategy is the starting point in a process of developing a campus of belonging; a University where we do not simply focus on representation or under-representation, but more importantly upon a sense of community and being in the right place.

Our strategy therefore, not only strengthens our efforts to widen access to our institution even further, but also ensures that those students are supported in their transition, their academic journey, and their progression onto a career or further study of their choice. We are doing this through four mutually supportive strands of the strategy (shown to the right):

We will also incorporate into each of these student lifecycle stages a consideration for students with protected characteristics, in particular where these intersect with socio-economic disadvantage.





Examples of new and exciting programmes of work across the student lifecycle strands of the strategy:



We are developing a **new schools partnership programme (YourEd)**, which will see us working with an identified number of secondary (and primary) schools across Scotland to deliver long term, impactful outreach and curriculum enrichment programmes to targeted groups of students.



We have established a **new part-time Access route** into the University of Edinburgh (to humanities and social sciences degrees) and over the next few years we will be developing foundation and access routes into the University for further academic disciplines.



We will be working with **the college sector** locally and further afield to establish routes into the University of Edinburgh for more college students.



To **enhance the student experience** for our current students from widening participation backgrounds we will provide additional funds to support commuter student travel and participation in sports and student societies.



To **enhance the work experience opportunities** for students from disadvantaged backgrounds we have developed an ambitious and long term initiative: Global/Local Insights where students are connected with University alumni all over the world and provided with full funding and support to undertake work experience.

“It painted a new picture of university, not as a scary, intimidating place. I now see the University of Edinburgh as a welcoming and evolutionary place.”

(Residential summer school attendee)

This strategy is accompanied by a three-year implementation plan. To ensure the strategy is implemented, this plan is being overseen by a group of colleagues drawn from across the University.

A staff engagement programme will be rolled out across the University over the next few months to help colleagues support students from all backgrounds.

Find out how you can get involved at: edin.ac/wp-strategy