Contents
Our Year in Numbers 01
Foreword by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education 02
Monitoring Our Impact on Widening Access 02
Access
Targeting and Partnerships with Schools and Colleges 03
Widening Participation Work within Faculties 04
Collaborative Partnerships 05
HEAT 05
The Liverpool Scholars Programme 06
Student Success
The Liverpool Guild of Students Outreach Activities 08
Study Abroad 09
Student Advocates as Role Models 10
Progression
Postgraduate Progression Award 12
Graduate Trainee Programme 13
Careers and Employability 14
Looking Forward 16

Our Year in Numbers

During 2015-16, the central Widening Participation and Outreach team engaged with over 11,000 young people from 170 primary/secondary schools and colleges, as well as the local community, in aspiration and achievement raising activities.

Over 160 teachers and practitioners attended the Russell Group Teachers Conference held at the University of Liverpool.

There were over 55,000 page views in 2016 to the Professor Fluffy website, designed to introduce and engage primary school students in the idea of university.

During 2015-2016 £7.9 million was invested in financial support for students, with a further £3.5 million invested in delivering access, outreach and student success activities.

65 Scholars students started their undergraduate study at the University of Liverpool, across 36 different degree programmes.
Foreword by Professor Gavin Brown, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education

At the University of Liverpool we have a strong commitment to ensuring that talented young people from all backgrounds can benefit from a University of Liverpool education.

We are proud of our position as one of the most successful Russell Group universities for widening participation. This year we ranked first in the English Russell Group for the recruitment of students from low participation neighbourhoods and first for recruitment of students from state schools and colleges.

Colleagues across the University work hard to deliver outreach projects that attract and support young people from all backgrounds. Last year we worked with over 11,000 students to raise aspirations and provide information, advice and guidance. Despite this success we know there is still more we can do to establish greater equity for all students accessing higher education and so we have set targets to increase the intake of students from ethnic minority backgrounds, improve gender balance in all our subjects, do more to recruit boys from disadvantaged backgrounds and also increase the numbers of mature students coming to the University. In addition we are introducing a number of initiatives and partnerships to help improve the attainment of Merseyside students and also do more to ensure good employment outcomes for all students but particularly those from widening participation backgrounds.

In the University of Liverpool’s Access Agreement for 2017-18 we have committed income, to support students from poorer backgrounds. This includes £30.5 million on bursaries and scholarships, £15.6 million on access and outreach work, and more than £3.2 million on student success.

In 2017 we will also be awarding scholarships to UK and EU students studying a master’s qualification with us. The scholarships are aimed at removing the barriers to postgraduate education for students from under-represented groups.

This annual report on widening participation is divided into three sections: Access, Student Success and Progression. This whole student lifecycle approach is vital for us to embed widening participation into everything we do at the University of Liverpool. We see widening participation as part of the whole student journey and while we want to continue to support learners to access higher education we also want to ensure that they succeed academically and personally, and then progress onto fulfilling employment or further study.

It is a challenging time for students entering into the world of higher education, with decreasing government financial support and a bewildering array of course choices. In the midst of this we intend to continue to invest in widening participation to ensure that everyone with the qualifications, potential and determination to succeed has the opportunity to study at the University of Liverpool, irrespective of their background.

The University of Liverpool continues to make progress against our widening participation benchmarks, both institutionally and at more local levels. We constantly monitor our performance and evaluate outcomes.

The University of Liverpool consistently performs well in widening participation benchmarks against similar universities, and recruits a high percentage of students who are in receipt of full state support. In 2014-2015 87% of the new intake of students were recruited from state schools and colleges, placing the University within the top two Russell Group universities in terms of the high numbers of low income students it recruits.

Our constantly improving retention rate for mature learners can be partially attributed to the University offering a wide variety of suitable pathways onto degree courses which fully prepare mature students for study at university level. These programmes include the University’s Year 0 and 2+2 programmes delivered jointly with local Further Education colleges and the Go Higher Humanities and Social Sciences pathway delivered at the University of Liverpool.

The Widening Participation and Outreach team’s approach to building school partnerships is based on the idea that the most effective way of working with schools and colleges to improve access to HE is by supporting capacity building at school level to achieve lasting culture change. This approach is key to the University’s ethos and is used across the University.

Monitoring Our Impact on Widening Access

The University of Liverpool WP Rankings 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)</th>
<th>State Schools and Colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Liverpool</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Russell Group</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Russell Group (Proportion)</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Higher Education Statistic Agency (HESA) Performance Indicators Table 1. 2015-2016
Russell Group Teachers Conference
The Russell Group Teachers Conference is a bi-annual event designed to develop and maintain a strong relationship between schools, colleges and universities. All 24 Russell Group institutions work together to deliver both a north and south conference, covering a variety of topics of interest to teachers such as academic references, personal statements, student finance and applications to selective courses such as Medicine.

The 2016 North Conference was held at the University of Liverpool Guild of Students, with over 160 teachers attending from across the country. The Conference was opened by Professor Fiona Beveridge, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, and Guild of Students Vice President Alex Ferguson, with a plenary address by Dr Glenn Godinho, Senior Lecturer in Egyptology.

Prior to the conference, teachers were able to register for workshops specific to their interests, which were delivered by colleagues from across all Russell Group Institutions. The University of Liverpool was represented by Dr Fiona Watson (School of Medicine), who delivered the Access to Medicine workshop, Paul Gaunt (Careers and Employability), who delivered ‘Developing Students’ Employability’ and Caroline O’Connell (Student Services) who delivered the Money Matters workshop.

Advancing Access
The University of Liverpool is a partner in Advancing Access, a collection of 24 leading universities who are working together with schools and colleges to develop and maintain strong relationships between schools, colleges and universities. All 24 Russell Group institutions work together to deliver both a north and south conference, covering a variety of topics of interest to teachers such as academic references, personal statements, student finance and applications to selective courses such as Medicine.

Advancing Access provides a variety of CPD resources and online events for teachers and advisors to help them support students’ progression to leading universities. The information and guidance is provided via an online platform and is designed to help teachers learn how to support their students.

The CPD resources and online events cover the following topics:

- Demonstrating informed decision making
- Navigating key information skills
- Understanding university admissions processes
- Writing UCAS personal statements and references
- Preparing for university interviews
- Supporting progression to university

Advancing Access also hosts virtual conferences, allowing teachers and advisors to access the conference from their own computer.

For more information on Advancing Access and to access these resources, please visit www.advancingaccess.ac.uk
The Liverpool Scholars Programme

The Liverpool Scholars programme is a supported admissions programme which supports young people from widening participation backgrounds into the University of Liverpool. The programme comprises a range of activities which aim to develop students’ academic and transferable skills and prepare them for entry into higher education. Through Scholars, students get the chance to experience university life through taking part in sample lectures and academic taster sessions. It also focuses on the pastoral aspects of university, delivered by the Liverpool Guild of Students and societies to support a successful transition into university life.

Mahnoor
Medicine student and former Scholar

"From Year 9 to Year 11 I was involved in the Champions programme with the Widening Participation and Outreach team and through Champions heard about the Liverpool Scholars programme. I loved being part of Champions as it gave me so many opportunities I wouldn’t have otherwise had in high school and the support it gave me with my GCSEs was so useful. I wanted to continue having those opportunities and support so I was really keen to be involved with Liverpool Scholars. I knew I wanted to do Medicine, which is a very competitive course, so the extra support was really important. Being a part of the Liverpool Scholars programme has genuinely changed my life. I wouldn’t be where I am now if it wasn’t for it, I made friends I’m still in contact with, got to experience what university is like and got so much help with my personal statement. UCAS application, interview and my A levels, plus I completed an academic assignment which initially seemed impossible."

The Liverpool Scholars programme definitely made me feel more confident about university. I knew what university was really like, what the student’s role is and how to do work and research projects. I felt I knew the University of Liverpool really well too, I knew my way around campus, already had my student card and knew how to access the library and everything. Knowing my way around and being familiar with campus made my experience much better because University didn’t seem so scary.

I am now in my 2nd year of Medicine and I firmly believe that I am here today, doing what I love because of the Liverpool Scholars programme. It not only helped me with my studies but also helped me to become more confident and shaped me into who I am today. I’m forever grateful for the opportunity and cannot stress enough what a great opportunity it really is. I would definitely recommend the Liverpool Scholars programme to everyone. It is such a fantastic opportunity and it doesn’t end after going to university. I still get so many opportunities as a student at the University, like the Holt bursary which I am only eligible for because I was a Liverpool Scholar, and the opportunity to work on the programme as a Student Advocate."

Haneen
Law student and former Scholar

"I heard about the Liverpool Scholars programme when a representative from the Widening Participation and Outreach team came to my school to speak to Sixth Form students. I chose to get involved with the programme as I felt it would put me one step ahead of others applying to university by helping me develop necessary skills for university such as essay writing skills, referencing and most of all independence, because university is nothing like school. I made some amazing friends on the programme and met many inspiring current and past students, as well as lecturers and other University staff. The Liverpool Scholars programme really helped me with my A level studies, through holding study groups and giving me access to the libraries on campus – just like real University students!"

Before starting the programme I was really afraid of starting university as I did not know what to expect, however after completing the programme my confidence began to increase and I am now a first year Law student at the University of Liverpool. I am also a Student Advocate within the Widening Participation and Outreach team, and work on the Liverpool Scholars programme. It is a rewarding job because having been in their situation I can relate to them and help them feel at ease. I always recommend the Liverpool Scholars programme to students – it has shaped me into a determined, hardworking, sociable and independent student, and I will always be grateful for the fantastic opportunities it has given me."

The culmination of the Liverpool Scholars programme is an academic assignment which students complete with the support of an academic advisor, typically a University academic lecturer or PhD student. This allows the students to further experience university learning and teaching, and demonstrate their own academic potential working closely with their academic advisor. Successful completion of the academic assignment allows the Scholars student to receive a number of benefits, including:

- A guaranteed conditional offer at the University of Liverpool, reduced by up to 2 A level grades or equivalent
- The Liverpool Scholars Award, a non-repayable financial bursary
- Access to Liverpool University – such as current Guild President Sean Turner, who was a Scholars student prior to his undergraduate degree.
The Liverpool Guild of Students Outreach Activities

Liverpool Guild of Students is the students’ union for the University of Liverpool. They have worked closely with the Widening Participation and Outreach team for a number of years to deliver outreach activities in local schools and develop the opportunities offered to students to engage with young people.

Science in Schools has been significant for both the children and myself. It’s a great opportunity for me to be more confident, while also helping the children become more interested in science. It’s an excellent project! I love it.

Student Volunteer

Study Abroad

The University of Liverpool has a variety of excellent Study Abroad opportunities across all degree programmes. The Study Abroad programme supports the University’s ethos of helping students become global citizens with a wide range of employability skills and experiences to help them succeed in the international and inter-cultural graduate employment market. The University has partnerships with over 100 universities across the world, offering students a range of study opportunities. As well as the traditional Study Abroad opportunities, the University of Liverpool is unique in offering a Year in China option to most courses, at XJTLU, our China campus in Suzhou.

Rachel

After completing my A levels at St Margaret’s Academy I started my degree in French and Spanish at the University of Liverpool in 2012.

Through the Study Abroad opportunities offered at the University of Liverpool, I was awarded a scholarship to study Mandarin at a university in South China at the end of my first year. I lived in Guangzhou, the third largest city in China, roughly an hour from Hong Kong. Alongside learning about the Chinese language and culture, I visited different families around China, climbed the Great Wall, visited Hong Kong to see the New Year fireworks and spent a week looking after pandas. I also made many friends among my classmates, and after graduating from the scholarship programme, travelled around 7 different Asian countries with them before returning to the UK.

The University of Liverpool offers all students the opportunity to study in China and experience life in a foreign country, which I would highly recommend. Studying in China and being able to communicate in Mandarin greatly adds to employability as well as being an interesting and useful skill.

During my degree I also trained as a TEFL teacher, so for the compulsory year abroad of my languages degree I chose to split my year between teaching in France for 5 months and Spain for 4 months. Studying abroad in both countries rapidly improved my language skills and developed my employability skills. I enjoyed teaching English to students of all ages, from young children to seniors and especially enjoyed giving lessons on English culture; how to make a cup of English tea, bonfire night, Christmas traditions and treasure hunts at Easter.

My highlight living in France was training for and completing the marathon ‘Championnats de France 2015’. I was then scouted by a coach and asked to train with a running club, which was extremely challenging as none of the runners spoke English! For my time in Spain I lived in Madrid, which was fantastic for sight-seeing, sports and experiencing Spanish culture. My year abroad gave me lots of experience teaching learners of all ages and abilities, which was helped me to gain a place on a PGDE Primary Teaching course following my graduation from the University of Liverpool.

I will be sad to leave the University of Liverpool this summer, but I have definitely packed my years of study with as many experiences and opportunity as possible – something I was only able to do on the strength of the Study Abroad provision offered at the University.”
Student Advocates act as Role Models

Student Advocates act as positive role models for young people, giving them a first-hand insight into higher education and sharing their educational journey, inspiring the young people to fulfill their potential and aspire to higher education.

Through working as a Student Advocate, students develop valuable transferable skills, and are able to take advantage of a variety of training opportunities such as first aid, child safeguarding, diversity and equality, and behaviour management. Students also have the chance to take on additional delivery responsibilities, which leads to them developing or delivering sessions to students. Through these development opportunities, Student Advocates are given the chance to develop new, and build on existing, skills and gain valuable experience to support them within a graduate job market.

Stephanie
Medical at University of Liverpool

"Originally from Wales, I am in my fifth and final year of studying Medicine at the University of Liverpool. This is also my fifth year of working as a Student Advocate (SA). During my time as an SA, I have worked on a large number of different projects, including Primary, Secondary, Fast Trackers mentoring, the Liverpool Scholars programme and Summer Schools. All of the projects have a common goal of encouraging young people from all walks of life to discover their potential.

The experiences I have gained and skills I have developed as an SA have supplemented my degree, and I am so grateful to have had this opportunity. Working alongside such a diverse group of young people has improved my confidence in communicating with new people, something which I put into practice every day when meeting patients in hospital. The staff at Widening Participation & Outreach has encouraged my personal development, and this has allowed me to take opportunities to polish my presentation skills. Delivering a session on time management skills to a lecture room of Scholars students is only one example of this.

One of my most memorable experiences of working as an SA was when I shadowed a medical student in a hospital in Liverpool. I will take the skills and values I have developed during my SA role with me, and hope to have the chance to continue raising aspirations of young people."

Tom Kewin
PhD Student

"I’m a second-year doctoral student researching into speculative fictions in the Department of English and I’ve been a Student Advocate for three and a half years. During my high school years, I had two encounters with widening participation: the first was an Aim Higher project which gave me the opportunity to attend a small-scale residential at Lancaster University, and the second was a shadowing scheme at the University of Liverpool. Both experiences proved useful in my formative years for figuring out which degree course was right for me, whilst providing a much-needed insight into what the university experience meant, apart from hearsay and myths from friends. The shadowing scheme in particular turned out to be one of the more rewarding experiences.

I applied for the Student Advocate role, wholly under the impression that it was a volunteering scheme, only to realise I’d signed up for something different altogether. Different in the sense that I’ve found myself in a job role which has had the most profound effect on me as a person; by now my involvement in the Widening Participation and Outreach team wherever I end up in the future. My time as a Student Advocate has proved to me that my future career, in spite of the frustrations of being forced to face my limitations, is achievable and that I’m capable of pushing through any barrier to success, partly down to the fact that I’d never truly believed I’d succeed as a Student Advocate."

Over 180 students are part of the Student Advocate programme, representing all disciplines and stages of study at the University of Liverpool. The Student Advocates act as role models for young people, giving them the chance to continue raising aspirations of young people. I have developed during my SA role with me, and hope to have the chance to continue raising aspirations of young people."
The University of Liverpool is a research focused, and research intensive institution, and this active, rigorous and leading research offers students the chance to be at the very forefront of knowledge in their discipline. We offer a stimulating research environment in which postgraduate students can flourish and reach their potential, while meeting other researchers, both in their discipline and in other areas of study.

The Postgraduate Progression Award supports University of Liverpool students to access the opportunities that postgraduate study offers. The Award is available to University of Liverpool undergraduate students progressing onto either full- or part-time postgraduate taught study in 2017 and takes the following form:

- UK and EU students with a 2:1 or above classification will be offered a 10% reduction in fees
- International students with a first class undergraduate degree will be offered a £2,500 reduction in fees
- International students with a 2:1 classification will be offered a 10% reduction in fees.

Postgraduate Progression Award

At the University of Liverpool we fully appreciate the importance of postgraduate study and how it can support our students to further their employability skills and knowledge base, helping them to stand out in the graduate job market, or progress on to postgraduate research and an academic career.

Graduate Trainee Programme

The Graduate Trainee programme aims to provide University of Liverpool students with the skills and experience to succeed in a career within and beyond the higher education sector. The two year programme offers a valuable insight into the challenging working environment of a university. The programme is made up of four structured placements, each lasting six months in four different professional areas of the University. This gives graduates a unique opportunity to develop employability skills and learn to apply them to a huge variety of situations and procedures. Graduate Trainees are also given the opportunity to complete professional qualifications while on the programme, such as the Institute of Learning and Management Level 5 qualification.

Nicole
Graduate Trainee 2015-2017

"After studying BA Geography and Civic Design (MCD) at the University of Liverpool, I joined the Graduate Trainee programme. I wanted to get into management because of my previous experience of project work during my degrees, and I liked the idea of being able to apply my knowledge across different departments throughout the University. The University is so diverse and constantly evolving, which really emphasised how exciting this opportunity could be.

I have enjoyed the structure of the programme; undertaking 4 placements for a 6 month period gives you enough time to learn and develop the relevant skills, and the rotation of departments has given me a broader experience and a real feeling of taking on responsibility.

The huge variety of tasks I have worked on has rewarded me with an agile way of working that is difficult to learn from a book. Whether it’s creating multi-audience digital content for the Institute of Integrative Biology or adapting the planning and recruiting practice of the Widening Participation and Outreach team, I have to digest information rapidly, make a decision and see it followed through. I have a mentor who I go to for one-to-one support and it has been really useful for my career development to have someone at a high level who has a strategic overview as they are able to provide information and constructive advice to point me towards things I might not have thought about. I would really recommend the Graduate Trainee programme to students, as it is a great opportunity for skills development and career progression as well as your own personal development.

After completing the Graduate Trainee programme, I would like to do project management in a job which is versatile and has multiple high level projects. I really enjoyed working in the Widening Participation and Outreach team, and felt it was very suited to me. If I don’t end up working in the higher education sector, I would like to establish a career in Transport Planning."

Some of the departments which have offered placements to the Graduate Trainees include:
- Widening Participation and Outreach
- Careers and Employability
- Strategic Planning
- Institute of Integrative Biology
- Material Innovation Factory
- Research Policy
- Health and Life Sciences Technology Directorate
- Environmental Sciences
**Careers and Employability**

Students from non-traditional backgrounds can face extra barriers in accessing good quality work experience or other opportunities to enhance their employability (such as work shadowing, language learning, enterprise, volunteering etc) because of the financial costs of participating in these activities, and because they usually lack access to the professional networks from which other students often benefit.

The Careers & Employability Service is committed to enhancing the employability of students from widening participation backgrounds and we currently undertake 3 major activities which reflect this commitment.

### Student Mentoring On-Line

The aim is to enable students to benefit from employer and alumni mentoring which in turn will support graduate career choice. We are now in the third year of running this project, with 71 students benefiting in 2015-16 through:

- Individual recognition, encouragement and support with their career development
- Increased self-esteem and confidence when dealing with professionals
- A realistic perspective of the workplace
- Advice on how to balance work and other responsibilities and set priorities
- Experience in networking.

Our WP Lead Careers Adviser, working with colleagues from Widening Participation and Outreach, runs focus groups to ensure that mentoring meets the needs of WP students, matches and trains both mentors and mentees, administers the programme and carries out evaluation. Mentors are largely sourced by the Alumni Department.

### Employability Support Award

The Employability Support Award enables students to benefit from a range of employability-related activities that lack of funding would otherwise hinder, for example, a short course, a research project, a mentoring or a networking meeting, an enterprise activity, volunteering or other work experience or work-shadowing activity either in the UK or globally. The Award can also be used to fund travel, accommodation or interview expenses.

Students are awarded a non-repayable bursary of up to £1,000 through a competitive application process, and the Award would either partially or fully cover the costs of the activity.

After participating in the bursary-funded activity, students produce a case study or deliver a presentation about their involvement, which acts as an inspiration to other students in the future.

**Outcomes and feedback:**

- "I have benefited as my mentor provided me with ideas for future employment and an insight into Parliament, which I now have a placement at."
  - Jennifer Rasal
  - BSc Marine Botany

- "My mentor has given me information as to how the sector I want to get into works, information I don’t think I could have got otherwise."
  - Victoria Newman
  - BSc Bovine Veterinary Science

- "The Award funded travel expenses to attend the International Jellyfish blooms Symposium conference in Barcelona. The symposium is the largest networking meeting for jellyfish research and has experts attending from around the world. It’s a week-long event comprising of lectures, question and answer sessions and poster displays. This was the first experience of what it is like to work in the marine environment and has experts attending from around the world."
  - Nadia
  - Liverpool upReach Associate

### upReach

upReach provides students with a programme coordinator who offers intensive one-to-one Skype and telephone support with their personal and professional development to develop their employability skills, offer CV application form and mock interview support, and boost their professional networks. Students also benefit from an opportunity to be matched with an employer mentor, and to attend employer events. In this first year of the programme, 27 University of Liverpool students took part, with 8 being matched with mentors from Deloitte, KPMG, Unilever and the Civil Service.

**Outcomes and feedback:**

- "upReach has given me an insight into different graduate roles I would have never previously considered. They’ve helped me to start the journey to securing a grad role through applying for internships and other forms of experience within my uni. I now feel confident in applying for jobs in the professional sector when I graduate, thanks to the support and advice I have received from them, such as the importance of gaining as much experience possible and how to write a CV and various applications."
  - Michelle Chapunza-Mhindurwa
  - MENG Mechanical Engineering with Management
Looking forward

The Widening Participation and Outreach team is now part of the University of Liverpool’s Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation department, delivering projects and activities in support of the University’s missions to widen access and enhance social mobility for those students who remain under-represented in higher education. The work of the Widening Participation and Outreach team focuses on learners from low participation neighbourhoods, disadvantaged and low income backgrounds and learners from a variety of targeted cohorts, and aims to increase opportunities for both young and adult learners in Merseyside and beyond.

Looking forward, the University aims to inspire, engage and enable all those who would not traditionally consider higher education to fulfil their potential by raising their awareness, challenging barriers and providing opportunities to experience and gain familiarity with university, which might not have otherwise been available to them.

To achieve this, and to further build on our existing successes, the Widening Participation and Outreach team will continue to provide students with a sustained programme of academic support, as well as targeted information, advice and guidance. We will expand our work with a range of learners, from primary to post-16 students, adapting our support as students’ needs evolve and in line with institutional and government priorities. Our high engagement rate and strong relationships with pupils, teachers, parents and carers is something we are extremely proud of and we intend to grow.

We will continue to work closely with colleagues in our faculties to ensure high quality widening participation work takes place across the University and that the evidence base on which we centre our future widening participation and social mobility work is developed further.

We are pleased to announce that we are the host institution for the HEFCE-funded Merseyside Collaborative Outreach Programme (MCOP), the MCOP team will work alongside colleagues in the Widening Participation and Outreach team and this will enable the University to grow its collaborative work with local universities and further education colleges in delivering activities that will make a real difference to learners in target wards where participation to higher education is lower than would be expected given students’ GCSE attainment.

Although historically we have concentrated our efforts on supporting students during their transition to university, we are increasingly paying attention to supporting students throughout their time at the University and helping them achieve fulfilling careers when they graduate.

Please get in touch if you would like to know more or if you would like to get involved.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Claire Brown
Director, External Relations
Marketing and Communications