



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

Widening
Participation
and Outreach

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES AND NURTURING TALENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



We are the original redbrick
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At the University of Liverpool, we're working hard to make sure all students have the opportunity to go to university, whatever their background. This has been our mission from day one. And that's why we're one of the leading universities in the sector for widening participation.

Based within the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation (SRAWP) department, the Widening Participation and Outreach (WPO) team delivers projects and activities designed to widen access to the University. We work in partnership with schools and colleges and our focus is to raise awareness of higher education and support attainment of students, particularly those students who are from areas where people are traditionally less likely to go to university, as well as care leavers, disabled students, asylum seekers, refugees and students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

We provide a programme of activity to inform, inspire and enable those students to excel. That means we can attract the brightest and the best, whatever their path to success looks like.



The Liverpool Advocate programme

During 2022, the Liverpool Advocate programme became a collaborative scheme, bringing together student workers from three teams in SRAWP – the Widening Participation and Outreach Team, Shaping Futures and UK Recruitment. 250 students take part in the programme and are vital for our work – they influence and guide us as well as energise and enliven the activities we run.

Liverpool Advocates provide the bridge between school and university and play key roles such as attainment mentors, session facilitators, campus tour leaders, events assistants and summer school support.

Whilst the advocates benefit from transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication and team work, the work is also paid which helps support them during their studies.

26% of our current Liverpool Advocates are from widening participation backgrounds and have participated in our widening participation projects whilst they were at school or college. Working as a Liverpool Advocate is a chance for our students to inspire young people by sharing their journeys to higher education and being positive role models.



Liverpool Advocate testimonials

Even before university, the Liverpool Advocate team was there for me! As a Year 12 'Pathways to Law' student, I was able to visit the university and hear about student life from Advocates. They guided me through my journey and gave me a true insight into my degree, the social life, and all of the benefits that the University of Liverpool had to offer.

Once I became a student myself, I was glad to become part of the Advocate team. As part of my role, I have made great friends, become more confident and managed to learn more about the University than I ever imagined. My favourite part of my role is helping young students with their studies and promoting higher education to them.

As many students are often unsure about attending university, being able to help them navigate this challenging time has been greatly rewarding. The team has taught me to be compassionate and a great listener. I could not have done all of this without them.

Liverpool Advocate, studying Law



My first experience with the WPO team was prior to university; contact with them allowed me to get to an Open Day and I ended up calling one of the team on the day because I got lost. As an estranged student, having some guidance on bursary applications and advice navigating university was crucial in helping me with my success early on. It was also how I heard about the Liverpool Advocate role.

I've grown in confidence so much since starting this role. I wouldn't have imagined I could give talks in school halls to whole year groups, mentor young people with Biology homework and act as a role model to younger students with so much potential.

I've met many wonderful Advocates and gained friendships through the role, people I would not have met otherwise. The Liverpool Advocate role has been one of my favourite parts of university so far, the skills it has given me will stay with me for many years after I graduate.

Liverpool Advocate, studying Biological Sciences



Showcasing the University's research to schools



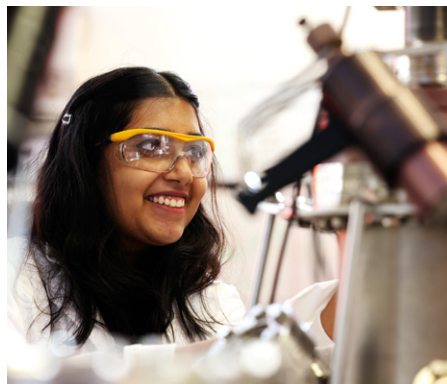
A key part of our approach to outreach is to support the curriculum in our partner schools, whilst also showing that learning at a university is different to school.

Throughout 2022 we have linked our outreach work in with the University's research themes, working closely with staff from across all three Faculties to develop and deliver events focused on: Infectious Disease, Climate Futures, Advanced Materials and Heritage. The events show how universities are carrying out cutting edge work to positively impact our city, our country and our planet, whilst attempting to inspire the next generation of researchers.

We have also delivered a number of events for schools that tie into other national and international research themes to show our audiences the scale of the research; the Climate Futures event was arranged to coincide with World Earth Day and the Infectious Disease event was held on the anniversary of the first Covid Vaccine, providing clear links between research and daily life that schools and young people could relate to.

This commitment to public engagement has not been limited to just campus visits, we have worked with departments to take PhD Research Projects into schools, forming a circle of researchers who explain their work to everyday audiences and expose young people to complex thinking in a familiar setting.

OUR AIM IS TO INSPIRE THOUGHT AND CREATIVITY IN OUR SCHOOLS AND YOUNG PEOPLE, AS WELL AS ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OUR RESEARCHERS DO.



Engagement with primary schools



In 2022 our work with primary schools evolved to include a new project called 'Students of the Future', an interactive online resource which enables us to widen our reach through virtual outreach and allows us to become a hub of primary school outreach work.

Accessible to schools across the country and beyond, the interactive website supports parents and teachers to introduce the idea of university to children, whilst the accompanying resources spark conversations about career goals and help children to envision their educational journeys.

The website can be used by children independently at home or as part of an in-school session; in 2022 we had over 113,000 visits to the website, 15,300 of which were unique visitors. [studentsofthefuture.co.uk](https://www.studentsofthefuture.co.uk)

On campus, we hosted 500 local primary school pupils and engaged with 1,000 pupils in school classrooms. We have been supported in our outreach work by the Liverpool Guild of Students, the Victoria Gallery & Museum and the Confucius Institute.



113,000

In 2022 we had over **113,000 visits** to our website.

Partnerships



Children's University

Our partnership with Children's University (CU) is expanding year on year. This year over 400 young people plus their parents came to campus for a graduation event to celebrate achievements in school and share in the positive messages about higher education. Having parents on campus is a unique opportunity for the University to have important conversations with families about their child's educational journey.



IntoUniversity

The University has worked in partnership with the Liverpool Football Club Foundation, and the national charity IntoUniversity, to co-fund an outreach centre in the North Liverpool area for the past 5 years. This area of Liverpool was targeted because of its levels of disadvantage, and this work is a further example of the University's civic engagement.

The partnership work with IntoUniversity complements the outreach programme provided by the University, often underpinning activities at Primary and Secondary level, working in the same schools to recognise the positive impact of repeated engagement with young people. Outreach events include in-school sessions, campus visits and activities based in the IntoUniversity Centre such as 1-to-1 tutoring and mentoring.

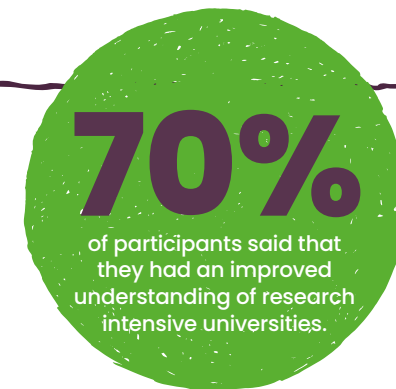
During 2022 the IntoUniversity Centre worked with 1,500 local young people, and over the five year period 3,300 young people have engaged with the centre, often on multiple occasions as they move through the school years. The vast majority of these interactions will have involved a visit to the University campus and engagement with our Liverpool Advocates.

**OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD,
3300 YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE ENGAGED WITH
INTOUNIVERSITY NORTH
LIVERPOOL.**



Realising Opportunities

Realising Opportunities is a unique collaboration of leading, research intensive universities, working together to promote fair access and social mobility of students from groups underrepresented in higher education.



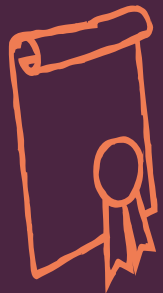
Participation in higher education in England has increased significantly since 1990 when 19% of young people went to university. Despite numbers increasing, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are still 2.4 times less likely to progress to university than those from the most advantaged backgrounds. The difference is even more distinct when considering progression to highly selective institutions, to which 21% of the most advantaged students' progress compared to 3% of the least advantaged.

The RO programme is designed to give students a wide range of information in a variety of ways in order for students to have the space and support to make informed choices about higher education and crucially, their future careers.



The Liverpool RO programme works with targeted schools locally, but uses the broader appeal of the programme to work in Manchester, Blackburn and more recently in 2022, we have been able to meaningfully engage with schools in central London.

Working collaboratively has enabled us to get a broader picture of the experiences of young people on the programme; over 70% of students reported that they had an improved understanding of research intensive universities after taking part in RO. 68% of students are from Polar 4 Quintile 1 and 2 and 92% have no parental experience of HE in the home. UCAS data has shown that there is a higher proportion of Black and Asian students taking part in RO when compared to the population as a whole, enabling the University to work directly with underrepresented groups in the local region.



**WE HAVE A LONG-STANDING
TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING
STUDENTS FROM ALL
BACKGROUNDS TO SUCCEED.**



Liverpool Scholars programme

A key element of our student intake strategy is to support, prepare and recruit local widening participation students from schools across the region.

Working with over 45 schools and 270 students each year, the programme supports talented young people, regardless of their background, to access a local and prestigious Russell Group University. Key stakeholders include our University sponsored school – North Liverpool Academy – and large providers such as Birkenhead Sixth Form College and Carmel College.

The programme is an institutional collaborative effort, spanning across 10 departments at various points during its delivery. The programme is responsible for recruiting over 10% of the University's Polar 4 Quintile 1 intake each year – an institutional and sector priority – as well as a growing focus on race equality, disability and low income families.

The programme acts as a beacon to the community, supporting students who may not traditionally think of the University of Liverpool as a possibility for them, and engaging with families and supporters at regular touch points to recognise the key contribution they can make. Liverpool Scholars has a strong focus on building a sense of belonging as well as providing the essential academic support to succeed and flourish at the University.

WORKING WITH OVER 45 SCHOOLS AND 270 STUDENTS EACH YEAR, THE PROGRAMME SUPPORTS TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR BACKGROUND.



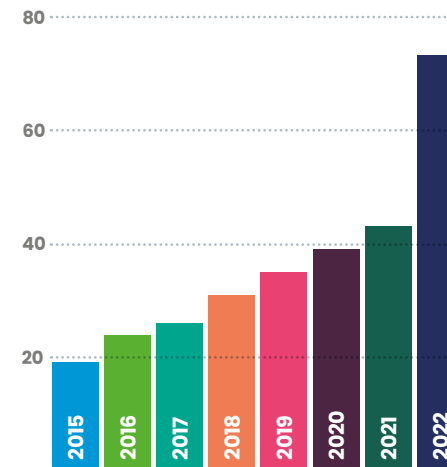
Supporting care experienced students

Over the past 4 years, a concentrated effort has been made to increase the number of care experienced students placed within the University.

The term 'care experienced' refers to anyone who has been, or is currently, in Local Authority care. The number of care experienced students has been steadily rising in England with over 80,000 young people now in care (up from ~70,000 in 2015).

Care experienced students often face incredibly difficult social circumstances and lack the same opportunities as their peers, particularly with regards to access and success within HE. The University recognises the barriers these young people face and has endeavoured to provide the support needed to ensure they have the opportunity to access the life changing benefits of studying here.

Care experienced applicants placed at the University of Liverpool



Merseyside Young Health and Life Scientists project



Prior to 2022, Merseyside Young Medics had been a long-standing project between the Widening Participation team and the School of Medicine, inspiring and preparing students in Years 9-11 in schools to pursue a career in Medicine.



Whilst many of the students would apply to study Medicine after sixth form, some students became interested in other clinical areas such as Nursing or Dentistry. In response to this, the programme has now expanded to include 5 other subject areas within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences: Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Health Sciences, Psychology and Life Sciences, and is now aptly named Merseyside Young Health and Life Scientists (MY HLS).

The expansion of the project has allowed Year 9 students to engage in all 6 areas of study within Health and Life Sciences and make better informed choices on which subject would be a suitable choice for them to focus on. From participating in MY HLS, young people gain crucial subject specific insight into their chosen subject, and are challenged to develop skills that will support them to apply to their chosen course at university in the future.

Strong links between the project and the NHS still remain a priority, and pupils are invited to hospital visits and NHS Career Days. Expansion of the project has encouraged the development of relevant work experience opportunities for all subject areas, and we are excited to be trialling a week of work experience at the Leahurst Campus in Summer 2023 for all students in the Veterinary Science cohort. Once pupils reach Year 11 they are signposted to apply for the University's Liverpool Scholars and Realising Opportunities programmes, continuing our approach of long term engagement with young people. We are confident that the expansion of the project will increase the number of widening participation students studying at the University not only in Medicine but across the whole Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

STRONG LINKS BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE NHS STILL REMAIN A PRIORITY, AND PUPILS ARE INVITED TO HOSPITAL VISITS AND NHS CAREER DAYS.



Year 12 Clinical summer schools



The Widening Participation and Outreach team works in collaboration with the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Sciences to run three summer schools for Year 12 students who are aspiring to study in these highly competitive areas.

Students from the Liverpool Scholars and Realising Opportunities programmes are prioritised alongside students from local schools who meet widening participation criteria.

'Destination Medicine' is a longstanding programme which recruits local students, whereas 'Destination Dentistry' and 'Destination Vets' are newer programmes and recruit nationally. Students take part in subject-specific tasks such as taster sessions, interview workshops and experiential visits to Leahurst and hospitals such as Whiston and Alder Hey. The summer schools develop students' confidence, expectations of the course and enables them to provide a strong application to their respective subjects.

“ I really enjoyed the summer school and Liverpool University has definitely become one of my options to apply for Dentistry as everyone was so welcoming and friendly and I had the best experience ever! ”

“ I thoroughly enjoyed everything about the summer school, especially the practice clinical skills and the lectures which gives you a perspective of what it's like to study veterinary science at Liverpool. ”

Summer school participants, 2022.



Raising attainment with local students



The Widening Participation and Outreach team works in partnership with the Liverpool Arabic Centre and other local partners to support young people from underrepresented minority ethnic groups across Liverpool with their GCSE attainment and progression to higher education.

The University has a longstanding partnership with the Liverpool Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS), and the local community, to support them to raise the educational attainment of minority ethnic pupils.

The programme of activity provided by the University includes online tuition with trained Liverpool Advocates alongside visits to campus to help students establish a sense of belonging and community at the University.

Students have consistently fed back that this high-level support has improved their learning:

“ I feel more prepared for my GCSEs and I was able to ask questions and be more engaged in school. ”

Year 11 student



Anti-Racist Schools project



The 'Anti-Racist School' project seeks to empower young minority ethnic students to create positive change in their school and community. The project is funded by 'Shaping Futures' and is a distinctive outreach activity in that it supports Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students in one of our local schools and seeks to address their lived experience.



Working in partnership with teachers at the school, students are given opportunities and experiences to build their confidence, meet with minority ethnic role models and gain an understanding on policy and making change. On a week by week basis, the project is student-led and builds towards a final activity of presenting their work on how their school can be an actively anti-racist institution.

THE 'ANTI-RACIST SCHOOL' PROJECT, SEEKS TO EMPOWER YOUNG MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS TO CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THEIR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY.

Celebrating success in 2022



The University of Liverpool has been awarded a national quality mark that recognises high standards of support for care experienced students.

The prestigious national award from the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) is a quality mark for Higher Education providers that demonstrates the institutions support for the inclusion, success and progression of Care Experienced students. This award recognises the support available to Care Experienced students via academic and professional services colleagues both before they join us and during and after their studies with us.

In particular, NNECL recognised the service provided for care experienced students prior to their entry into the university as 'exceptional', commenting that the university has **"very well-established practices and a very clear, structured approach to the support of care experienced applicants"**.

The admissions system within the University was also highlighted as an area of good practice, stating that **"a strong and well-established approach is evident, placing it firmly within the enhanced category"** of the quality standard.

In higher education, care experienced students are defined as:

- students who have self-declared their care status via UCAS and have provided further information to confirm that they have spent time in the care of the local authority;
- and are a young person who has been involved with social services during their childhood based on self-declaration and follow-up validation by the university.



University of Liverpool
Widening Participation and Outreach

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THE ORIGINAL

REDBRICK