

1. Equity outcomes and strategies

a) Outcomes for improving performance for equity groups from 2015-2017

The 2015-2017 University of Newcastle Access & Participation Plan reflects the University's commitment to improving the educational outcomes of our community by having a focus on the equity target groups that are most widespread in our region.

Low SES outcomes:

- increase participation rates from 24.3% (2013) to 24.6% (2017) (based on SEIFA 2011 indicator SA1 measure)
- continue to maintain undergraduate success rates for low SES students that are within three percentage points of UON non-low SES undergraduate students

Disability outcomes:

- increase participation rates from 5.9% (2013) to 6.2% (2017)
- achieve undergraduate success rates for students with disability within five percentage points of students without disability by 2017 (in 2013 this gap over 10 percentage points)

Indigenous outcomes:

- increase participation rates from 2.7% (2013) to 3.0% (2017)
- achieve undergraduate success rates for Indigenous students within two percentage points of non-Indigenous students by 2017 (in 2013 this gap was close to four percentage points)

b) Strategies for achieving the outcomes

- Build an expectation to participate in higher education amongst primary and high school students and their family members throughout the Hunter, Central Coast and lower Mid North Coast through the AIM HIGH Program.
- Provide pathways for adults into university by continuing to expand our established pathway programs, including the delivery of Open Foundation in community based settings.
- Increase the retention, success and career readiness of students by embedding a range of evidence based support strategies throughout the curriculum. Including ensuring our course and programs are designed and assessed in ways that actively engage a diverse community of students with their learning.
- Design and implement a supportive framework to grow the capability of our staff to work with our diverse student cohort.
- Implement an institutional Disability Action Plan with actions specifically targeted to improve participation and success of students with disability.

2. Evaluation Plan

The University of Newcastle Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE) plays a critical role in the University's Equity & Access agenda by strategically aligning, coordinating & evaluating our strategies to deliver innovative solutions and cultural change across the University in relation to equity practice. The data analysis and evaluation framework designed by the CEEHE is informed by research best practice and includes: robust data gathering using qualitative and quantitative measurements and measuring the short and long term impact of strategies.

3. Partnerships and collaboration

The University will continue to build the capacity of our region through the ongoing collaboration with community partners, including schools, TAFE and community based organisations such as The Smith Family. The University implements a strength based approach when working with educational partners, with our partners being able to identify areas where university involvement or extra support could improve the learning opportunities for community members, whether in the development of new initiatives or adding value to existing activities.