
1. AIM

The University of Technology, Sydney Widening Participation Strategy (WPS) aims to deliver long-term sustainable outcomes for improved access, participation, retention and success of students from targeted equity groups, with a special focus on students from low socio-economic (low SES) and Indigenous backgrounds.

2. EQUITY GROUP TARGETS,

Two primary student groups are identified as key groups for which UTS will seek recognition for progress against targets:

1. Students from low SES backgrounds, and
2. Indigenous students

While students from equity groups are often represented in the above two groups, other equity group students demonstrating educational disadvantage will continue to receive ongoing services and be monitored for internal and external reporting purposes, including:

- Students with a disability
- Students with a rural and isolated area home address
- Students who are recent migrants or refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Female students enrolled in non-traditional fields of study

3. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

UTS Key Performance indicators currently include:

- Increasing the access, participation, retention and success of low SES students
- Increasing the access, participation, and success of Indigenous students

4. STRATEGIES

BUILDING EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION AND ATTAINMENT

Objective: Encourage aspiration for university study, well before the point of enrolment, through an integrated suite of programs developed in partnership with targeted schools, TAFEs and communities.

Outcomes:

- Improving students' academic preparedness and outcomes
- Increasing students' awareness, confidence and motivation toward higher education
- Building teacher, school and community capacity
- Broadening students' family knowledge about higher education
- Developing and sustaining effective community and stakeholder partnerships

| Strategies | Programs | Success Indicators |
|---|--|---|
| Implement low SES schools outreach activities for targeted high school students to provide an experience of university and the associated life benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Schools Program • On and off campus experience days and workshops • School visits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers/proportions of students and parents reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater awareness of what university offers and higher education options available - better knowledge of the benefits of higher education - a more positive perception of university • Numbers/proportions of students, teachers and parents reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improved student motivation to study at university - increased optimism that university is a realistic option for themselves/their students/their child • Numbers/proportions of students and teachers reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater student confidence in academic abilities - improved learning progress and/or academic performance - greater student engagement in school |
| Provide academic support to high schools to improve students' academic preparedness and progress. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UTS student tutors working in schools • Academic preparation and study skills workshops • Discipline-specific activities in schools • Development of resources for use in schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/proportion of students reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improved motivation to do well in school - better study skills - better preparedness for university • Number/proportion of teachers reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better access to professional development - improved knowledge and skills in discipline of focus - development and application of enhanced learning and teaching practices - increased capacity to motivate and engage their students in learning • Number/proportion of key stakeholders reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development and maintenance of robust and valued partnerships with relevant UTS Units and/or Faculties |

WIDENING ACCESS

Objective: Expand and strengthen access schemes and admission pathways into UTS for school leavers and mature age students to assist low SES and Indigenous students gain access to university.

Outcomes:

- UTS access schemes for school leavers are implemented to recognise academic potential beyond ATAR attainment
- UTS access schemes and pathways for mature age students are expanded
- Recognition of prior learning for mature age students is improved
- Enrolment at UTS by LSES students and TAFE students is increased

| Strategies | Programs | Success Indicators |
|--|---|--|
| Provide access schemes not wholly reliant on ATAR for school leavers from a low SES background. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Access Scheme • UTS Principals Recommendation Scheme (moving to Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of applications for admission via access schemes • Number of students entering university through access schemes • Number of students entering university through TAFE pathways • Number/proportion of TAFE students |

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| Provide access schemes and multiple admission pathways for mature age students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Access Scheme • Multiple admission pathways and assessment processes (e.g. TAFE, Insearch, STAT) • Recognition of prior learning • Development of credit transfer arrangements to facilitate TAFE student articulation • Pathways-building and transition support activities • TAFE-UTS partnerships | <p>reporting increased awareness and knowledge university pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number/proportion of TAFE staff reporting greater student awareness of university pathways • Number of credit transfer and articulation arrangements developed |
| Develop and implement outreach activities to increase awareness of access schemes and alternative entry pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAFE visits • On campus information and experience days • Community events and presentations | |
| Promote and implement Indigenous pathways into UTS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and recruitment programs • UNISTART Enabling Program • Direct Entry Program • Away-from-Base Courses | |

TRANSITION, RETENTION AND SUCCESS

Objective: To enhance UTS academic and personal support programs to promote the effective transition, retention and success of low SES and Indigenous students and actively respond to the changing needs of an increasingly diverse student community.

Outcomes:

- Improved student transition to university
- Improved engagement of first year students in transition programs
- Implementation of academic, co-curricular and personal programs and resources to meet the needs of a diverse student community
- Increased use of research-led approaches to teaching focused on student learning, integrating online and face-to-face experiences.
- Increased participation by UTS staff in an active community of practice that promotes the delivery of transition, retention and success programs

| Strategies | Programs | Success Indicators |
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| Provide transition support for students from low SES backgrounds to support them access and begin to develop a graduate capabilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'First Year' Experience Program • Graduate attributes Program • PRS/EAS Transition Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved academic performance by students engaged in transition programs • Improved retention and success rates of students from low SES and Indigenous backgrounds |

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| Provide academic support to UTS students to assist them to perform at the best of their ability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial support • Peer mentoring • Academic English support • Resources and programs for first year students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved employment outcomes for students from low SES and Indigenous backgrounds • Transition, Retention and Success programs are embedded in UTS core business, including curriculum and strategic planning |
| Provide financial assistance for students from low-SES backgrounds to support the successful completion of their studies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity scholarships • Student loans • Internet and computer access | |
| Provide academic and personal support for Indigenous students at UTS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist Academic workshops (tailored learning support) • Appropriate visible Indigenous student space • Indigenous scholarships • Faculty Liaison • Study facilities • Internet and computer access • Indigenous library space • Employment and volunteer opportunities | |

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Objective: Promote the importance of delivering inclusive community programs and policies that contribute to building a university community in which students from diverse backgrounds can thrive.

| Target group | Key programs include | Responsibility |
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| Cultural Diversity | Cultural Awareness Information Sessions | E&DU |
| | Cultural festivals | SSU |
| | Multifaith prayer spaces | SSU |
| Disability support | Academic support, case management and financial assistance | SSU |
| | Mental Health Awareness Training | SSU/E&DU |
| | Disability Action Plan | E&DU, Faculties, Units |
| | Disability Projects Fund | E&DU |
| | Transition to work programs | SSU |
| | Web resources for students with disabilities | SSU |
| Indigenous staff and students | Cultural support, social support and community events | Jumbunna |
| | Wingara Indigenous Employment Program | E&DU |
| | Cross-cultural training (Australian Indigenous) | E&DU |
| Gender Equity | Women in non-traditional fields of study | FEIT |

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| | including programs to encourage and support women in Engineering and IT. | |
| | Women@UTS Professional Development Program | E&DU |
| Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex support | ALLY program to support and celebrate sexual diversity | E&DU |
| Diverse Community | Building Cultures of Respect & Safety in UTS Housing | E&DU/SSU |
| | Human Rights & Social Justice Awards | E&DU |
| | Sex-based Harassment Out of UTS (SHOUTS) information | E&DU |
| | Social activities and festivals | SSU, Student Union |
| | Mental Health First Aid accredited training | E&DU |
| | Wheelchair Basketball social sporting events | E&DU/ Student Union |
| | UTS Diversity and Inclusive Language Resource | E&DU |
| | UTS student clubs | Student Union |
| | UTS students' representative organisation | Students Association |
| | Workshops on life, career and wellbeing | SSU |

5. EVALUATION

UTS annual performance against the Access and Participation KPI's is reported to Council by the UTS Social Justice Committee in order to meet University and statutory reporting requirements. Annual comparative Access, Participation, Retention and Success outcomes are reported for the following equity groups:

- InpUTS: students entering through Education Access Scheme requiring ATAR concession
- Low Socio Economic Status (Low SES): students from LSES background based on ABS IEO 2011
- Disability (self-identified)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (self-identified)

NB: *A significant proportion of the actions within this plan are reliant upon the receipt of HEPP funding in 2015. If that funding is not forthcoming, the university may not be able to undertake a number of initiatives and any evaluation undertaken will be reduced accordingly.*

6. PARTNERSHIP

Extensive consultation with the UTS community, other University partners, schools, TAFES and other key external stakeholders has informed the development of the WPS, leading to a 'whole of university' approach. The WPS is managed by the Equity and Diversity Unit, under direction of the Provost, in collaboration with university partners including faculties, the Student Services Unit, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, UTS Library, and the Student Administration Unit.

Programs are developed in partnership with UTS faculties and units, schools, parents/carers, communities, community organisations, TAFE and other universities. UTS is also a partner in the Bridges to Higher Education initiative delivered via a partnership of five universities (University of Western Sydney, University of Sydney, Macquarie University, Australian Catholic University, and University Technology Sydney).