

FYNAC 2008

Your starter for ten.....

Why have a foundation year?

For students who do not have the right entry reqs

- Subject conversion (often high points)
- Subject deficiency (did not study / failed)
- Failed to attain academic level (low points)
- No opportunity to attain

Low achievers → high achievers

Opportunities maximised → not taken → missed
young → mature

fdn years are so different

Univ :

- Foundation courses across a wide variety of subjects to “fill in gaps in knowledge and skills”
- 40-100 UCAS points plus grade C English, grade D maths

Univ B:

- grades BBB, Nat Diploma DDM, IB 30 pts. For people who have not studied the required subjects

Univ C:

- no standard offer – each applicant considered individually.

Ben's survey so far

- Cohorts of between 29 and 600 students!
- Mature students 11% - 52%
- Progression rates 45% - 77%

At least one thing in common:

The desire to help students grow and
achieve places on appropriate HE courses

(ideally our own!)

“Grow your own students”

widening participation

- **all** universities facing this
- myths, realities

under-represented categories in HE

- state schools/colleges
- lower socio-economic groups
- low participation neighbourhoods

class

- social class V numbers doubled since 1991/2 but proportion is still the same
- young people in most advantaged 20% areas are 5-6 times more likely to enter HE than those in least advantaged 20%

HEFCE 2005

do most (older) academics come from advantaged backgrounds?

disability

- an 18 year old with a disability or health problem only 40% as likely to enter HE as someone without

HEFCE 2005

how many disabled colleagues do you have?

ethnicity

- ethnic minorities = 15% all students

(more likely to be in post 92, vocational and professional oriented subjects and in Greater London)

MMU Foundation Year

- Grown from 240 students in 2000 to 817 in 2006 (almost all full time)
- In 2004/2005
 - 97% of students came from state schools
 - 45% came from socio-economic groups 4,5,6 or 7
 - 22% came from low participation neighbourhoods
 - 30-40% higher numbers of students from ethnic minority back grounds as compared to Year 1 entrants to the same degrees
- Progression to link degree rose from 49% in 2000 to 71% in 2006



Government's 50% target

50% of all 18-30 year olds participating in higher education by 2010.

“Participation in HE will equip our citizens to operate productively within the global knowledge economy. It also offers social benefits, including better health, lower crime and a more tolerant and inclusive society.”

HEFCE Strategic Plan 2003-2008

myth or reality?

WP is about
increasing student numbers

HEFCE benchmarks

FT undergraduate entrants 2005/06

	HEFCE Benchmark	UK
From classes 4-7 (Young)	33.1%	29.8%
From LPNs (Young)	15.7%	14.6%
From LPNs (Mature)	18.9%	16.8%
From BME background	N/A	19.6%
In receipt of DSA (All students)	4.3%	4.0%

Location adjusted benchmarks take into account the characteristics of the regions from which the University takes its students

DfES 2003 paper

- attainment
- aspiration
- application
- admission

2 or more A levels?

- approx 90% these students enter HE fairly even over all social classes

BUT these are only

19% of all 18 year olds from manual backgrounds compared to

43% of all from non-manual backgrounds

How many A levels needed to do your fdn?

level 3 vocational quals?

- only 40-50% progress to HE

does your uni recognise them for degree entry?

National GCSE figures 2007 (grade C+)

- English 62.2%
- Maths 55.2%
- 5 subjects incl english & maths 46.7%
(girls 51.2%, boys 42.4%)
(prof/man 69%, unskilled 30%)

50% target missed for boys and lower SEG

(timesonline)

attainment and state schools

639 / 3000 state schools have failed to meet the Gvmt min target

- at least 30% of pupils to gain 5 good GCSEs incl maths and English (2012)

(timesonline)

50% target missed

differential rates of application

a significant number of those who achieve very good A levels do not to apply to universities with strong competition for places, but which may provide a good match to their talents.

who is failing our students?

myth or reality?

equity in access to HE
can be achieved by 2010

raising aspiration: Aim Higher

national programme

- raising the aspirations and developing the abilities of young people from under-represented communities.
- partnerships build cross-sector relationships which break down the barriers which institutions and systems can unwittingly create for learners.
- funded activities include summer schools, taster days, masterclasses, visits and one-to-one mentoring programmes.

positive discrimination?

should we consider **lowering entry requirements** for students from schools/colleges with low levels of achievement and poor rates of progression to HE?

or are Heading Higher Passports enough?

Fair Admissions report

examination and assessment results do not necessarily provide a complete guide to the potential of a student to succeed in HE

need to assess a range of additional factors

- self-organisation,
- independent worker,
- motivation to learn
- interest in the subject area.

how...

...in this age of even more
computer-based application systems?

we can do this with our foundation students

but will the university allow us?

role of FECs?

just over 10% of HE is delivered by
Further Education Colleges

increasing partnerships esp for foundation
years and FDs

Action on Access 2005

money matters

financial support to encourage applications from lower-income groups and enable an informed choice

variable tuition fees and bursaries monitored / controlled by Office for Fair Access (OFFA)

money matters

why not **charge less for a foundation year**,
esp if it is taught at a FEC where everyone
else pays less?

myth or reality?

finance is the most important barrier to
effective widening participation

support is vital

visible, equitable and accessible
student support and guidance
capable of identifying students at risk
and
providing appropriate interventions

(see Nikki's paper from last year)

myth or reality?

increasing access for students from WP
backgrounds will result in lower rates of
retention and completion

take a risk?

Recruiting people who do not then progress and achieve does more damage than good, in terms of w.p.

BUT

If your progression rate is high (80%+) then you are not taking enough chances at admission

staff development & resources

- re-appraise teaching and learning
- responding to more diverse needs
- attitude of colleagues to fdn years
- attitudes to wp
 - (leave it to FECs??)
- workload allocation or seniority allowances for wp work

one university's response

1. Increase outreach activity to raise aspirations and attainment
2. Increase numbers using Heading Higher Passport Scheme
and Access to HE Progression Accord
3. Increase number of applications.....
4. Improve offer conversion rate.....
5. Increase % young entrants.....
6. Increase % mature entrants with no previous HE background and from
low participation neighbourhoods
7. Increase % entrants from monitored black and minority ethnic groups
8. Increase in % entrants in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance
9. Improve completion rate.....
10. Improvement in employability rate.....

.....from state schools/colleges, lower socio-economic group and low participation neighbourhoods

pre-entry activities and initiatives

- consolidate and enhance the range of
 - summer schools,
 - revision classes
 - subject taster sessions
- enhanced pre-entry provision for mature students from under-represented groups

is this what academics do?

HEFCE

We cannot afford to waste talent simply because of a reluctance to foster it. That means continuing to reach out to those for whom HE seems beyond reach, not for any lack of potential, but often for reasons of family or community tradition. This challenge of widening access and increasing participation remains a crucial part of our mission.

HEFCE strategic plan 2006-11

Updated May 2008