Understanding Foundation Year Programmes

A report on current research

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The Challenge

- 2011 Government White Paper "Students at the Heart of the System"
- Effect of fees
- Access and equivalency

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The Research

- 2011 commissioned Marketwise Strategies
- Task to review the outward facing data on Foundation provision for 127 UK universities and private providers
- Home / EU and Overseas

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Method

- Data gathered July 2011
- Search Engines embedded in the websites
- Variable levels of information and not all information was available

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Results

- 76 of 127 universities reviewed offered some form of Foundation Programme for Home/ EU students

Affiliation	Number of Universities of that affiliation offering FPs	Number of universities in affiliation group	% of universities of each affiliation offering FPs
Russell Group	10	20	50
1994 Group	12	18	67
Million+	19	27	70
University Alliance	18	23	78
Unaffiliated	17	39	45

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By Ranking

Quartile in rankings	Total	% with Home FP	% with International FP
Q1 – upper	26	46.2 (n=12)	84.6 (n=22)
Q2 – second	29	75.9 (n=22)	93.1 (n=27)
Q3 - third	30	60.0 (n=18)	80.0 (n=24)
Q4 - lowest	26	73.1 (n=19)	92.3 (n=24)

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Delivery

- Majority (51 of 76) home programme were based entirely within academic departments
- 18 institutions offered at least one Foundation Year programme through an FE College
- 11 universities used a combination of academic departments and external providers (e.g. FE Colleges)
- 7 Universities based their Foundation programme provision exclusively in FE colleges
- 3 Universities had a specific Foundation Centre
- 4 Scottish Access courses were provided by Centres for Lifelong Learning

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Pathways

- The majority (61 of 76) offered 5 or fewer programmes or routes

- 4 universities offered more than 10 programmes or routes

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Disciplines

Academic Discipline	No. of Institutions offering Pathway
Engineering & Technology	52
Sciences & Mathematics	49
Computing	22
Art & Design	21
Humanities & Social Sciences	12
Business & Management	9
Medicine	8
Sport Sciences	6
Law	5

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Entry Requirements

- Very diverse for those aged under 21
- Most institutions required UCAS points or A level grades
- Range from 40 UCAS points to 240 UCAS points
- Some “conversion students” needed in excess of 300 UCAS points
- Around half of the institutions had different entry requirements for different routes
- Mature students rarely required to have formal Level 3 qualifications

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Modelling

- Entry Requirements
- Structural Locus of delivery
- Home status only

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[d1] Do we need the A level grades bit here as it is mentioned in the model paragraph?

Matrix of Modelled combinations

		Entry Requirements			
		A' Level grades and/or UCAS points required for all age groups	UCAS points required for <21, but not >21	No UCAS points required	Total
Where taught	Academic Departments	Model 1 (n=21)	Model 2 (n=20)	Model 3 (n=10)	(n=51)
	Specialist Centre	Model 4 (n=2)	Model 5 (n=0)	Model 6 (n=6)	(n=8)
	Academic Department and FE College	Model 7 (n=2)	Model 8 (n=6)	Model 9 (n=2)	(n=10)
	FE College	Model 10 (n=1)	Model 11 (n=3)	Model12 (n=3)	(n=7)
	Total	(n=26)	(n=29)	(n=21)	(n=76)

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Your Thoughts

- Widening Participation vs Deepening Participation
- OFFA or Meeting Quota
- Home/EU and International – taught together or separately

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Next steps…

- Add in the international dimension
- Test the models
  - Extend the data set to include internal institutional data
- Establish a robust and (preferably) comprehensive picture of Foundation Level provision in the UK

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