



UNSW
SYDNEY

2020 Impact Statement

Access and Equity (Students)



UNSW Sydney
Division of Equity,
Diversity and Inclusion

“The program enables rural students to strive beyond the scope of their hometowns, helping solidify decisions on life after school. It helped me fine tune my post-schooling goals, and find ways to get there. I grew up in a regional high school of 220 students, with less than 20 kids in my year group. I decided on UNSW because it was simply so different from where I’d come from. Although sometimes terrifying, I was for the most part thrilled with the idea of attending a university twenty times the size of my home town, gaining my own independence.”

Student,
UNSW Bachelor of Medicine

**Improving
educational
outcomes for
students who are
underrepresented
in higher
education**

Our impact in 2020

By Mary Teague

Director, Access and
Equity (Students)
Division of EDI
UNSW Sydney

2020 challenged us to do things differently. We had to rethink how our core business was undertaken. Students, schools and universities saw unprecedented disruption and, simultaneously, the funding model for higher education and student equity went through unparalleled reform with the introduction of the Federal Government's Job-ready Graduates Package.

Even before these shifts became apparent we were already on a trajectory of transformation that included: the complete re-imagining of the educational outreach program; the introduction of a new admission pathway; and a new operating model with a Students as Partners program. Alongside these new ways of working, we established new internal and external partnerships which put us on track to meet our strategic targets.

In 2020, we launched our Access Strategy to drive our mission to increase the access rate of students from underrepresented backgrounds to university and to UNSW, specifically. Our four strategic aims are to:

1. Improve access to higher education and UNSW for students from underrepresented backgrounds through enhancing the educational capacity of students and schools
2. Establish UNSW as a preferred university for students from underrepresented backgrounds, their families/carers, teachers and communities
3. Contribute to and influence an institutional culture of equity, diversity and inclusion
4. Lead the development of collaborative partnerships to improve the educational outcomes for underrepresented students.

Over 2020, the Gateway Winter and Spring Programs engaged students from across NSW in our first digital outreach program. This was a groundbreaking achievement that resulted in us providing online academic enrichment, HSC preparation, and establishing supportive communities of Year 11 and 12 students and connecting them with our dedicated staff and university student Ambassadors.

We also worked with 200 university students as part of our Students as Partners Program, which values the lived experience of current university students to co-design our program workshops and facilitate their delivery, while communicating authentically about the journey to university. We employed university students from diverse backgrounds, providing paid opportunities to access unique professional development opportunities aligned with graduate outcomes at UNSW and prepare for life beyond university.

Partnering with the Harding Miller Educational Foundation, the Public Education Foundation and The Smith Family, expanded our reach to students who experience educational disadvantage beyond our existing partner schools.

“We have taken a whole-of-University approach to increase access and participation for our undergraduate student equity cohorts – low-SES, Indigenous and Regional, Rural and Remote students. It is tremendous to see the high levels of engagement with our programs and that, as a community, we have acted and prioritised the transformational educational opportunities for these students. It reinforces our commitment to a just society.”

Professor Leisa Sargent, Senior Deputy Dean, UNSW Business School and Chair of the Gateway Sub-Committee of EDI-Board.

We saw pleasing results from the establishment of the Gateway Admissions Pathway and Program (GAPP), which enabled students from low-SES backgrounds in NSW to apply for early conditional offers to UNSW, a first for our institution. Over 1,400 students participated in the GAPP, which included significant ATAR adjustments up to 15 points below the Lowest Selection rank for close to all programs offered at UNSW, alongside a new pathway for the Bachelor of Medicine. We also implemented a governance structure that actively involves academics across all faculties and schools at UNSW in the design of the CAPRI+ assessment matrix, a whole-of-university approach that is crucial to improving the access and success of students from equity cohorts at university.

We also sought to leverage the expertise of our academics at UNSW, partnering with Sally Baker and Dennis Alonzo in the School of Education.

Some of the successes of the Gateway pathway have been:

- Unprecedented levels of student diversity. 136 students from regional and remote schools received an offer, and 165 offers were made to students who attend schools not represented in UNSW's 2020 admissions. There were also high levels of Indigenous student engagement in the Program, with more than 50 Indigenous students participating and 16 receiving offers.
- A 25% increase in enrolments from Gateway schools as at T1 2021. In turn this contributed to an increase in the low-SES access rate from 9.7% in T1 2020 to 10.9% in 2021. This is the largest year-on-year increase for T1

(or Sem 1 for previous years) since comparable data began in 2015 and demonstrates significant progress towards UNSW's target low-SES access rate of 13% by 2025.

- A 32% increase in the number of Year 12 students from Gateway schools giving their UAC 1st preference to UNSW, compared to the previous six-year average. This demonstrates that the pathway and program fostered increased interest, confidence and demand from students at Gateway schools to study at UNSW.
- Plus, 79% of these students from Gateway schools were extended a firm offer upon release of their ATAR. Of these, 69% achieved an ATAR over 80 and 33% achieved an ATAR over 90. Seventy-five percent of firm offers were extended to students who would not have received an offer to that degree based on an ATAR without adjustment factors applied. Together, this data demonstrates that the pathway is widening the access of students from Gateway schools and attracting highly capable students who are set up to succeed at UNSW.
- 52% of Gateway enrolments in the Faculties of Science, Engineering and Medicine and Health were women, compared with a rate of only 40% of all UNSW commencing undergraduates.

Changes to funding in 2020 meant we had to think more broadly about outreach and how to ensure that initiatives could be undertaken at scale, remain sustainable, impactful and become a vehicle for action-led research. This resulted in the NSW Equity Consortium, a cross-institutional five-year partnership with the University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University and six Western Sydney partner schools.

More than a collaborative partnership, the NSW Equity Consortium responds innovatively to student learning. It provides school leaders with an action-orientated plan to address literacy targets and builds teachers' capacity in using data to measure learning gains and in their understanding of student equity. The program is accompanied by an innovative research and evaluation framework that will measure gains in student learning and long-term objectives to improve student engagement with post-school learning. Importantly, the NSW Equity Consortium brings together the shared knowledge, expertise and resources of the university partners.

Despite, or maybe because of, the challenges of 2020, we are in a stronger position than ever before to fulfil our Strategy to 2025. I cannot think of a time since the Bradley Review in Higher Education in 2008 and the expansion of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) when student equity mattered more. COVID-19 has seen a further entrenchment of educational disadvantage which means that programs and funding to counter balance the impacts need to be re-prioritised.



“Education should be available to all. The carefully prepared outreach and pathway program centred around early conditional offers highlights opportunities at UNSW and has attracted students from across Sydney and the State. The added diversity and inclusivity will strengthen our community and fits with our mission as a public institution established to serve all parts of society.”

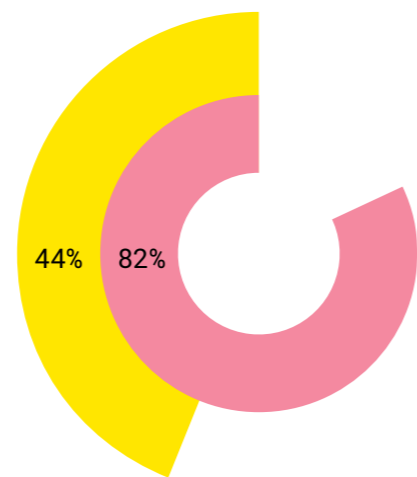
Merlin Crossley,
Deputy Vice
Chancellor –
Academic, UNSW

The background for our work

We aim to address the disparity in academic attainment that is directly linked to socio-economic status, and ensure all students have the opportunity to access the benefits that flow from a university education. We seek to remove the structural barriers of university admissions requirements that are based solely on ATAR.

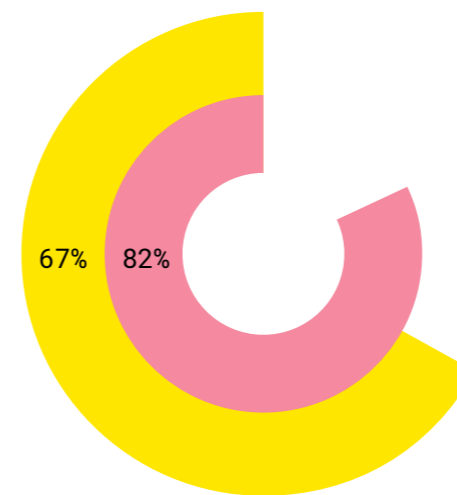
Recent studies show that:

44% of students from the lowest SES backgrounds receive an ATAR by age 19 compared with 82% from the highest SES backgrounds.



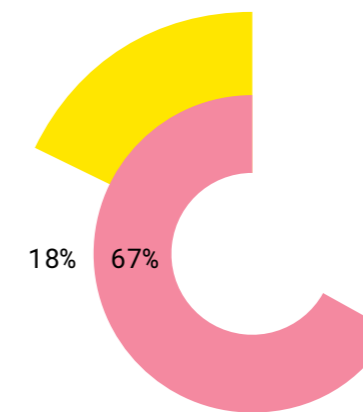
- Students from low-SES backgrounds who receive an ATAR by age 19
- Students from highest SES backgrounds who receive an ATAR by age 19

The mean ATAR of students from the lowest SES backgrounds is 67 compared to a mean of 82 from the highest SES backgrounds.



- The mean ATAR of students from the lowest SES backgrounds
- The mean ATAR of students from the highest SES backgrounds

18% of 24-year-olds from the lowest SES backgrounds have attained a university degree compared with 67% from the highest SES backgrounds



- % of 24-year-olds from the lowest SES backgrounds who have attained a university degree
- % of 24-year-olds from the highest SES backgrounds who have attained a university degree

Student equity in the higher education landscape

By Dr Sally Baker

Senior Lecturer of Language and Literacies in the School of Education, UNSW

Despite the myriad challenges that the impacts of COVID rained down on UNSW—and the Australian higher education sector more broadly—2020 saw the beginnings of exciting and long-lasting developments to the equity agenda. The deleterious effects of lockdown and the cessation of international student mobility have certainly hit the teaching and learning experience and university's

bottom line hard; however, the outlook for domestic student enrolments in 2021—particularly for equity cohorts—is looking rosier by comparison. While the upturn in domestic enrolments can certainly be attributed in part to the increased likelihood of people returning to education at times of economic recession and in times of jobs uncertainty, at UNSW this is also due to a sustained commitment to meeting the ambitious equity and access targets outlined in the UNSW Access and Equity (Students) Strategy 2020–2025.

The central piece in the Access and Equity Strategy is a holistic, whole-of-institution commitment to opening access to equity cohorts through the Gateway Admissions Pathway Program (GAPP), which was piloted in 2020 and received over 1,200 applications from equity-background students from 185 schools. In 2021, 377 'Gateway Scholars' will commence their studies at UNSW as a result of participating in GAPP.

The magnitude of this piece of work cannot be overstated. It involved extensive engagement and buy-in from the faculties and a commitment to shift the normal guaranteed entry rank down by an average of 15 ATAR points in recognition of the endemic educational disadvantage that accrues by virtue of financial background, Indigeneity and geography. The engagement of the faculties throughout the process foregrounds the importance of equity being seen as 'everyone's business', particularly in the elite context of a Group of Eight university. This engagement, through ongoing consultancy with the faculties, has also led to a greater sense of transparency about how equity-related decisions are made and how they impact at all levels of the system, and ultimately to a greater sense of ownership in the process, which is essential to the sustainability of the GAPP. Moreover, the development of wraparound social, personal, academic, professional and financial supports—coordinated by a specialist equity advisor in Equitable Learning Services—also demonstrates a commitment to equity students' success in their studies beyond a focus on access.

As a member of the GAPP committee I can say with certainty that building the GAPP is nothing short of impressive and offers a strong message to other universities that the recognitive and redressive social justice mission of equity and widening access must not be dropped when times get tough.

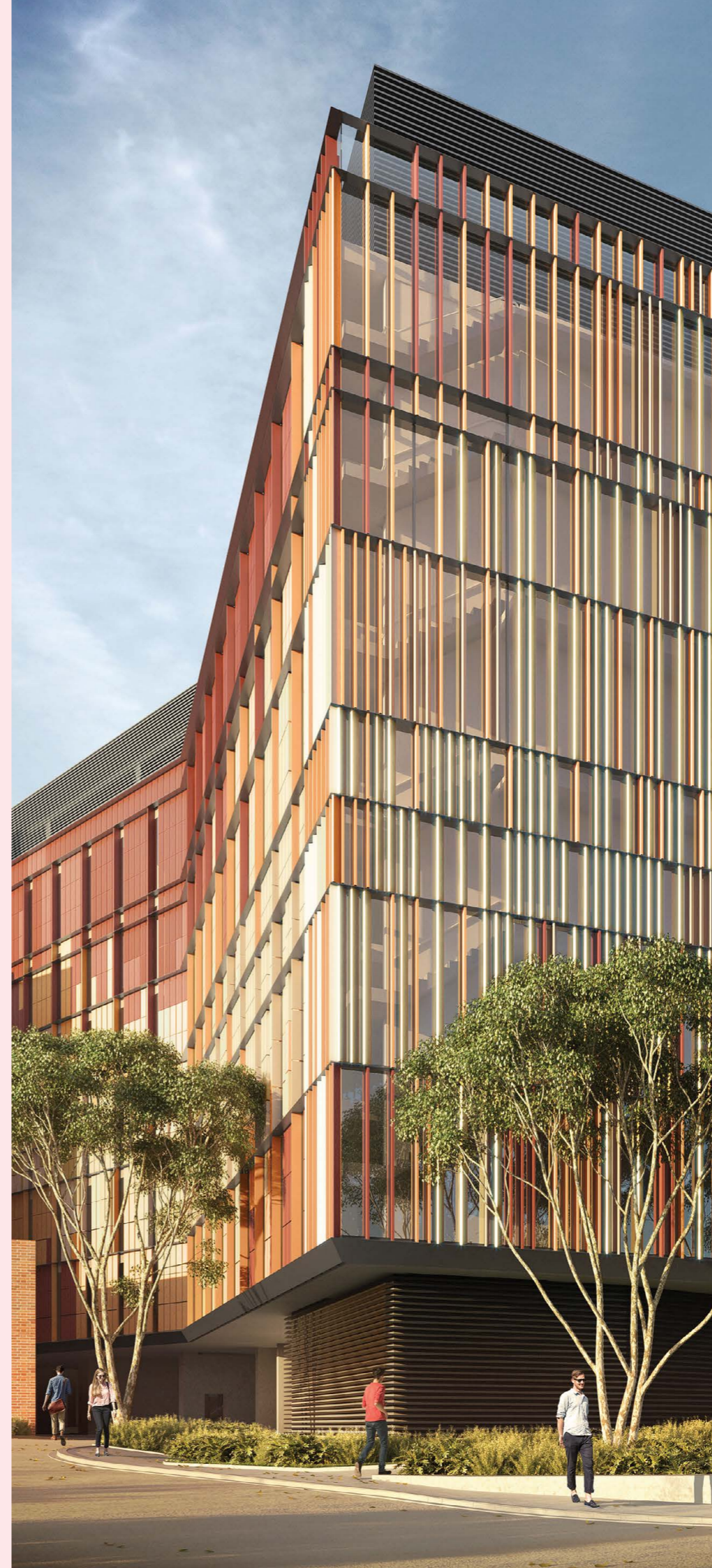
Another exciting development to emerge from Access & Equity (Students) in 2020 is the development of the first voluntary NSW consortium project to work collectively on whole-of-cohort school outreach in the Greater Western Sydney area, which is led by UNSW. Working in partnership with two other universities and six schools, the NSW Equity Consortium represents a real shift in 'business as usual' in three main ways:

- Firstly, the focus on whole-of-cohort delivery across Years 7–9 in six schools means that no student is left out from accessing the outreach activities.
- Secondly, the focus on partnership and working in participatory ways means that schools and teachers are actively involved in the development of content, research and evaluation methods and in the outcomes of the outreach activities.
- Thirdly, the focus on students' imagined futures, encompassing but not limited to post-school educational outcomes, is a more holistic lens for helping students to envisage and plan futures that extend beyond perceived limitations. This focus is underpinned by an innovative theory of change based on bridging expectations/attainment gaps, which will underpin the design of the interactions according to students' capacity to see their post-school options ('the map'), their capacity to navigate to their 'destination' ('the compass'), and focusing on focus on literacy as 'the key' to achievement.

This is an ambitious and visionary project that will exemplify a new way of doing university/school outreach. By working collaboratively across three universities, we will resist the imperative to compete for space in low-resourced schools. By working in partnership with schools, we will disrupt the power dynamics where universities are assumed to know better than schools how to respond to patterns of inequitable participation in post-school education options. By engaging in a longitudinal program of integrated research and evaluation, we will be able to track the impact of the interactions at the institutional, year group and individual levels, and we will be able to provide robust quantitative and qualitative evidence of this impact.

Finally, expertise of Access and Equity (Students) at UNSW was recognised in 2020, with the award of a National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education grant to explore universities' responses to equity in the context of the impacts of COVID, led by Access and Equity (Students) Director, Mary Teague. This multi-university partnership—working with UTS, WSU and MQ—further demonstrates UNSW's strong commitment to collaboration in the equity research field. The awarding of this grant in a highly competitive field is a testament to the development of strong expertise and demonstrated research achievements in the equity and higher education space.

While federal reforms to higher education funding and policy space are likely to bring changes and some challenges in 2021, with the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) changing to the Indigenous, Regional and low-SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF), the strong foundations built in 2020 will ensure that UNSW's commitment to increasing the representation and success of equity-cohort students will endure, and UNSW will continue to offer national leadership with regard to equity and access practice and policy.



“Without scholarships I wouldn’t be able to attend UNSW. The cost of living here in Sydney, and studying during the harsh drought, was too much for my parents to even consider being able to afford. The way in which the program affects rural students is complex and is very difficult to explain to those who haven’t grown up in a rural area... it breaks the current expectations that are being placed on them simply because they live in a rural community.”

Student, UNSW
Bachelor of
Engineering and
Bachelor of Arts

Student journey



Year
9

Imagined Futures



The Imagined Futures program is the Year 9 Unit of Work for the NSW Equity Consortium. This is a research-informed equity and literacy outreach program that is curriculum linked and designed in partnership with teachers from participating schools.



Year
10

Gateway Summer Program



Students identify their career goals, write persuasive personal pitches and develop and practise dramatic techniques to present and communicate with influence. They also have an opportunity to practise their enhanced skills live, as part of an industry mentor networking experience.



Year
11

Gateway Spring Program



Students build upon the experiences of Gateway Summer. Students access unique UNSW faculty experiences and learn key HSC curriculum content to get ahead for Year 12.



Year
12

Gateway Winter Program



Students participate in HSC exam preparation, through subject-specific workshops, online practice exams and individualised feedback led by HSC teachers and markers. Year 12 students are also supported to apply for an early conditional offer.



Access Uni

Beyond school

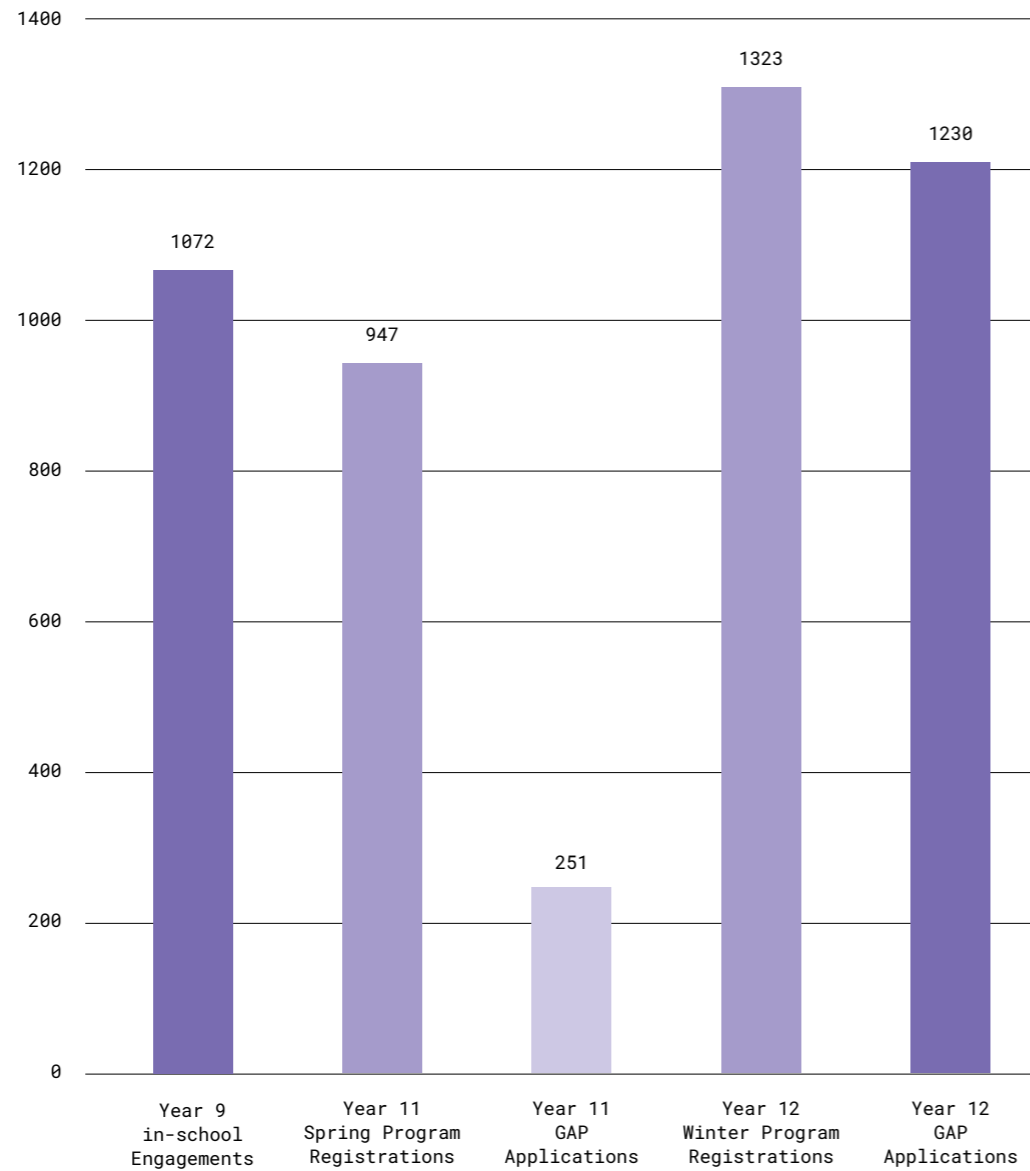


Students are prioritised for UNSW Equity Scholarships and access the Gateway Scholars transition to uni program.

“It was helpful to listen to current university students as it broadened my perspective on uni life, the degree and the opportunities associated with it. Learning about their journeys inspired me to work harder towards getting into my course and into UNSW as their experiences were really eye opening. The Q&A session towards the end was probably my favourite part.”

Student, Gateway Winter Program

2020 achievements



“The friendly and conversational tone adopted in the webinars was reassuring and truly inspired me to pursue the Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics at UNSW in 2022.”
Student, Gateway Spring Program

Gateway Admission Pathway and Program

The UNSW Gateway Admission Pathway and Program (GAPP) is a three-year program that encourages students in Years 10, 11 and 12 at Gateway partner schools to:

- identify their future study goals
- navigate post-school study choices and university degrees
- prepare for university
- prepare for their HSC examinations through intensive HSC subject workshops
- connect with our faculties and University Ambassadors to gain insights into university
- apply for an early conditional offer to UNSW.

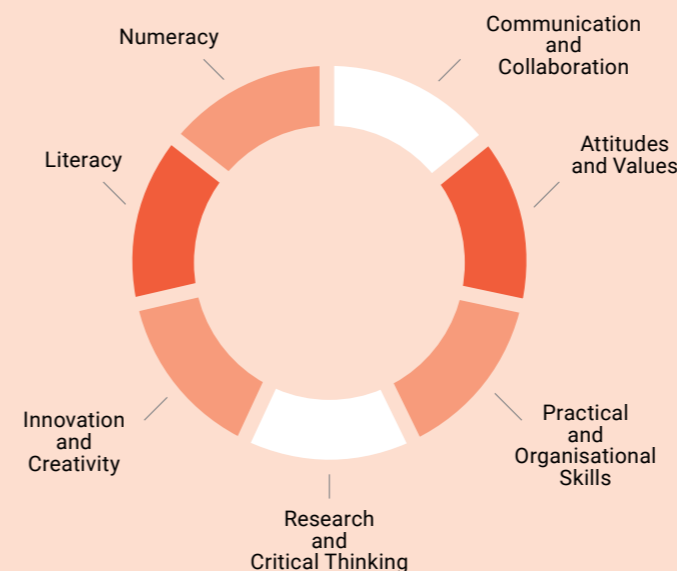
GAPP is UNSW's primary pathway for equitable access for students from low-SES backgrounds (identified by UAC as eligible for the Educational Access Scheme based on SEIFA consideration) and/or who are attending an identified Gateway partner school.

We have drawn upon the CAPRI+ Framework to form our Gateway assessment matrix, as it measures a range of student capabilities that are not measured by the ATAR. This assessment provides us with an indication of students' potential for success once they are at university and identifies students who demonstrate potential in fulfilling the UNSW Graduate attributes.

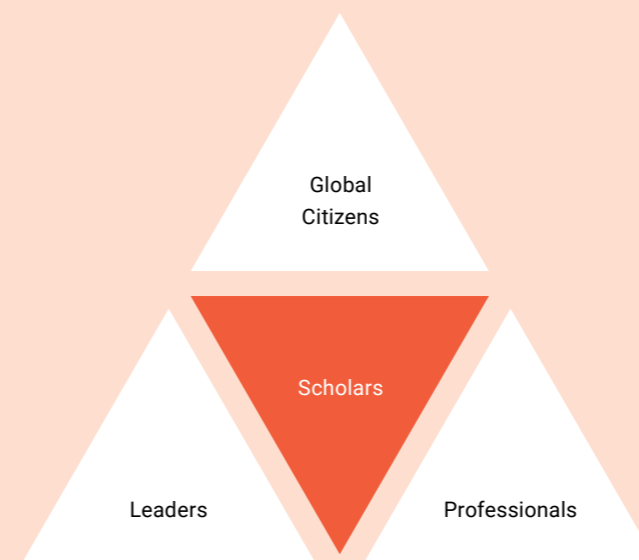
There are three components to the GAPP:

- The Gateway Spring Program for Year 11
- The Gateway Winter Program for Year 12
- An early conditional offer to UNSW through the Gateway Admission Pathway.

Capri+



Graduate Attributes



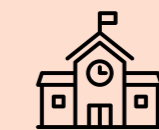
2020 GAPP impact at a glance



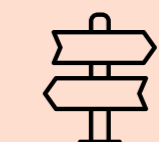
1,323
registered students for Gateway Spring Program



947
registered students for Gateway Winter Program



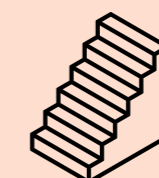
350
schools represented by registered students (above)



377
Gateway Admission Pathway students enrolled at UNSW in Term 1, 2021



111
scholarship recipients



9.8% - 10.9%
UNSW low-SES access rate increased from 9.8% in 2020 to 10.9% in 2021 (with a target of 13% by 2025)

Gateway Admission Pathway

An early conditional offer to UNSW

UNSW recognises that an ATAR is not an equitable measure for students who are underrepresented at university. The Gateway Admission Pathway (GAP) offers eligible Year 12 students an early conditional offer to study at UNSW with a significantly lower ATAR than the advertised Lowest Selection rank.

Students attending the Gateway Spring or Winter Programs receive information, guidance and tools to write an application for an early conditional offer to UNSW. They also receive individual support from UNSW staff and students to investigate their degree choices, and explore what life at university is like. Common to both programs is a core focus on supporting students to improve their educational outcomes in the HSC and early knowledge of university to enable them to make informed decisions about future study.

How does an early conditional offer work?

An early conditional offer is a guaranteed place at university with a significantly lower ATAR than the advertised Lowest Selection rank that students receive ahead of sitting the HSC. The conditional offer is made based on an assessment of the student's application, Year 11 results, and schools' ratings of their aptitudes and performance in subject areas relevant to their chosen degree.

How do we support these students?

Financial support available

Students who receive a Gateway early conditional offer to UNSW and are identified as low-SES (identified by UAC as eligible for SEIFA consideration) are prioritised for UNSW Equity Scholarships. This may include awards of \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year for the duration of the degree, or accommodation scholarships valued at \$24,000 per year (subject to availability).

In addition to these scholarships, in 2020 UNSW provided one-off university access payments of \$5,000 to support students who came through Gateway.

In 2021, Equity Scholarships were awarded to:

- 111 scholarships to students who attended a Gateway school
- 116 offers were to students from a low-SES background (95 commencing, 21 current)
- There was a crossover of 77 students who demonstrated low-SES and Gateway
- \$1,119,500 was spent on these scholarships for commencing students in 2021.

Pre-access, orientation, transition and academic support

All Gateway students are given priority access to additional resources that are provided as part of the accompanying program to support them in their HSC years prior to commencing university and as part of their early orientation and transition, this includes access to:

- supported places for online tutoring in the lead-up to the HSC
- supported places in bridging courses for Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics
- targeted orientation and transition program for the first year of university
- priority access to paid employment as University Ambassadors.

"At UNSW Law, issues of social justice and inclusion are at the heart of our concerns as a Faculty. A diverse student body brings varied perspectives and experiences of law and justice that enhance the learning experience for all of our students. We have been really impressed with the calibre of applications from Gateway schools and we are looking forward to welcoming our first Gateway scholars into the Faculty in 2021."

Associate Professor Melanie Schwart, UNSW Law



What has the Gateway Admission Pathway and Program achieved so far?

In its first year, the new **Gateway Pathway brought 377 students** into the UNSW undergraduate community in 2021.

Year 11 Gateway early conditional offer

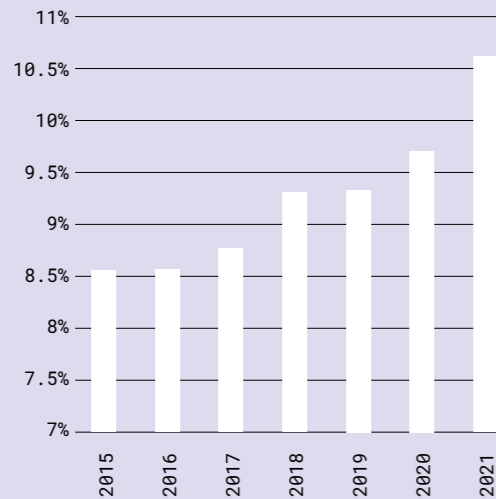
Applications	251
Offers	172
Enrolments to UNSW	Data available March 2022

Year 12 Gateway early conditional offer

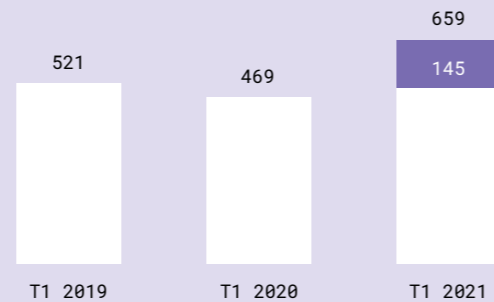
Applications	1,230
Offers	979
Eligible to receive firm offer based on ATAR	774
Enrolments to UNSW	377

145 students who enrolled in 2021 were from a low-SES background, contributing to UNSW's increase in the low-SES access rate from 9.8% to 10.9%. This is the largest year-on-year increase since comparable data began in 2015 and demonstrates significant progress towards UNSW's target low-SES access rate of 13% by 2025.

UNSW's low-SES access rate



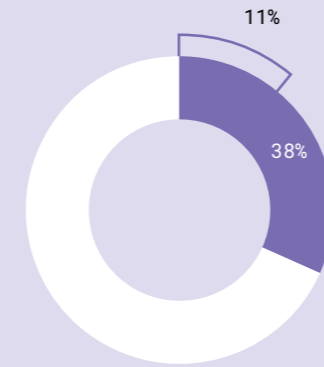
The Gateway Admission Pathway brought in 145 students from a low-SES background in its first year contributing to UNSW's overall increase



Furthermore, we had a retention rate from pre to post census of 96.1% comparable with the 96.7% achieved for the wider undergraduate community, indicating the successful transition of the first GAPP cohort into the UNSW community.

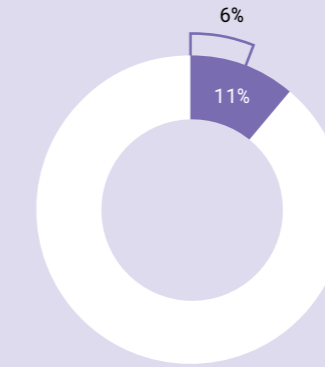
The Pathway has already had a positive impact on the diversity of the UNSW undergraduate population, with the cohort being significantly more representative of a variety of equity cohorts (i.e. low-SES, regional and remote, first in family, women in STEM) compared with the overall UNSW undergraduate community.

38% of Gateway students are from low-SES backgrounds, compared to only 11% of all UNSW commencing undergraduates that are from low-SES backgrounds.



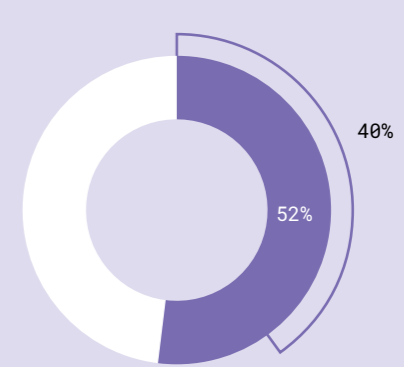
● % of Gateway students from low-SES backgrounds
○ % of all UNSW commencing undergraduates from low-SES backgrounds

11% of Gateway students are from regional or remote areas, compared with 6% of UNSW commencing undergraduates.



● % of Gateway students regional or remote areas
○ % of all UNSW commencing undergraduates from regional or remote areas

52% are women in STEM compared with 40% of overall undergraduates.

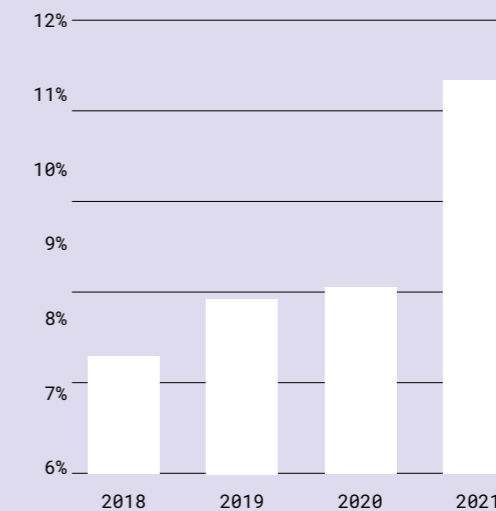


● % of women in STEM
○ % of women in all UNSW commencing undergraduates

There has also been a substantial increase in the proportion of first preferences given to UNSW by students from Gateway schools in 2021, indicating progress towards making UNSW a preferred university among under-represented students.

Future growth of the pathway, and refinements to criteria (to include students from low-SES backgrounds who do not attend a Gateway school), will ensure our continued progress towards an increased low-SES access rate at UNSW.

Preferences from Gateway schools increased significantly in the first year of the new Gateway Admission Pathway and Program





"Getting to know about each faculty and some of the degrees from the students made me realise what it is I'm interested in. I also found it useful how they briefly explained the scope of the degree and what was involved."

Student, Gateway Winter Program

Year 12 Gateway Winter Program

Gateway Winter focuses on providing Year 12 students with HSC preparation, subject-specific exam practice and workshops led by experienced HSC teachers and markers. Students also meet our Ambassadors and are supported to write and submit their Gateway early conditional offer for University admission.

Navigational Capacity

Students:

- develop an understanding of how to apply for the early conditional offer
- develop an understanding of what makes a good early conditional offer application
- know how to access further support for their early conditional offer application
- develop their understanding of what university is like
- develop their knowledge of available degrees and how they link to individual interests and capabilities.

Student Identities

Students:

- feel more confident about their transition to university
- develop a sense of belonging within a university setting.

Academic Attainment

Students:

- feel more prepared to study for and sit the HSC
- develop their understanding of HSC subject-specific content
- develop new strategies to manage the challenges of the HSC and improve their wellbeing.

In 2020 we had

1,323

Year 12 students register for the Gateway Winter Program from 217 schools across NSW

8%

came through an NGO partner

32%

were first in family

36%

were from low-SES backgrounds

3.5%

of students identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Student feedback:

88% of students said that as a result of the program they felt more prepared for their HSC

“Discussing where these marks come from and how to answer questions step-by-step allowed me to visualise and comprehend the structure of answering questions.”

95% of students agreed that it was useful to hear from current university students

“I found that the given insights from uni students helped me gain some confidence since they were in our shoes not too long ago.”

84% of students agreed that the session provided strategies they would adopt to manage their wellbeing

“The ‘Keeping it together’ session was really quirky and uplifting, and taught me that it’s okay to have a break and to relax.”

92% of students agreed the faculty session improved their understanding of which available degrees might suit their interests

“It was really nice and helpful to listen to current university students studying my desired course as it helped broaden my perspective on uni life, the degree and the opportunities associated with it. Learning about their journeys inspired me to work harder towards getting into my course and into UNSW as their elaborations on their experiences were really eye opening.”

And 97% of those who had used the Nail It App agreed that it was useful.

“I had thought that applying for early offers and university would be extremely daunting. But I found Gateway Program really provided me with crucial knowledge and insight and a step-by-step guide on how to apply. This program has equipped me with a lot of confidence and reassurance about the application process.”

Year 11 Gateway Spring Program

Gateway Spring gives Year 11 students the opportunity to discover the degrees available at UNSW, through faculty-led interactive sessions. It also supports students' academic preparation for the HSC and in planning and scaffolding their written personal statements as part of their application for an early conditional offer.

Navigational Capacity

Students:

- develop an understanding of how to apply for a Gateway early conditional offer
- develop an understanding of what makes a good early conditional offer application
- develop an understanding of how to access further support for their early conditional offer application
- develop their understanding of what studying at university is like
- develop their knowledge of how degree choices link to individual interests and capabilities
- develop their knowledge of the nature and focus of each UNSW faculty
- understand the opportunities and benefits of higher education.

Student Identities

Students:

- feel more confident about their transition to university
- develop a sense of belonging within a university setting
- develop an understanding of their strengths and capabilities as a learner and future uni student.

Academic Attainment

Students:

- develop their understanding of HSC subject-specific content
- develop strategies to manage study routines and the challenges of the HSC.

In 2020 we had

947

Year 11 students registered for the Gateway Spring Program from 133 different schools.

13%

were from rural/regional/remote backgrounds

35%

were from low-SES backgrounds

11%

came through an NGO partner

64%

were first in family

1.5%

of students identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Student feedback:

86% of students said the Gateway Spring Program provided them with study strategies that work for them

"I found all the study/note-taking help sessions extremely useful as they taught me new methods that I am now able to incorporate into my own learning."

89% believe they have a good understanding of how to apply for the UNSW early conditional offer

"The session for the early conditional offer was the most communicative and useful to me as the information provided was highly applicable and relevant in making the application process more convenient and simple."

84% of students said The Gateway Spring Program improved their understanding of what studying at university is like

"The question session gave me answers to almost everything I've been unsure of for years and this was very relieving as it has given me confidence to transition into uni."

92% of students said The Gateway Spring Program had improved their understanding of what opportunities are available at university

"The most useful stuff I found was all the info about the degrees and the Ambassadors who are doing the course right now. This was useful to me because it gave me an insight on what the degree will consist of and what it's like studying that degree."

98% said, "I can see myself at university" and 93% of students said, "I can see myself at UNSW"

"The friendly and conversational tone adopted in these webinars truly inspired me to pursue the Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics at UNSW in 2022."

95% agreed that it was useful to hear from current UNSW university students.

"The Uni-Bites Student Experiences allowed me to receive an insight into the lives of Uni students, the courses they study and how they cope with their courses in terms of assignments, lectures, practicals etc."

From Broken Hill to Outer Space



**Kelsie,
Broken Hill NSW**

Kelsie comes to UNSW from Broken Hill in far western NSW. She began her Bachelor's degree in Quantum Engineering at UNSW in 2021 having been part of the first cohort of students to apply to UNSW through the new Gateway Admission Pathway in 2020.

Kelsie was motivated to apply to UNSW because it's the only university to offer a Bachelor of Quantum Engineering and she has her sights on expanding the limit of scientific and human endeavor.

"I am eager to learn more about the world around us and the scientific explanations of how everything works," Kelsie explains. "I want to be part of building the future and creating new opportunities for further exploration in the space industry."

However, her journey to UNSW was not without its challenges.

Attending a small regional high school in Broken Hill in far west NSW, Kelsie had to complete some of her favourite subjects like chemistry and physics via another high school and distance education.

Kelsie was also completing the HSC during a global pandemic which presented challenges for her in achieving entry to university. Kelsie found COVID-19 created shifts in routine with online learning and it was hard to stay motivated alongside her domestic caring responsibilities.

These challenges presented a significant barrier to achieving the high ATAR required to get into her dream course at UNSW.

Kelsie was grateful for the support she received from UNSW, as one of 288 students from regional and remote Australia who attended the Gateway Winter Program in 2020. Run online in 2020, the Gateway Winter Program supports Year 12 students during their HSC and guides them in making a Gateway Admission Pathway application.

"It was a real opportunity because I would not have been able to travel 15 hours to visit UNSW," Kelsie explains. "Having access to individual HSC subject masterclasses via the Gateway Winter Program was a significant advantage.

"The opportunity to be considered for entry to UNSW on the basis of a personal statement was also a relief, because the ATAR doesn't really look at us as a person, it just looks at us as a number," says Kelsie. "I found it a very big help to end the year knowing that my university future was one step closer thanks to being offered conditional entry through the Gateway Admission Pathway."

Kelsie also successfully applied for a UNSW Equity Scholarship, which covers her accommodation costs and allows her to give more attention to her studies.

"The Equity Scholarship is a massive support," says Kelsie. "Adapting to a very different life in a big city like Sydney and living on campus has not always been easy, but becoming involved in different university and sporting clubs, and being open to opportunities also helps."

Kelsie is the first person in her family to attend university, and she has decided to use her own experience to guide Year 12 students on their journey to university by becoming one of the Gateway Admission Pathway's University Ambassadors.

Imagined Futures

Year 9 Unit of Work – NSW Equity Consortium



The NSW Equity Consortium is a partnership led by UNSW with the University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University and six metro high schools for whole-cohorts in Years 7-9. From 2021, each university will be responsible for delivering a curriculum-linked program to a designated cohort: Macquarie University to Year 7, UTS to Year 8 and UNSW to Year 9.

What

Students will:

- develop confidence in literacy strategies before NAPLAN
- identify and practise metacognitive strategies
- work with current university students who act as role models and support students in navigating their learning journey using reflective and reflexive practice.

Navigational Capacity

Students will develop:

- their understanding of the value and purpose of education
- their understanding of the importance of academic attainment in opening up a breadth of future possibilities
- their understanding of generic skills for success.

Student Identities

Students will develop:

- their identity as a learner (including an understanding of their current strengths and weaknesses)
- an understanding that their learner identity can shift over time and develop their ability to draw links between their strengths and weaknesses and their projected future selves.

Academic Attainment

Students will develop:

- micro-literacy skills in identified focus areas and develop their confidence in demonstrating these skills
- their ability to recognise their own level of understanding and where it requires greater depth
- their ability to choose the right tools to correct gaps in understanding
- their ability to apply metacognitive skills in wider contexts
- their understanding of the importance of literacy across their school subjects
- their understanding of the importance of literacy to a range of future study options and their ability to draw explicit links between current and future learning
- a broad appreciation for literacy that goes beyond the school context
- an enhanced desire to learn
- the ability to articulate possibilities for future study and postschool options.

NSW Equity Consortium 2020 progress

Throughout the year, Access and Equity (Students) collaborated, planned and developed the NSW Equity Consortium with our university partners in preparation for a 2021 launch.

During this time, we:

- established the partnership with university partners and schools
- created the research and evaluation framework
- generated research tasks
- developed the Year 9 Unit of Work
- ran professional learning for teachers.

Year 9 Unit of Work

The Year 9 in-school program will innovatively explore ways in which students can be led to develop reflective and reflexive practice, and metacognitive strategies, to articulate and navigate perceptions of themselves as learners for their future study.

The program also supports teachers and schools in piloting and identifying different teaching and learning strategies and includes a professional learning component for teachers as participatory researchers and content co-creators.

Teacher professional learning

UNSW led five professional learning workshops to build school teachers' capacity as action researchers.

Four content-design workshops

Over four online workshops, more than 30 teachers analysed aggregate NAPLAN reading data to identify three micro-literacy skills for intervention and then developed a unit of work for each year group.

One Participatory Action Research workshop

During an in-person workshop, 14 teachers explored the importance of Participatory Action Research in teaching and strengthened their understanding of the methodological, ethical and practical issues related to undertaking critical reflection on their practices.

Program funding

The NSW Equity Consortium is jointly funded by UNSW, Macquarie University and UTS through strategic university funding, philanthropic donations and endowments. UNSW also allocates a portion of Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) funding as provided by the Australian Government to improve access to undergraduate courses for people from regional and remote Australia, low-SES backgrounds, and Indigenous backgrounds.



“The Gateway program is a true reflection of UNSW’s commitment to a more equitable and diverse society. The support programs and ATAR adjustments that have been established show a genuine drive to provide opportunities to all. It has been an absolute pleasure to work in such a collaborative team environment to make this meaningful project happen.”

Associate Lecturer
Tracy Huang, UNSW
Built Environment

KPIs

2020-2025 Strategies	2020 Objectives	2020 Measures of Progress	Status
Improve access to higher education and UNSW for students from underrepresented backgrounds through enhancing the education capacity of students, schools and communities.	Establish targeted UNSW admission pathways, including an early conditional offer scheme, linked to the Aspire Educational Outreach Program.	UNSW Gateway was implemented in 2020. It is an early conditional offer admission pathway accessible to students from over 380 Gateway schools. It assesses a range of capabilities and provides successful applicants with adjusted ATAR requirements up to 15 points below the Guaranteed Entry rank.	Complete
	Co-design innovative learning experiences, including curriculum-linked academic enrichment and school educator professional learning.	The Gateway Winter, Spring and Summer programs are innovative and educationally enriching programs providing students with opportunities to identify their future study goals, navigate post-school choices, obtain academic support and connect with current students and faculty partners to gain an insight into university life. In 2020 Gateway Winter and Spring were implemented as a digital program on Open Learning. Four Professional Learning workshops were delivered as part of the NSW Equity Consortium focusing on participatory research and the development of content for the Imagined Futures Unit of Work.	Ongoing
	Engage UNSW students as co-designers, facilitators, mentors, powerful role models and partners for change.	Designed and implemented a Students as Partners program, to co-design and develop the UNSW Gateway Program with current UNSW students. Of the 38 Ambassadors in 2020, 15 attended a Gateway school. 418 University Ambassador applications have been received for 2021.	Ongoing
	Develop strategic collaborative partnerships with secondary schools, other universities, workplace partners and leading NGOs to develop creative, sustainable, evidence-informed and evaluated approaches to widening participation.	Partnerships with 7 schools and 3 universities were established to deliver a Year 7-9 literacy-focused outreach program as part of the NSW Equity Consortium. NGO partnerships established with Smith Family, Harding Miller Education Foundation and the Public Education Foundation. Established an expanded network of 40 key metro schools and engaged with 350 schools in NSW through Gateway.	Complete
	Establish a longitudinal evaluation framework and community of practice that embeds relevant research at all levels.	Overarching student outcomes-focused evaluation framework complete with associated Theory of Change implemented across the whole program. NSW Equity Consortium SERAP and HREC approvals confirmed (led by Dr Sally Baker) for 5 year longitudinal research project.	Ongoing

2020-2025 Strategies	2020 Objectives	2020 Measures of Progress	Status
Establish UNSW as a preferred university for students from under-represented backgrounds, their families/carers, teachers and communities	Develop innovative and educationally enriching outreach programming, reflective of UNSW strengths in research, teaching and learning.	Developed shared projects DCV-A and DEx and have embedded GAPP as core business of the University. Relationships established with DVC-I and Nura Gili to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students during UNSW Gateway. All faculties and schools at UNSW engaged in pan-institutional program design and offering.	Ongoing
	Effective communication of targeted admission pathways, scholarships and other higher education access opportunities to students from underrepresented backgrounds and their key influencers.	Gateway communications strategy and website was launched. Communications and marketing campaign run through UAC and embedded with Future Student Recruitment communications strategy.	Ongoing
	Build collaborative partnerships with a core group of secondary schools across south, south-west and western Sydney.	Six highly engaged partner schools engaged as part of the NSW Equity Consortium. Expanded and strengthened school relationships for 40 core partner schools. 350 Gateway schools now engaged across NSW.	Ongoing
	Establish targeted UNSW admission pathways, including an early conditional offer scheme, linked to the Aspire program.	UNSW Gateway Admission Pathway established and early conditional offers to Year 11 and 12 students in 2020 exceeded target for 2020.	Complete
	Embed externally led mixed-methods research and impact evaluation frameworks across the program, prioritising the contributions of students, schools and key influencers.	Overarching Gateway Admissions Pathway and Program (GAPPP) student evaluation Indicator Bank established, linked to Access and Equity (Students) Theory of Change – ahead of Research ethics proposal submission in 2021. NSW Equity Consortium project key evaluation outcomes, methods and indicators confirmed for: students, teacher researcher, school community, University Ambassadors and University Partner groups.	Ongoing

2020-2025 Strategies	2020 Objectives	2020 Measures of Progress	Status
Contribute to and influence an institutional culture of equity, diversity and inclusion	Whole-of-university engagement with the Access and Equity (Students) 2020-2025 framework for widening participation and outreach practice, aligned to UNSW 2025 Strategy.	Creation of Access and Equity 2020-2025 Strategy. Establishment of 2020 Access and Participation Plan. Contributed to the design of the low-SES emergency student support fund for COVID-19. Governance structures embedded to support the UNSW 2025 equity targets.	Ongoing
	Expanded opportunities for UNSW students and staff to co-design and lead innovative and inclusive learning experiences for students from underrepresented backgrounds.	Agreement in place for up to 60 EDST2002 students to undertake 15 days of required fieldwork as part of the NSW Equity Consortium delivery in schools.	Ongoing
	Create inclusive student experience initiatives, responsive to the needs of students from underrepresented backgrounds, to encourage enhanced student sense of belonging across the student life cycle: pre-access, transition, access, participation, success at university and graduate outcomes.	Governance structure established for student equity and initiated the Student Life-Cycle (low-SES initiatives) Working Group.	Ongoing
	Contribute expertise and student-centric perspectives to support inclusive teaching and learning practices with a focus upon recognising the strengths and unique attributes that students from low socio-economic status backgrounds bring to the higher education experience.	Secured NCSEHE funded project in collaboration with UWS, UTS and MQ-University responses to enhancing equity in the post-COVID landscape Collaboration confirmed with University of Sydney, UOW and UC for re-framing the Gap Year project funded by the NSW Department of Education's Regional Transitions to University Grant. Sponsored and collaborated on a report focused on surveying current equity cohorts on their experience of UNSW "Gateway Scholars Program Scoping Document", which informed the design of the Gateway Scholars program, and led the design of Theory of Change framework and associated evaluative survey instruments for Scholarships.	Ongoing
	Contribute to the design of resources that support students' early transition and first-year experience as an area of focus.	Contributed to strategic advocacy efforts to confirm resources to enable key Orientation and Transition support for students from low-SES backgrounds from 2021.	
	Advocate for the assessment and appraisal of student academic potential by means other than a singular ATAR measure.	UNSW Gateway Admission Pathway established and early conditional offers sent to Year 11 and 12 students in 2020, assessment matrix developed and refined. Reduced the ATAR requirements to up to 15 points below the Guaranteed Entry rank for students who receive Gateway early conditional offers.	Ongoing

2020-2025 Strategies	2020 Objectives	2020 Measures of Progress	Status
Lead the development of collaborative partnerships to improve the educational outcomes for under-represented students	Partnerships with a core group of secondary schools across south, south-west and western Sydney.	6 core schools committed to engage in the NSW Equity Consortium Years 7-9. 387 schools reached through Gateway program communications with 82 participating in the Winter GAPP program.	Ongoing
	Partnerships across UNSW, drawing on areas of excellence in research, learning and teaching to create transformational learning experiences.	Engaged and promoted UNSW areas of expertise and areas of excellence through collaborative academic engagement with the School of Education – Dr Sally Baker, Dennis Alonzo, Geraldine Townend, Peta Hay.	Ongoing
	Students as Partners approaches embedded across the program – as co-designers, facilitators, mentors and powerful role models.	Students as Partners engagements embedded across UNSW Gateway Winter and Spring program and NSW Equity Consortium and University Ambassador recruitment, training and development reinvigorated into 2021.	Ongoing
	Partnerships with other universities to develop creative, sustainable, evidence-informed and evaluated approaches to widening participation.	NSW Equity Consortium established partnership with MQ, UTS and 7 schools. Secured NCSEHE funded project in collaboration with UWS, UTS and MQ-University responses to enhancing equity in the post-COVID landscape. Collaboration confirmed with University of Sydney, UOW and UC for re-framing the Gap Year project funded by the NSW Department of Education's Regional Transitions to University Grant.	Ongoing
	Partnerships with leading NGOs at both a program level and through strategic advocacy and engagement.	Partnerships with The Smith Family, Public Education Foundation and Harding Miller Education Foundation established.	Ongoing
	Partnerships with a core group of industry partners who act as powerful mentors and role models, as well as assisting with students' future career mapping and 21st century capacity building.	Partnerships with over 20 companies are established and will be leveraged as part of Gateway Summer Program in 2021.	Ongoing

Distance no obstacle for future doctor



**Ashleigh,
Coffs Harbour NSW**

After participating in the Gateway Winter Program in 2020, Ashleigh received an early conditional offer through the Gateway Admission Pathway to study Medicine at UNSW in 2021. Originally from Coffs Harbour, Ashleigh moved to pursue her dreams at UNSW's Rural Clinical School in Port Macquarie.

Ashleigh's goal of becoming a doctor is driven by her passion to help others, alongside her love of learning.

"I want to help people when they're going through difficult situations and pursue a career where I have endless opportunities to learn, doing different things every day," Ashleigh says.

Originally from Coffs Harbour, attending a Gateway partner school, Ashleigh moved one step closer to this dream by attending the Gateway Winter Program in 2020. The Program supported Ashleigh to prepare an impressive personal statement, to help with her application for an early conditional offer through the Gateway Admission Pathway to study Medicine at UNSW.

"It was an opportunity to present myself as a whole person, not just a number," Ashleigh explains. "I made an impassioned case for pursuing a career in medicine, expressing my love of science, desire to improve other people's quality of life and my hopes of being an empathetic doctor with an understanding of current research and innovations in medicine beyond the boundaries of a conventional medical degree."

Ashleigh took full advantage of the HSC Masterclasses offered online during the Gateway Winter Program, and says these helped her feel more comfortable with what would be expected during the HSC exams.

Ashleigh says the Gateway Winter Program certainly helped, not least

because she successfully received an early conditional offer through the Gateway Admission Pathway, which helped her approach the HSC exams more confidently and calmly.

"Receiving the offer really dissipated some of the nerves of the HSC," Ashleigh says. "I had undertaken a very big workload of English, advanced maths, maths extension 1, chemistry, biology, physics and software design and development."

Ashleigh is the first person in her family to go to university and, although going to UNSW means leaving her support network and moving away from home, she's landed not too far away at UNSW's Rural Clinical School in Port Macquarie.

Undeterred by the challenges, Ashleigh has connected with other students who have similar passions and interests by becoming an Ambassador for the Gateway Winter Program in 2021.

"Originally, I was hesitant, and struggled to find the confidence to apply through the Gateway Pathway," Ashleigh says. "So I am keen to encourage other aspiring future UNSW students to reach their goals by encouraging them to take up the opportunities the Gateway program offers."

Our Partners

NSW secondary schools

We partner with more than 370 schools across south-west Sydney and regional NSW to provide an academic-enrichment program tailored to the learning needs of young people who aspire to access tertiary education. Our Gateway partner schools are identified by taking the three-year average of Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) score for schools across NSW. The ICSEA score of a school can be found on the My School website.

University partners

Our partnerships with other universities focused on student equity enable us to share knowledge and expertise, research, evaluation, and resources. These partnerships demonstrate our values in action: driving innovation; demonstrating excellence; and building collaboration.

We are leading the NSW Equity Consortium in partnership with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Macquarie University.

NGO partners

Our NGO partners play a critical role in supporting students from low-SES backgrounds in their educational journey and to fully participate in educational opportunities. We work with these partners to offer eligible students already engaged with them access to our programs, early conditional offer, and equity scholarships.

Harding Miller Education Foundation

The Harding Miller Education Foundation provides a scholarship program for high-potential girls from low-SES circumstances. The four-year program supports them from Year 9 until Year 12.

hardingmillereducationfoundation.org.au

Public Education Foundation

The Public Education Foundation scholarships support high-potential students who are in financial need and attend schools in specific school regions. Students are supported both financially and academically.

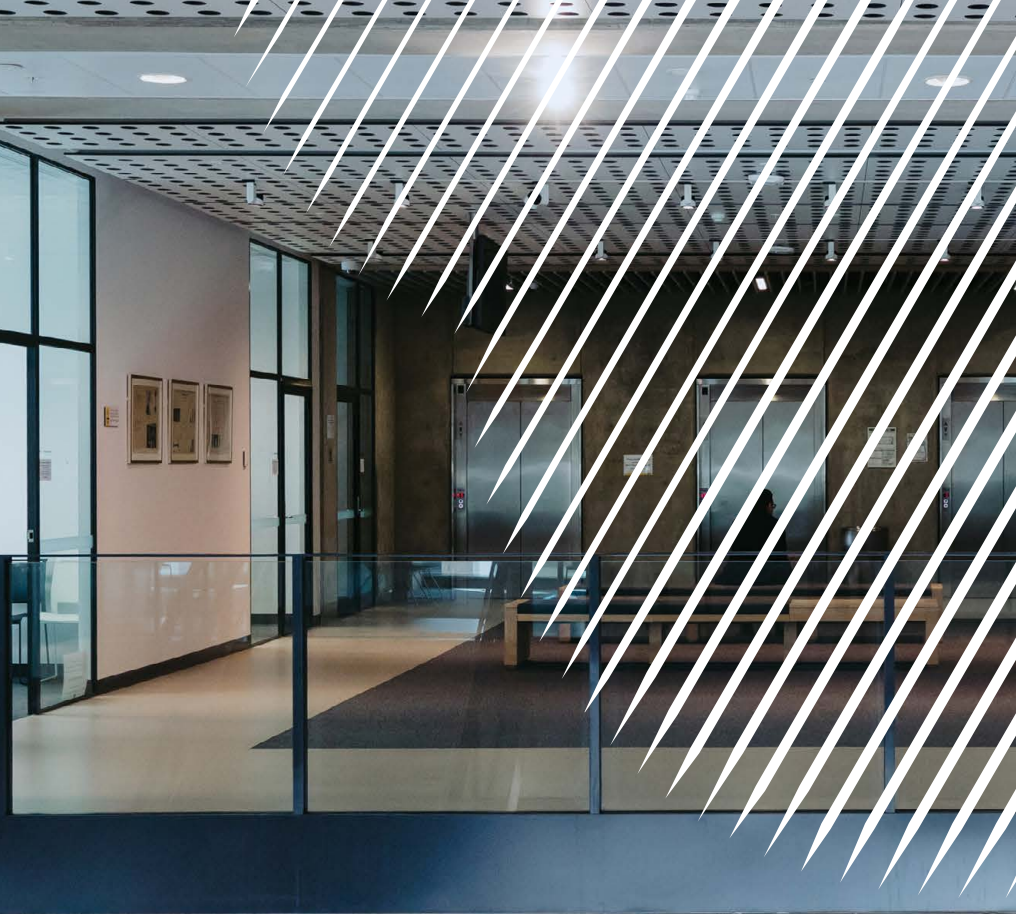
publiceducationfoundation.org.au

The Smith Family

The Smith Family's Learning for Life Program recognises that disadvantaged children need extra support to stay at school and go on to further studies or a job. They work closely with students from all year groups and their families to support their academic success and provide financial assistance.

thesmithfamily.com.au





Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) who are the traditional custodians of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

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