Widening Participation and Outreach Yearbook 2015-16
Welcome to our Yearbook

We are delighted to present our second annual report on widening participation at Queen Mary University of London. This provides a summary of our work in 2015-16, including the projects we have delivered, our target demographic and our highlights over the year.

The Widening Participation team works with young people, from 10-18 years old, from under-represented groups that are statistically less likely to consider higher education. Our work focuses on dispelling assumptions, building aspirations and providing insight and first-hand experience of university, helping students to make informed choices about higher education. We also offer initiatives to support transition of students from school or college to QMUL, offering support across the whole student lifecycle.

QMUL’s five-year Strategic Plan makes it clear that widening participation is at the heart of the College’s vision and ambitions, with emphasis on continuing to serve our local communities. Our work aligns with QMUL’s ethos that “we celebrate the diversity of our student body and aspire to be recognised as a prime destination for high-achieving students from lower participation backgrounds,” with our activities supporting this aspiration.

It has been another full and exciting academic year for widening participation at Queen Mary University of London, with the team implementing a range of new initiatives. Particular successes include:

Our communications work
- Met with 30 schools on our new target list to discuss better engagement
- Launched our new WP twitter account – we currently have over 250 followers
- Started a new internal widening participation e-network
- Held a successful “Open House” event to discuss widening participation targeting and evaluation with colleagues in academic schools and professional services departments
- Launched our ‘Making Decisions about university’ video – featuring three of our student ambassadors – to allow us to offer enrichment activity to more schools
- Relaunched our widening participation webpages, and launch of teachers webpage in collaboration with UK Student Recruitment team

Increased the range and number of outreach activities. Highlights include:
- New programme of work with parents and carers
- New Humanities Summer School, with 4 times the number of applications to places
- New programme for Pathways to Law and Pathways to Coding, working in partnership with the Sutton Trust
- Boys, books and blogging programme launched
- Doubled the applications to the Engineering Spring School for Year 12 students
- New schools partnered with for our Bridge the Gap programme

Developed our evaluation strategy
- Comprehensive embedding of evaluation into all widening participation programmes
- New evaluation strategies used such as quizzes to test what students have learnt

We hope you enjoy reading the summaries of our most significant outreach activities, and the impact they have had on attendees.

With best wishes,

The Widening Participation team
In 2015-16 we worked with...

5281
Young people

144
Schools and colleges

In 130 light, medium and high intensity activities

Intensity examples:
Light = HE talk, HE fair
Medium = Subject taster
High = Summer school, repeated activity

Which took place at QMUL, in schools, and further education colleges.

64
In school

7
FE Campus

59
HE Campus
Individual monitoring data was collected from almost 800 individual young people. This helps us take a closer look at who we're engaging in widening participation activities.
Supporting students from the most deprived areas of London

Index of Multiple Deprivation

Polar quintiles
Target schools and boroughs

We work with priority schools, from eleven London Boroughs, which we have identified as having a high number of students who would benefit from our work. This map shows the location of schools we worked with in 2015-16. Our new data based targeting strategy was successfully implemented and we attended 30 meetings with our priority schools and colleges to foster even stronger relationships.

Areas of London supported

Target boroughs:

1. Barking & Dagenham
2. Enfield
3. Greenwich
4. Hackney
5. Haringey
6. Havering
7. Newham
8. Redbridge
9. Thurrock
10. Tower Hamlets
11. Waltham Forest
A year in photos...
Our activities - Pre-16 initiatives

Primary School engagement
This year our primary engagement initiatives included a weekly code club delivered by student ambassadors where Year 5 and 6 pupils learn how to code in fun and exciting sessions. In addition, QMUL students work as reading mentors, supporting aspirational readers in Year 5 and those who need support in Year 6. The project encourages participants to build confidence in verbal literature review through discussions, and 1-2-1 workshop activities. In addition, Solebay School regularly came onto campus to use an allocated section of the allotment to grow their own vegetables.

Bridge the Gap
The programme aims to increase students’ awareness of medicine and dentistry as a career pathway and support them on their journey towards these professions, working with students in Year 6 – Year 13. Some new changes were made to the programme this year in order to build on the success of previous years. The parents/carers event in January was a welcome addition as it was well attended by parents, participating students and teachers who found out first-hand what the programme was about by talking to staff and undergraduate students as well as practicing CPR using a dummy torso and learning how to suture.

An E-mentoring programme was piloted with the remaining members of the first cohort who are now in year 12. Two fourth year Dentistry students used their personal experiences, knowledge and skills to support their mentees through online discussions aimed at improving their knowledge of medicine or dentistry and preparing them for the university application process. We are planning to expand the E-mentoring aspect of the project to include more year 12 students this year.
Visit days
We were delighted with the success of our revamped visit days, tailored specifically to Year 8 and 9 students. The dates were set by us which offered us more control and enabled us to book appropriate rooms. Next year to further develop the days we are including a pizza lunch for all students who attend and offering the day to any WP student not only those from middle or gifted and talented groups.

“Really well organised, great range of activities and incredibly useful to the students.”
Teacher

Engaging parents
Recognising that parents are key influencers, this year we approached a number of schools to allow us to participate in their Year 9 options pathways parent’s evenings. Depending on the school, we were either offered a stall or had the opportunity to deliver a presentation to the parents. We feel presentations proved much more effective and will be offering this to a limited number of our priority schools next year. New this year was our Parent Ambassador scheme. Two QMUL staff members kindly volunteered their time to come along to parents evening answering questions and providing reassurance.

Boys, books and blogging
In 2015-16 we worked hard to plan and organise this project, investigating the most effective methods of delivery. Eastbury Community School will be working with us to trial this programme from October 2016 until Christmas. Year 10 students will be reading with student ambassadors and blogging about their views relating to reading. We look forward to discovering their thoughts.
Year 9 Humanities Summer School

Brand new for 2015-16, we were delighted that so many academic schools supported us in the delivery of this project. The five day programme included practical sessions introducing students to a wide range of Humanities degree subjects including; English, Drama, History, Geography, Law and Politics. The highlight of the week was a trip to the theatre to see the Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time.

“From taking part I have gained a lot of confidence and knowledge about university so in the future I am prepared for what is coming up.”
Year 9 Summer School student

Year 11 Experience Health Sciences Residential Summer School

28 year 11 students from East London and Warwickshire got to experience life at QMUL and the University of Warwick. Over the course of the week the students took part in a range of health-related sessions, such as learning how to deliver a baby and taking blood from a patient (using dummies not real patients we hasten to add!) and exploring pathology at Barts Pathology Museum.

In addition, the participating students were asked to deliver group presentations on a medicine related ethical topic which they worked on throughout the week and produced some thought provoking presentations on the final day.
Our activities – Post 16 initiatives

Year 12 Physics Practical School
This programme offers students the opportunity to carry out practical work in our undergraduate Physics teaching laboratory over the course of three weeks. During the programme, participants work in pairs on various experiment solving practical problems of experimental design and data collection. Sessions are supervised by QMUL staff and students from the academic School of Physics and Astronomy.

What did you like most about the Physics Practical School? “Being let loose in a real lab with real equipment and doing real experiments and obtaining real results.”
Year 12 student

Year 12 Engineering Spring School
This Spring School offers students the opportunity to experience university-style teaching and project work incorporating a variety of engineering subjects.

The best thing was “showing us the different types of engineering. It helped me in narrowing down which engineering courses I’d like to do most.”
Year 12 student
Year 12 Medicine and Dentistry Summer School
Two summer schools were delivered, both aiming to give students an idea of what studying Medicine and Dentistry is like, through exposure to current students, advice and guidance sessions, and practical workshops which provide hands on experience.

We had a record number of applications for this summer school and once again it proved to be well-received by those who attended. Throughout the weeks the students participated in the sessions with a lot of enthusiasm and the group presentations at the end of the weeks were the best we had seen on a summer school.

“**I believe with your support and confidence in me will help me to pursue a career in medicine and hopefully to study at Queen Mary University.**”
Year 12 student

Year 12 Undergraduate Shadowing Scheme
This programme offers the opportunity for young people to experience a full day as an undergraduate student. In 2015/6 we extended the eligibility for this programme to include: disabled students, students who are young carers and students who are estranged from their families in addition to young people who currently live in local authority care. The days continue to gain extremely positive feedback from all participants, their social workers, families, academics and the ambassadors who take part.

“It was amazing... it really motivated me to achieve my goals and pursue my dreams.”
Year 12 student

Year 12 Steps to Success
Step to Success is a 5 week coaching programme offering year 12 students the opportunity for one-to-one discussions with a trained Coach aiming to enhance their skills, knowledge or academic work. Coaches work with students to identify achievable goals, helping them to learn and apply strategies to enable successful study, whilst also encouraging students to think and talk about higher education.
Initiatives to support transition

Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS)
Taking the student lifecycle approach, we support students not only pre-entry, but also as they progress into QMUL ensuring students are given the support they need to thrive and succeed.

PASS has run strongly across QMUL this year. PASS activities are documented in a twice-yearly newsletter, back copies of which are always available on the PASS web page, www.qmul.ac.uk/pass.

The mentoring sessions run by students, for students, are always at the scheme’s core but other highlights this year included contributions by PASS student organisers to the QMUL Teaching and Learning Conference in January, on ‘student transitions’. Two PASS mentors attended the PASS/PAL national conference in Bath in November and our mentors celebrated with the annual Certificate Ceremony in March. Three PASS alumni returned as part of the event to give encouragement and advice from the world of work and further study.

Transition Events

In August we ran again our whole-day event for students from our target schools due to start at QMUL in September, A Date with Queen Mary. Friendships were made and current students and staff were on hand to answer queries and help participants build their familiarity with the Mile End Campus. Some students on this event later gathered to give ideas for future projects at A Second Date with Queen Mary, in November.

“It is an excellent scheme, it has genuinely helped a lot when I have attended, and always gives a sense of clarity.”
PASS student
Partner schools

QMUL has a long-term relationship with two key partner schools: St Paul’s Way Trust School in Tower Hamlets and the Drapers’ Academy in Havering. We have continued to develop long-term outreach programmes with these schools, and enhance this activity by focusing primary work on their feeder schools. Students at these schools will have access to a series of initiatives that build engagement with QMUL and higher education in general.

St Paul’s Way Trust School

QMUL is the lead trust partner at St Paul’s Way, with senior members of staff chairing the governing board and Trust Board. A broad programme of academic and governance support is provided in this long-term relationship between the school and QMUL. A number of activities took place in 2015-16 including hosting the annual Year 9 Pathways evening which saw 241 students arriving on campus with their parents in January. The WP team delivered an interactive parents’ activity and a short presentation about university.

Drapers’ Academy

A comprehensive information, advice and guidance programme was delivered to all students in years 7 – 11. This work introduced higher education, covering key information on budgeting and getting into university along with the opportunities available. The sessions are designed to progressively build knowledge and understanding through a series of interactions each year.

Student Ambassadors

Each year we employ around 50 current QMUL students to work for us as student ambassadors. Their role is to promote higher education through imparting their own knowledge to students, parents and teachers. They act as motivators – encouraging other young people to consider higher education; sharing the challenges and successes they have faced.

Our first ever Student Ambassador Awards was held in May to celebrate and reward their contribution to widening participation.
Meet the team...

Anne Setright
Head of Outreach and Widening Participation

Dr Debbie Andrews
Peer Mentoring and Transition Coordinator

Danielle Russo
Deputy Head of Outreach and Widening Participation

Alasdair Robertson
Widening Participation Officer (Medicine and Dentistry)

Priya Clarke
Widening Participation Officer

Michelle McAvoy
Widening Participation Coordinator

Jessica Benson-Egglenton
Widening Participation Officer (Evaluation and Monitoring)

Fathea Khanum
Widening Participation Coordinator
Widening Participation and Outreach in numbers...

5281 young people worked with in total

3871 students seen at HE information talk

1193 parents engaged

505 students attend a campus visits

434 students attended Taster Days

381 Primary School students engaged

180 students attended a summer school

144 schools and colleges worked with

130 activities delivered

117 students mentored

50 PASS mentors trained providing peer support to help QMUL students thrive

41 Student Ambassadors employed

34 students attended A Date with Queen Mary

8 tailored Undergraduate Shadowing Scheme days

7 Summer Schools delivered
Looking forward to 2017

We have lots of exciting new activities planned for 2016-17 including:

- Year 12 Pathways to Coding in partnership with the Sutton Trust
- Year 6 Primary Summer School
- Embedding activities which build social and cultural capital within our existing initiatives

Look out for full details in next year’s annual report.

Thank you

Widening participation is an institution-wide responsibility involving not only the Widening Participation and Outreach team but also academic schools and institutes, professional services and external partners. Without the collaboration and support of our colleagues our work would not be as successful.

Thank you for your help and support, and we look forward to working with you all again in 2016-17.

Get in touch with us at wp-enquiries@qmul.ac.uk or @QMULWP