

Abstract 2B

**Pre-entry Widening Participation programmes at the University of Glasgow: a study of success and impact on progression and retention.**

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The University of Glasgow has well-established and well-respected widening participation programmes including the Top-Up Programme, Summer School and Access courses. This presentation will focus on pre-entry Summer School, the Top-Up Programme for school pupils and the new Reach programme, based on Top-Up, promoting access to the high demand professions. These aim to attract and prepare able students from non-traditional backgrounds who may not consider or aspire to progressing to higher education, or who may need advice and assistance with access and preparation for successful study.

School/ campus sessions expand on study skills from school to prepare prospective students for the transition to the new learning environments and methods they will encounter in higher education, by academically rigorous study in specific subject areas. The Top-Up and Reach programmes work with pupils in low participation schools, raising aspirations for progression to higher education, contributing to attainment of entry qualifications at school, and the programme assessment profiles are used by University Admissions Officers across Scotland to aid access. Summer School is targeted at prospective students who have applied to the University of Glasgow who, due to their non-traditional backgrounds, may require more preparation and orientation, or a Summer School profile to assist with admissions.

These programmes are delivered and facilitated by academic staff/ postgraduate tutors and undergraduate students. By introducing prospective students from widening participation backgrounds to an authentic experience of higher education the programmes act as an early induction to University to aid transition, integration and retention. The skills gained form the basis of the attributes necessary to become successful students and, over time, will be developed into higher level graduate attributes. Additionally, involvement of current undergraduate and postgraduate students in development and delivery of activities contributes to development of their own graduate attributes. In this presentation we will describe the underpinning theories behind the activities, and demonstrate impact on access to the University of Glasgow, and student retention and success.

By the end of this session delegates will be able to...

- Identify widening participation students and understand why they need help with access and preparation for success in higher education

- Describe the University of Glasgow's flagship pre-entry WP programmes and understand the underpinning theory behind the activities
- Recognise the impact of these programmes on access and retention
- Consider pre-entry WP programmes as early induction to first year for non-traditional students