Introduction

Discover US is The University of Sheffield’s sustained outreach programme for Y9 pupils who meet specific widening participation (WP) criteria from state schools within South Yorkshire and the surrounding region. Through repeated visits to the University in Years 9, 10 and 11, the programme is designed to raise participants’ aspirations and their awareness of Higher Education. It aims to help these young people discover how university is within their grasp, and support them to make considered and informed choices. This document provides information about WP target groups and our selection criteria. It also explains the application process and what you will need to do to submit pupil applications on behalf of your school.

Summary of Application Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre Sept 2018</th>
<th>Your school should have already registered with our Outreach Online System and designated one member of staff as the Programme Contact for Discover US (please contact us with any queries relating to this).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2018</td>
<td>Programme Contact receives guidance document by email, and Parent/Carer letters and Discover US leaflets by post.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Programme Contact selects up to 10 suitable pupils based on academic and widening participation criteria (see page 2), and provides them with a Discover US leaflet and Parent/Carer letter to take home. You will need to add a suitable deadline date to the letters for pupils to complete their online application – this deadline must allow the school time to then add the School Supporting Statement for each pupil by 19th October.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 2018</td>
<td>Applications open on Monday 10th September – Pupils ‘sign up’ to the online application system using the link given in their Parent/Carer letter [<a href="https://outreach.shef.ac.uk/">https://outreach.shef.ac.uk/</a>] and complete the Student Application Form (see page 3) with the help of a parent/teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programme Contact signs in to the online application system to review the pupil application and completes the School Supporting Statement form (see page 4).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 2018</td>
<td>All completed applications (comprising both Student Application Form and School Supporting Statement) must be on the system by Friday 19th October.</td>
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<td>Completed applications are reviewed by the Outreach team.</td>
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<td>All applicants, parents/carers and schools are informed of the outcome of applications by mid-November.</td>
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Who can participate in Discover US?

It is important for us to demonstrate that we are supporting young people who will benefit most from our activities. This is one of the conditions of the programme funding, under the University’s Access and Participation Plan.

PLEASE NOTE:
Students CANNOT be part of both Discover US and US in Schools Mentoring (if this is a programme your school participates in) and will need to meet the academic criteria and WP Criteria detailed below.

1. **Academic Criteria** - In targeting pupils in your school for Discover US you should ensure they demonstrate the potential to enter both Higher Education and the University of Sheffield. We therefore ask that you only select pupils who have the academic potential to achieve the following, or higher:
   - Be on track to achieve a minimum of 5 GCSE’s grade 9-6, plus English at 4, if not already included

**WP Criteria –**
Essential:
   - Attend a state school
   - Are the first generation of their family to enter Higher Education (it is acceptable to have siblings who have already progressed to HE, or parents who attended HE as a mature student)

Then priority will be given to:
   - Students from areas of Low Participation in Higher Education
   - Looked After Child / Young Adult Carers
   - Students with a declared a disability
   - Students from ethnic/gender/socio-economic groups which are currently under-represented within HE*

*Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptional circumstances stated by the student and/or the school, such as family upheaval or disrupted schooling, will provide additional context to applications.*

* As part of these criteria, the University may use a postcode analysis tool to assess levels of deprivation and HE participation based on home postcode. e.g. Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Participation of Local Areas (POLAR), which measures the progression rates to higher education from specified postcode areas. You may find it helpful when targeting students to check if their postcode falls within quintile 1 for the POLAR3 young participation measure, by entering their postcode into the following online tool: [https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/postcode-search/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/postcode-search/)

**Key dates for Online Applications for Discover US:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Dates for Online Applications for Discover US</th>
<th>Monday 10th September</th>
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<tr>
<td>Applications Open</td>
<td>Monday 10th September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications Close</td>
<td>Friday 19th October — all student applications with school supporting statements MUST be on the system by this date.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers and students notified of outcome</td>
<td>By early November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successful applicants invited to Welcome Evening and first event ‘Intro to US’</td>
<td>Welcome Evening — 15th November 2018 Intro to US — Early December 2018</td>
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Completing the Student Application Form

From Monday 10th September, your selected pupils will be able to ‘Sign Up’ to the online application system using the link given in their Parent/Carer letter: [https://outreach.shef.ac.uk/](https://outreach.shef.ac.uk/)

To do this, they will need to enter their full name, email address, school name, and date of birth. They will also need to choose a password that they can remember. An email like the one below will be sent to their email address from heat@sheffield.ac.uk

```
Dear Adam
Thank you for applying to participate in the University of Sheffield Outreach and Widening Participation Programme.
Before you can continue with your application, please click the following link to confirm your email address:
Confirm your email address
```

When they click on Confirm your email address, it will take them to the online application system ‘Student Sign In’ page. They need to sign in with their email address and password. It will then continue onto ‘My Application’, where they can start their application to Discover US.

The ‘Student Application’ should be completed by the student who is applying, together with either a parent/carer or teacher. Whilst completing the application, students can see helpful notes by using the icon at the side of questions.

Students will need the following information to complete the application:

- Parent/carer history of attending higher education (if students live with their parents)
- Parent/carer contact details
- Parent/carer current or most recent job title
- Contact details for two emergency contacts (these can be parent/carers if appropriate)

It is possible to save the application after each section in case they do not have the information required immediately available. They can then complete the application at a later stage, before submitting it.

**Important information about the student application form:**
The student application comprises of the following sections:

**Eligibility:** We ask questions about a student’s family attendance at university and questions about citizenship as these are pre-requisites for some of our programmes.

**Personal Details:** These are used when assessing eligibility for our programmes; contact details are also required for future programme correspondence.

**Your Future:** The questions in this section give us an idea of a student’s intention towards further study.

**Personal Statements:** This is where a student can tell us more about themselves and why they would like to be on the programme.

**Emergency Contacts:** We collect emergency contact information at this stage in case they are successful in their application to the programme.

**Medical Details:** This is where a student can detail any conditions requiring medical treatment, allergies or other requirements.

**Code of Conduct:** This section outlines our expectations of students on our programmes and asks that they agree to a Code of Conduct.

**Consent:** This section allows participants to choose how we use their data.

**Summary:** This section allows them to review and edit their application one last time before they submit it.
When a pupil submits their application, they will receive a confirmation email, and the application will then appear in the school Programme Contact’s ‘Submitted Applications’ section of the outreach online system.
Completing the School Supporting Statement

Before submission to the University Outreach team, the assigned ‘Programme Contact’ for the school needs to review applications and provide supporting information for each student.

To do this, the assigned Programme Contact should sign into the online application system.

The Programme Contact will then be able to view the student applications that have been submitted to them, and provide the supporting statement for each student individually.

After selecting ‘Provide supporting statement’, the Programme Contact will be taken to review the Applicant Details.
The Programme Contact should check the details provided by the applicant, ensure that they are correct, and use the free text boxes to provide the additional information required.

If there are other circumstances that warrant consideration, please record these in the supporting statement. We ask you to provide information that may help us to understand more about the young person’s background and why they would particularly benefit from participating in Discover US. This may be, for example, that the applicant has had family upheaval, or that the applicant has had illness which has affected their studies. We appreciate that this information may be sensitive but all such information will remain confidential.

The Programme Contact should ensure the applicant’s home postcode has been completed correctly as the University will use postcode information to identify if the applicant lives in a low participation neighbourhood (LPN) or an area of multiple deprivation (based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation-IMD).

The Programme Contact will need to confirm that the applicant meets the academic criteria by ticking and answering the questions in this section related to qualifications. This will ensure the students we accept on the programme have the academic potential to succeed in Higher Education and at the University of Sheffield.

Once the Applicant Details have been completed, the Programme Contact should ‘Save and continue’.
The Programme Contact is then asked to confirm that the details provided are correct and that the school is committed to supporting the participant by allowing them time off from school to participate in the programme, if selected.

The summary page allows the Programme Contact the opportunity to check that the information they have provided is correct and edit as needed. The Programme Contact will then submit the supporting statement by pressing the purple ‘Submit’ button. This application will then be removed from the teacher view.

Once submitted, the Programme Contact will be returned to the ‘Submitted Applications’ screen to review the other applications that are waiting to be submitted.
What happens next?

Once the School Supporting Statement has been submitted by the Programme Contact, each student’s application will be reviewed by the Outreach team to determine whether they can be accepted onto the programme.

Please note that an application for Discover US does not necessarily guarantee a place on the programme. We aim to inform all applicants, parents/carers and schools of the outcome of applications by mid-November.

Data Protection

The data collected in both the School Supporting Statement and the Student’s Application Form will be processed by the University of Sheffield in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018, as well as all legislation enacted in the UK in respect of the protection of personal data ("Data Protection Legislation"), and held for as long as we need this information.

For research, monitoring and evaluation purposes only, your data may also be shared with appropriate third party organisations such as the Office for Students, Higher Education Statistics Agency and our partners including Higher Education Access Tracker Service subscribers. We will not release data to anyone who is unauthorised. Under the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 individuals have the right to a copy of the data held about them by us.

If they/you would like a copy of the data they/you have supplied to us, they/you would need to contact heat@sheffield.ac.uk. By submitting the application, they/you are consenting to the use of personal data as outlined above. Individuals can find out more about why we collect personal data on our website: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/outreach/data

Further information

If you require any clarification on whether an individual student meets the selection criteria or if you would like us to supply publications in an alternative format then please get in touch with the Discover US Team using discoverus@sheffield.ac.uk

More general information on opportunities for students and teachers can be found by visiting the University of Sheffield’s webpages for schools and colleges: www.sheffield.ac.uk/schools

If you have any other queries you can contact the University of Sheffield Outreach and Widening Participation team:

By email: outreach@sheffield.ac.uk

By telephone: 0114 222 1027

By post:
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Discover US Team
Outreach and Widening Participation
Student Recruitment and Admissions
The Arts Tower, Level 3
Western Bank
Sheffield
S10 2TN