One of the continual challenges to universities is to be inspiring places of learning for all students so that they can not only develop personally but go into the world after graduation with the confidence that they have the skills and knowledge to make a worthwhile contribution to society.

It is vitally important to ensure that these opportunities are open to all young people and that everyone is aware of the options available to them. As such we have to work assiduously to engage with those for whom university might feel alien, unknown or indeed unattainable. Showing them it is possible and potentially desirable for them to consider studying at a higher level.

Clearly, this must always be couched in terms of what is best for the individual but here at the University of Sheffield, providing clear information, guidance and advice is something we strive to do through the work of our Outreach and Widening Participation team. Informed by partnerships working with academic departments and external stakeholders, the mission of the team is to help raise aspirations and share knowledge in communities, schools and districts where there are those who could and would benefit from continuing their studies at a higher level but are at present not doing so in the numbers we would expect.

This report provides an overview of the excellent work being undertaken with a wide range of people within and beyond our city and region. As a university we believe passionately in this agenda and I continue to be proud of what has been achieved and of the work undertaken by my colleagues and commend their work as outlined in this report.

Foreword
Professor Wyn Morgan
Vice-President for Education
Targeting the right students, those who are most able but least likely to go to university, is at the heart of what we do.
Introduction

James Busson
Head of UK Student Recruitment and Widening Participation

It’s my great pleasure to be introducing what is now our third annual report, showcasing our sector-leading pre-entry widening participation activity here at the University of Sheffield, which is so vital to our core mission and founding values.

The Higher Education (HE) sector is still a challenging environment with a number of pressures facing it. However, the newly established Office for Students and the fundamental focus on equality of opportunity and social mobility within its strategy gives us reason to be excited and to be able to play a key part in delivering on these goals.

During 2017/18 we’ve strengthened our key partnership work, launched exciting new sustained-engagement programmes and taken steps to further evidence the direct impact of our work. We’ve also seen the highest number of individuals progressing from our sustained-engagement programmes to undergraduate study here at Sheffield, with a total of 112 registering as students at the University in September 2018.

A key development this year has been the extension and growth of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, known locally as Higher Education Progression Partnership South Yorkshire Plus (HEPPSY+). Working in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University to deliver this exciting programme, over the last 12 months we have significantly grown the number of participants we work with, the activities that we deliver and the way that we track and report our students and activities.

Following a research project commissioned by the University of Sheffield’s Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit (WPREU) we created a brand-new programme to address the concerns from many parents of our participants. IMPACT launched in Spring 2018 and aims to re-enforce the importance of working hard in school and to demystify Higher Education during the early stages of secondary education.

My thanks go to all of those involved in widening participation, both here at the University and across the region through our partners, schools, colleges and other stakeholders.

Your support is vital to help us to improve the educational outcomes for the students that we work with.

I do hope you enjoy reading this report and look forward to continuing to work with you to progress the Widening Participation agenda.
**University of Sheffield sustained programmes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>% POLAR3Q1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>50.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>44.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>39.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall admissions statistics 2017/18**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young, full-time first degree entrants from state schools</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time first degree BAME entrants</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature full-time first degree entrants who are from low participation neighbourhoods</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures taken from the Access and Participation plan 2019–20 based on UK domicile students in the 1st December census data for new entrants only.
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<td>Case Study – Discover US</td>
<td>16 – 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study – Post-16 DISCOVER Programme</td>
<td>20 – 21</td>
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<td>Case Study – US in Schools Mentoring</td>
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<td>Subject focused activity</td>
<td>36 – 39</td>
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<td>Case Study – Work with parents IMPACT</td>
<td>40 – 41</td>
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<td>Mature students</td>
<td>42 – 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study – HEPP Learning Cafés</td>
<td>44 – 45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 2017/18 academic year saw the Outreach and Widening Participation team not only deliver successful programmes of events and activities, but improve on the systems and processes that have been introduced over the last two years. Particular focus and emphasis was placed on our data collection processes and, in turn, the way we track participants, evaluate our interventions and monitor the effectiveness of our outreach programmes.

Further development and refinement of our online application and event management portal – Outreach Online – has been ongoing. We based our portal development on the user experiences of applicants and staff from local schools and colleges ensuring we can offer an intuitive system that removes any possible barriers to applicants and our widening participation programmes.

Evaluation is a fundamental part of our work, therefore throughout each programme we continuously evaluate the activities undertaken through surveys, feedback forms and research projects conducted by the University of Sheffield Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit (WPREU). Through this ongoing monitoring and evaluation we are able to make changes to the structure and content of our programmes to better suit the needs of our participants, ranging from extra support with exams and study skills to new field trips and subject based workshops.

### Progress against our Widening Participation indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>% of students on sustained programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR3 Q1)</strong></td>
<td>2015/2016  2016/2017  2017/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Generation to enter HE</td>
<td>75.98%  82.69%  89.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)</td>
<td>22.58%  24.40%  27.03%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Targeting the right students is at the heart of what we do and our sustained programmes deliver this outcome by engaging with students in a meaningful way.

Discover US, our flagship programme for students in Year 9 through to Year 11, focuses on raising aspirations for those who have the potential to access and progress to Higher Education but do not have a family tradition of going to university. Over three years the programme aims to provide students with the opportunity to explore a range of academic subjects, support with GCSE and A Level choices and develop the skills necessary to be successful at university and in life.

The Post-16 DISCOVER Programme aims to support students during Year 12 and 13 in raising aspirations and exploring Higher Education study. The programme is split into six subject and career pathways that offer students a unique experience and specialist support. Participants who successfully complete a pathway will be eligible for a conditional alternative offer for degrees at the University of Sheffield.

Both Discover US and DISCOVER are designed to nurture and inspire the participants on their journey to Higher Education and beyond, ensuring they are equipped with the skills necessary to be successful. Each programme is thoroughly evaluated and feedback monitored throughout with the results being used to build and shape future content and structure – ensuring we are delivering the best programme for our participants.
I decided to apply for the Discover US programme because I wanted to see what university is really like so I could determine whether it would be the right choice for me. I also wanted to develop key skills regardless of what I decide to do after I’ve finished school: teamwork, communication, problem solving and independence for example.

The main highlights of Discover US for me have been both the History and Law subject workshops and the Summer School residential. The Law workshop was especially useful for teamwork and the History workshop has inspired me to choose History after Year 11. The Summer School residential was brilliant! I had a great time taking part in all the different activities, making new friends and staying over in the halls of residence.

Taking part in Discover US has really helped with both my decision making about university and my future. It has given me confidence and affirmed what I want to do after I finish my A Levels. Throughout the programme I received a lot of information about applying to university, accommodation and student finance and now I do not feel worried about these aspects of university anymore. The workshops within the summer school gave me a taster of all different subjects and I have now narrowed down my choices to two, and know what I need to study at A Level to make this a possibility. I know I definitely want to apply to the University of Sheffield!
“Taking part in Discover US has really helped with my decision making about university and my future. Now, I know that I definitely want to apply to the University of Sheffield.”

Horeb Debesay, All Saints’ Catholic High School
I applied for the Access to Dental Occupations – Practice and Tutoring (ADOPT) pathway because I really wanted to find out for myself what dentistry is like to study, as a career and also what life at university is really like.

At the time of applying I was unsure if dentistry would be the subject for me but I knew that the ADOPT pathway would give me a full insight and help my decision making. I realised early on that the support provided through e-mentoring and the guidance with UCAS, the application process and student finance was going to be invaluable when the time came to applying for university.

Meeting a lot of people my age and with the same aspirations has been the best part of the pathway. It’s been really enjoyable making new friends – attending the range of events, activities and sharing new experiences with them. Particularly during the Summer School residential, where we were able to combine subject-focused activities with social events, giving us a great taste of what it’s like to be a student at the University of Sheffield.

Without a shadow of a doubt taking part in ADOPT has made me certain that I want to become a dentist in the future. It has made me realise it is my greatest ambition and ADOPT has been so successful in managing my expectations and fulfilling the very reason I applied for this brilliant programme.
US in Schools Mentoring

Mentoring is a key part of the University’s Widening Participation strategy and our flagship mentoring programme – US in Schools Mentoring is at the forefront of it. The programme aims, by means of close mentoring relationships, to raise the aspirations and attainment of young people in Years 9, 10 and 11 from targeted local schools, who are from backgrounds that are under-represented in Higher Education.

We realise the importance of mentoring and how valuable this can be to our participants, no matter their age or year group.

With our mentoring programme participants can rely on support for a range of topics from homework and coursework support, developing study skills, exploring education and career pathways. Mentors provide mentees with a positive role model and introduce them to student life at the University of Sheffield.

2017/18 Participation

394 mentees 22% increase from 2016/17
9% increase from 2016/17
76 mentors

16 schools 23% increase from 2016/17
I took part in the US in Schools Mentoring programme because I knew that it would be beneficial and would teach me lots of new and useful life skills – like study skills, revision guidance, and what options to pick for GCSEs.

I thought that the idea of having one-to-one mentoring would give me a chance to get advice about how to improve, make progress and be successful as an individual.

The best thing about taking part was that I got to learn about university and also that I formed a new bond and friendship with my mentor, Emily.

Emily was a great support and helped me a lot throughout the programme with many things such as improving my revision techniques – which resulted in me getting the grades that I needed! She also helped increase my confidence which was put to the test when I had the opportunity to speak publicly in front of a large audience at our end of programme celebration event.

I also really enjoyed my trip to the University of Sheffield. It opened my eyes to what Emily does and made me realise that I too can get there if I try and work hard.

Komal Anjum
Mentee, Fir Vale School

I joined the programme as I have always loved working with children and young people. I found secondary school very stressful and difficult due to social and academic pressures so I wanted to try and help other young people through that.

By far the best thing has been seeing my mentees grow in confidence and empowering them to feel more independent. Towards the end of each year I could see the growth and their self-belief in what they were capable of increase so much from the start of the programme.

I’ve always wanted to be a school teacher and I really enjoyed working with young people on a more personal level. Having a smaller number of pupils helped me get to know them, make more of a difference and have a greater impact. This year I’m working as a teaching assistant for children with autism and I’m really loving that personal, pastoral element of the role.

Emily Matkin
US in Schools Mentor
“For me, US in Schools Mentoring definitely made me realise that university is for me and that I want to go and study for a degree.”

Komal Anjum, Mentee, Fir Vale School
We work with a range of partners locally, regionally and nationally – from sustained engagement through Realising Opportunities and the Brilliant Club to school, college and campus based activities with Excellence Hub, HEPP and HEPPSY+.

The University of Sheffield and Realising Opportunities have been in partnership since 2013. This national sustained programme is a unique collaboration of leading, research intensive universities, working together to promote fair access for those groups under-represented in Higher Education.

The two year programme provides students with the skills and information to help not only make informed decisions about their futures and to raise their aspirations to progress to a leading research intensive university, but also to support with their current work in their school or college. The last five years have seen over 300 students take part in Realising Opportunities at Sheffield and we are excited to continue this important and valuable partnership.

We have continued our partnership with the Brilliant Club, a charity that works to bring together PhD students with talented state school children from under-represented backgrounds. Throughout the year PhD students from the University of Sheffield work with small groups of students on a university style research project.

### Participation

- **14,268 student engagements***
- **298 schools and colleges**
- **216 activities**

* engagements may include students who have attended more than one outreach activity.

**Activities include:** Brilliant Club, Excellence Hub, HEPP, HEPPSY+, Realising Opportunities
2017/18
Realising Opportunities

Realising Opportunities (RO) is a unique collaboration of leading, research intensive universities, working together to promote fair access for those groups under-represented in Higher Education.

Over two years students take part in:
- E-mentoring programme
- National Student Conference
- Online study skills modules
- Academic Assignment or Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
- Visits to RO partner universities

Students recruited to Sheffield RO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 8</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 9</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Progression to Higher Education

Progression data for RO cohorts is reported on a national basis as it is a UK wide Widening Participation Outreach programme promoting access to research intensive universities and geographical mobility for applicants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 5</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education overall</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Intensive universities</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO Partner universities</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robin Williams
King Edward VII School

Realising Opportunities (RO) really appealed to me as it supports students from sixth forms and colleges which may have fewer applicants to research intensive universities.

The programme provided me with step-by-step information about the UCAS application process, student finance and even matched me with a current university student studying my desired subject so that I could ask questions and get advice and support.

Realising Opportunities has given me a much more in-depth understanding of university life as a whole from accommodation, student finance and academia.

A really useful aspect about the programme has been the visits to different universities and their open days. I have always known that I wanted to study Medicine but visiting different universities has really opened my eyes. It has shown me variances in both how courses are structured and the content of them, but also differences between both campus and city based universities.
The Brilliant Club

The University of Sheffield partners with the Brilliant Club, a charity that seeks to mobilise the PhD community to engage with state schools and support talented pupils from under-represented backgrounds to progress to highly-selective universities. To do this, they deliver two programmes: The Scholars Programme and Researchers in Schools.

The Scholars Programme employs doctoral and post-doctoral researchers on a part-time basis to deliver programmes of academic enrichment to small groups of pupils. Through a combination of university trips, in-school tutorials and online resources, it supports pupils aged 10–18 to develop the knowledge, skills and ambition needed to progress to highly-selective universities.

The Researchers in Schools Programme offers a bespoke route for PhD graduates to enter the teaching profession as full-time classroom teachers. Working in partnership with other providers, it offers a programme of initial teacher training and on-going professional development that equips participants to utilise their academic expertise to the benefit of pupils, schools and universities.

2017/18 Participation

- 798 students
- 23 PhD tutors
- 66 schools
- 480 teaching hours delivered by PhD tutors
Higher Education Progression Partnership South Yorkshire Plus (HEPPSY+)

During 2017/18 the Higher Education Progression Partnership South Yorkshire Plus (HEPPSY+), a collaborative project between the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University. The project, funded by Office For Students (OFS) as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), has recently completed its first full year and now offers a very broad range of activities, workshops and summer schools specifically targeting students in Year 9 through to Year 13.
Subject focused activities are predominantly based within our faculties and academic departments. This means we can draw on the expertise of our academics, world-leading researchers and teaching staff to deliver cutting edge sessions.

Throughout 2017/18 we have worked hard to expand these sessions, as our evaluations consistently show students respond to visiting the University campus and using the resources, such as laboratories and lecture theatres we have available.

Whether it be learning about the work of a biomedical scientist, or being an ecologist for the day, students are given a flavour of what degree and career opportunities are available to them. Experiencing student and academic life in this way provides learners with exciting opportunities not ordinarily available to them.

2017/18 University of Sheffield Participation

20,281 student engagements* 376 activities

205 schools and colleges

* engagements may include students who have attended more than one outreach activity.
The University of Sheffield | Annual Report 2017/18

2017/18 examples

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Philosophy essay competition

66 students 46 schools

Faculty of Engineering
Bloodhound: Supersonic car workshop

21 students 1 school

Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health
Adult Nursing taster day

36 students 21 schools

Faculty of Science
Environmental Robots workshop

120 students 2 schools

Faculty of Social Sciences
Journalism taster day

24 students 17 schools

“The thing I enjoyed most about the day was that we could write about any topic. We were given total independence. I felt like it was a real day at university.”

Journalism taster day participant
More and more we have seen the impact that our work has not only on students but parents as well. In 2017/18 this was a particular focus area for the Widening Participation team following an extensive research project which involved parents of Year 7 and 8 widening participation students with the aim of developing their knowledge and helping overcome the barriers to Higher Education their children face.

Last year our new outreach project IMPACT was launched. IMPACT was created and continues to be directly informed by research and feedback from both students and parents. The tools and activities within the programme are specifically designed based on participants’ feedback, ensuring we meet their needs and expectations.

Following an extremely successful first year IMPACT will continue in 2018/19 and support more parents and their children.

Samar Mohammed
Parent, IMPACT

“I feel very happy and very lucky to be part of the IMPACT programme. I found the visit to campus and the activities really helpful – I found out a lot of information about the University that I previously didn’t know, such as the finance support available and the Residence Life team.

For me it has been a really informative programme and all the staff I have met have been really helpful and willing to answer any questions and concerns I have had. My experiences on IMPACT have made me think differently, more openly about university and I feel confident in encouraging my children to apply—especially to the University of Sheffield.

Personally I think that every parent that can, should join IMPACT and learn more about university and how they can support their children to dream big and get to university if it is the right thing for them.”

2017/18 Participation

133 parents*

218 students
5 activities

*Number of parents attending across all activities
At the University of Sheffield we understand the value of studying for a degree at any age. We celebrate the life experience and skills that mature students bring to their learning, which greatly enrich the learning experience for everybody. The University is committed to maintaining the diversity of its student body now and into the future.

The University of Sheffield runs an outreach programme which targets adults aged 21 and over who haven’t previously had access to Higher Education. This programme is led by the Department for Lifelong Learning (DLL) and aims to raise participant’s aspirations, increase awareness of options available to them, and offer guidance around application processes, student finance and career options.

The programme ranges from one off interactions outside the University such as learning cafés or community visits, to on-campus tasters and events, through to sustained outreach programmes which take place over a number of weeks. Whilst each activity is open to any participant as a one off interaction, the programme also offers a pathway to those who wish to access multiple activities over a longer period of time.

The Department for Lifelong Learning employs a team of student ambassadors who are integral to the outreach programme, sharing their own stories of returning to education as an older student, and offering advice on specific topics such as studying whilst bringing up children.

### 2017/18 Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Engagement Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>340</td>
<td>engaged with the DLL outreach programme. 108 of these people engaged with more than one event/activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>new students were welcomed to the foundation programme. 32 of these students had engaged in at least one outreach activity during 2017/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>adults attended an open event or taster event. 30 of these attendees applied to the DLL foundation programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>adults attended a 6 week Discover Course. 8 went on to apply to the DLL foundation programme, with 7 of them securing a place on the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>individuals that engaged, applied for a course with DLL. 19 made an application for a course elsewhere within the University of Sheffield</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HEPP Learning Cafés

In 2017/18 the Department for Lifelong Learning worked in partnership with The Higher Education Progression Partnership (HEPP), Sheffield Hallam University and local Further Education colleges to deliver a series of ‘Learning Cafés’ in both Sheffield and Barnsley.

The primary aim of this project was to engage with adults not currently in education – to reach out to them in a community setting, offering an alternative to traditional ‘on campus’ events.

These events ran every 6 weeks over a 9 month period, and followed a successful smaller pilot project in 2016/17. Taking place in city centre locations, these events offered visitors the opportunity to meet staff and student ambassadors from a variety of local HE and FE providers, to explore all of their options for returning to education.

2017/18 Participation

103 adults attended a learning café in 2017/18

67% of attendees said they intended to apply for a course of Further or Higher Education in the future

100% of visitors said that they would recommend the event to others

All institutions involved have received applications from adults who visited the Learning Cafés

4 students welcomed to The Department for Lifelong Learning to the foundation programme in 2018, who had made initial contact with us via a Learning Café
Further information

The University of Sheffield
sheffield.ac.uk

Outreach and Widening Participation at the University of Sheffield
sheffield.ac.uk/outreach

The University of Sheffield Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Unit (WPREU)
sheffield.ac.uk/als/wp/wpreu

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0114 222 1027

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this publication is accurate at the time of print. Student numbers have been collated across the range of Outreach and Widening Participation work at the University of Sheffield.

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