



STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS POLICY

EQIA MONITORING REPORT

April 2010

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Executive Summary

In accordance with its Equality Scheme the University of Ulster concluded that the Student Admissions Policy should be subject to an equality impact assessment (EQIA). An EQIA Sub-group considered the impact of the policy across the nine equality groups covered by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The EQIA was completed in February 2007 with the publication of the final EQIA results report and recommendations. The revised policy was included in the EQIA consultation exercise. Since then the University has recently revised the policy and has made further revisions to it, to reflect both recent legislative developments and guidance from the QAA Code of Practice on admissions.

Based on the evidence it considered, the EQIA Sub-group concluded that the profile of student entrants reflects general Northern Ireland demographics. The Sub-group identified some under-representation with regard to **gender, religion, and racial group**. However, these were considered to be differential rather than adverse impacts.

The EQIA showed that generally 40% of students to the University were male. In Northern Ireland, significantly more females leave school with 2 or more 'A' levels than males.

The data collected for the EQIA showed an under-representation of Protestant students across all faculties and campuses, particularly at the Magee campus. This was explained by a range of external factors, largely beyond the control of the University. For example, patterns of migration show that Protestant students are twice as likely than Catholics to leave and study outside Northern Ireland.

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) data presented in the EQIA showed that Black and Minority Ethnic students represented 1.1% of applicants and 0.7% of enrolments¹. Pre-consultation with the Chinese Welfare Association indicated that the shortfall in Chinese student enrolments may be due to the fact that applicants from the Chinese community are more likely to attend Universities in England and Scotland; and had applied to Ulster as a reserve choice, with little real intention of taking up a place.

The University identified in the consultation report proposed measures to mitigate the differential impacts identified. The recommended actions were as follows:

- To develop links with the Chinese Welfare Association, the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and other ethnic minority groups as appropriate, in order to collaborate in events such as Open Days and Recruitment Fairs;
- To hold meetings with Head Teachers of Protestant schools which have been identified as providing low numbers of applicants, to arrange talks/information days and to develop outreach measures and marketing activities, in conjunction with Academic Development and Student Services ;

¹ The relatively low numbers make the interpretation of data relating to Black and Minority Ethnic Groups difficult.

- To hold meetings with influential individuals or community organisations from the Protestant community to encourage applications from pupils in Protestant schools;
- To take cognizance of data on students to Magee campus in the development of the North West Development Plan;
- To include information on students in informing future decisions on the location of future course provision;
- To review the marketing strategy for the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy in relation to the nine categories under Section 75;
- To monitor student students to each campus on an annual basis; and
- The Faculty of Engineering should consider action to increase female participation.

This EQIA monitoring report is based on an analysis of student entrant data to the University of Ulster for the 2008/09 academic year relating to religion, gender, disability, racial group, age, persons with dependants and marital status². Within the report the term 'student' relates to 'student entrants'. The report also includes a comparison with Ulster student equality data from the final year of the EQIA Report, the academic year 2004/05 and data from UCAS and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Tables are presented in Appendix 1 to 3. Appendix 4 provides an update on the recommended actions agreed as an outcome of the EQIA.

Based on recent data considered in this monitoring report, the University believes that the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy does not have a differential or negative impact with regard to gender, persons of different political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, between persons with a disability and persons without, and between persons with dependants and persons without.

In terms of religious belief, although the gap between Catholic and Protestant NI-domiciled students has narrowed, the proportion of Protestant entrants (34%) is lower than the proportion of Protestant school leavers with two or more A' Levels at Grades A-C (43.1%); and the proportion of school leavers intending to go to Higher Education (37.9%) as reported in the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.

The EQIA concluded that patterns of migration show that Protestant students are twice as likely than Catholics to leave and study outside Northern Ireland. Since the EQIA the University's new marketing strategy has identified which schools provide low numbers of student applicants and those schools which had no existing relationship with Ulster. Some of these were Protestant grammar and secondary schools. The new marketing strategy has identified ways to engage feeder schools more effectively with Ulster; and more specifically those schools with greater growth potential.

An analysis of the University's student equality data has identified the following trends with regard to the composition of student entrants since the completion of the EQIA:

² The University does not collect student data in relation to sexual orientation or political opinion.

- The gap between the proportion of Catholic and Protestant NI-domiciled students **has narrowed from 22.8% in 2004/05 to 21.4% in 2008/09**. In 2008/09 there was a higher proportion of NI-domiciled students from the Catholic community (55.4%) compared to the Protestant community (34%). The proportion of NI-domiciled students from the Protestant community is lower than the proportion of school leavers with two or more A' Levels at Grades A-C (43.1%); and the proportion of school leavers likely to enter Higher Education (37.9%) as reported in the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.
- The proportion of female students compared with male students has remained relatively stable since the EQIA, with **female students (60.3%) continuing to outnumber males (39.7%)** in 2008/09. The NI School Leavers Survey (2007/08) show that significantly more females (55.6%) leave school with two or more 'A' levels than males (37.9%). The proportion of male students to the University of Ulster (39.7%; 2008/09) is higher than the proportion of school leavers whose preferred destination is Higher Education (32.8%; 2007/08).
- The proportion of **students with a disability has remained fairly stable**; 5.4% of students recorded a disability in 2004/05 compared with 5.1% in 2008/09. A third of all students known to be disabled were recorded as having 'a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia'.
- The proportion of **NI-domiciled students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds has increased** from 1% in 2004/05 to 1.7% in 2008/09; and is similar to their representation of school leavers likely to enter Higher Education (1.6%) as suggested by the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.
- A slightly faster rate of increase in the proportion of all students from minority ethnic backgrounds from 2.8% in 2004/05 to 4.9% in 2008/09.
- The age profile of students at Ulster is similar to the age profile of students in higher education across the UK. However **the age profile of students at Ulster varies considerably across levels and modes of study**. Postgraduate students are generally older (37.2% are aged 26-35 years and a further 30.1% are aged 36 years and over); and the majority of undergraduate students are aged 21 and under (62.8%). Part-time students are generally older than full-time students.
- The **proportion of students who are single has increased** from 63.4% in 2004/05 to 75% in 2008/09 (possibly due to a reduction in 'not known' data). The proportion of students who are married has remained fairly stable (14% in 2004/05; 14.3% in 2008/09). Students recorded as single were more likely to be full-time undergraduates (87.3%) and those recorded as 'married' were more likely to study part-time (82.6%).
- The **proportion of students with dependants has increased** from 12.1% in 2005/06 to 13.3% in 2008/09 (again possibly due to a reduction in 'not known' data). A higher proportion of female students have dependants (61.1%) compared to males (38.9%).
- At Ulster the participation in higher education of those from less well-off backgrounds is relatively high (48.9% NS-SEC categories 4-7, 2007/08) compared with the UK average (29.5% 2007/08).

1. Introduction

The Policy

1. The University is required by its Charter to provide for the advancement of education through a variety of patterns, levels and modes of study. A written Admissions Policy was developed by the University in 1996; it was subsequently revised and updated in 2001, as an outcome of the EQIA in 2005 and following QAA guidelines in 2010. The 2010 revised policy will be equality screened in accordance with Section 75.
2. The policy is based upon principles of equality of opportunity. It outlines the need to apply impartial and transparent academic selection criteria for all applicants. General and course specific entry requirements are set out in the annual prospectuses, and programme-specific entry requirements are prescribed in programme regulations.

Aims of the Policy

3. The aims of the recently revised Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy are:
 - *to provide a wide range of flexible educational and training opportunities, designed to meet the needs of the community in Northern Ireland and elsewhere;*
 - *to provide opportunities to access and progress to higher-level study developed in line with market demand and higher education guidelines and equality legislation;*
 - *to ensure that selection is based primarily on academic criteria/competencies;*
 - *to provide equitable and fair access for adult learners to higher education; and*
 - *to provide a suitable learning environment for all students, including those students with a disability.*

The University recognises that some applicants, particularly adult learners, may not satisfy the general entry requirements for admission to courses by way of formal qualifications, but may have relevant prior experiential learning to bring to university studies. The University has now in place a policy and guiding principles with regard to the accreditation of prior learning.

Section 75 Legislation

4. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act), requires the University in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;
 - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - between persons with dependants and persons without.
5. In addition, without prejudice, to the above obligation, the University is required to promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
 6. The new Policy on Student Recruitment and Admissions was developed following an equality impact assessment (EQIA) on the University's previous policy in compliance with the University's Equality Scheme. A Sub-group of the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group (EDAG) was formed to conduct the EQIA. The EQIA Sub-group considered the impact of the policy on the nine equality groups specified under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. The Final EQIA Report was published in February 2007.
 7. The Final EQIA Report is available to view on the University's website at <http://www.equality.ulster.ac.uk/completedeqias.html> . Following recent restructuring of University Departments, the Equality Policy and Practice Unit has now moved to Corporate Planning and Governance, and has been renamed 'Equality and Diversity Services'.
 8. This report can be made available in alternative formats (such as large print, audio cassette, Braille, or minority language etc.) by contacting Equality and Diversity Services at Tel: 028 9036 8137.

2. Main findings of EQIA

9. For the purposes of the EQIA the University Sub-group considered information from the following sources:
 - University of Ulster student equality data (2000/01 to 2004/05);
 - Universities and Colleges Admissions (UCAS) data (2003/04);
 - 2001 Census data;
 - Data collected as a result of pre-consultation meetings;
 - Research reports; and
 - Relevant legislation.
10. Based on the evidence it considered, the Sub-group concluded that the profile of students generally reflects Northern Ireland demographics. Within the report the term 'student' relates to 'student entrants'. The Sub-group identified some under-representation with regard to **gender, religion, and racial group**. However, these were considered to be differential rather than adverse impacts.
11. In 2004/05, the EQIA showed that generally 40% of students to the University were male. This had changed little since 2000. At the time of the EQIA the Department of Education Northern Ireland School Leavers Report showed that significantly more females leave school with 2 or more 'A' levels than males.
12. The data collected during the EQIA showed a lower proportion of students from the Protestant community across all faculties and campuses, particularly at the Magee campus. This was explained by a range of external factors, largely beyond the control of the University. For example, the EQIA concluded that patterns of migration show that Protestant students are twice as likely than Catholics to leave and study outside Northern Ireland.
13. UCAS data for 2003/04 showed that Black and Minority Ethnic students represented 1.1% of applicants and 0.7% of enrolments³. Pre-consultation with the Chinese Welfare Association indicated that the shortfall in Chinese student enrolments may have been due to the fact that applicants from the Chinese community were more likely to attend Universities in England and Scotland; and had applied to the University of Ulster as a reserve choice, with little real intention of taking up a place.

³ The relatively low numbers make the interpretation of data relating to Black and Minority Ethnic Groups difficult.

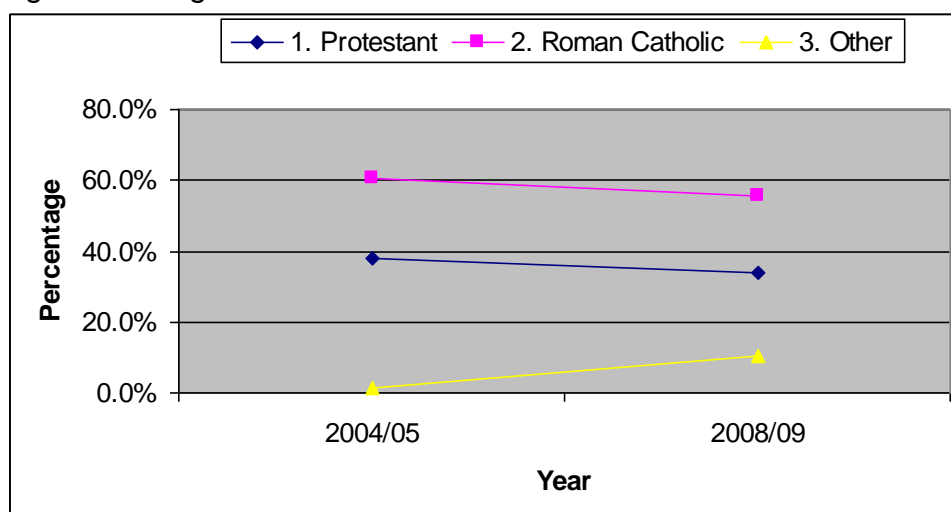
3. Main Findings of Monitoring Report

14. This EQIA monitoring report is based on an analysis of student entrant data to the University of Ulster for the 2008/09 academic year relating to religion, gender, disability, racial group, age, persons with dependants and marital status⁴. The report also includes a comparison with Ulster student equality data from the final year of the EQIA Report, the academic year 2004/05. This section also analyses data from UCAS, the HESA Equality in Higher Education Statistical Report 2009 and the Department of Education (NI) School Leavers Survey 2007/08. Tables are presented in Appendix 1 to 3. Appendix 4 provides an update on the recommended actions agreed as an outcome of the EQIA.

Religious Belief

15. The EQIA report noted that there was a very high proportion of ‘not known’ religious belief at approximately 20%. The proportion of ‘not known’ religious belief has decreased over the last five years to approximately 10% of NI domiciled students in 2008/09. For this report students with ‘not known’ religious belief have been excluded.
16. In 2008/09, 10.6% of NI-domiciled students selected ‘Other’ as their religious/community background (an increase of 9.2% since 2004/05). Correspondingly the proportion of students who have indicated that they are from a Protestant or Catholic background has fallen. In 2008/09 there is still a higher proportion of Catholic (55.4%) than Protestant (34%) NI-domiciled students. However, the gap between the proportion of Catholic and Protestant NI-domiciled students has narrowed from 22.8% in 2004/05 to 21.4%% in 2008/09.

Figure 1: Religious belief of NI-domiciled entrants in 2004/05 and 2008/09



⁴ The University does not collect student data in relation to sexual orientation or political opinion.

17. Data from the Department of Education NI School Leavers Survey show that the proportion of school leavers with two or more A' Levels at Grades A-C (43.1%) is higher than the proportion of NI-domiciled students from the Protestant community. The proportion of Protestant students in 2008/09 is also slightly lower than the proportion of school leavers intending to go to Higher Education as 37.9% were Protestant, 53% Catholic and 9.1% Other⁵.
18. The lower proportion of Protestant students (34%) to the University of Ulster was explained in the EQIA in relation to a range of external factors, largely beyond the control of the University. For example, the EQIA concluded that patterns of migration show that Protestant students are twice as likely than Catholics to leave and study outside Northern Ireland⁶.
19. In 2008/09, similar proportions of NI-domiciled students from the Protestant community are studying at postgraduate (35.3%) and undergraduate (33.6%) level. By campus the highest proportion of NI-domiciled student students to Belfast, Jordanstown and Magee are from the Catholic community in 2008/09. At Coleraine the highest proportion of students are from the Protestant community as the percentage of Catholic students has fallen with an increase in the proportion of students who have selected 'other' as their religious belief. Similarly at Magee the percentage of students from the Catholic community has fallen with an increase in the percentage of students who have selected 'other'.
20. Within each faculty the highest proportion of students are from the Catholic community. Changes in faculty structures over the last five years make comparisons with 2004/05 difficult.

Gender

21. Since the EQIA on Student Admissions the proportion of female students compared with males has remained relatively stable; with overall female students (60.3%) continuing to outnumber males (39.7%) in

⁵ The data for the highest qualification and destination of NI school leavers for 2007/08 by gender and religion is shown in Appendix 2.

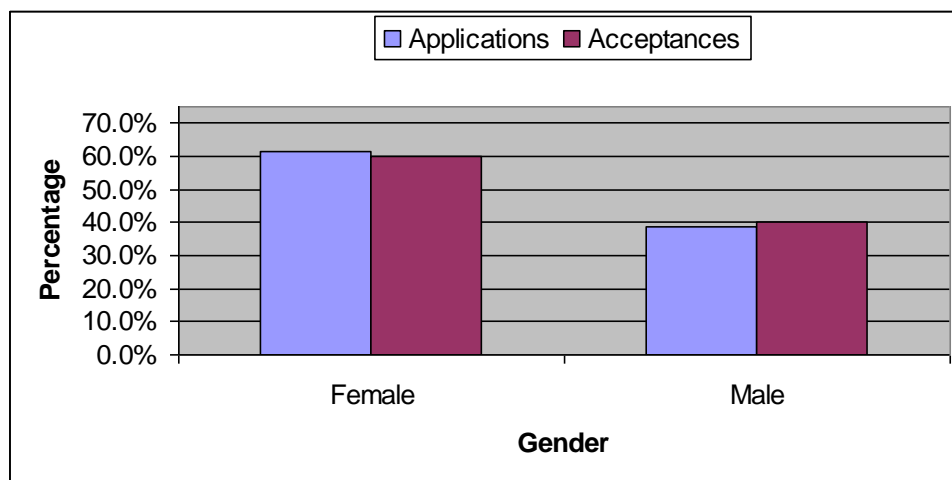
⁶ The EQIA explained that one of the main characteristics of higher education participation in Northern Ireland is that many students migrate to study in Britain. These migrants have, on the basis of systematic research, been classified into two groups:

- 'Determined' leavers. These students record all their university preferences for institutions outside Northern Ireland (when UCAS preferences are examined) and research suggests that they wish to leave Northern Ireland under 'all circumstances'. Most of these students tend to come from comparatively well-off backgrounds and to be Protestant rather than Catholic and to attend more prestigious universities in northern England and Scotland.
- 'Reluctant leavers'. These students usually contain a mix of preferences for Northern Ireland and non-Northern Ireland institutions. Through qualitative research, these students indicate that they would prefer to stay in Northern Ireland but that their expected academic attainment was unlikely to secure them a place. Students in this group tend to be more mixed in terms of religion, to be from a mix of social backgrounds but less likely to be from the more well-off backgrounds, and more likely go to a range of institutions but especially the former polytechnics in northern England and Scotland.

2008/09. The Department of Education NI School Leavers Survey (2007/08) show that significantly more females (55.6%) leave school with two or more 'A' levels than males (37.9%)⁷. The proportion of male students to the University of Ulster (39.7%; 2008/09) is higher than the proportion of school leavers whose preferred destination is Higher Education (32.8%; 2007/08).

22. Data from UCAS on applications and acceptances to Ulster by gender for 2008/09 show that the percentages of acceptances reflect applications received; with male acceptances (40.2%) slightly higher than the percentage of applications received (38.7%).

Figure 2: Gender profile of UCAS applicants and accepts to Ulster in 2008/09



23. At the University of Ulster the gender split is similar for full-time postgraduates and undergraduates at approximately 55% female and 45% male. The gender split is more apparent among students studying part-time, of whom approximately 65% were female and 35% male for both postgraduate and undergraduate courses.
24. Computing and Engineering is still the Faculty with the highest percentage of male students (77.4%). The new faculty of Art, Design and the Built environment also has a majority of male students at 59.4%; this is not surprising as the majority of courses in this new faculty originated in the Faculty of Computing and Engineering.

Disability

25. At the University data is collected differently for full and part-time students. Full-time students can indicate on their UCAS application and this is transferred on to their student record. For part-time students, who do not apply via UCAS, this information has to be sought by the University at student registration. Full-time students can also provide information on disability at student registration if they have not disclosed on the UCAS application.

⁷ Ibid.

26. Overall the proportion of students known to have a disability in 2008/09 was 5.1%, compared with 5.4% in 2004/05. Students can also disclose a disability throughout the course of study and therefore the percentage for the academic year 2008/09 may increase.
27. Across levels and modes of study a higher proportion of full-time undergraduate students were known to have a disability (6.6%) than full-time postgraduates (4.2%). Overall a lower proportion of part-time students (3.5% for both undergraduate and postgraduate) were known to be disabled compared with full-time students.
28. Students can use a number of categories to describe their disability on the basis of their own self assessment. A third of all students known to be disabled were recorded as having 'a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia'. The second most commonly recorded was 'unseen disability e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma' (13.6%).

Table 1: Disability profile of student entrants by academic year

	2004/05		2008/09	
Blind/Partially Sighted	57	0.6%	18	0.2%
Deaf/Partial Hearing	64	0.6%	28	0.3%
Dyslexia/Learning Difficulty	186	1.8%	246	2.2%
Mental Health Difficulties	31	0.3%	49	0.4%
Two or more disabilities	22	0.2%	34	0.3%
Other disability/special needs	95	0.9%	46	0.4%
Unseen e.g. diabetes, epilepsy	76	0.7%	134	1.2%
Wheelchair/Mobility	26	0.3%	14	0.1%
Not Known to have a disability	9,724	94.6%	10,486	94.9%
	10,281		11,055	

29. The Department of Education School Leavers Survey shows that 14.5% of school leavers have special educational needs (SEN stages 1 to 5)⁸. Of those school leavers likely to go into Higher Education, 3.9% have special educational needs. This figure is probably lower than the actual figure of school leavers with a special educational need or disability as SEN figures may not reflect pupils with unseen disabilities and the survey does not include special and independent schools in NI.
30. The proportion of students who have declared a disability at Ulster (5.1%) is less than the 2007/08 benchmark statistic (7.3%)⁹ for the Higher Education Sector within the United Kingdom.

⁸ See Appendix 3.

⁹ This figure is from an analysis by the Higher Education Statistics Agency for the 2007/08 academic year, Equality in Higher Education: Statistical Report 2009

Ethnicity

31. The ethnicity categories in the student records system is based on the HESA ethnicity categories. In this report the individual ethnic categories have been aggregated into 'white', 'black and minority ethnic groups (BME)' and 'not known'. All the non-white categories have been aggregated into the BME group.
32. In 2004/05, 21.8% of ethnicity data for students was 'not known'. By 2008/09 the figure had fallen to 14.2%. For this report students with missing ethnicity information have been excluded. Overall the proportion of BME student students has increased from 2.8% in 2004/05 to 4.9% in 2008/09; this may be due in part to the reduction in 'not known' ethnicity data for student students. However benchmark data from HESA shows that the proportion of BME students has gradually increased across UK higher education institutions¹⁰.
33. The proportion of BME NI-domiciled students has increased from 1% in 2004/05 to 1.7% in 2008/09. This reflects the Department of Education School Leavers Survey (2007/08) which showed that 1.6% of school leavers intending to go to higher education were from 'other ethnic groups'¹¹.

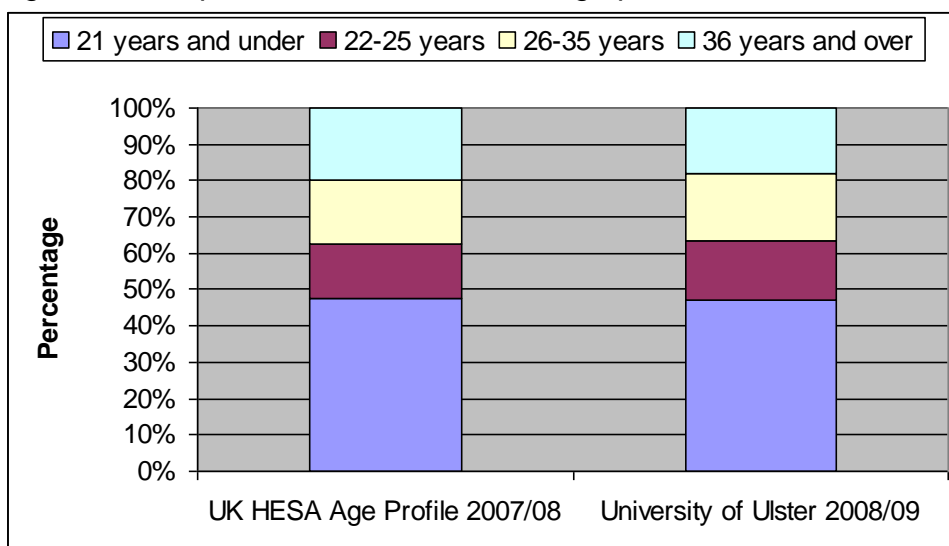
Age

34. In terms of data on the age of students the percentage of students whose age is unknown is small (0.3% in 2004/05 and 0.1% in 2008/09). Since the EQIA the age profile of students has changed slightly. The proportion of students aged 18 and under and those aged 18 and 21 years have decreased by 0.4% and 2.4% respectively. The 21 to 40 years groups has increased slightly from 42.5% to 44.9%.
35. The age profile of students in UK higher education has been reported by HESA in the 2009 statistical report 'Equality in Higher Education'. In order to compare Ulster student age profiles with the UK benchmark data, the age bands in the rest of this report are consistent with HESA.
36. The age profile of students at Ulster is similar to the age profile of students in higher education across the UK. At Ulster we have slightly higher proportions of students in the 22-25 years and 26 to 35 years age groups.

¹⁰ From 14.9% in 2003/04 to 17.2% in 2007/08, Equality in Higher Education: Statistical Report 2009.

¹¹ See Appendix 3.

Figure 3: Comparison of Ulster student age profiles with HESA



37. The age profile of students at Ulster varies considerably across levels and modes of study. The majority of postgraduate students are aged 26-35 years (37.2%) and a further 30.1% are aged 36 years and over. Approximately two thirds of undergraduate students are aged 21 and under (62.8%).
38. Part-time students are generally older than full-time students. 84.6% of part-time postgraduate students are 26 years and older. Over two thirds (68.7%) of part-time undergraduate students are 26 years and older compared with 7% of full-time undergraduates.

Marital Status

39. The individual marital status categories have been aggregated into 'single', 'married', 'other' and 'not known'. 'Other' includes 'separated', 'divorced', 'widowed' and 'co-habiting'. Unknown data on the marital status of students has dropped from 22.6% in 2004/05 to 10.7% in 2008/9. A reduction in missing data may have impacted on the proportion of students who are single which has increased from 63.4% in 2004/05 to 75% in 2008/09. The proportion of students who are married has remained fairly stable (14% in 2004/05; 14.3% in 2008/09).
40. Across modes and levels of study, a high percentage of full-time undergraduates were single (87.3%). Students recorded as 'married' were more likely to study part-time (82.6%): of these 61.7% were postgraduates and 38.3% were undergraduates.

Dependants

41. Information is gathered on students who have dependants which includes care for a child or elderly relative. In 2004/05 there was a high percentage of 'not known' data (20%); however by 2008/09 this has reduced to 4.6%. The proportion of students with dependants has increased from 12.1% in 2005/06

to 13.3% in 2008/09. A higher proportion of female students have dependants (61.1%) compared to males (38.9%).

Sexual Orientation

42. The University does not collect data on the proportion of students who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual (LGB) or heterosexual. However in 2008 the University of Ulster participated in a survey by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) to establish the experiences of LGB staff and students. The results were published in March 2009 and evidence indicated that sexual orientation can have an impact on the student experience. The ECU has suggested that sexual orientation is included in the National Student Survey to ascertain the experience of LGB students against other equality indicators.

Political Opinion

43. The University does not collect data on the political opinion of students.

Socio-economic Classification (SEC) Profiles

44. Socio-economic status does not fall under Section 75 legislation; however the EQIA Sub-group felt that it was important to include socio-economic status in terms of the University's commitment to widening access. The data on socio-economic status is derived from the UCAS data, and is based on the students' view of their parents' occupations (the NS-SEC).
45. In 2003/04, one fifth of students applying through UCAS had unknown NS-SEC data. This had increased in 2008/09 to 23.9%. A quarter of students came from 'lower managerial and professional occupations' in 2003/04 and 2008/09¹². In 2003/04 and in 2008/09 nearly half of students were recorded as being in NS-SEC categories 4-7 (48.2% and 48.9% respectively). This is higher than the UK national average of 29.5% (UK-domiciled first degree students) according to 'Performance indicators in higher education in the UK 2007/08'.

Table 2: Accepted applicants by socio-economic group, 2003/04 and 2008/09
NS-SEC

NS-SEC	2003/04		2008/09	
	Accepted Applicants		Accepted Applicants	
1. Higher Managerial	393	8.8%	390	8.9%
2. Lower Managerial	1,106	24.9%	1,130	25.7%
3. Inter Occupations	803	18.1%	730	16.6%
4. Small Employers	741	16.7%	670	15.2%
5. Lower Supervisory	304	6.8%	285	6.5%
6. Semi-routine	634	14.2%	765	17.4%
7. Routine	467	10.5%	430	9.8%
Total	4,448	100.0%	4,400	100.0%
Unknown	1,135	20.3%	1,385	23.9%
Total	5,583		5,785	

¹² 24.9% in 2003/04 and 25.7% in 2008/09.

4. Conclusions

46. The University has considered a range of equality data to assess the impact of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy.
47. Based on recent data considered in this monitoring report, the University believes that the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy does not have a differential or negative impact with regard to gender, persons of different political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, between persons with a disability and persons without, and between persons with dependants and persons without.
48. In terms of religious belief, although the gap between Catholic and Protestant NI-domiciled students has narrowed, the proportion of Protestant entrants (34%) is lower than the proportion of Protestant school leavers with two or more A' Levels at Grades A-C (43.1%); and the proportion of school leavers intending to go to Higher Education (37.9%) as reported in the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.
49. The EQIA concluded that patterns of migration show that Protestant students are twice as likely than Catholics to leave and study outside Northern Ireland. Since the EQIA the University's new marketing strategy has identified which schools provide low numbers of student applicants and those schools which had no existing relationship with Ulster. Some of these were Protestant grammar and secondary schools.
50. The new marketing strategy has identified ways to engage feeder schools more effectively with Ulster; and more specifically those schools with greater growth potential. An extensive range of presentation topics has been developed and promoted to Head Teachers and careers coordinators in order that school pupils can have the most appropriate, relevant and persuasive information conveyed to them.
51. The University has also recently developed a Schools Engagement Model which is reliant upon a needs-based' approach through:
 - Better indentifying the 'needs' of targets through longitudinal research study;
 - Enhancing schools presentations – customised according to school profile/need; and
 - Developing more effective and efficient communications plans.
52. An analysis of the University's student equality data has identified the following trends with regard to the composition of student entrants since the completion of the EQIA:
 - The gap between the proportion of Catholic and Protestant NI-domiciled students **has narrowed from 22.8% in 2004/05 to 21.4% in 2008/09**. In 2008/09 there was a higher proportion of NI-domiciled students from the Catholic community (55.4%) compared to the Protestant community (34%). The proportion of NI-domiciled students from the Protestant community is lower than the proportion of school leavers with two or more

A' Levels at Grades A-C (43.1%); and the proportion of school leavers likely to enter Higher Education (37.9%) as reported in the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.

- The proportion of female students compared with male students has remained relatively stable since the EQIA, with **female students (60.3%) continuing to outnumber males (39.7%)** in 2008/09. The NI School Leavers Survey (2007/08) show that significantly more females (55.6%) leave school with two or more 'A' levels than males (37.9%). The proportion of male students to the University of Ulster (39.7%; 2008/09) is higher than the proportion of school leavers whose preferred destination is Higher Education (32.8%; 2007/08).
- The proportion of **students with a disability has remained fairly stable**; 5.4% of students recorded a disability in 2004/05 compared with 5.1% in 2008/09. A third of all students known to be disabled were recorded as having 'a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia'.
- The proportion of **NI-domiciled students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds has increased** from 1% in 2004/05 to 1.7% in 2008/09; and is similar to their representation of school leavers likely to enter Higher Education (1.6%) as suggested by the 2007/08 NI School Leavers Survey.
- A slightly faster rate of increase in the proportion of all students from minority ethnic backgrounds from 2.8% in 2004/05 to 4.9% in 2008/09.
- The age profile of students at Ulster is similar to the age profile of students in higher education across the UK. However **the age profile of students at Ulster varies considerably across levels and modes of study**. Postgraduate students are generally older (37.2% are aged 26-35 years and a further 30.1% are aged 36 years and over); and the majority of undergraduate students are aged 21 and under (62.8%). Part-time students are generally older than full-time students.
- The **proportion of students who are single has increased** from 63.4% in 2004/05 to 75% in 2008/09 (possibly due to a reduction in 'not known' data). The proportion of students who are married has remained fairly stable (14% in 2004/05; 14.3% in 2008/09). Students recorded as single were more likely to be full-time undergraduates (87.3%) and those recorded as 'married' were more likely to study part-time (82.6%).
- The **proportion of students with dependants has increased** from 12.1% in 2005/06 to 13.3% in 2008/09 (again possibly due to a reduction in 'not known' data). A higher proportion of female students have dependants (61.1%) compared to males (38.9%).
- At Ulster the participation in higher education of those from less well-off backgrounds is relatively high (48.9% NS-SEC categories 4-7, 2007/08) compared with the UK average (29.5% 2007/08).

Appendix 1 University of Ulster Student Equality Data

Table 1: NI-domiciled Entrants by Religion

	2004/05		2008/09	
Protestant	2,293	37.9%	2,447	34.0%
Roman Catholic	3,680	60.7%	3,987	55.4%
Other	84	1.4%	766	10.6%
Not Known	2563 (29.7%)		1840 (20.4%)	
Total Entrants	8,620		9,040	

Table 2: NI-domiciled Entrants by Religion and Level of Study

	2008/09				
	Postgraduate		Undergraduate		Total
Protestant	483	35.3%	1,963	33.6%	2,446
Roman Catholic	678	49.6%	3,310	56.7%	3,988
Other	206	15.1%	562	9.7%	768
Total	1367	100%	5835	100%	7202
4. Not Known	556		1,278		1,834
Total Entrants	1,923		7,113		9,036

Table 3: NI-domiciled Entrants by Religion and Campus

		2004/05		2008/09	
Belfast	Protestant	149	46.1%	212	36.9%
	Roman Catholic	165	51.1%	256	44.6%
	Other	9	2.8%	106	18.5%
	Not Known	208 (39.2%)		122 (17.5%)	
	Total	531		696	
Coleraine	Protestant	625	48.7%	636	45.9%
	Roman Catholic	645	50.3%	562	40.5%
	Other	13	1.0%	188	13.6%
	Not Known	290 (37.5%)		155 (10.1%)	
	Total	1,573		1,541	
Jordanstown	Protestant	1,361	38.0%	1,415	33.1%
	Roman Catholic	2,174	60.6%	2,469	57.8%
	Other	50	1.4%	388	9.1%
	Not Known	1784 (33.2%)		1413 (24.9%)	
	Total	5,369		5,685	
Magee	Protestant	158	18.2%	184	19.0%
	Roman Catholic	696	80.4%	700	72.3%
	Other	12	1.4%	84	8.7%
	Not Known	281 (24.5%)		150 (13.4%)	
	Total	1,147		1,118	
Total Entrants		8,620		9,040	

Table 4: NI-domiciled Entrants by Religion and Faculty

		2004/05		2008/09	
Faculty of Arts	Protestant	306	39.6%	184	32.5%
	Roman Catholic	451	58.3%	271	47.9%
	Other	16	2.1%	111	19.6%
	Not Known	334 (30.2%)		128 (18.4%)	
	Total	1107		694	
Ulster Business School	Protestant	520	41.0%	569	37.5%
	Roman Catholic	734	57.9%	820	54.1%
	Other	13	1.0%	128	8.4%
	Not Known	532 (29.6%)		322 (17.5%)	
	Total	1,799		1,839	
Faculty of Art, Design & Built Environment	Protestant			364	30.9%
	Roman Catholic			688	58.3%
	Other			128	10.8%
	Not Known			152 (11.4%)	
	Total	0		1,332	
Faculty of Computing & Engineering	Protestant	474	33.8%	261	33.5%
	Roman Catholic	914	65.1%	402	51.5%
	Other	16	1.1%	117	15.0%
	Not Known	402 (22.3%)		121 (13.4%)	
	Total	1806		901	
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	Protestant	568	39.4%	583	36.3%
	Roman Catholic	852	59.2%	892	55.5%
	Other	20	1.4%	131	8.2%
	Not Known	728 (33.6%)		584 (26.7%)	
	Total	2,168		2,190	
Faculty of Social Sciences	Protestant	425	36.2%	471	31.2%
	Roman Catholic	729	62.1%	901	59.7%
	Other	19	1.6%	138	9.1%
	Not Known	567 (32.6%)		489 (24.5%)	
	Total	1,740		1,999	
Access & Distributed Learning	Protestant			14	32.6%
	Roman Catholic			14	32.6%
	Other			15	34.9%
	Not Known			38 (46.9%)	
	Total	0		81	
Total Entrants		8,620		9,036	

Table 5: Entrants by Gender

	2004/05		2008/09	
Female	6,100	59.3%	6,667	60.3%
Male	4,181	40.7%	4,388	39.7%
Total Entrants	10,281		11,055	

Table 6: Entrants by Gender, Level and Mode of Study

			2008/09	
Postgraduate	Full-Time	Female	555	56.5%
		Male	427	43.5%
		Total	982	
	Part-Time	Female	1,307	64.5%
		Male	718	35.5%
		Total	2,025	
Undergraduate	Full-Time	Female	3,317	57.6%
		Male	2,444	42.4%
		Total	5,761	
	Part-Time	Female	1,488	65.1%
		Male	799	34.9%
		Total	2,287	
Total Entrants			11,055	

Table 7: Entrants by Gender and Faculty

	2004/05					2008/09				
	Female		Male		Total	Female		Male		Total
Faculty of Arts	877	62.7%	521	32.3%	1,398	512	59.3%	351	40.7%	863
Ulster Business School	1,232	58.1%	888	41.9%	2,120	1,359	58.6%	959	41.4%	2,318
Faculty of Art, Design & the Built Environment					0	620	40.6%	906	59.4%	1,526
Faculty of Computing & Engineering	480	23.4%	1,573	76.6%	2,053	226	22.6%	776	77.4%	1,002
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	2,143	76.9%	642	23.1%	2,785	2,187	76.3%	681	23.7%	2,868
Faculty of Social Sciences	1,368	71.1%	557	28.9%	1,925	1,628	70.5%	682	29.5%	2,310
Access & Distributed Learning					0	51	60.7%	33	39.3%	84
UU Health Enterprise Division					0	84	100%	0		84
Total Entrants					10,281					11,055

Table 8: UCAS Applicants and Acceptances by Gender 2008/09

	Female		Male		Total
Applications	17,120.00	61.3%	10,800	38.7%	27,920
Acceptances	3,460.00	59.8%	2,325	40.2%	5,785
Total	20,580		13,125		33,705

Table 9: Entrants by Disability

	2004/05		2008/09	
Known to have a disability	557	5.4%	569	5.1%
Not Known to have a disability	9,724	94.6%	10,486	94.9%
	10,281		11,055	

Table 10: Entrants by Disability, Level and Mode of Study

			2008/09	
Postgraduate	Full-Time	Known to have a disability	41	4.2%
		Not Known to have a disability	941	95.8%
	Part-Time	Known to have a disability	71	3.5%
		Not Known to have a disability	1,954	96.5%
Undergraduate	Full-Time	Known to have a disability	378	6.6%
		Not Known to have a disability	5,383	93.4%
	Part-Time	Known to have a disability	79	3.5%
		Not Known to have a disability	2,208	96.5%
			11,055	

Table 11: Entrants by Ethnicity

	2004/05		2008/09	
White	7,815	97.2%	9,025	95.1%
Black and Minority Ethnic Groups	227	2.8%	464	4.9%
Not Known	2239 (21.8%)		1566 (14.2%)	
Total Entrants	8,042		9,489	

Table 12: NI-domiciled Entrants by Ethnicity

	2004/05		2008/09	
White	7,354	98.9%	7,839	98.3%
Black and Minority Ethnic Groups	84	1.1%	137	1.7%
Not Known	1182 (13.7%)		1064 (11.8%)	
Total Entrants	7,438		7,976	

Table 13: Entrants by Age Band

	2004/05		2008/09	
Under 18	87	0.8%	40	0.4%
18 and under 21	4,542	44.3%	4,629	41.9%
21 and under 40	4,354	42.5%	4,960	44.9%
Over 40	1,268	12.4%	1,418	12.8%
Other	30 (0.3%)		8 (0.1%)	
Total Entrants	12,581		11,055	

Table 14: University of Ulster compared with HESA Age Profile

	UK HESA Age Profile 2007/08	University of Ulster 2008/09
21 years and under	47.7%	46.9%
22-25 years	14.7%	16.2%
26-35 years	17.9%	18.2%
36 years and over	19.7%	17.9%

Table 15: Entrants by Age, Level and Mode of Study

Level and Mode of Study	21 years and Under	22-25 years	26-35 years	36 years and Over
Postgraduate	6.0%	26.7%	37.2%	30.1%
Full-Time	16.6%	51.9%	21.7%	9.8%
Part-Time	0.9%	14.5%	44.6%	40.0%
Undergraduate	62.8%	12.5%	11.3%	13.4%
Full-Time	84.3%	8.7%	4.2%	2.8%
Part-Time	9.5%	21.8%	28.9%	39.8%

Table 16: Entrants by Marital Status

	2004/05		2008/09	
Single	6,521	63.4%	8,291	75.0%
Married	1,437	14.0%	1,576	14.3%
Other	321	3.1%	487	4.4%
Not Known	2,002	19.5%	701	6.3%
Total Entrants	10,281		11,055	

Table 17: Entrants by Marital Status and Mode of Study

	2008/09				
	Full-Time		Part-Time		Total
Single	6,117	73.8%	2,174	26.2%	8,291
Married	274	17.4%	1,302	82.6%	1,576
Other/Not Known	352	29.6%	836	70.4%	1,188
Total Entrants					11,055

Table 18: Entrants by Dependants

	2004/05		2008/09	
No Dependants	7,230	87.9%	9,146	86.7%
Have Dependants	991	12.1%	1,399	13.3%
Not Known	2060 (20.0%)		510 (4.6%)	
Total Entrants	8,221		10,545	

Table 19: Entrants by Dependants and Gender

	2008/09				
	Female		Male		Total
No Dependants	5,488	60.0%	3,658	40.0%	9,146
Have Dependants	855	61.1%	544	38.9%	1,399
Not Known	324	63.5%	186	36.5%	510
Total Entrants					11,055

Appendix 2 Highest qualification and destination of NI school leavers 2007/08⁽¹⁾

	All School Leavers		Gender				Religion of pupil					
			Girls		Boys		Protestant		Catholic		Other	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2 or more A levels at Grades A-E (inc. equivalents)	11248	46.7	6645	55.6	4603	37.9	4297	43.1	5958	49.9	993	45.9
At least 5 GCSEs at Grades A*-C (inc. equivalents)	16107	66.9	8826	73.8	7281	60.0	6488	65.0	8189	68.5	1430	66.1
At least 5 GCSEs at Grades A*-G (inc. equivalents)	21613	89.7	11073	92.6	10540	86.8	8883	89.0	10824	90.6	1906	88.1
No GCSEs	877	3.6	296	2.5	581	4.8	369	3.7	409	3.4	99	4.6
Higher Education	9608	39.9	5651	47.3	3957	32.6	364	36.5 (37.9%) [41.7%]	5094	42.6 (53%) [58.3%]	867	40.1 (9.1%)
Further Education	7107	29.5	3563	29.8	3544	29.2	3280	32.9	3129	26.2	698	32.3
Employment	2468	10.2	1070	9.0	1398	11.5	1077	10.8	1157	9.7	234	10.8
Training	3574	14.8	1050	8.8	2524	20.8	1430	14.3	1906	16.0	238	11.0
Unemployment	842	3.5	396	3.3	446	3.7	387	3.9	379	3.2	76	3.5
Unknown destination	492	2.0	225	1.9	267	2.2	160	1.6	282	2.4	50	2.3
Total Leavers	24091	100.0	11955	100.0	12136	100.0	9981	100.0	11947	100.0	2163	100.0

Source: School Leavers Survey

1. Data exclude special and independent schools

Appendix 3 Highest qualification and destination of NI school leavers 2007/08⁽¹⁾

	All School Leavers		Ethnicity				Special Educational Needs					
			White		Other Ethnic Groups ⁽²⁾		Not SEN		Stages 1-4		Stage 5	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2 or more A levels at Grades A-E (inc. equivalents)	11248	46.7	11068	46.5	180	58.3	10764	52.3	424	14.9	60	9.2
At least 5 GCSEs at Grades A*-C (inc. equivalents)	16107	66.9	15890	66.8	217	70.2	15216	73.9	791	27.7	100	15.3
At least 5 GCSEs at Grades A*-G (inc. equivalents)	21613	89.7	21346	89.8	267	86.4	19323	93.9	1985	69.6	305	46.6
No GCSEs	877	3.6	858	3.6	19	6.1	394	1.9	327	11.5	156	23.9
Higher Education	9608	39.9	9454	39.8 (98.4%)	154	49.8 (1.6%)	9235	44.9 (96.1%)	333	11.7 (3.5%)	40	6.1 (0.4%)
Further Education	7107	29.5	7025	29.5	82	26.5	5872	28.5	1029	36.1	206	31.5
Employment	2468	10.2	2431	10.2	37	12.0	2045	9.9	359	12.6	64	9.8
Training	3574	14.8	3552	14.9	22	7.1	2438	11.8	865	30.3	271	41.4
Unemployment	842	3.5	834	3.5	8	2.6	616	3.0	182	6.4	44	6.7
Unknown destination	492	2.0	486	2.0	6	1.9	380	1.8	83	2.9	29	4.4
Total Leavers	24091	100.0	23782	100.0	309	100.0	20586	100.0	2851	100.0	654	100.0

Source: School Leavers Survey

1. Data exclude special and independent schools

2. Minor Ethnic Groups include Irish Travellers

Special Educational Needs Stages

Stage 1 - Pupils with special educational needs that are being met through differentiated instruction by class/form teacher alone.

Stage 2 - Pupils with special educational needs that are being met through differentiated instruction by class/form teacher supported by the school's SENCO.

Stage 3 - Pupils with special educational needs that are being met through differentiated instruction by class/form teacher supported by the school's SENCO and using

an Education Plan informed by an outside professional such as an educational psychologist.

Stage 4 - Pupils with special educational needs who are undergoing Statutory Assessment.

Stage 5 - Pupils with a statement of special educational need made and maintained by an Education and Library Board.

Appendix 4 Update on recommended actions agreed as an outcome of the EQIA on the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy

Actions	2009/10 Update
<p>To develop links with the Chinese Welfare Association, the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and other ethnic minority groups as appropriate, in order to collaborate in events such as Open Days and Recruitment Fairs (Lead Agents – International Office and Student Recruitment Services)</p>	<p>Jiemin Tomita, Country Manager for China and Hong Kong, is a member of the Chinese Welfare Association. Ms Tomita works with the Chinese Students Scholars Association and one of our Chinese students sits on the committee. The University is a representative of the Black Minority Ethnic Forum which meets four times per year. In collaboration with the PSNI Claire Kane, Business Manager, is involved in two working groups: reducing crime against students and reducing crime against ethnic minority groups.</p>
<p>To hold meetings with Head Teachers of Protestant schools which have been identified as providing low numbers of applicants, to arrange talks/information days and to develop outreach measures and marketing activities, in conjunction with Academic Development and Student Services (Lead Agents – Provosts and Student Recruitment Services)</p>	<p>The University’s marketing strategy identified which schools provide low numbers of student applicants and those schools which had no existing relationship with Ulster. Some of these were Protestant grammar and secondary schools.</p> <p>Student marketing identified ways to engage with feeder schools more effectively with Ulster; and more specifically those schools with greater growth potential an extensive range of presentation topics has been developed and promoted to Head Teachers and careers coordinators in order that school pupils can have the most appropriate, relevant and persuasive information conveyed to them.</p>
<p>To hold meetings with influential individuals or community organisations from the Protestant community to encourage applications from pupils in Protestant schools (Lead Agents – Provosts and Student Recruitment Services)</p>	<p>The student marketing strategy aims to increase applications and therefore targets schools which the University has not traditionally received applications, these include Protestant schools.</p>

<p>To take cognizance of data on entrants to Magee campus in the development of the North West Development Plan (Lead Agent – Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Communication & Institutional Development)</p>	<p>The North West Development Plan continues to take cognizance of student data to the Magee campus; and staff are proactively targeting the Protestant community and engaging with Protestant schools in relation to the plan.</p>
<p>To include information on entrants in informing future decisions on the location of future course provision (Lead Agent – Student Recruitment Services)</p>	<p>Weekly UCAS data are used by staff in faculties and student recruitment to review and monitor applications; to support marketing activities, eg identifying target markets and trends in subjects; and for strategic planning.</p> <p>UCAS provides a breakdown by gender for different age ranges. Trends relating to factors such as ethnicity, diversity and disability can also be monitored which could help support 'Widening Participation' and Access activities. The data also provides statistical evidence to underpin annual monitoring, evaluation and updating of course/institution admissions policy and practice.</p>
<p>To review the marketing strategy for the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy in relation to the nine categories under Section 75 (Lead Agents – Public Affairs, Student Recruitment Services, Access & Educational Partnerships and Student Support Services)</p>	<p>The University's marketing strategy was reviewed in 2007 to increase applicants, applications and conversion ratios from schools. This can be achieved by influencing schools/colleges positively and proactively, and by influencing key stakeholders such as careers teachers, parents, principals and prospective students.</p> <p>The University has recently developed a Schools Engagement Model which is reliant upon a needs-based' approach through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better indentifying the 'needs' of targets through longitudinal research study ▪ Enhancing schools presentations – customised according to school profile/need ▪ Developing more effective and efficient communications plans.

<p>To monitor student entrants to each campus on an annual basis (Lead Agents – Corporate Planning & Governance and Equality Policy & Practice Unit)</p>	<p>All new student entrants are required to provide EO information and this is used to fulfill our statutory obligations to HESA and DEL and to satisfy internal and external statistical inquiries. There is a standard suite of reports in terms of equality information on student entrants.</p>
<p>The Faculty of Engineering should consider action to increase female participation (Lead Agents – Faculty of Engineering and Equality Policy & Practice Unit)</p>	<p>Information from Opp Now application ...</p>