

Flexible Education & Widening Participation Annual Review

**First Edition
2025**



CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION	
CONTENTS	02
WELCOME	03
MEET THE TEAM	04
CENTRE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS, SKILLS & FLEXIBLE EDUCATION	
APPRENTICESHIPS	06
SKILLS	08
FLEXIBLE EDUCATION	10
CASFE HIGHLIGHTS	12
WIDENING ACCESS & PARTICIPATION	
POLICY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	
WAP ACTIVITIES	14
WAP IMPACT	15
ACCESS AMBASSADORS	16
FOSTERING ASPIRATIONS	17
SCIENCE SHOP	18
FUTURE INSPIRE SCHOLARSHIPS	19
EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	
OPTIONS PLUS	20
DISCOVERY ACADEMY	21
ARTS, HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES	22
LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES	23
ULSTER BUSINESS SCHOOL	24
COMPUTING, ENGINEERING & BUILT ENVIRONMENT	25
MANCHESTER UNITED FOUNDATION	26
STUDENT INTERNS & PLACEMENTS	27

WELCOME



The 2024/2025 academic year has been another busy and rewarding period for the team. With the rebranding of the directorate to Flexible Education and Widening Participation (FEWP), we have sharpened our focus, strengthened our partnerships, and continued to drive meaningful impact across Ulster University and beyond. It remains a privilege to collaborate with FEWP colleagues, faculties, departments, employers, and our many educational and community partners who are at the heart of everything we do.

This Annual Review offers a glimpse into the diverse range of projects and initiatives that have defined our year. Notably, from 2025/2026, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls will be a specific priority within our Widening Access and Participation (WAP) interventions, reflecting our commitment to supporting those who need it most. Through the Department for the Economy's Tertiary Education Senior Leaders Forum, we are proud to be leading the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Tertiary Sector Working Group, with Professor Ruth Fee and Dr Susan Lagdon co-chairing on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

We all celebrated in May when Claire Mulrone, Head of Widening Access and Participation, was recognised for her outstanding leadership and community engagement with the Outstanding Contribution (Individual) award at the Ulster Excellence Awards 2025. She is pictured here alongside Dr Esther McGuinness, Head of the Law School, and Professor Ruth Fee at the awards.

Onwards to 2025/2026!

Ruth Fee
Dean of Flexible
Education and Widening
Participation
r.fee@ulster.ac.uk



MEET THE TEAM

2025-2026

Welcome to the Centre for Apprenticeships, Skills & Flexible Education (CASFE). This year has marked significant progress in supporting Faculties and Schools to increase opportunities for apprentices and learners through innovative, inclusive, and industry-responsive programmes.

With strong partnerships, impactful initiatives, and a forward-thinking approach, our focus on engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders has helped shape and deliver a high-quality experience for learners, apprentices and employers. Enabling students and apprentices of all backgrounds to thrive and employers to access skilled, work-ready talent, we continue to shape the future of lifelong learning.



Abbie McKenna

Head of Centre for Apprenticeships, Skills and Flexible Education
ae.mckenna@ulster.ac.uk

FLEXIBLE EDUCATION & WIDENING PARTICIPATION



Ruth Fee

Dean of Flexible Education and Widening Participation



Sharon Copeland

Administrative Officer

CENTRE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS, SKILLS & FLEXIBLE EDUCATION



Peter Bell

Support Assistant



Kim Hughes

Operations & Project Manager



Aileen O'Connor

Contracts Co-ordinator



Karen McCormack

Skills Project Manager



Lauren Stuart

Skills Project Manager



Philip Turbitt

Curriculum Manager



Evan Vellis

Governance & Policy Officer



Hilary Wilson

Executive Assistant



Claire Mulrone

Head of Widening Access and Participation
cm.mulrone@ulster.ac.uk

The Widening Access and Participation team deliver a range of innovative and impactful engagements to promote fair access, progression, and success at Ulster. The Widening Access and Participation Team consist of two distinct sections; Educational Partnerships led by Claire Gordon and Policy & Community Partnerships led by Catherine O'Donnell.

We deliver programmes with Widening Access post primary schools, Further Education partners, community and voluntary partners across NI. This year we have a range of new partnerships with Sentinus, Catalyst, Irish Youth Foundation, Breaking Borders and Boys Impact Hub. All activities are aligned to Ulster's Widening Access and Participation Plan meeting our statutory obligations to the Department for the Economy (DfE).

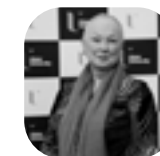
WIDENING ACCESS & PARTICIPATION

POLICY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Catherine O'Donnell

Policy & Community Partnership Manager



Barbara Hunter

Access Officer



Andrew Toye

Access Officer



Martin Hinch

Data Development & Enhancement Analyst



Paul Cassidy

Community Outreach Officer



Anne Mooney

Community Outreach Officer



Andy Hamilton

Research Associate
 Wap Policy & Research



Clare Paradi

Executive Assistant

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



Claire Gordon

Educational Partnership Manager



Siobhan Flynn

Educational Outreach Officer



Richard Gormley

Educational Outreach Officer



Darryl McCullough

Educational Outreach Officer



James Wray

Educational Outreach Officer



Aidan McLaughlin

Manchester United Foundation

APPRENTICESHIPS



APPRENTICESHIPS AT UU

Ulster University has been delivering Degree Apprenticeships since DfE began funding Higher Level Apprenticeships in the academic year 2017-18. Apprentices divide their time between work and study, earning a wage while completing their Degree. Apprentices apply what they learn in the classroom on the job from day one, and leave debt-free.

NEW FOR 24/25

We welcomed 300+ new Apprentices to campus in 2024-25, including our first apprentices in Law, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Mechatronic Engineering, Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, and International Accounting with Analytics. This is the first year that all four of our faculties are involved in the Apprenticeship framework.



APPRENTICESHIPS BY NUMBERS

Ulster University is the largest provider of Degree Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland, with over 900 Apprentices enrolled across our three campuses. We have 16 Undergraduate and 7 Postgraduate Apprenticeship frameworks. As of June 2025, we have partnered with over 200 employers across Northern Ireland.



APPRENTICESHIPS

Ulster is the leading provider of degree apprenticeships in NI with more than 900 apprentices enrolled across our approved apprenticeship frameworks.



APPRENTICESHIP SOCIETY

Apprentices have a unique experience compared to other students at Ulster. The Apprenticeship Society gives our current Apprentices the opportunity to network with peers across all of our programmes. The Society plays an active role in advocating for its members and works closely with the team to support our work.



FIND AN APPRENTICESHIP

In response to employer and applicant feedback, we created a new resource, called 'Find an Apprenticeship' to help link employers to people interested in pursuing an Apprenticeship at Ulster University. For September 2025, over 130 apprentices have secured a position with one of over 40 partners who have advertised there.



HOW WE WORK WITH YOU...

The team works alongside Schools and Faculties to deliver apprenticeships and to develop and seek approval for new programmes. We are often the first point of contact for internal and external stakeholders interested in our Apprenticeships. We ensure that our apprenticeship provision is delivered in line with DfE policy.

SKILLS



INTRODUCTION TO SKILLS

In Northern Ireland, upskilling and reskilling are vital to meet evolving economic demands, supporting workforce adaptability and driving growth. CASFE champions reskilling and upskilling opportunities by securing funding, providing governance and curating knowledge on skills gaps to support development of new learning options.



SKILL UP BY NUMBERS

Skill Up is a fully funded training initiative, delivered by education providers in partnership with DfE. Courses are designed to help individuals upskill, reskill, and enhance their employability in areas of economic priority. 24/25 was the 4th year of the partnership and saw 454 students achieve postgraduate certificates and postgraduate micro-credentials.



SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP (SKILL UP)

Ulster University Business School, in partnership with PODIEM and funded by DfE, developed and delivered the Sustainable Leadership Programme for 42 Sustainability Leaders in Northern Ireland. This pioneering initiative equips business leaders with the knowledge and skills to drive meaningful environmental and economic change.

SKILLS

Working in partnership with the Department for the Economy (DfE), we offer a range of free courses to develop skills and expertise that support career development.



STRATEGIC DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION (SKILL UP)

With an increased focus on the use of data to inform business decision making, this micro-credential was developed to provide managers with a strong understanding and foundation in data analytics and visualisation approaches for business. Due to demand, Ulster University Business School ran this twice in 24/25!



BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL: SKILLS ASSESSMENT

This assessment identifies current and future skills needs in the Life and Health Sciences sector, mapping existing provision, highlighting gaps, and recommending new or expanded interventions. It explores best practice and develops actions to ensure Northern Ireland's workforce is equipped to benefit from City & Growth Deal investment opportunities.



BREAKING BARRIERS SKILLS FUND

Launched in 24/25 by DfE, the Breaking Barriers Skills Fund supported targeted interventions for inclusion. In collaboration with the Employability and Graduate Futures team, we delivered 'Graduate Boost' - a unique programme for graduates with a disability, combining a 15-week internship with a 15-credit postgraduate module 'Demonstrating your Professional Identity'.

FLEXIBLE EDUCATION

WHAT ARE MICRO-CREDENTIALS?

Micro-credentials offer flexible, focused learning to help individuals upskill or reskill in response to industry needs. Level 4 and Level 7 micro-credentials can be studied alone or "stacked" towards a larger qualification in Professional Development. Whether boosting a career or exploring new fields, courses make lifelong learning more accessible and relevant.



LEVEL 4 MICRO-CREDENTIAL FRAMEWORK

Our undergraduate micro-credential framework (CPPD) offers short, targeted courses co-designed with community partners and employers to provide short learning opportunities for individuals who have had little or no experience with higher education.



MANAGEMENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

The Department of Hospitality, Tourism & Event Management partners with Hastings Group to deliver a bespoke Undergraduate Level 4 curriculum, The Management Ambassador Programme (MAP). The 6-module programme is critical to Hastings' people and culture strategy to enhance professional practice, retention and succession planning, for first line and new managers.



FLEXIBLE EDUCATION/MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Flexible education and micro-credentials are designed to align with industry and learner needs, providing a more focused approach to traditional learning.



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

The Dept of Hospitality Tourism and Events Management, in partnership with Tourism NI and Tourism Space, deliver a micro-credential in Sustainable Tourism. This course empowers professionals to embed sustainable tourism practices within their organisations. The collaboration reflects strong academic standards, continuous improvement and a shared commitment to sustainable, community-focused tourism development.

LEVEL 7 MICRO-CREDENTIAL FRAMEWORK

Our postgraduate micro-credential framework (PG CPD) provides an agile foundation for reskilling and upskilling opportunities. In 24/25 115 students self-funded their postgraduate micro-cred learning, a further 330 had their studies funded by DfE through Skill Up, 50 through the Breaking Barriers fund and 150 through the DfE Derry~Londonderry funded programme.



HYPATIA (MULTIPLY)

This numeracy initiative, funded by the UK government through its "Multiply" fund, was developed and delivered by School of Education Lecturers Dr Aideen Hunter and Dr Shauna McGill. With a focus on embedding numeracy teaching in Further Education (FE), it was offered as postgraduate micro-credentials to FE lecturing staff in 24/25.

CASFE HIGHLIGHTS



A YEAR OF GROWTH & ACHIEVEMENT

This year marked the Centre's first full academic cycle as a unified team, and what a journey it's been! From national recognition at the NI Apprenticeship Awards to providing hundreds of funded reskilling opportunities and hosting impactful employment fairs, these milestones reflect our deep commitment to people, place, and partnerships.



WINTER GRADUATION 2025

Winter Graduation at Ulster University was a joyful celebration of our undergraduate and postgraduate micro-credential students. With gowns donned, smiles beaming, and proud moments shared with family and friends, it was a fitting tribute to their hard work. Late nights, endless cups of tea, and unwavering determination led to this achievement. Here's to their next exciting chapter.



DfE NI APPRENTICESHIP AWARD

At the Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Awards, Ulster University was recognised along with Citi, winning the Large Employer in Partnership with a Training Provider Award. We were also nominated in the same category for our work with another established employer partner, CME Group.

CASFE HIGHLIGHTS

The Centre for Apprenticeships, Skills and Flexible Education (CASFE) promotes and celebrates academic excellence and the outstanding commitment of employers, apprentices and students.



UU APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS

Every year, we host an award ceremony to recognise the achievement of our apprentices during Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Week. In February, we celebrated the success of 27 apprentices alongside their employers and course teams at the Europa Hotel. Apprentices are nominated based on their outstanding academic achievement.



EMPLOYER APPRENTICESHIP FAIR

To bookend NI Apprenticeship Week, we hosted two Apprenticeship Employment Fairs in Belfast and Derry~Londonderry. We welcomed over 700 people and 50 employers to campus, and hosted a series of talks by academics and employers about both the application process and secrets to success.



L&HS INDUSTRY WORKSHOP

An industry engagement workshop gathered key Life and Health Sciences employers to discuss current and future skills needs, assess existing provision across Northern Ireland, and identify gaps. Insights informed recommendations and actions for the City & Growth Deal Employability and Skills Board and Cross-Deals Skills Group to address sector requirements.

WIDENING ACCESS & PARTICIPATION



HOPE TRAINING WORKSHOP

Supported by the North West Opportunities funding in collaboration with Ulster University and the Department for the Economy, a workshop of HOPE, facilitated by Maire Dunne of Resilio, was delivered on the Derry~Londonderry campus and attended by representatives from North West Community Partners.



BREAKING BORDERS

Young people from Lagmore Youth Project, Aspire2Achieve – Bespoke Service's Ltd and Youth Work Ireland, Louth attended Ulster's Belfast campus to celebrate the completion of Healthy Young Adult Relationships (HYAR) training programme. This Breaking Borders initiative and was led by Falls Community Council in partnership with Dr Susan Lagdon with Shared Island funding.



TAKING BOYS SERIOUSLY

The conference explored the next steps in supporting, resourcing and transforming boys' educational experiences in NI. We also announced the development of NI Boys' Impact Hub. The Hub will support formal and non-formal educationalists, dedicated to fostering equitable outcomes for disadvantaged boys and young men by working systemically throughout NI's education system.

ACTIVITIES & IMPACT

The Widening Access and Participation team work with post-primary schools, FE colleges and community partners to promote fair access, progression and success at Ulster.

WAP BURSARIES

To date: 309 students have received a WAP travel bursary of £372 equating to circa £115K. 97 students have received Care Leavers Bursary of £1,000 equalling to £97K. Furthermore, 2,596 students have received a WAP Bursary equalling to circa £1,232,586. Additionally, 52 students have converted their WAP Bursary to an Accommodation Voucher of £1,000 equalling to circa £52K.



NIO BURSARIES

197 NIO Step Up care experienced and travel bursaries for carers, reasonable adjustments and graduate medical entry students equating to £155K were awarded. One student commented: "Travel is a huge expense for me to attend university and there are times I'm not able to, due to not having the finances".



DERRY~LONDONDERRY CAPTURED BY DRONE

For the Virtual Campus, unmanned drone footage of the Derry~Londonderry campus has been captured and these images have been animated to build a digital twin of the campus. This enables outputs to provide a 'google maps' 3D image of the campus, as well as, adding additional features, such as, navigation and way finding across campus.



ACCESS AMBASSADORS

The Access Ambassador Programme facilitates meaningful engagement between Academic staff and Community & Voluntary partners across NI.



WE CAN: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

The 'We Can' project delivered by Dr Máire Braniff in the community and on Ulster University's Belfast Campus, aims to empower women through personal and social development and promote access to education, training and skills building opportunities.



EXPLORING COSMETIC SCIENCE

Students from the Coleraine and Newtownabbey campuses of the Northern Regional College took part in an interactive laboratory session led by Dr Peter McPherson. Gaining experience in cosmetic science, students also engaged in a Q&A segment highlighting the potential for entrepreneurship within the cosmetic sector.



REACH ACROSS

"Thank you to the Policy and Community Partnerships Team for organising and facilitating an excellent tour of Magee campus at which REACH Across members participated in interactive workshops and were informed of the many courses available to them, to help students prepare for University." - Barney McGuigan, Project Co Ordinator.

FOSTERING ASPIRATIONS

Fostering Aspirations encourages and welcomes applications from young people who have experience of care to explore pathways to FE & HE.



EDUCATION ROADSHOW

Ulster University (UU) hosted a three-day event in April 2025 at our Belfast campus to strengthen support for care-experienced youth. Day 1 introduced Years 10–12 students to higher education. Day 2 featured student presentations affirming UU's commitment. Day 3 united social workers, charities, and agencies to align goals for better outcomes.



COURSE CELEBRATION

Ulster University celebrated the completion of a pioneering course on developmental trauma for care-experienced youth. The 10-week program, supported by academic and voluntary sectors, aimed to boost confidence and access to higher education. A £10,000 donation ensures its continuation, highlighting the university's commitment to educational equity and inclusion.



RESIDENTIAL SUMMER SCHOOL

The residential program for Care Experienced young people aged 15-17 was a resounding success, offering engaging activities, informative course talks and safe accommodation. Culminating in a round of well-researched presentations by the participants, the program showcased growth, learning, and empowerment. This comprehensive experience left a lasting impact on all involved.

SCIENCE SHOP

Providing real world connected learning projects for students working with community & voluntary partners.



MEDIA MEETS COMMUNITY

Interactive Media students collaborated with local community partners to create a range of digital media outputs addressing real community needs. This 40-credit module replicates professional practice and provides a unique learning experience for students strengthening digital skills, boosting confidence, making learning more inclusive, applied, and meaningful beyond the classroom.

EMPOWERING SPORTS CLUBS

23 Sports Science final year students collaborated with SPORTED who support community-based sports clubs across NI. The students partnered with 8 clubs to develop Club Development plans, creating a vision and goals for each club, helping to grow their membership, develop volunteers, support club staff and ensure efficient use of resources.



RESPIRE HOLIDAY VILLAGE

26 post-graduate Public Relations students worked in partnership with the Compass Advocacy Network Ltd (CAN), a Ballymoney-based charity who work with children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and mental health issues. The students used their knowledge and expertise to develop a PR fundraising campaign for a new Respite Holiday Village at Lislagan farm.



FUTURE INSPIRE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Future Inspire Scholarships aim to increase access to Ulster University for new students entering full-time undergraduate courses across our campuses.



SCHOLARSHIP CELEBRATION

The annual Scholarship Celebration brought together donors, scholars, staff and friends to celebrate the impact of scholarships, donor generosity and achievements. 8 Community Scholars represented the current 104 Scholars. Second-year student Sean McAuley shared his inspiring journey as the first in his family to attend university, highlighting the life-changing support of scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES

A further 26 Community Scholars graduated in Summer 2025 from a range of disciplines including Music, Software Engineering, Economics, Animation and Community Youth Work. All students have excelled in their degree programmes and are moving into employment or onto Postgraduate study.



SCHOLARS' ADVISORY GROUP

A group of Community Scholars formed an Advisory Group for Taking Boys Seriously (TBS) exploring how the TBS principles can be embedded at Ulster. Five Scholars contributed to the 'TBS Educators' Conference held at Ulster on 22 May 2025. Two Scholars spoke to delegates highlighting who have had a positive impact on their educational journey.

OPTIONS PLUS

Option Plus encourages young people from under-represented groups & socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to explore pathways to FE & HE.



OPTIONS PLUS

217 Year 13 pupils from 10 schools took part in Options Plus, our flagship aspiration-raising programme. Pupils engaged in 2 campus visits and workshops designed to demystify the next step in their educational journey. This repeat intervention over 6-8 weeks empowered to develop skills, explore university pathways and build confidence.



IMPACT

Following the programme, 99% of pupils reported feeling more informed about the degree course options available at Ulster, while 97% had gained a better understanding of what student life at Ulster is like. Importantly, 92% said they were now more likely to choose Ulster University as their destination for Higher Education.



EXPERIENCE

"The Options Plus programme benefited the pupils at Mercy College in several key ways. It broadened their curriculum, offered specialised support, widened participation and raised their ambitions. It also allowed the pupils to gain practical experience into potential further study." - Leader of Learning and Progress KS5, Mercy College

DISCOVERY ACADEMY

Discovery Academy offers an extensive range of free, online, subject-specific courses & programmes for young people in KS3-5 age groups.



DISCOVERY ACADEMY

This award-winning online learning platform with 70+ taster courses targets KS3-5 pupils. With 15,000 pupils registered and 27,000 course enrolments, many schools use the Academy to support careers education lessons allowing pupils to explore subjects of interest, at their own pace, helping to inform their choices about further study.



FUTURE PLANS

DfE have funded a WAP Market Engagement project to develop mechanisms to increase student numbers at our Derry~Londonderry campus. In partnership with North West Regional College we will expand Discovery Academy offering, creating new courses designed to attract Further Education students and adult learners promoting pathways and course at Derry~Londonderry.



NEW VETERINARY NURSING COURSE

Veterinary Nursing, a new undergraduate degree at Coleraine Campus, will welcome its first cohort of students in September 2025. We have created a Discovery Academy course, developed with Course Director Bethan Phiney. In addition to recent schools' outreach activities we hope this taster course will inspire a pipeline of future undergraduate students.

ARTS, HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Educational Partnerships team support a range of engagement activities across our campuses for post-primary schools, FE & community partners.

LAW VISIT

Dr Esther McGuinness and The Educational Partnerships Team welcomed All Saints College pupils to a Law Workshop at the Belfast campus. Highlights included a School of Law tour, Law Clinic visit, moot courtroom session, and lecture by Mr Justice Patrick Kinney, Judge in Residence, offering insights into legal education and careers.



LINEN MILLS STUDIO PARTNERSHIP

First-of-its-kind partnership with Linen Mill Studios, we hosted "Story Threads" at the Game of Thrones Studio Tour. 60 Year 10 Art pupils from St Mary's High School, Newry, Lismore College and St Paul's High School experienced a hands-on costume workshop, a studio tour, and insights into industry pathways, future study/careers.



SHOW UP

In partnership with Belfast School of Art we welcomed pupils from 12 secondary schools under the Widening Access "SHOW UP" initiative. Through graduate interaction, studio tours and end of year show exhibition visits, pupils explored all 10 degree pathways, helping demystify higher education in the arts for disadvantaged young people.



LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES

The Educational Partnerships team support a range of engagement activities across our campuses for post-primary schools, FE & community partners.

HEALTHCARE SCIENCE DAY

"Great news, 2 Life and Health Science pupils have applied to Healthcare course at Ulster next year! This can be directly attributed to our visit. Both were enthused and excited about cardiac physiology and decided they would apply. These campus events really do work!!" - Teacher Quote St Mary's College Derry



ROYAL PORTRUSH 153RD OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

40 pupils from North Coast Integrated College, Coleraine College & Our Lady of Lourdes High School took part in an immersive Girls in STEM Education Day – showcasing the range of career opportunities, breaking the stigma encouraging girls to consider the diverse and rewarding pathways to a career in golf industry.



INTER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION DAY

Limavady High pupils undertook an opportunity to learn the importance of working collaboratively across a range of professions including nursing, paramedic science, healthcare science, medicine, social work and sport. "I enjoyed my experience of getting involved, I was able to listen to a foetus heartbeat and learn CPR." - Pupil quote



ULSTER BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Educational Partnerships team support a range of engagement activities across our campuses for post-primary schools, FE & community partners.



DESIGN THINKING EVENT

With the Department of Global Business and Enterprise in partnership with Catalyst, 69 Year13 pupils attended a design thinking event. Activities included problem solving group work, aspiration-raising design thinking workshops and a campus tour. 83% of pupils had improved understanding of courses, with a 24% increase in their likelihood of studying at the campus.

PROJECT 1.5

In partnership with the Department of Marketing, Leadership and Management, we delivered to Year 13 pupils at Blessed Trinity College, explored the societal & environmental impacts of climate-friendly policies. 88% of participants found it highly effective in enhancing their understanding of climate change's impact on modern business & the importance of sustainable decision-making.



HOSPITALITY TOURISM & EVENT MANAGEMENT

With the Department of Hospitality Tourism and Event Management we delivered an event for 64 pupils from Coleraine, Belfast and Derry~Londonderry. We promoted future study options, subject-specific competitions and a campus tour. Pupils reported a 23% increase in likelihood of studying at Ulster and a 16% increase in interest in business degrees.



COMPUTING, ENGINEERING & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Educational Partnerships team support a range of engagement activities across our campuses for post-primary schools, FE & community partners.



SCHOOLS' AI WORKSHOP

In partnership with Catalyst, and part funded through North West Opportunities Funding, 40 Year 9 and 10 pupils from two schools took part in an exciting AI Design Thinking workshop at Ulster University's Derry~Londonderry campus. Pupils tackled real school challenges with AI solutions and explored future pathways through a Computing and Engineering Campus Tour.



FIRST LEGO LEAGUE ROBOTICS

Together with Sentinus, we supported 80 Year 9 and 10 pupils from 12 schools to compete in the FIRST® LEGO® League STEM competition. Through engaging robotics and coding challenges, pupils explored issues affecting our oceans. Pupils gained hands-on experience, developed problem solving and teamwork skills, while exploring real-world environmental problems.



MATHS WEEK IRELAND 2024

During Maths Week Ireland 2024, with support from Professor Colin Turner and Dr Mark McCartney, we hosted an event to inspire Year 12–14 pupils featuring three engaging talks: 'Proving the Obvious Untrue', 'Pi Hunting', and 'The Psychology of Maths'. The event offered students a unique opportunity to apply maths skills through sport.

MANCHESTER UNITED FOUNDATION

The Foundation uses football to engage and inspire young people to build a better life for themselves and unite the communities in which they live.



NEW OUTREACH MANAGER

Aidan McLaughlin joined the Educational Partnerships Team as the Manchester United Outreach Manager at our Derry~Londonderry Campus. Aidan will work with the team and Foyle Learning Community schools, delivering inclusive sport programmes, community outreach and partnership projects, providing young people opportunities to explore pathways to Ulster.

PROGRAMME SPOTLIGHT: ABILITY COUNTS

The Manchester United Foundation's Ability Counts programme supports young people with disabilities through inclusive football sessions, promoting teamwork, confidence and access to education. We plan to host a four-team tournament in October and November 2025 giving participants the chance to compete, build friendships and showcase their talent.

CROSS BORDER PROGRAMME

The Foundation, supported by Ulster University, has partnered with the International Fund for Ireland to expand its outreach work in Derry~Londonderry and cross-border regions. Ulster hosted the Foundation's launch of new programmes with John O'Shea, using football to engage and inspire young people, encouraging positive life choices and community connection.



STUDENT INTERNS & PLACEMENTS

These students are actively engaged in a range of activities promoting fair access, progression and success at Ulster.

Every year we provide opportunities for Ulster undergraduate students to undertake placements and internships across our Widening Access and Participation team. The students are actively engaged in a range of widening access activities promoting fair access, progression and success at Ulster.

The students co-create and help to facilitate activities for young people, acting as ambassadors, sharing their experiences of studying at Ulster University. This active peer support allows young people to engage and ask questions, helping them to envisage undertaking a course at Ulster.

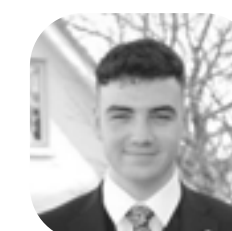
This year the students directly contributed to open days, applicant days, Tick the Box, fostering aspirations summer school, access ambassadors programmes, science shop activities, school events with faculty partners on and off campus, Taking Boys Seriously conference, PASS and capturing new footage for the Virtual Campus.

This year's student placements and interns are studying a range of undergraduate programmes including Digital Media Production, Graphic Design, Psychology, Computer Science and Architectural Technology and Management.

Having students actively engaged in Widening Access and Participation team has real impact, ensuring the voice of young people is central to creating activities that engage and inspire the next generation of students. Huge congratulations to Nicole, Temidire and Aodhan who successfully graduated in July 2025!



Reece Harvey
Virtual Campus
Digital Consultant



Luke Fitzpatrick
Virtual Campus
Digital Consultant



Rosanna Fullerton
Educational Partnerships
Placement Student



Harsha Koorimannil Valiyamannil
Communications & Peer
Mentoring Placement Student



Rachel Johnston
Community Outreach
Placement Student



Nicole McCart
Community Outreach
Intern



Temidire Britto
Community Outreach
Intern



Aodhan McAlorum
PASS Outreach
Intern



Ulster University
2-24 York Street
Belfast
BT15 1ED
ulster.ac.uk

Ulster University [2025]