Welcome to your widening participation in outward student mobility workshop

These slides, and the notes that go with them, can be used to deliver workshops to staff and academics. The workshop outline covers: the benefits of outward mobility for students from widening participation groups, the particular barriers they face and some of the approaches you can take to help students overcome these barriers. Findings and recommendations from the UUKi and EHEA Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility Project are used to help you look at widening participation in outward student mobility at your institution.

You can present these slides by using the ‘Widening participation in OSM workshop slides’ PDF and presenting in full screen, using the arrow keys to scroll through the slides.

Before you deliver this workshop: make sure you go through all of the slides carefully, and read the Widening Participation in Outward Student Mobility report and toolkit to understand the background to this content. You can find the report and toolkit at: universitiesuk.ac.uk/wideningparticipation-osm-resources
In 2017 the UUKi/ EHEA Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility Project developed a report and toolkit to support higher education institutions and colleges of further education to develop effective strategies to increase participation in mobility programmes by students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds.

The work is intended to help achieve a year on year increase of students from widening participation backgrounds engaging with outward mobility programmes.

In 2017, UUKi’s Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme’s Higher Education Key Action 3 strand was introduced with the aim of increasing mobility for under-represented groups year on year.

There are two parts to the project:

1. A report to analyse trends and patterns, and to find out where gaps in participation are
2. A toolkit to support capacity building at institutional level through sharing recommendations based on good practice case studies and student voice.

The project focused on 5 target demographics – does anyone know what those groups are?
These are the 5 target demographics.

These groups were selected because we have data on them in the UK through our HESA return. Other groups which could be looked at include: part-time students, mature students, LGBT* students, students who are carers, students who are estranged.
Six months after graduating mobile students in this sample were: less likely to be unemployed. More likely to be in a graduate job and earning higher starting salaries than their non-mobile peers.

**GONE INTERNATIONAL: MOBILITY WORKS – 2017 REPORT**

UUKi’s annual Gone International reports consistently show that students who are mobile get better degrees and better jobs; there is a correlation year on year.

There are even more pronounced positive outcomes for students from more disadvantaged or under-represented groups.
Key findings from the EHEA Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility Project included:

- Although we have seen increases year on year, across the board students from the 5 target demographics were under-represented in mobility.

- Students from more advantaged backgrounds are 65% more likely to participate in some form of outward mobility during their degree.

- Students from low participation neighbourhoods had a 1% participation rate, vs 1.8% for their peers from higher-participation areas.

- BME students made up 22.2% of the cohort but only 17.6% of the outwardly-mobile group (although there was some variation between groups within this demographic: Asian British (Bangladeshi) students and Asian or Asian British (Pakistani) students had the lowest participation rates for the demographic: 0.6% and 0.8% respectively.)

- Disabled students: 1.5% of disabled students participated in some form of outward mobility (although there was some variation between groups within this demographic: students with two or more conditions were engaging with mobility at the lowest rate (0.9%))
MULTIPLE BARRIERS AND OVERLAPPING IDENTITIES

Important to recognise that some students have overlapping disadvantaged identities and therefore may face compounded barriers to mobility.

All of the target demographic groups are underrepresented in mobility numbers, and students with overlapping disadvantages have even lower rates of participation.

Intersectionality:

“The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.”

We also noted that students who were a member of more than one demographic had even lower participation rates – barriers are compounded so they are less likely to engage in mobility. This example looks at students from low socio-economic groups by ethnicity and we can see the BME group have lower rates of participation than their white peers.

It’s worth noting that there was diversity within demographics that have further groups – for example, disabled student mobility participation varied dependant on the type of disability a student reported.
Students from the UK went on outward mobility placements to on average 170 countries each year across the world during the last three years.

Top 9 countries visited by students from disadvantaged groups reflected the national pattern:
- Europe: France, Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands
- English speaking: United States, Canada, Australia
- Asia: China

Students go to all countries – which is great.

The top 10 locations were the same across all demographics – USA, Canada, Australia, China, France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

The final country to make up the top 10 was changeable from year to year, and also dependent on how the data was cut, but the following countries were all highlighted as contenders: Ireland (particularly for those from low socio-economic backgrounds), Japan (particularly for those from low-participation neighbourhoods), Russia, Malaysia (particularly for BME students), Belgium, Hong Kong, India, Bangladesh, Switzerland, Sweden and Jordan.
The majority of mobility was undertaken by students via either the Erasmus+ programme or through a provider-led programme. There has been a growth of 54.6% in participation in provider-led programmes, while Erasmus+ mobility has stayed at a consistently high level, with an average of 11,975 mobility instances each year.

In 2015–16, looking at instances of mobility for eight weeks or more in duration (the minimum length of an Erasmus+ mobility) BME students were found to be more likely to undertake mobility via Erasmus+ (46%) than a provider-led programme (43%).

Target demographics also saw larger growth for work abroad compared to their more-advantaged peers between 2013-14 and 2015-16. There was 21.8% growth in mobility for work for the low-SEC group compared to 4.2% for their higher-SEC counterparts. There was a 29.5% growth in work-based mobility within the BME group, compared to 6.3% for the white demographic. These findings suggest the appetite for study and work-based mobility is growing faster among our target demographics.
Over the period analysed, among those engaging in outward mobility, students from low-participation wards, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, BME students and students with a disability were all more likely to undertake short term mobility than their peers.

Growth in short term mobility is more pronounced for our projects target demographics:

- 150% for students from a low socio-economic background
- 166% for students from a low participation neighbourhood
- 149% for Black and Minority Ethnic students
A NOTE ON SHORT-TERM MOBILITY

➢ The institute of international Education found that developing teamwork was "an area of strength for shorter term programs" and that development of certain skills is "unaffected by length [of mobility], including curiosity, leadership, and work ethic."

➢ Universities Australia cited evidence that "a well-designed short-term programme can have a significant lasting impact upon participants" and that "more is better, but some is better than none".

➢ The British Council and UUKi's (2015) Student Perspectives research found that students "reported valuable outcomes for very short and short-term mobility programmes."

➢ Focus group participants contributing to this toolkit who had been on a short-term mobility programme described the experience as "life-changing."

Short-term mobility (mobility that is less than four weeks in duration) is undertaken by students from disadvantaged groups at a higher rate than their more advantaged peers. Short-term mobility develops valuable skills and positively impacts students.
The EHEA project ran a series of focus group with students from: Birmingham City University, Kingston University, University of Exeter, North West Regional College, Southampton Solent University.

The students were from the five target demographics.

The students talked about the barriers to outward mobility that they faced.
WHAT MIGHT BE THE BARRIERS TO OUTWARD MOBILITY FOR STUDENTS FROM LESS-ADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS?

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS ON A POST-IT!
# FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

**Finance:** This was raised in every group and by most students. Concerns related to the cost of the programme, accommodation, travel, subsistence, course materials, visas, passports, insurances and health services.

**Accommodation:** When mobile, students often found it difficult to source accommodation within budget; on return to the UK, particularly for students on semester mobility, many encountered issues if trying to secure a lease for less than 12 months.

**Language:** This was particularly raised by students in the context of short-term mobility, who voiced uncertainty about having the language proficiency to navigate the host country.

---

## Cohort-specific factors

**Pre-mobility**
- First time abroad
- Leaving support networks
- Perception by locals
- Medical support

**Challenges in country**
- Behaviour from locals
- In-country support
- Visa and Immigration
- Health crises

---

**Recommendations:** Messaging, Information, Logistics, Support, Networks, Post-mobility activities.

These were the top barriers reported by students.

Finance, Accommodation and language are reported by students across the board but the impact is compounded for the 5 target groups.

For example, finance could be even more of a barrier for students who are self-funding, who could be less likely to give up a job and who could be contributing to their family household etc.

Suggestions to help students overcome these barriers include starting preparation early and providing students with more information. Providing opportunities to speak to students who have been abroad could also be useful – ambassador scheme, pre-mobility, post-mobility and buddy schemes are all effective.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT QUOTES</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’ve worked since I was 16, I’ve always had a full-time job so didn’t think I needed work experience”</td>
<td>“I will never be the same person again; I’m changed forever, for the better.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“(I) couldn’t afford (to do) it without the grant”</td>
<td>“(I have) a brilliant network of people that I know from everywhere in the world”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“(I) felt intimidated going through border security”</td>
<td>“(It) massively increased my confidence”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I was travelling alone for the first time”</td>
<td>“(It) changed my entire worldview in a year”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“(It was) my first time abroad”</td>
<td>“(It was a) really interesting and eye-opening experience”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If I mess up a little bit it would be really bad in a foreign country”</td>
<td>“It’s literally changed everything for me”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are some of the comments from students. Students almost across the board found their experience of outward mobility life-changing.
PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support from leadership
2. Institutional targets
3. Academic buy-in
4. Collaborate
5. Transparency
6. Flexible offer
7. Widening Participation agreements
8. Funding information
9. Scholarships, grants and bursaries
10. Marketing

These are the recommendations that came out of the report.
There are a number of good practice case studies – which can be categorised into these into 8 broad themes, although of course there is plenty of cross over, for example with short-term funded summer work placements which are included in access agreements.
Here are some examples of ways in which institutions have marketed mobility to students.
Here are some examples of ways in which institutions have marketed mobility to students: interactive tool, student voice (blogging, ambassadors, youtube videos, social media)

What does our institution do around marketing – what has worked in the past?
WHAT WORKS WELL AT THE UNIVERSITY, AND WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED TO SUPPORT MORE STUDENTS TO GO ABROAD?

DISCUSS WITH THE COLLEAGUE SITTING NEXT TO YOU!
The toolkit which was produced by UUKi as part of the project suggest some practical steps that could be taken to help overcome the barriers faced by students from the five key demographics.

Discuss – how could these be applied at our institutions? Are we already doing some of this?
NEXT STEPS
There are three specific areas of work that would benefit from further exploration following the publication of this toolkit.

1. Further examples of good practice on targeted support for care leavers and BME students to encourage access to mobility opportunities.

2. Good practice on support for demographics who are outside of the scope of this project but who may face barriers in going abroad, including part time students, lesbian, gay and bisexual students, trans students, mature students and students with caring responsibilities.

3. Clarity on the extent to which short-term mobility results in positive outcomes. It would be valuable to explore students’ progression from short to long-term activities.

This is were UUKi/EHEA would like to take their widening participation work next. Where will you take yours?