Dublin City University
From a Localised Ballymun Initiative to a National Programme – The Access Service at DCU, 21 years on!

Colette Keogh & Cathy McLoughlin, Post-Entry Project Officers, Dublin City University, Access Service
Twenty-one years on, **1289** students later, it all began in Ballymun with a newly designated University and a local initiative.
1990 - 1995

**BITE** - Ballymun Initiative for Third Level Education

- Main objective to increase the participation of students from Ballymun in third-level education
Ballymun

Population = 19,483*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ballymun</th>
<th>Nationally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 14</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan-Parent Family</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passed Leaving Cert Exa</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress to 3rd Level</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2006 Population Census
National Policy

- The Government White paper: *Charting our Education Future* (1995) - Each University was to develop initiatives to promote participation among students from lower socio-economic groups.
1996 - 2001

NDA - North Dublin Access programme

- Continue & expand on work began with BITE
- Raise awareness & increase participation into third level from linked schools (16)
2001-2011

- 2001-2003 – CAF: Common Application Form
- 2004-2005 – HEDAS: Higher Education Direct Application Scheme
- 2010-Date – HEAR National
DCU Access Student Intake 1990-2010

Diagramstitel

Achsentitel

Preparation for Research

- All Access scholars identified
- Collated statistics – University ITS system & Access records
- Tagged
Methods

- Letters to former students: Introducing the research
- Semi-formal telephone interview
- Survey posted to small number of students unable to contact by telephone
Main Findings

Graduates
- Breakdown by Faculty
- Qualifications Analysis
- Further Study
- Employment

Withdrawals
- Reasons
- Rate
### Graduates by Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Access 1990-2010</th>
<th>DCU UG 2009/10*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Health</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excludes Oscail and The Royal Academy of Music (8.0%)
# Access Graduates: How do they compare?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Access 2003-2010</th>
<th>Gen. UG DCU 2003-2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Class Div.1</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Class Div.2</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(Pass/Dis)</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Access Students 21 year average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second Class Div.1</th>
<th>Second Class Div.2</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business with Internship</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business without</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DCU have had students from 34 nationalities enter the Access programme. To date students from 15 nationalities have graduated, the remainder are current students. This strongly reflects the changing demographics in Ireland.
## Access Graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990-2011</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Contacted</th>
<th>Un-Contactable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990-2008</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>370</strong></td>
<td><strong>69%</strong></td>
<td><strong>31%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Study
1990-2008

- No Study: 43%
- Full-Time Student: 3%
- Further Study: 53%
- Unknown: 1%
Areas of Employment

- Related to degree: 85%
- Not related to degree: 8%
- Student: 3%
- Unemployed: 4%
Types of Occupations

- Most frequent – Accountants
- Financial Sector
- Sales/Marketing
- Sports Reporter/Broadcaster
- IT Consultant, Software Engineer
- Web Design/Developer
- Teaching
- Nursing
- Telecommunications Engineer
- Post-Doctoral Researchers
93% of Access students who enter DCU complete third-level.
Total Breakdown

- Graduates: 46%
- Current UG: 35%
- Studied elsewhere: 12%
- Withdrawn: 7%
Reasons given for withdrawing

- Wrong Course Choice: 47%
- Other: 19%
- Course too difficult: 19%
- Personal Reasons: 11%
- Financial: 4%
Post-Entry Supports

- Scholarships
- Orientation
- One-one meetings within 1 month of entry
- Learning Agreements
- Designated first year post entry Officer
- Tuition Workshops
- Peer Mentoring
- Subsidised Accommodation
- Networking opportunities
- Volunteering Opportunities
Contact details:

golette.keogh@dcu.ie
cathy.mcloughlin@dcu.ie

The full research report can be viewed at:
http://www4.dcu.ie/students/access/research.shtml