

# Feedback

*“Access Postgrad has helped me form new contacts and build a wider understanding on the advantages and disadvantages of postgraduate studies... It has helped prepare me ... My mentor has instilled confidence and excitement for my upcoming course ...I hope to provide the same support for future Access Postgrad applicants”*

Participant, 2022

*“It made me feel a lot more confident in knowing I could go forward with postgrad study, I had limited support from my family so that was a really big thing for me”.*

Participant, 2022

*“Really useful and thoroughly enjoyable experience. My mentor had a lot of insight”*

Participant, 2022

*“Access postgrad helped me to decide on the course that was best for me”.*

Participant, 2023



# ACCESS POSTGRAD

Alice Brereton  
PG Recruitment Manager

# What we'll cover today

- PGT Widening Participation
- Access Postgrad as a case study
- Challenges encountered
- Practical top tips
- Ambitions for the future

# Do you have a dedicated PG recruitment team?

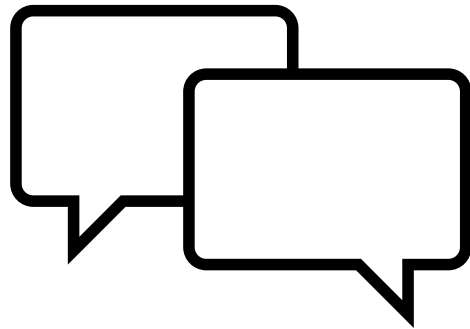
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It's just me!	UG and PG are combined	Yes



# PGT WIDENING PARTICIPATION

Where are you in your PGT widening participation journey/activity at your university?

Where does responsibility for PGT WP sit at your university?



Please discuss in your groups.





# UOB TEAM



Alice Brereton  
PG Recruitment Manager



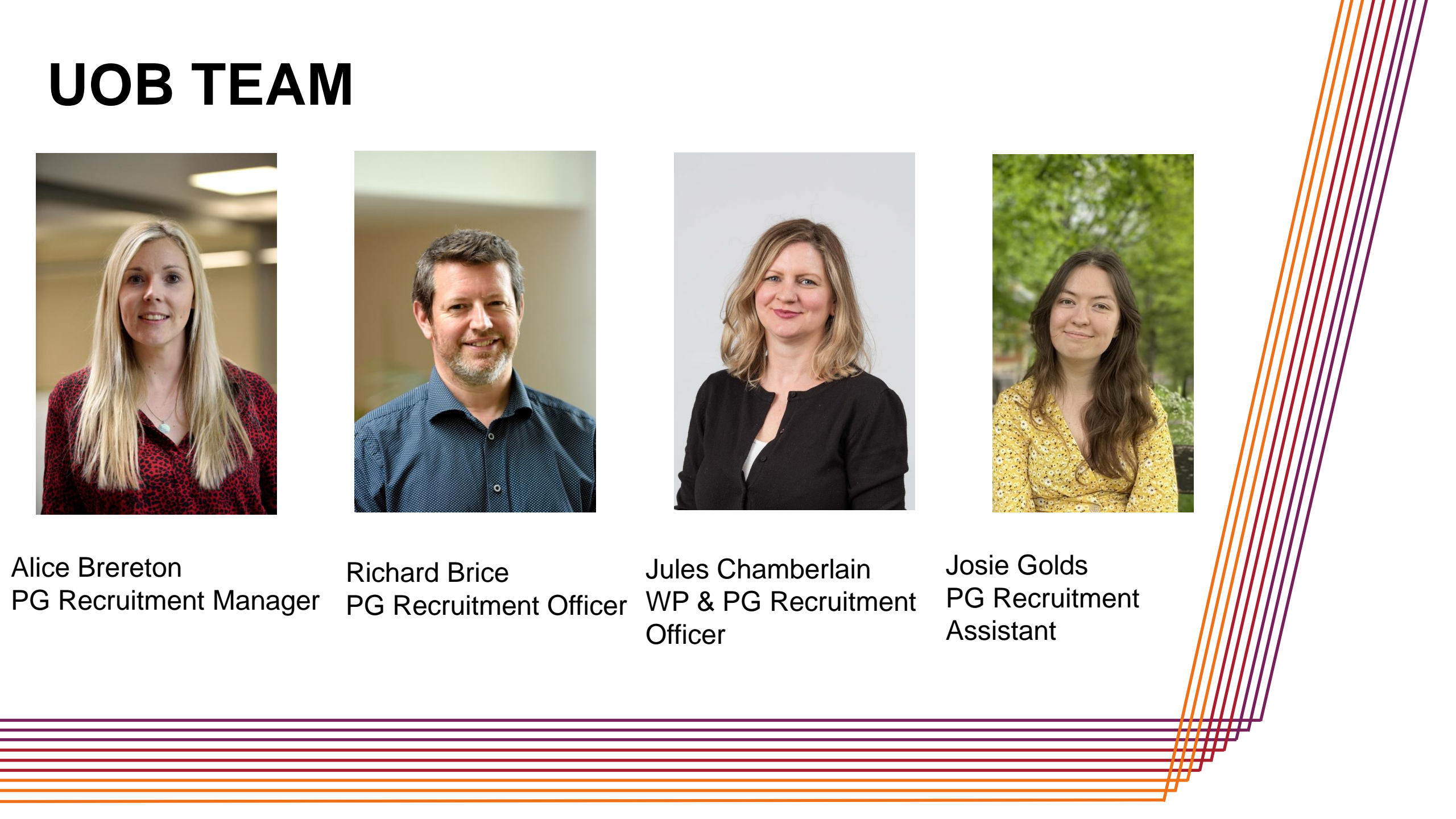
Richard Brice  
PG Recruitment Officer



Jules Chamberlain  
WP & PG Recruitment  
Officer



Josie Golds  
PG Recruitment  
Assistant



# PGT WIDENING PARTICIPATION

- Build upon undergraduate progress.
- Emerging area and not actively regulated by the OfS.
- [Postgraduate Diversity Strategy Blueprint](#)

Louise Banahene, University of Leeds and Chair of NEON Postgraduate Diversity Working Group.

- [Inequality in the highest degree?](#)

Sutton Trust, Paul Wakeling and Jose Luis Mateos-Gonzalez, June 2021.

- PGR WP is also developing across the sector (NEON) and at Bristol.





# PGT WIDENING PARTICIPATION

- Challenges associated with the data and its collection.
- Weekly WP dashboard.
- Characteristics currently have information on are disability; local (BA or BS postcode); gender; and ethnicity.
- UoB - some positive trends - the number of applications from students who identify as Black and students with disabilities increasing modestly.
- Across all other categories the picture is more volatile and demonstrates the need for further provision to see a sustained increase in applications and firms from under-represented groups.





# ACCESS POSTGRAD

- 'Widening Participation in Postgraduate Taught Courses at the University of Bristol: Understanding the landscape'. (1)
- In 7<sup>th</sup> year, run annually, November - May.
- Internal/UoB UG students only.
- 1-1 mentoring and workshops. Logistics costs under £3,000.
- £334,000 funding committed since the scheme's introduction.
- 2020/2021 no funding - piloted inclusion second year students.

*(1) Dr Jo Rose, Dr Lisa Lucas, Dr John Hill, Dr Bernardita Munoz Chereau, and Dr Andres Anwandter Aguero, 2017.*



# ELIGIBILITY

- Must be from at least one group that is currently underrepresented at PG. Priority is given to applicants meeting more of the following criteria:
  - *From a UK minoritized ethnic groups.*
  - *Care experienced.*
  - *Bereaved of or estranged from both parents.*
  - *UK refugee status, seeking asylum or fleeing conflict.*
  - *Mature student.*
  - *First generation in family to go into higher education.*
  - *Have a disability.*
  - *Have caring responsibilities or dependents.*
  - *In receipt of a University of Bristol Bursary.*
  - *Were entitled to free school meals.*
  - *Military veteran or child of a military family.*
  - *Completed a WP scheme ahead of UG study.*



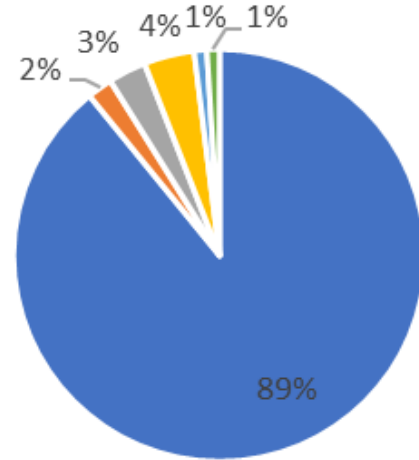
# What are your most effective tactics for advertising WP schemes and targeting underrepresented students?

Waiting for responses ...



# PROMOTION 22/23

How did you hear about the Access Postgrad scheme?



- Email from the Postgraduate Team
- Digital Signage
- From another student
- Other: UOB website
- Other: via reserach internship
- Did not respond

- 89% of the applicants stated that they had heard about the scheme via the invitation email.
- From another student - may inc. SU networks.





# PLANNING

- Begins in July - live Nov - April
- May - contingency for completion - extenuating circumstances.
- Evaluation June.
- Central services buy-in and support is key.
- Funding team support and clarifying roles /responsibilities.
- Resources - webinars/Q&A/engagement if sessions are missed.



*Access Postgrad  
Scheme Timeline  
2023/24*

	November	December	January	February	March	April
Questionnaires	<u>Entry Questionnaire</u> W/C 30 October onwards (once participants are confirmed and before first mentor meeting).					<u>Exit Questionnaire</u> April/May After final workshop & mentor meeting completed.
Participant workshops and Sessions	<u>Welcome and PGT Applications &amp; Top Tips</u> In person	<u>Funding your PG Studies</u> Online		<u>PG Study Skills and Learning Resources</u> In person	<u>Managing Your Wellbeing During PG Study</u> Online	<u>Careers &amp; Employability Workshop and Closing Event</u> In person
Mentor Meetings	<u>Peer Mentor Session 1</u> In person Nov/Dec	<u>Peer Mentor Session 2</u> In person / online December/January		<u>Peer Mentor Session 3</u> Funded students only In person / online February	<u>Final Mentor Session</u> In person / online March	
Sample Teaching (optional)	<u>Sample Teaching (Optional)</u> To be available any time throughout the scheme					

# MENTORING

- Past participants make marvellous mentors! (not essential)
- Advertise as part of the wider ambassador recruitment.
- Interactive training - pre-session online prep.
- Challenge to keep engaged and effective.
- Allocated either funded or non-funded participants.
- First mentoring session encouraged to be Face to Face.
- Monthly newsletter.



# Who has experience of running a mentoring scheme ?

0  
Yes

0  
No





# Top tips for running mentor schemes?

Waiting for responses ...



# OVERVIEW

- Funding is instrumental for students to complete AP and to progress onto PGT study.
- Used non-funding situation as a year to experiment and open to second year students – build the pipeline.
- Only 28% of students completed AP in 2020/21 (no fee waiver, pandemic), compared to 70% average.
- Non-funded year only 9% of those that completed AP then progressed to PGT at UoB, compared to average of 59%.
- Some participants join PGT programmes at other universities, but still given glowing feedback on Access Postgrad.
- Important to consider the context 2021 onwards – post covid, tight labour market, cost of living crisis, large scholarship schemes at other institutions.



Scheme year	No. applications	No. places available on scheme	No. of successful completions	% completed AP	No. progressing to PGT with UoB*	% completed AP that progress to UoB PGT
2017/18	5	10	4	80%	4	100%
2018/19	20	10 (all funded)	9	90%	8	89%
2019/20	40	40 (all non-funded)	11	28%	1	9%
2020/21(covid)	31	30 (10 funded + 20 non-funded)	16	52%	13	81%
2021/22	62	30 (10 funded + 20 non-funded)	24	80%	8	33%
2022/23	101	30 (10 funded + 20 non-funded)	21	70%	9	43%
2023/2024	70	30 (10 funded + 20 non-funded)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

*\*in year following scheme completion (funded & non-funded)*

# IMPACT

- 85 students have successfully completed Access Postgrad to date.
- 50% (43 students) have then progressed to PGT study at UoB.
- Since the scheme began **97% of funded students** that progressed to PGT **completed** their studies.
- The one student (3%) will rejoin in January with the remainder of their fee waiver.
- Master's completion rate for those on AP is significantly higher than students who only receive a scholarship.
- 12% went onto study PhD at Bristol.





# IMPACT

- Students making an informed choice not to progress because that is the right decision for them, is also a positive outcome.
- Students graduating from the scheme with an increased confidence and awareness of postgraduate study.
- Provided an evidence base to create the Bristol Master's Scholarship.
- Year on year improvement in confidence demonstrated - exit questionnaire.



# CHALLENGES

- Alumni funding was withdrawn in 2019 with no fee-waivers available in 2020/21....also the pandemic cohort.
- Dramatic impact on engagement and scheme completion rates. 28% completed compared to average 70%.
- Attendance for the in-person development sessions.
- Time/resource.
- Until there is OfS interest at PG level, it will continue to be a challenge to develop the scheme.
- Exit interview completion rates.
- External factors – Covid-19, Cost of living, master's loan not keeping pace with inflation, labour market.
- Marking boycott – students being able to firm their offers as normal.



# CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Supporting statements - clarity and shortened word count.
- Fee waivers - applicable PT for those starting 24/25.
- Microsoft form in confirmation email - increased uptake sample teaching by 500%.
- Exit questionnaire - question re happy to be contacted at the end of the PGT course and reasons not requesting sample teaching.
- Mentor proforma's only a prompt - encourage mentors to be more student-led.
- Mentors - process for non-submission of proforma's.
- Accommodation - guaranteed for AP and PP students for 24/25 start.
- Tightened-up processes around workshop attendance.
- Alumni outcomes and stories - on the to do list!





# FEEDBACK

Jules Chamberlain, PG Recruitment and WP Officer, was nominated for an award by students' last cycle:

- Outstanding Support Award - Bristol Teaching Awards 22/23.

Access Postgrad was shortlisted/nominated for:

- Nominated for University Progression Initiative of the Year - UpReach Student Social Mobility Awards.
- Shortlisted for FAU Award 'Outstanding contribution to Postgraduate Support and Wellbeing' .





# FEEDBACK

**“Before the programme I was uncertain about applying for and undertaking a postgraduate degree but now I am much more confident about these things”**

**Participant, 2023**

**“It’s useful as the scheme can provide you the right tools to make a decision if you are unsure “.**

**Participant 2023**

***“It massively aided my concerns about finance and application. I feel a lot more confident in my understanding of why I want to apply, as well as understanding how I ought to convey my interest in PG study during application processes”.***

**Participant, 2023**

***This course really helped me apply for my master's! Without it, I probably would have been lost”.***

**Participant, 2023**



# PRACTICAL TIPS

- Data informed approach - use what you have.
- Doing something small is okay.
- Theory of Change and draw on UG colleagues' expertise/data.
- Financial support is key to engagement and impact.
- Inviting a previous Access PG graduate to talk the next cohort.
- Have a reserve list.
- Use of Microsoft forms over email comms.
- Deadline for the funded students to have submitted their PGT applications by scheme end (April 30<sup>th</sup>).





# PRACTICAL TIPS

- Flexibility in format of mentoring – online/in-person.
- Continuous improvement - seek out and act on feedback.
- Network and share best practice - HELOA, NEON, FAU.
- Internal schemes can develop the business case for external schemes - Participate Postgrad.



# NEXT STEPS

- Increase the size of the fee waiver?
- More resources/staff time?
- Alumni outcomes.
- Develop and refine our WP data collection and evaluation.
- Collaborate with NEON colleagues.
- Continually improve and learn from the sector.
- Participate Postgrad and Bristol Master's Scholarship.





# ANY QUESTIONS?

