



KEBLE ACCESS AND ADMISSIONS 2023

This is our fifth annual report on our access and outreach activity in academic year 2021-22, as well as undergraduate admissions in the last round, December 2022.



Highlights:

- Our Access and Outreach team engaged with over 7,000 students, teachers, and supporters in 2021-22
- We resumed in-person visits to Keble by school groups
- We ran four Subject taster Days, resulting in 13 attendees being made offers at Oxford.
- Keble hosted a 10th anniversary celebration of our partnership with the Brilliant Club.
- Our partnership with Colmers School and the Access Project was extended for a further three years.
- Around 3,800 people attended our Open Days in June and September
- Our applications reached a record high in December 2022
- Keble made nine offers under the Opportunity Oxford programme

Access and Outreach Goals

We aim to admit students with the potential for academic excellence from the widest possible range of places and backgrounds. Our access and outreach activities are designed to find people who will thrive in the College and to support them in making competitive applications. We focus particularly on encouraging applicants from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented parts of the country, offering them support and information that will assist them with decision making and the application process. But we also try to enhance student diversity by, for example, encouraging the flow of BME applicants or encouraging women to apply to STEM subjects, where they are generally under-represented.

We try to achieve these goals by a broad mix of activities in Oxford and in our link local authorities in the West Midlands. We invite groups from around 200 schools to visit the College and meet our students, and we hold events for schools, teachers, parents/careers in the region itself. As well as working with our colleagues in other colleges and in the University, we partner with other organisations interested in access and widening participation, some of which you can read about below.

The table on the next page gives a summary of our goals and how we are trying to achieve them. Many of our activities are aimed at more than one goal.

Goals	Activities
1. To admit more students from socio-economically disadvantaged and/or under-represented areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Visits• Virtual and Digital Outreach• Subject Taster Days at Keble• The Ambassador Platform• Partnership with the Brilliant Club• Opportunity Oxford• Open Days (specifically offer holder events)• Support UNIQ residential summer schools• Focus on Data and Evaluation
2. To strengthen our presence in our Link Region in the West Midlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership with the Access Project• Virtual events for teachers and for parents/carers• Work with other Oxford colleges as part of the West Midlands Consortium• Work closely with teachers to understand schools' needs

3. To increase the flow of BME candidates at Keble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with Target Oxbridge • Partnership with the Brilliant Club • Subject Taster Days at Keble
4. To increase the numbers of women applying for STEM subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with Departments • Support UNIQ • Subject Taster Days at Keble

Our activities are carefully targeted. The two main criteria for deciding which schools to work with and which students to invite to our events are geodemographic measures: (i) ACORN is a classification of an area's socio-economic profile; (ii) POLAR is based on the level of progression to Higher Education in an area. But we also fine-tune these general metrics to take account of individuals' circumstances for example, time spent in care, free school meals, and first-generation applicants. We also consider other intersecting factors of disadvantage, such as ethnicity (BME), as well as gender in terms of underrepresentation in STEM, and try to target participating students accordingly.

Our outreach and access activities are designed to enable students to make good, informed decisions about their future and to encourage them to aim high. By providing support and guidance on the admissions process, or by holding subject taster days, we also try to enable students to make the best applications they can. If that leads to an offer at Keble we are understandably pleased, but we also encourage students to apply to whatever course, college, or University they think suits them best. Keble is only one college at Oxford, and we cooperate with our colleagues across the University to achieve our common goals.

Access and Outreach Activities 2021-22

Events & Schools Liaison

We estimate that over 7000 students, teachers, and supporters engaged with Keble Access and Outreach activity during the 2021-22 academic year. This number was boosted by the return of Oxford's in-person University Open Days and a number of large-scale virtual events. We aim to engage as many people as possible in our activities but have welcomed opportunity to interact with the slightly smaller groups made possible by in-person events.

During the year, we hosted 116 Access & Outreach events. Two thirds of these were virtual, but there were also 39 in-person events in spring and early summer. By the start of 2022-23 about two-thirds of our activities and events were in person. We are currently focusing on inbound events (school visits, taster days etc) and virtual provision in light of current demand trends and to maximise the number of high-impact events we offer.

We worked with the following schools this year as part of our Access & Outreach programme. Interactions ranged from online sessions to full-day visits (from the start of

Trinity term 2022) to participating in college tours as part of a visit to another college. Schools marked with * were able to visit Keble in person.

Alcester Grammar School*	King Edward VI College Stourbridge*
Alderbrook School*	Kings Heath Boys' School*
Aldridge School (Walsall)*	Langley School*
Arena Academy*	Lordswood Girls' School
Barr Beacon School*	Lyndon School
Barr's Hill School*	Nicholas Chamberlaine School
Bishop Challoner Catholic College	Ninestiles, an Academy*
Bishop Vesey's Grammar School	Nishkam High School*
Bloxwich Academy*	North Leamington Academy
Bordesley Green Girls' School	Plantsbrook School
Campion School	President Kennedy School*
Clevedon School*	Reach Academy Feltham*
Cockshut Hill Academy*	Smith's Wood Academy*
Coundon Court	St Paul's School for Girls (Birmingham)*
Erdington Academy*	St Thomas More Catholic Academy*
Finham Park School	St Thomas the Apostle Catholic School*
George Dixon Academy*	Stoke Park School*
Greenford High School*	Stratford Girls' Grammar School
Gumley House Convent School*	Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls
Hayesfield School*	Swanshurst School
Higham Lane School	The Chase (Worcestershire)
John Cleveland Sixth Form Centre	Tile Cross Academy*
John Henry Newman Catholic College*	University of Birmingham School*
Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College*	Waddeson C of E School*
Kineton High School*	Willenhall E-Act Academy*
King Edward VI Aston*	Wood Green Academy
King Edward VI College Nuneaton*	

The majority of these schools are located in our linked local authorities (or the wider West Midlands region), but by working cooperatively with other colleges we also make contact with schools from other areas of the UK.

Forty-one events, including Open Days (see “Open Days”), four Subject Taster Days (see “Subject Taster Days”), and various webinar series (see “Virtual & Digital Outreach”), were open to students from any UK state school or college. Open Days are open to all. This enabled us to engage students from an even wider range of locations.

Each Oxford college is [linked to a Local Authority](#) to ensure that all schools have a first point of contact within the University. Keble is linked with **Birmingham, Sandwell, Solihull, Coventry, and Warwickshire**. We are also pleased to be working with Oriel and University Colleges as part of [Oxford for West Midlands](#).

School Visits

We reintroduced school visits for the first time since March 2020 in spring 2022. School visits typically take place during term time enable visiting groups to benefit from meeting student ambassadors. We offer the opportunity to state schools and colleges but give priority to schools in our link region. Since the reintroduction of the school visit programme, there has been more demand than the college is able to meet from its link areas alone. This is a positive position to be in and our team has enjoyed being able to work with so many teachers and pupils, although we continue to develop ways to target these visits and manage demand.

School visits are offered for Years 7-12, with age-specific material adapted and used for each event. All visit programmes involved an information and guidance session with a focus on demystifying Oxford, an opportunity to tour the college and meet with student ambassadors, and lunch in the dining hall. Depending on a school's preferences or needs, the rest of a programme might contain visits to museums or additional colleges; sessions focused on the admissions process (e.g. interview skills); or subject taster sessions facilitated by Keble graduate students (recruited through the MCR volunteer scheme).

At present, the only cost to a school for visiting Keble is travel to reach us. We are pursuing the possibility of making travel costs an integral part of our school visit offer through alumni donations.



Year 8 school visit at Keble

Subject Taster Days at Keble

In 2022 we launched a programme of Subject Taster Days. These are designed to help students who are thinking about what course to do at University and to enable them to make strong applications by learning more about each subject. The first subjects involved were Law, English, Theology and Geography. Each subject's specific access challenges were considered in planning each day, with the involvement and advice of subject tutors. Students from across the UK were selected on the basis of: school type (non-selective), Free School Meals, First Generation to pursue HE, time spent in care, and self-identification as British Minority Ethnic (BME). Academic profile was also taken into consideration (GCSE performance), as well as gender where there is subject-specific underrepresentation.

Of the 135 students that attended, 65 applied to Oxford and 22 chose Keble.
Of those who attended:

- 3 were made offers in Theology
- 6 were made offers in English
- None were made offers in Geography
- 4 were made offers in Law

Nine of these offers were to applicants in bands A and B of the University's admissions classification, meaning that they are from the more under-represented or disadvantaged parts of the country. Three of these offers were at Keble and the rest were at other colleges.



Yr12 Keble Subject Taster Day in Geography

Partnerships

Keble has continued existing partnerships and embarked upon new ones, looking to strengthen its presence in the West Midlands and to attain access and outreach goals.

The Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club is a charity that aims to increase the number of pupils from under-represented backgrounds that progress to highly selective universities. They do this by mobilizing the PhD community to share its expertise with state schools. They offer a Scholars Programme, which recruits PhD researchers, trains them, and places them as tutors in schools. We were proud to host a celebration for the tenth anniversary of the Brilliant Club at Keble in June 2022. We have participated in a number of virtual events run by them during 2021-22 and have enjoyed hosting in-person events for the Scholars' Programme from the beginning of 2022-23.

Keble formalised its partnership with the Brilliant Club (which began in 2016) in November 2022 with a strategic agreement for an initial period of three years. This agreement includes increased visits to college (approximately 576 students/academic year), virtual events, a focus on schools in the West Midlands (and therefore a large BME population), the recruitment of tutors from Keble's postgraduate community, and consistent reporting (data collection and impact reports) on all activities undertaken during this partnership. From 2018 to 2022 Keble has worked with 600 students through the Brilliant Club programme, and data suggests that this cohort was more likely to apply to Oxbridge than the control group.



The Brilliant Club 10th Anniversary Celebration at the Warden's Lodgings, June 2022

The Access Project

The Access Project offers consistent mentoring and guidance for students through a dedicated team of school-based Access officers. TAP is grounded in the local community and is part of Keble's wide-reaching efforts to help students from the West Midlands make successful applications and transitions to leading Universities. Keble partnered with TAP in 2018 by supporting the programme at Colmers School in Rednal, then continued with the recruitment of a second school in 2021, Waverley school in Birmingham. In June 2022 Keble signed a further three years of support for Colmers school, until 2025.

In 2021/22 the charity engaged 13 Keble alumni and 2 students who signed up to be volunteer tutors, offering 290 hours of tuition in total. From the Oxbridge Society, the section of TAP that Keble supports with student visits and academic sessions, 8 students applied to Oxford and 7 to Cambridge. The application to placement ratio was slightly higher than the year before, with 4.8 applications/place, compared to 5.2 applications/place.

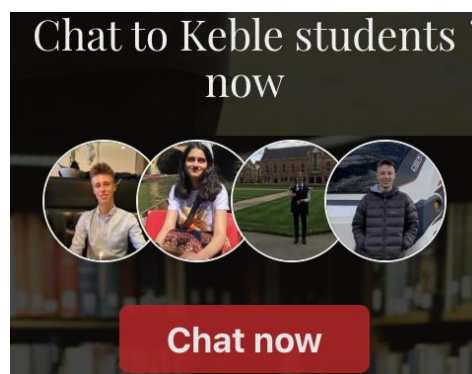
In 2021 we did not run any in-person trips due to the pandemic, but 30 Year 12 students visited on 5th February 2022. Another 76 Year 12 students visited on 11th March 2022 for an event coordinated by Magdalen and Keble.

Target Oxbridge

Target Oxbridge works with school students of mixed or sole black African and Caribbean heritage to increase their chances of getting into Oxbridge. In 2022 Keble officially partnered with Target Oxbridge, offering financial support for 3 places on the programme, as well as offering rooms and facilities for events. Over the past five years, the programme has helped an increasing number of black students and students of mixed race with black heritage get to Oxford. In October 2021, 31 Target Oxbridge students (the largest number to date) joined the University. In January 2022, 34 Target Oxbridge students obtained offers at the University.

The Ambassador Platform

The Ambassador Platform is an online forum where prospective students can speak confidentially to current Keble students from similar backgrounds. The platform is moderated by members of the access and outreach team. Applicants can either 'chat' with individual students or take part in live Q & A events. In July 2021 we renewed our contract with them for 2 years. Indicatively, from 15 January 2022 to 15 January 2023, 107 new accounts were created on the platform. Of those prospects, 35 applied to Oxford (33%). 11 put down Keble as their first-choice college, and 11 got offers from a variety of colleges (meaning that 1/3 of those who applied obtained offers).



Pop-up window on the Keble website, which enables school students to chat with current Keble at Large Ambassadors.



Keble at Large

Keble at Large (KAL) is our society of student volunteers that actively contributes to all the activities listed in this report. It is set up to bust myths about Oxford, encourage people from underrepresented backgrounds to apply, and offer students practical advice for admissions. Apart from facilitating school tours and workshops for state school students, usually from our link region of Birmingham and the West Midlands, KAL volunteers connect with students through a variety of outreach channels. Via the [KAL Instagram](#) (1,800 followers), students have done takeovers, giving insight into what life is like on their degree and answering any questions that prospective applicants may have. KAL volunteers also enhance our [Keble Outreach YouTube channel](#) with student-produced videos offering interviews advice in different subjects, footage of college accommodation, and a student-led perspective of life at Keble (54,000 views).

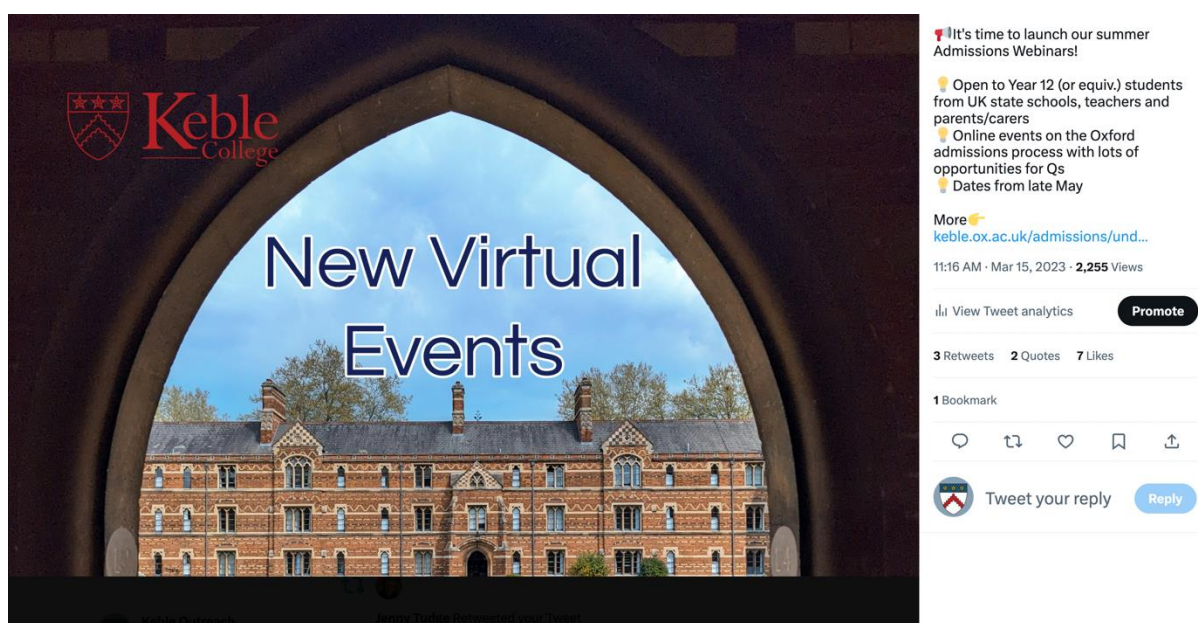
Virtual & Digital Outreach

Although we were glad to welcome outreach groups and prospective students back into college during 2021-22, we have embraced the flexible nature of digital tools and virtual Access and Outreach events as an ongoing fixture of its programme. Various information and guidance sessions are available for age groups from primary school to sixth formers making applications to the University.

We continue to collaborate with Oriel and University Colleges (the Oxford for West Midlands Consortium) and Cambridge colleges linked to the same region on webinar sessions offering a comprehensive guide to Oxbridge and its admissions process for sixth form students. Oxford for West Midlands also ran a virtual teachers' conference in February 2022, which was targeted at, but not limited to, teachers in this area. Sessions included overviews of admissions tests and how to prepare for them; a mock interview delivered by a Keble Chemistry fellow; and insights on setting up an Oxbridge support programme in a school environment. Resources have been recorded and are kept on file for future use by the schools we work with. Keble also participated in University-wide virtual initiatives, such as the Opportunity Oxford Welcome Day event in February 2022.

During the summer term, we established a series of Admissions Webinars open to state school students from all areas, including information and guidance on preparing for

admissions tests and interviews; introducing the college and tutorial systems; and offering lots of opportunities for questions to be answered. More than 800 students registered for at least one of these webinars, with peak attendance of just over 200 at the most popular sessions. A separate session was hosted for parents, carers and supporters. Feedback for these sessions was very positive and meant that demand for similar sessions from schools in our link areas could be managed efficiently during a busy term which saw the return of school visits and Subject Taster Days. Our team heard from many Open Day visitors that they had decided to visit Keble due to how useful and enjoyable they (or their parents) had found the sessions. We keep in touch with schools and interested audiences through updates posted regular on our [Outreach Twitter account](#).



Launch of Admissions Webinars on the Keble Outreach Twitter handle

Open Days

Keble welcomed the return of in-person Open Day provision, beginning June 2022. The college received approximately 3000 visitors across the events on 28th & 29th June, and a further 700-800 on 16th September. A large team of student ambassadors, recruited principally from Keble at Large, gave hundreds of tours and answered even more questions to prospective applicants, their families and supporters. For the first time, the college trialled an Offer Holder event held as part of the first June Open Day, which was well received by attendees and enabled them to take advantage of the Open Day programme (view accommodation, etc). We also trialled a new tutor panels arrangement in September.

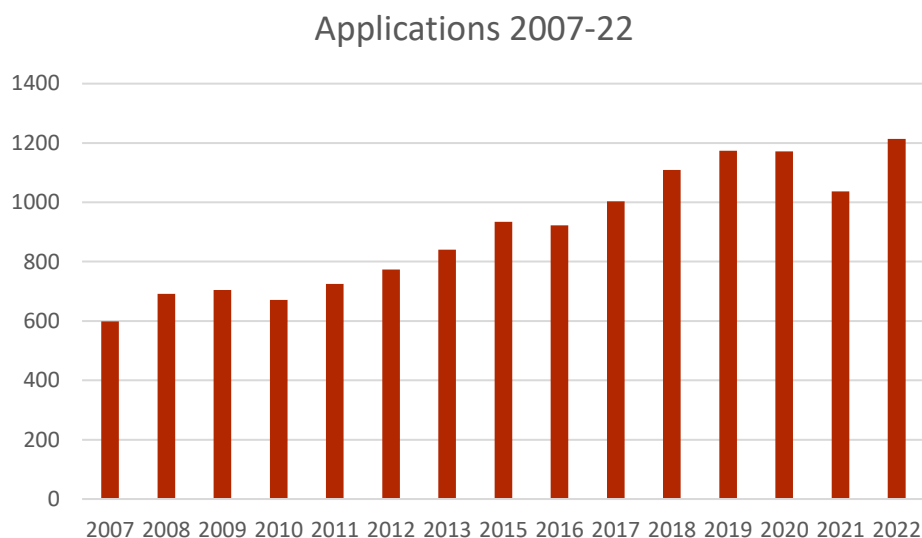
UNIQ+

UNIQ+ is the University's Access programme for postgraduate students. It is aimed at talented undergraduates from under-represented groups, who would find continuing into postgraduate study a challenge for reasons other than their academic ability. Keble supported UNIQ+ in 2022 by offering subsidised accommodation for their residential programme at the HB Allen Centre and will continue to do so in 2023.

Applications and Admissions December 2022

Applications

In the December 2022 admissions round there were 1214 individual applications to Keble, which was well up on the previous year and our highest ever as a college. The number of applications to the whole University, by contrast, was slightly down on 2021.



Applications to Keble alone have doubled in the period 2007-2022 and it has become increasingly impractical to interview everyone who applies. We shortlist applicants for interview according to criteria agreed across the colleges for each subject and there are marked variations in the proportion of applicants who are shortlisted. In 2022 only 38% of applicants were shortlisted. A very large number of applicants, the vast majority of whom have achieved and/or are predicted to achieve top grades in their school exams, were therefore disappointed. Of those who applied to us, 14% were made offers at Keble or another college. We ourselves made 136 offers, including two for entry in 2024.

Because some subjects received many more applicants per place than others, and because some (now most) make use of pre-interview tests, the exact criteria for shortlisting vary. At least for UK applicants, tutors are able to make use to an increasing amount of contextual information, about individual candidates, the areas they come from, and their relative school performance, to inform their decisions. More information on how we use contextual data can be found [here](#) on the University's website. More context for this process can be found in the University's [Access and Participation Plan](#).

Although some subjects are more popular than others in terms of their applications, we always encourage prospective applicants to go for what really interests them. We think they will do best in studying that way.

Admissions

The University (and therefore by extension the colleges) have agreed an [Access and Participation Plan](#) with the Office for Students.

Part of this plan ('participation') is about improving the performance of key groups while on course, notably by reducing or eliminating gaps in attainment. Part concerns access, how Oxford is going to address its well-known inequalities in admissions. A key element of this plan is the setting of new and more demanding targets for admitting students from areas of lower participation in higher education (POLAR4) and/or socio-economic disadvantage (ACORN), as well as from under-represented groups. The three main targets are:

- Target 1: to reduce the gap in participation rates for disadvantaged students (ACORN) to 3:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 2: to reduce the gap in participation rates for under-represented students (POLAR4) to 8:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 3: to eliminate the gap in offer rates for Asian applicants by 2021-22.

The University publishes an annual [Admissions Statistical Report](#) which is accessible from its website. This report contains statistics about socio-economic disadvantage, gender and ethnicity, and school type for each subject and college. These figures are retrospective and they concern 'accepts', i.e. students who take up their places at the start of the year, rather than 'offers', i.e. students to whom offers have been made. The figures are presented as three-year rolling averages, which evens out some of the normal annual variation.

The following sections report on Keble's performance on some of the key access measures, with a focus on the most recent admissions round (which is not included in the University's report).

Socio-economic disadvantage

The access targets agreed across the University are expressed as ratios between the most and least advantaged or represented quintiles of POLAR and ACORN classifications. The lower the ratio, the closer the College or University is to the target.

In the tables below the years are the year of main entry of that cohort, i.e. 2023 refers to applicants who were interviewed in December 2022 and made offers in January 2023. The targets refer to arrivals (students accepted) but the figures in the table are for offers. Not all offer-holders meet the conditions of their offer and a few of those that do nonetheless decline their offer, so there will always be slight differences between the two measures.

Year	ACORN Target	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	4.7:1	2.5:1	2.9:1
2021	4.3:1	2.9:1	2.7:1
2022	3.7:1	3.7:1	2.6:1
2023	3.3:1	2.9: 1	2.9:1
2024	3.0:1		

Year	POLAR target	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	14.5:1	7.9:1	7.6:1
2021	13.1:1	7.5:1	6.3:1
2022	10.8:1	5.8:1	6.0:1
2023	9.4:1	7.7:1	7.9:1
2024	8.1:1		

As far as Keble is concerned, we started off in a strong position in 2019 and have made in the right direction but at a rate lower than intended. Although it is difficult to assess trends based on relatively small numbers over just four year, nonetheless we recognise that this prompts us to avoid complacency and maintain our access and outreach efforts.

Nine offers were made under the University's [Opportunity Oxford programme](#), which was within the target range. In addition, a further 8 standard offers were made to candidates flagged as Opportunity Oxford.

School type

Although none of the University's access targets refer to the type of school applicants attend, i.e. state or independent, there is, understandably, intense public scrutiny in this measure as a proxy for inequality. The greater availability of contextual data, for example on whether applicants qualify for free school meals or have been in care, makes it less and less meaningful to use such proxies.

Of offers made to applicants from the UK in the most recent round, 65 per cent were to students from state schools. This was below the level of the previous year (75%), although the medium-term trend is upwards. The admissions data we get do not enable us to fully distinguish between selective and non-selective state schools.

Other data

In the 2022 admission round: 47% of offers were to female applicants (the same as the level of applications); 15% were to applicants who reported some kind of disability (13% of applicants); 82% were to Home (UK) students (74% of applications). Detailed figures by ethnicity are published in the [University's annual report on admissions data](#). In the most recent completed round for which data are available (admission in 2019-2021), 26% of accepts were classified as BME.

Aspirations and Future Plans

We think we have recovered well from the challenges posed by the pandemic, and we are encouraged by the renewed level of interest from schools and students for our in-person events. Some of the results have been very encouraging but we are not complacent about the challenges we face. We want to strengthen our access agenda with additional programmes and plans for consistent evaluation of our activities. We have history of supporting the University's [UNIQ](#) summer residentials for Yr12 students from underrepresented backgrounds, which we intend to keep offering. We also support UNIQ+, the equivalent programme that assists graduate students with opportunities for further

study. The college's participation in the Astrophoria Foundation Year, starting October 2023, our efforts to increase bursary support, as well as our ambition to launch a bespoke aspiration programme in the West Midlands should set us on track for making further progress.