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Supporting disadvantaged students through contextual admissions and foundation years

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What we will cover

- What are contextual offer / access schemes / foundation year programmes and how to find them
- How to find the right course for your students
- Understanding eligibility criteria
- The benefits of taking part
- Understanding the conditions for completion
- Support for younger year groups



What's the difference?

Contextual offer schemes

- Usually automatically applied to eligible applicants
- Typically a 1 grade drop on the standard offer
- Often only looking for 1 or 2 characteristics in order to be eligible
- No additional work or participation required

Access schemes

- Usually need to be applied to separately
- Typically applied to and completed during year 12 or 13
- Often a bigger grade drop (min 2 grades) and financial support available
- Often looking for more socio-economic factors to be met for eligibility
- Usually requires participation/completion of activity during year 12/13

Foundation year programmes

- Usually a 1-year course completed after Year 13 (or equiv) and before starting a full undergraduate degree
- Applied to during Year 13, often through UCAS
- Often for students without specific subjects needed, e.g. no Maths A Level
- Not usually looking at specific socio-economic characteristics



Examples of the different schemes

Contextual offer schemes

UoB Contextual offer scheme – 1 grade drop for all P4Q1 applicants

Warwick contextual offers – 2 grade drop for all P4Q1 applicants / from school performing below national average

Access programmes

Pathways to Birmingham – 2 grade drop and financial aid, completion of activities throughout Y12/13

Realising Opportunities Programme – access programme across 15 HEIs, starting in Y12, with grade drop & financial aid

Warwick Scholars – up to 4 grade drop, financial aid, engagement with activities throughout Y12/3

Foundation year programmes

EPS Futures – foundation year in Engineering and Physical Sciences for state school students without A Level Maths

WBS Foundation Year – foundation year for Accounting & Finance or Management degrees for LAC, refugees, P4Q1 or school performing below national average



How to find relevant schemes

Search university websites using keywords

Google search using keywords

Contact local universities' Outreach, Recruitment or Widening Participation teams

Keywords to search for: outreach, access, widening participation, foundation year, contextual offers

Sign up to mailing lists from universities

Find events at unis via websites such as **unitasterdays.com**



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Which programme is right for your students?

- ✓ Read the website carefully to find the full eligibility criteria
- ✓ Understand which parts are required (e.g. region, school) and which parts are additional
- ✓ Make a note of any deadlines early on – which year group is it targeting?
- ✓ What is the focus of the programme? Subject specific or general?
- ✓ What are the conditions?
- ✓ Don't hesitate to contact the university if you're not sure!



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Identifying eligible students

Nikita

Household income £80k pa. Adopted at a young age.

Oluwafemi

Household income £120k. Lost a parent at the end of Y12.

Ryan

Attended school performing below national average until Y10, then moved to a high-performing state school.

Sadiq

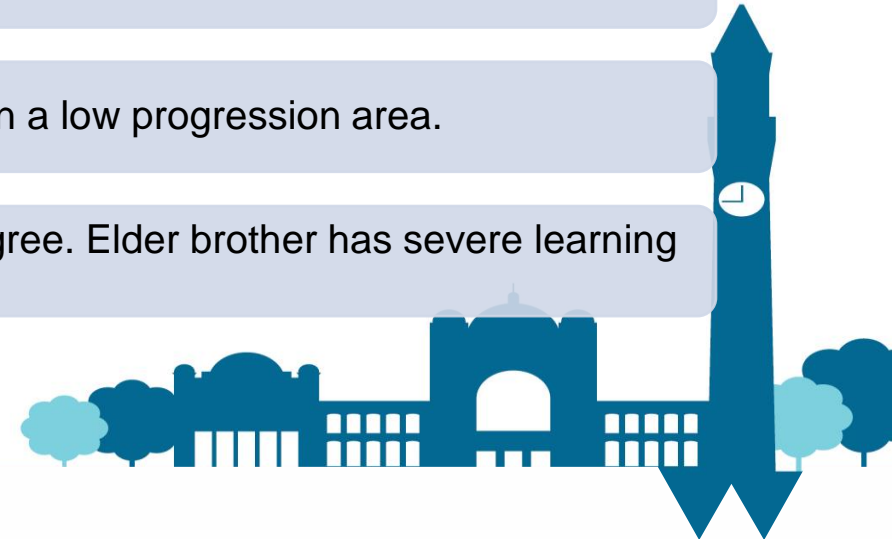
Attends high-performing state school. Estranged from parents.

Salma

Brother attends local university. Lives in a low progression area.

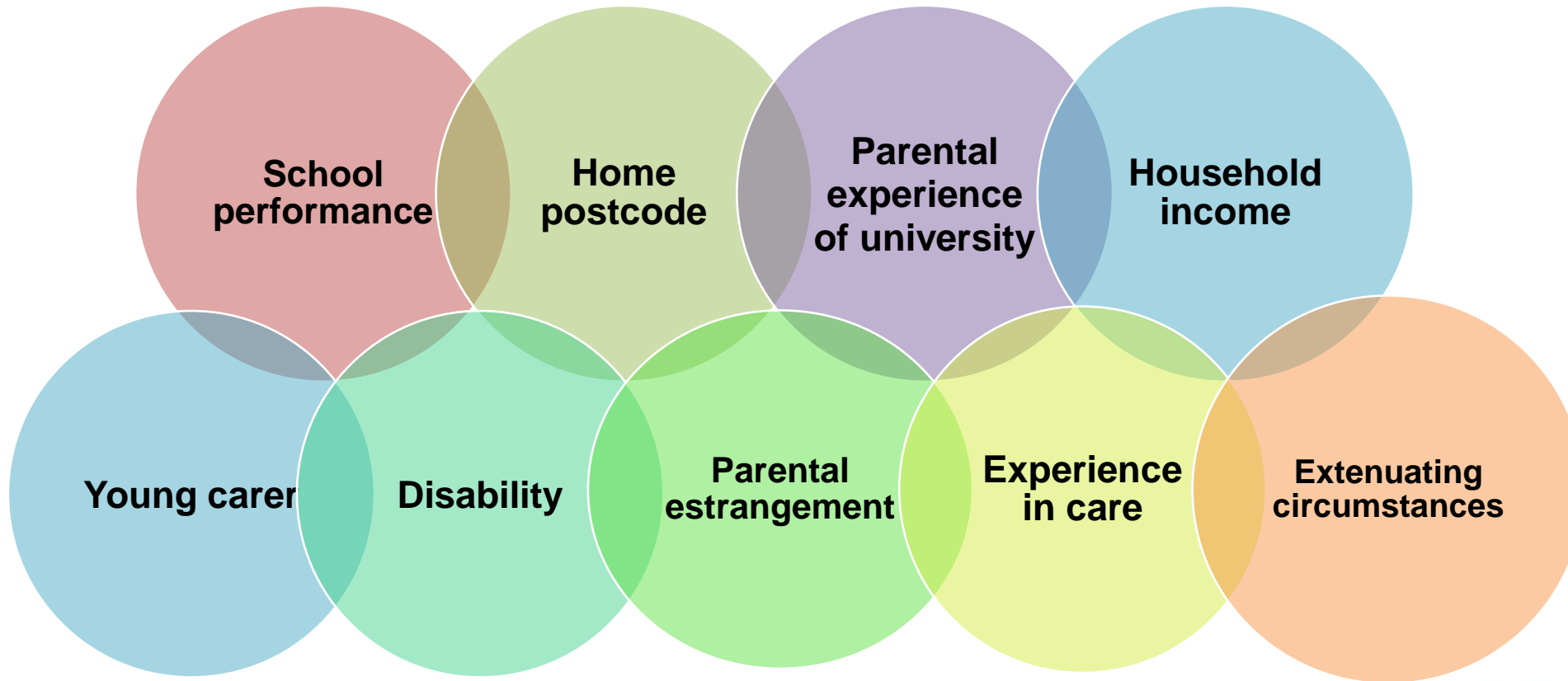
Yi

Single parent family with university degree. Elder brother has severe learning difficulties.



Understanding Eligibility Criteria

Lots of access schemes will look at a range of criteria, such as:



- Full guidance can usually be found online
- Some criteria might be required, other optional
- What is the minimum number of criteria that need to be met?
- Is it a selective programme or can all eligible students participate?
- What is considered as extenuating circumstances?
- What do you need to do as the support teacher?
- Is any parental input needed?



Benefits of participating in these schemes



Try out a university assignment / activity



Meet academic staff before they start



Insights into university teaching and learning



Develop skills for success



Meet other students before they start uni



Visit university campuses and get insights into uni life



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Benefits of completing A2B

- ✓ An alternative offer typically **2 grades lower** than standard offer
- ✓ Financial support of up to **£3,500 per year**
- ✓ Kick-Off Event when you join UoB
- ✓ Become a Birmingham Scholar and access bespoke support and opportunities

Benefits of completing Warwick Scholars

- ✓ Reduced offer up to **4 grades lower**
- ✓ Bursary of **up to £2,000** and **50% tuition fee discount** per year
- ✓ 1-to-1 A Level tuition
- ✓ Campus visits and residentials



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Student Feedback

“ Before having attended the programme I was extremely nervous and honestly dreaded attending the programme. But I am **so grateful for the experience** as it provided me with a **much needed insight** into what to expect from university. I **enjoyed the opportunity massively** and would 100% recommend to other students.

A2B Student 2021

Being a Warwick Scholar has provided me with **opportunities, support, and community**, throughout applying to university and while being a Warwick student, that I could have never even thought of when I applied. It has made applying to and becoming a university student in uncertain times **feel less daunting** and isolating and **I couldn't recommend it enough!**

Warwick Scholar, 2021

”



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Understanding the conditions

Most access schemes will require students to do something in order to access the benefits. This might be:

- Attending information events on campus
- Academic activity or assignment
- Online content to work through
- Mentoring schemes
- Student shadowing
- Quizzes

This information might be on the programme website, or might be given directly to students. Ask any participating students about the deadlines and tasks.

Contact the programme team if you want more information.



Support for younger year groups

Talks in
schools

Visits to
campus

University
taster days

Programmes
for pre-16
pupils

Masterclasses

Online
materials



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Thank you for listening!

To find out more about the schemes offered by the Universities of Birmingham and Warwick, contact us at:
outreach@contacts.bham.ac.uk | outreach@warwick.ac.uk