

Transitions to HE for Mature, Widening Participation Students.

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Transitions to HE for Mature, Widening Participation Students

1. Barriers faced by students
2. Pre-entry programmes
3. Impact
4. Online delivery



uel.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/new-begnings



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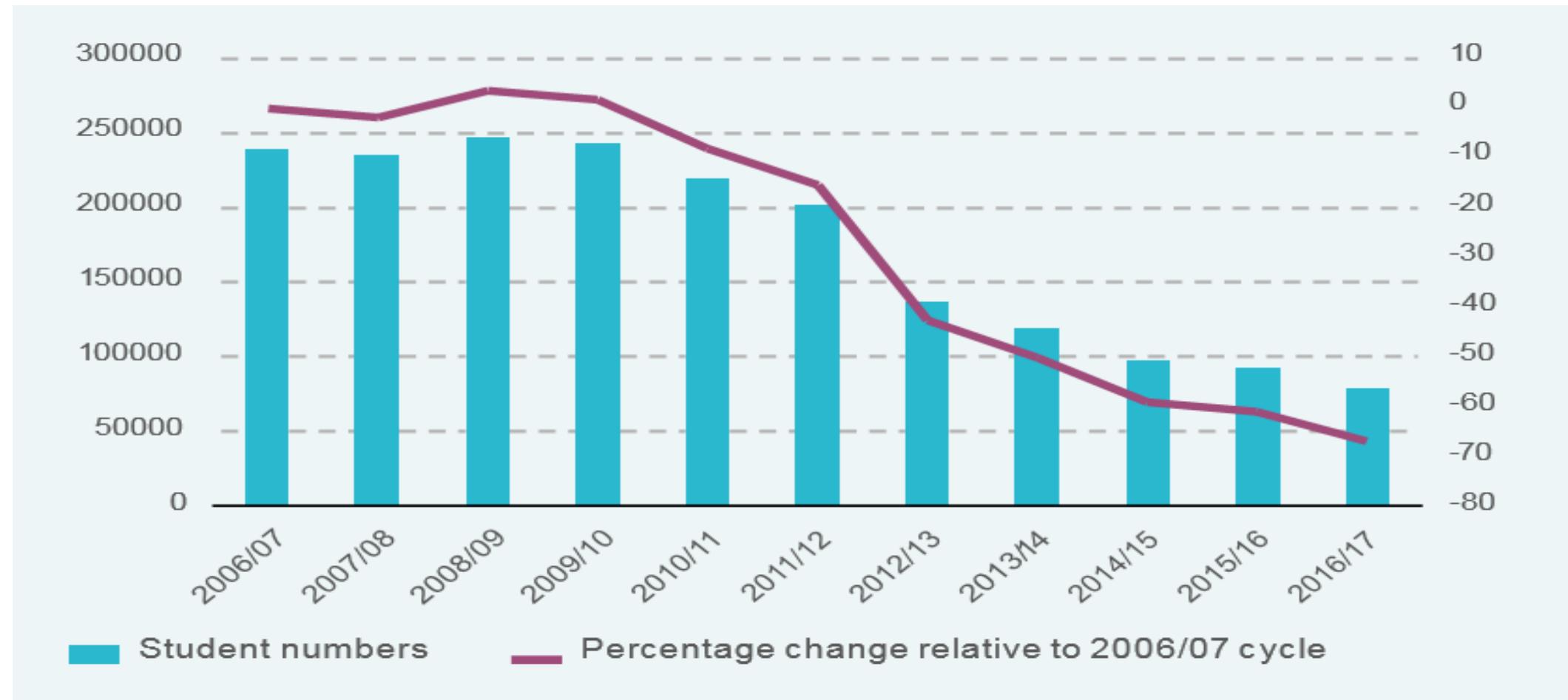
Mature Student Entrants (UG): National Overview



MillionPlus, 2018:22

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Part-Time Mature Student Entrants (UG): National Overview



Mature Students by age - percentage change



- The average age of pre-entry students at UEL is 30
- According to the most recent census data from 2011 there were 8.4 million people in England and Wales aged between 25-74 with level 2 or 3 qualification/s however without a level 4 qualification (ONS, 2014).

Mature Student common characteristics

‘mature students are more likely than the general student population to be from groups disadvantaged in higher education.’ (OfS, 2018)

- Parent/Carer
- BAME
- Care experienced
- Estranged
- (dis)Ability/learning differences
- Ex-Military
- People with convictions
- Individual differences

Mature Students - Common challenges

- Lack of confidence
- 1st in family to be in HE – lack insider info re practices and jargon
- Time and space (online learning)
- Other priorities

Overview of pre-entry courses at UEL

- New Beginnings

www.uel.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/new-beginnings

- Introduction to Law

www.uel.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/law-short-course

- Get Into Nursing

www.uel.ac.uk/study/information-advice-guidance

New Beginnings - the Course

10 week
short course

For mature
applicants who do
not meet UG entry
requirements

Entry to a
wide range of
courses

Focus on
academic and
personal skills
development

New Beginnings - Impact

- 72% of UEL undergraduate students who come through New Beginnings complete their undergraduate degree with a 1st or 2:1
- The BAME awarding gap is reduced by 10 points

New Beginnings students are successful

because they know:

- how to study
- how to use their strengths
- how to mitigate their weaknesses
- how to identify their needs
- how to find support
- how to get the best out of the university

New Beginnings - Why it works

- Administration of the course and tracking student progress
- The student experience
- Access to information
- Inclusive pedagogy and collaborative learning
- Institution wide engagement

Institution wide engagement

- Academics
- Admissions
- Academic Tutoring
- Disability and Dyslexia Access Centre
- Information, Advice and Guidance Team
- IT services
- Library Services
- SMART
- Student Life and Wellbeing

New Beginnings

- What we teach and what students learn

- Confidence
- Independence
- Pro-activity
- Reflection

New Beginnings - Outcomes

Progress to
UG study

Progress to
Level 3

Refer to
external course

Repeat NB

Student feedback

What students think works well:

- ‘This course eliminates the fear of studying at university.’
- ‘This course helped with my confidence issue.’
- ‘I found it helpful because I learnt specific strategies.’
- ‘Having a schedule helped me to get organised.’

Student feedback

What students think could be improved:

- 'Can tutorials be straight after the seminar so I can work more?'
- 'Can we start earlier so that I can get more done in the afternoon?'
- 'I would have liked more on referencing.'

Student feedback

What students think works well:

- 'NB [New Beginnings] has reminded me of the person who was active learner decades ago. I thought that person was lost for good but thanks to NB I am back. Can't thank you enough.'

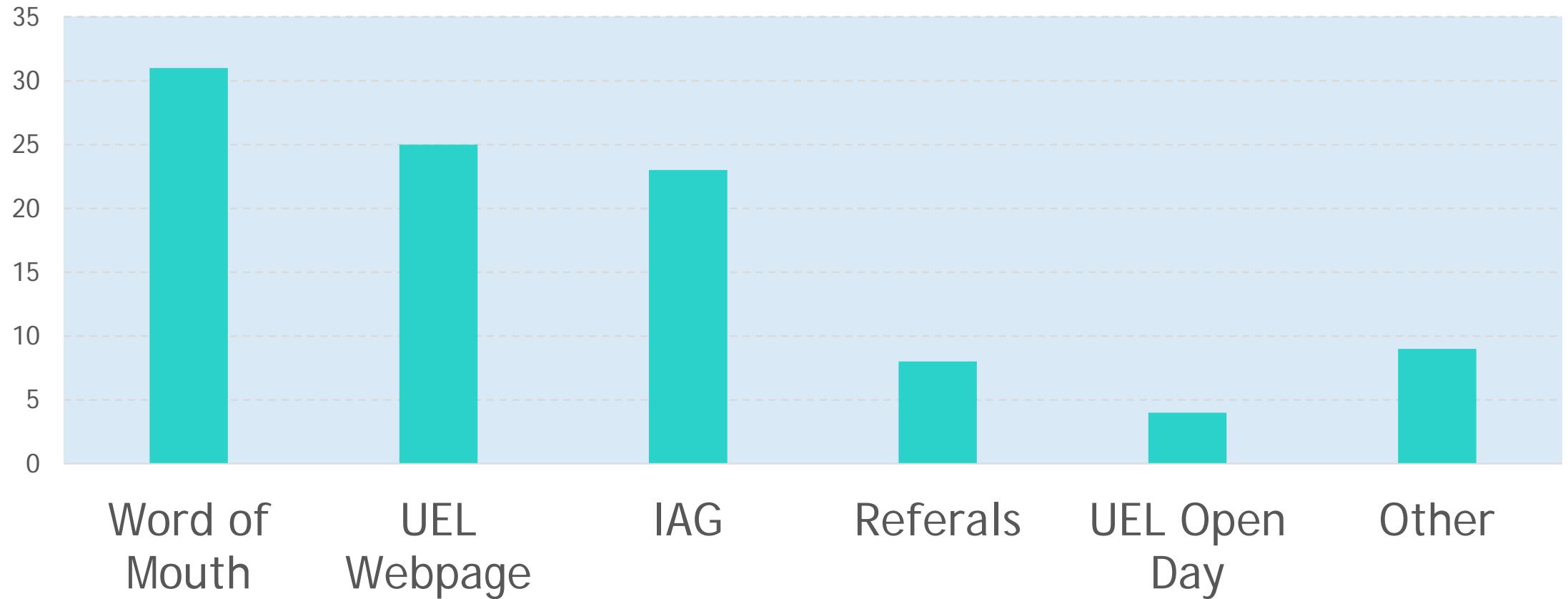
Student feedback

What students think works well:

- 'I have loved turning up each week, knowing that I am working towards having an actual career that I choose and don't just do as a job because I have a family to feed.'

How New Beginnings students first find out about the course

Method of becoming engaged with New Beginnings (%)





Winner

Widening Participation or Outreach
Initiative of the Year

“It address many of the barriers to access experienced by mature students and has been sustained over many years. Although programmes of this nature exist in many institutions, what sets New Beginnings apart is the evidence of impact on enrolment in university courses and subsequent success” the panel said.

Online Delivery of pre-entry courses – Challenges

- Many students very unsure and anxious at the beginning of the online lecture



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Evolved practice

- Display welcome slide and give/repeat guidance on use and issues with technology

Welcome to New Beginnings

Today's online New
Beginnings session will
begin at 10am.

Please use the chat box to
greet your fellow students
and ask any questions.



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Online Delivery of pre-entry courses – Challenges

- An unmanageable number of comments in the chat box

Evolved practice

- Use of likes and emojis



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To manage the number of comments in the chat please use likes and emojis when possible to respond positively to comments.

Currently on a break until 12:30pm



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Online Delivery of pre-entry courses – Challenges

- Students' responses to questions delayed and overlapping responses to other questions

Evolved practice

- Spacing out of questions and use of on-screen prompt for when responses are required

eg. 'Please post responses in the chat'



Online Delivery of pre-entry courses – Challenges

- Time issues with online presentations and peer feedback

Evolved practice

- Peer feedback form moved from Word to MS Forms



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Online Delivery of pre-entry courses – Lessons learned

1. Clear and consistent routines help students feel more confident in the online environment
2. Student engagement monitoring through Teams online contributions, maintaining a connected class
3. Lack of non-verbal communication puts added importance on clarity of visual resources and use of voice



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A final thought from Freire

‘Whoever teaches learns in the act of teaching,
and whoever learns teaches in the act of learning’
(Freire, 1998:31).

*Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage,
Lanham, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.*

Any Questions?

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