

Title: **Widening Access and Participation Dashboards for Data Informed Decision-Making.**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Evaluate HE WAP policy, practice and approaches to evidence-based data-informed decision-making that can guide educational interventions and lead to student success, measurable by improved student satisfaction, retention, attainment and/or learning gain.
- Explain and evaluate the key features of WAP data processes at Ulster University and compare these features with practice elsewhere.
- Analyse and plan how the sector can share practice regarding evidence-based ways of making data-informed decisions for WAP objectives.

Session Outline

Participants will consider WAP policy, practice and approaches to data informed decision-making for learning gain within Higher Education. The presenters will share how Ulster University collects and analyses a wide range of student data in compliance with GDPR in order to develop reports, visualisations and dashboards that inform WAP decision-making. Directed discussion and sharing of practices about how other delegates approach WAP impact will be encouraged and facilitated.

Increasingly Ulster University staff and without doubt other educational development and/or teaching staff externally are seeking new evidence-based ways of supporting students as Universities are keen to prove impact and make data-informed WAP decisions that support students during their entire student lifecycle from pre-entry through to employability. Professor Les Ebdon has commented that universities should use learning analytics to boost fair access and retention as ***“an effective approach to access should not stop at the front door when a person enters higher education.”***

Ulster University recognises that different stakeholders have different data needs and therefore adopts a collaborative partnership approach to collate, interpret and visualise data. University data is used to make data-informed decisions that guide educational interventions which can lead to student success and can be measured by improved

student satisfaction, retention, attainment and/or learning gain. Key data objectives include:

- Understanding the student profile and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Analysing trends in access, participation and success.
- Promoting equity and inclusivity in admissions and student performance.
- Ensuring consistency and robustness in defining and measuring targets to enhance WAP.
- Safeguarding objective profiling of schools and areas of low participation for support.

This discussion paper session will also showcase examples of data visualisations at Ulster University, Faculty, School, Programme (Course) and Student levels and will provide opportunities to discuss lessons learned. Delegates will be supported to analyse and plan actions for their own applications and about to how share practice.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

45-minute integrated presentation and directed discussions to encourage delegates to consider WAP policy and practice, approaches at Ulster University and elsewhere and consider actions regarding how practice could be adopted/shared. The presentation will be divided into three parts with interactivity, questions and answers encouraged/embedded throughout.

- **Part 1: WAP policy, practice and data based decision-making approaches at Ulster University and elsewhere [15 minutes]**
 - Presenters will share how Ulster University collects and analyses student data in compliance with GDPR to develop reports, visualisations and dashboards that inform WAP decision-making. They will also cover policy, practice and objectives. Presenters will also share Ulster University's collaborative partnership approach adopted to collate, interpret and visualise data in order to promote evidence-based ways of making data-informed WAP decisions for learning gain. Presenters will facilitate and invite direct discussion which encourages delegates to share practices about how they approach evidence-based ways of supporting students for WAP objectives.
- **Part 2: Visualisations and Dashboards for WAP Data informed Decision-Making [20 minutes]:**
 - During this part of the discussion paper session the presenters will also showcase examples of data visualisations at Ulster University, Faculty, School, Programme (Course) and Student levels. The presenters will discuss lessons learned and discuss how delegates could go about implementing similar approaches.
 - The presenters will invite questions and encourage discussion and sharing of practice about how other Institutions visualise data and seek to prove WAP impact.

- **Part 3: Action Planning for WAP Based Decision-Making. [10 minutes]:**
 - Delegates will be supported to discuss approaches and analyse/share if and/or how approaches may be transferrable across institutions.
 - Participants will be encouraged to plan actions as to how WAP data informed decision-making could be deployed/adapted in their institutions in light of discussions.
 - Presenters will facilitate tasks to share practice and will collate responses/share with all participants afterwards.

References

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