



YOUR INVESTMENT IN BIRMINGHAM STUDENTS



Your generosity is enabling Birmingham students to flourish.

Alaric Rae, Director of Student Recruitment

Welcome to the fourth edition of our annual Access to Education Report.

Thank you for helping students to excel at Birmingham, regardless of their background. Social inclusion has been at the heart of the University of Birmingham since it was founded in 1900 by Joseph Chamberlain. Birmingham was England's first civic university, where students from all religions and backgrounds were accepted on an equal basis. We have a proud history of upholding this vision, and it remains at our heart today.

Our broad outreach programme has increased social mobility and improved the diversity of students accessing higher education. More than 80 per cent of our undergraduates are drawn from state schools, with over 23 per cent taken from areas with traditionally low progression to university.

This year we are especially proud to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Access to

Birmingham Scholarships. Over the past decade, more than 830 students have benefitted from receiving an A2B Scholarship, generously supported by donors like you. The recent abolition of undergraduate maintenance grants, coupled with a rise in living costs, presents barriers to bright and talented under-represented students from studying at Birmingham. We are committed to reducing these obstacles as far as possible and, in support of this, we have increased the A2B scholarship to £1,500pa.

On behalf of the University, and our student community, thank you for your support. Your generosity enables students to flourish, and equips them with the skills, confidence and opportunities to succeed, both during their time at Birmingham and in their future.

Alaric Rae, Director of Student Recruitment

BROADENING HORIZONS THROUGH ACCESS TO BIRMINGHAM (A2B)

Often educational progress is not based on achievement alone. There are strong links between socio-economic background and the likelihood of an individual accessing university. For example, only 16 per cent of students who are eligible for free school meals go on to study at university. The Access to Birmingham (A2B) Scheme is designed to help change this, targeting

students who have come from families with little or no previous experience of higher education. Established in 2000, the scheme is now widely emulated by other universities, and is one of the longest running and largest access schemes of its kind. More than six per cent of Birmingham undergraduates are recruited through the scheme annually.



Current student

'Whilst deciding whether to apply to university, I was worried about how I would afford the cost of daily living, as I knew my parents wouldn't be able to support me financially. Without the A2B scholarship, I wouldn't have been able to move away for university.'

'The scholarship has helped cover the cost of food and accommodation, and even my sports membership. I now compete in the British Universities and Colleges Sport League in Canoe, Polo and Volleyball. I've got involved in many activities at university and without the scholarship this would have been very difficult.'

Bethany Wragg (Third Year, Sport, Physical Education and Coaching Science)

Recent graduate

'It means an awful lot for me to graduate. It means I've succeeded in a goal I've set for myself. It means I've achieved something no-one else in my family has previously done.'

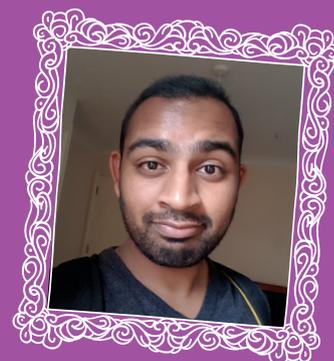
'The A2B scholarship has been a godsend. It meant I didn't have to work in my last year, allowing me to concentrate on my studies. It helped so much and gave me so many opportunities to get the most out of university and to broaden my horizons.'

'I've now got a taste for academia and I am going on to study a Masters in Biosciences. One day I would love to have a publication with my name on.'

Darwin Hickman (BSc Environmental Science, 2016)

'I'm extremely proud of him. He worked so hard to achieve what he has. Thank you to everyone who has supported him, it's been a great help.'

Darwin's Mum



Two years after graduating

'Coming from a less advantaged background, the A2B scholarship made a huge difference to me. It meant I didn't need to worry about my finances, or about buying supplies needed for study throughout my time at university. It helped cover the cost of essentials such as rent and food, and some of it even went to paying for travel to interviews. Without the scholarship I would have been under extreme financial pressure.'

'When I graduated I was successful in gaining a job as a Credit Risk Analyst for a financial services company. Since then, I have progressed into a role as a Statistical Analyst and I am now training to become an Actuary.'

'I know how much the scholarship has helped me get to where I am today, and I want to help give someone else that same opportunity. That's why I've chosen to support A2B scholarships at Birmingham, and I intend to continue supporting them in the future.'

Abdul Amin (MSci Mathematics, 2014)

THERE ARE NOW

240

A2B PARTNER SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, UP FROM 107 IN 2006

MORE THAN

82%

INCREASE IN A2B APPLICATIONS SINCE 2010

830

A2B STUDENTS HAVE BENEFITTED FROM SCHOLARSHIPS



SHAPING EDUCATION IN BIRMINGHAM

The University of Birmingham School has now entered its second full year of operation, recently welcoming a second cohort of Year 7 students from 63 different primary schools across the city. The School's world-class facilities, combined with its commitment to character education and curriculum enrichment, is raising the aspirations of children from across Birmingham.



'In 2015, the University of Birmingham School opened to provide an outstanding education for all, regardless of background or prior attainment. A year on from our historic first day, we have remained true to this vision.'

'It has been a wonderful start to life here at the School. In the last year we have seen our pupils thrive and mature, and enjoy every opportunity that has been available to them.'

Alongside our academic curriculum, we champion character education to support our students to develop as well-rounded people.

'As the first secondary University Training School, we are at the forefront of pedagogical innovation. Following the model of teaching hospitals, our trainee teachers work closely alongside experienced and outstanding practitioners to learn and develop. We aim to make a significant contribution to the recruitment and education of the next generation of outstanding teachers in the city, and in the region.'

'On behalf of the whole School community, thank you to everyone who has so generously given to support the School.'

Mike Roden, Principal of the University of Birmingham School

'On my first day I was surprised at how big the School is, but I'm really enjoying being here and I've definitely grown in confidence. I love all the different subjects and opportunities I can get involved with. Debating, sport, baking – there's lots of enrichment activities to choose from! They help make you a better person, not just more academic.'

Sascha Sturgeon, Year 8

What giving means to me



'I give to support students at Birmingham as I feel I have an obligation to give something back to help others access the opportunities that I myself have benefitted from. By supporting A2B Scholarships at Birmingham I feel that I am achieving that and I enjoy giving back.'

*Laurence Hollingworth (LLB Law, 1979)
Donor to A2B Scholarships*



'We are both alumni and feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to study at Birmingham. We support A2B scholarships to ensure students from all backgrounds are able to access the same incredible opportunity, particularly as today's funding environment is more difficult than it was in our day.'

*Lesley (BSc Chemistry, 1974) and
Neil Lethby (BSc Chemistry, 1974)*



'We have been part of the A2B scheme for many years now and a substantial number of our students have benefitted from the support it offers.'

'In my opinion, the A2B scheme is the best scheme of its kind by far, and it's a model to which other universities aspire. The scheme is very good at identifying those who can really benefit from it. It develops a real sense of purpose and provides a smooth and well-supported transition to University.'

*Trevor Irving, Assistant Principal,
The Sixth Form College, Solihull.*

YOU ARE AT THE HEART OF BIRMINGHAM'S FUTURE

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of A2B scholarships, and as a small token of our appreciation for your generous support, we are inviting donors who have given £200 or more in 2016/17 to support students at Birmingham, the chance to be part of campus forever.

As part of our Green Heart development, which will open up the campus for students, staff and the local community to enjoy, a special donors' path will be created. The individual bricks that make up the path will be inscribed with the names of all those who give £200 or more in this tenth anniversary year of A2B scholarships. These bricks will commemorate your generosity in enabling young people to follow in your footsteps and study at Birmingham.

Look out for more information to follow in future months.



GATEWAY BURSARY: FUNDING FOR INTERNSHIPS

The Gateway Bursary scheme provides financial support for students undertaking internships or work experience they may otherwise not be able to afford.

Karolina Pakenaite (Third Year, MSc Mathematics with a Year in Computer Science) recently received a bursary to volunteer in Sri Lanka with VoluntEars, an organisation working with local schools for deaf children.



'I would like to say a huge thank you to the donors who have financially supported me to be a part of VoluntEars. This experience not only helped me develop my skills, but has also helped me to get back on my feet and combat my depression.

'A couple of months ago, I was diagnosed with Usher syndrome, which means that my vision will degenerate in the next decade. I already have a hearing impairment and became very fearful at the thought of having to contend with challenges in both my hearing and vision. Working with VoluntEars was a good therapy and distraction from this stress and I received amazing support from the team. Coming back to the UK, I became stronger than I have ever been. I have never felt so hopeful and inspired for my future.

'Without the Gateway Bursary, I would not have been able to take up this opportunity.

Thank you!

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

We are pleased to announce that in addition to our current access to education and widening participation programmes, we are fundraising for a new suite of student support initiatives. This includes:

- **Carer Bursaries** – to support young carers (between 16–25-year-olds) with the day-to-day living costs of studying at Birmingham.
- **Music and Sports Scholarships** – to inspire and equip the most talented students to excel at Birmingham.
- **International Scholarships** – to assist the brightest and best scholars from Hong Kong and Malaysia to study at Birmingham.
- **Postgraduate Scholarships** – to ensure financial concerns are not a barrier to carrying out groundbreaking research at Birmingham.



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