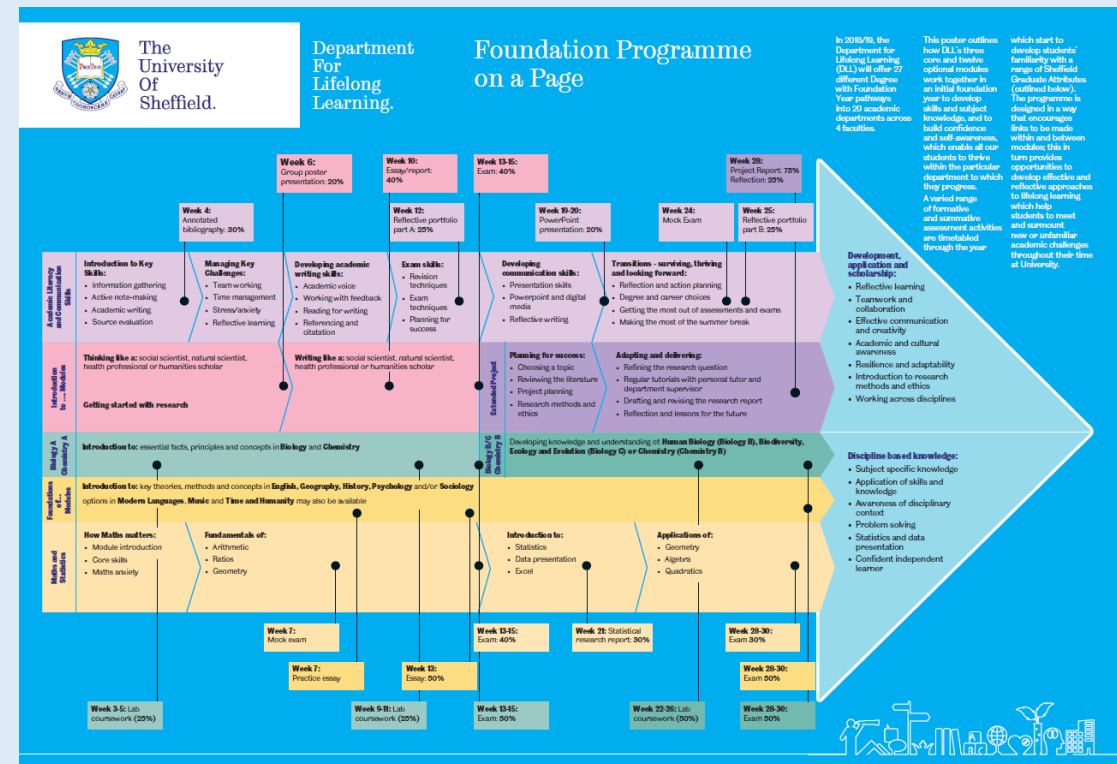


# Access, participation & success – degrees with integrated foundation year for mature students at the University of Sheffield

*How can HEIs attract greater numbers of mature learners?*  
NEON Summit 13 May 2020

Dr Willy Kitchen – Head of Department  
Helen Roy – Marketing and External Relations Manager  
Department for Lifelong Learning  
University of Sheffield



# From Division of Adult Continuing Education to Department for Lifelong Learning ...

Access to what?

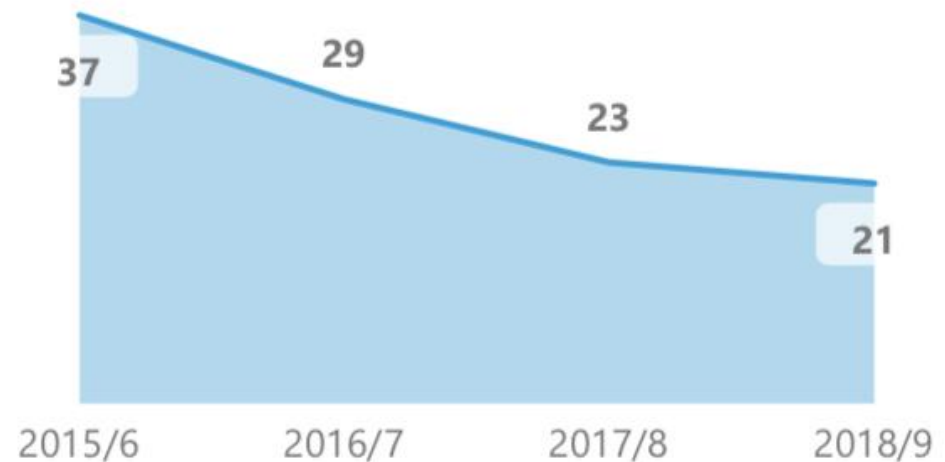
Participation by whom?

What does success look like?

**Enrolments FT**



**Enrolments PT**



# 40 Degrees with integrated Foundation Year – 20 Academic Depts – 4 Faculties

## **Social Sciences**

- Applied Social Sciences
- Business Management
- Education, Culture and Childhood
- Geography
- Geography and Planning
- International Relations and Politics
- Journalism
- Landscape Architecture
- Politics
- Quantitative Social Science
- Sociology
- Sociology with Criminology
- Urban Studies
- Urban Studies and Planning

## **Science and Health**

- Biology
- Biomedical Science
- Environmental Science
- Health and Human Sciences
- Orthoptics
- Psychology
- Speech & Language Therapy

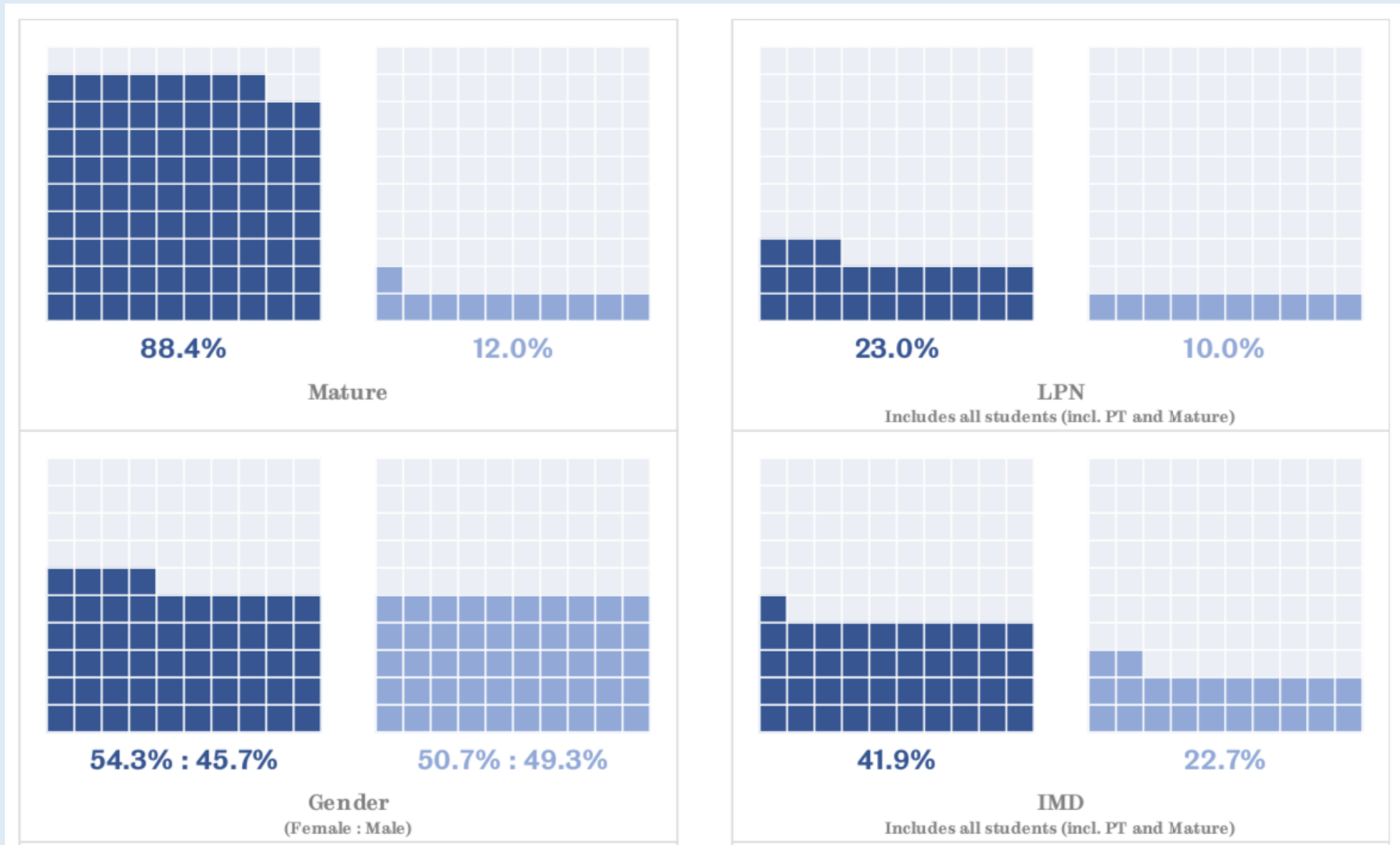
## **Joint ('dual') degrees**

- Archaeology and History
- English and Philosophy
- History and Modern Languages
- History and Politics
- English and History
- English Language and Sociology
- History and Philosophy
- Politics and Philosophy

## **Arts and Humanities**

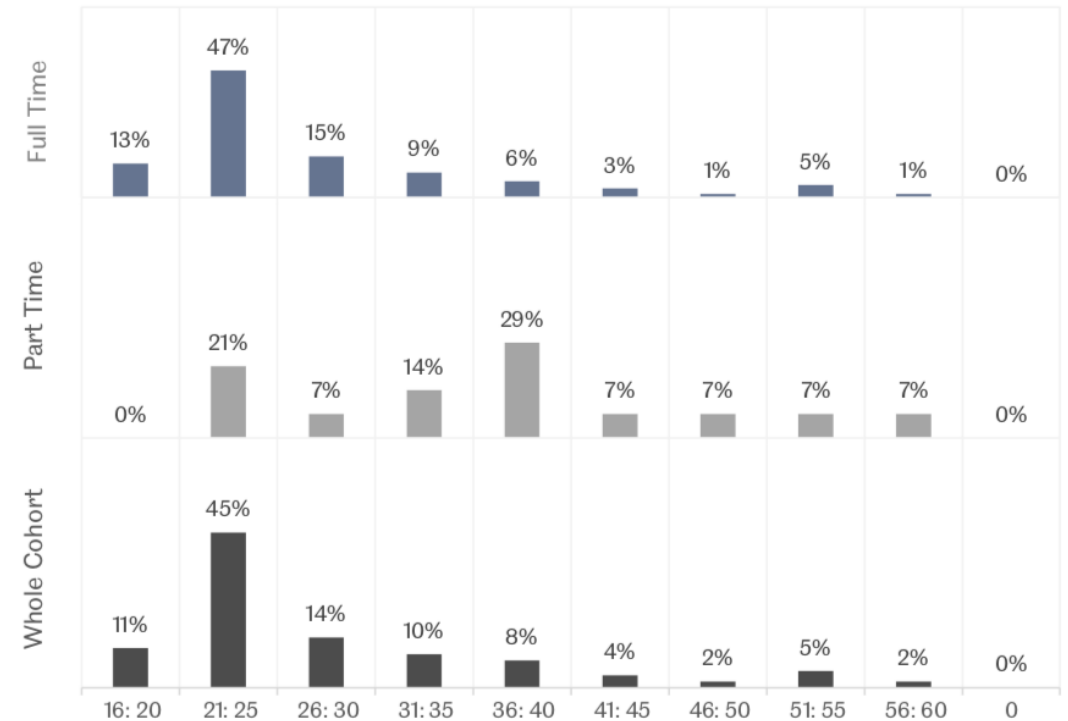
- Archaeology
- East Asian Studies
- English Language and Linguistics
- English Language and Literature
- English Literature
- History
- Modern Languages and Cultures
- Music
- Philosophy
- Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

# Know your audience – broad & diverse



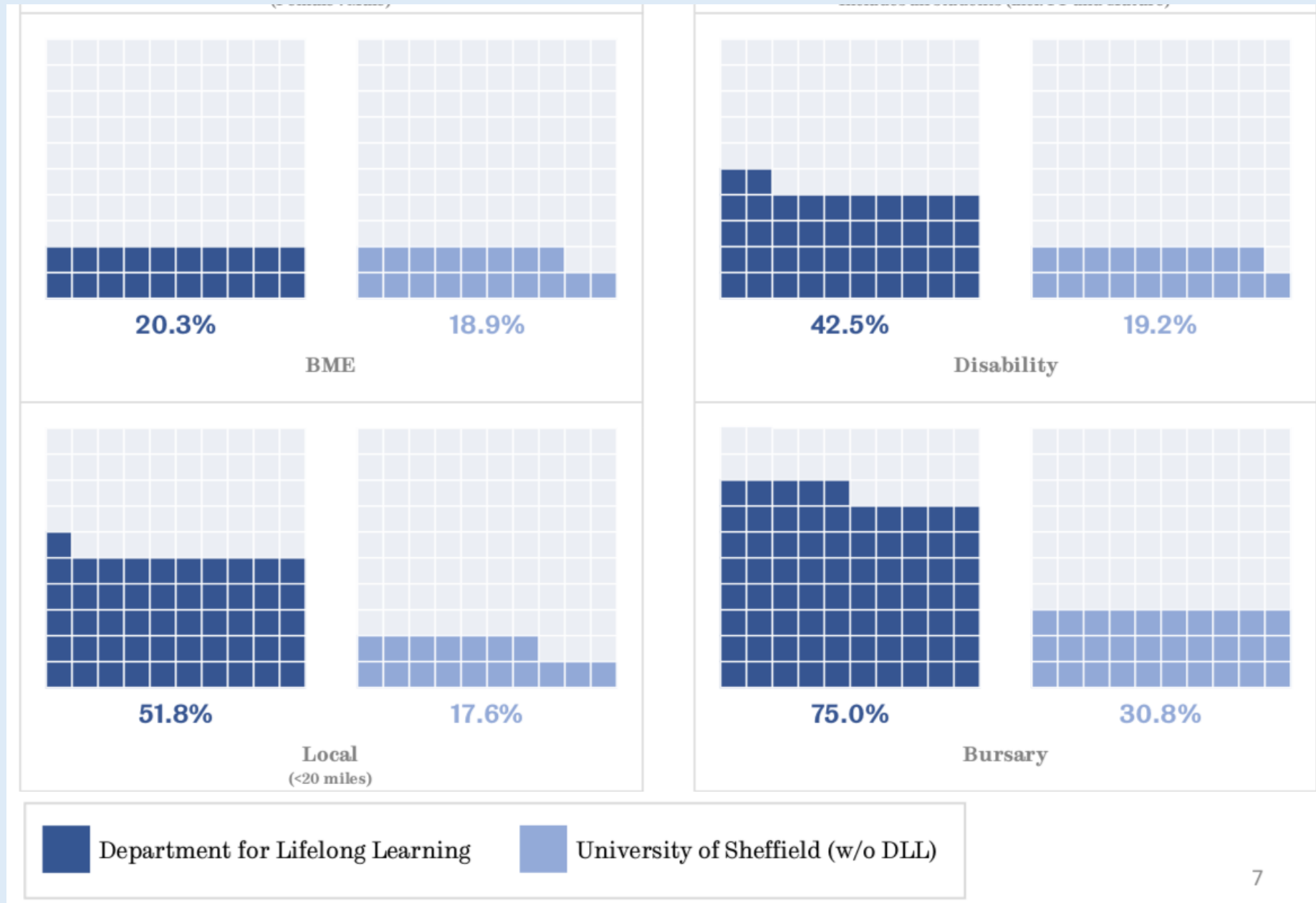
# Know your audience – younger than you think?

7.1 Age Distribution by Programme Mode 2019/20



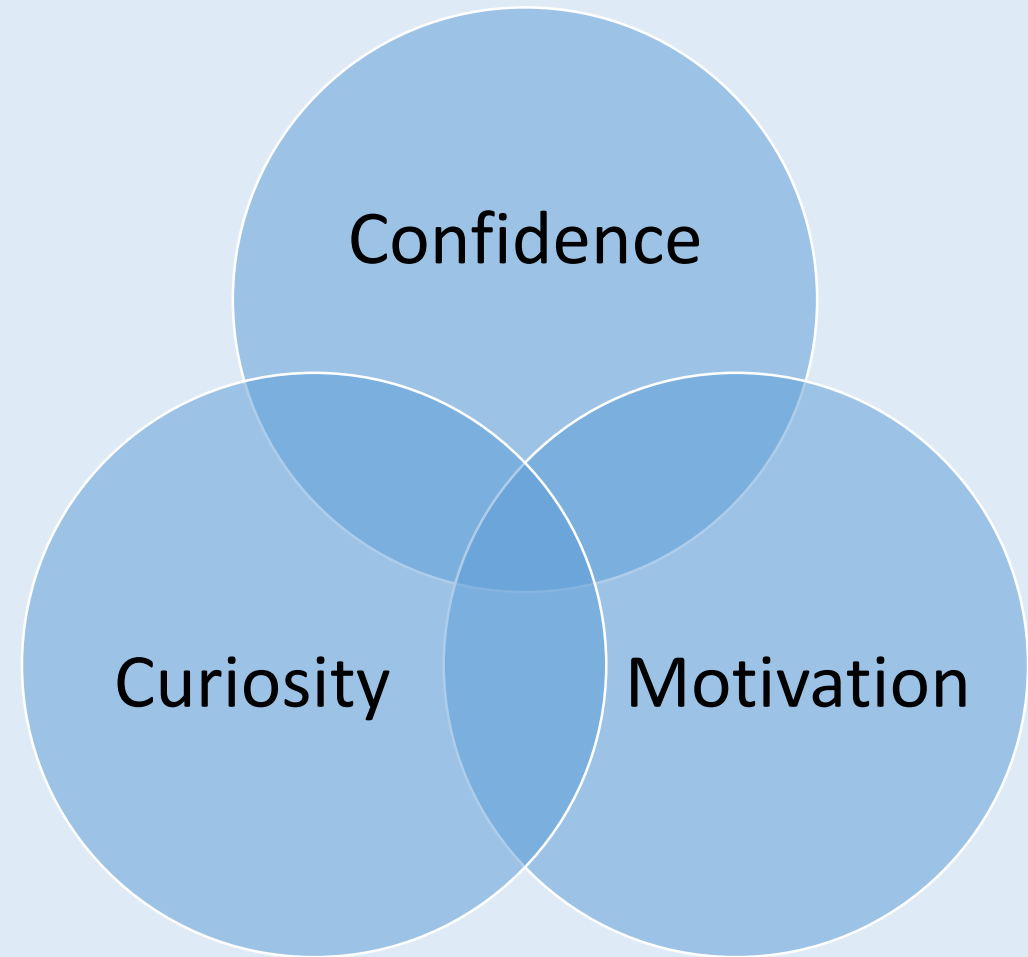
Average Age & Standard Deviation	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Full Time	31.5 ± 10.5	28.1 ± 10.6	28.4 ± 9.0	26.9 ± 8.2	27.6 ± 9.3
Part Time	31.4 ± 9.4	34.4 ± 10.9	37.9 ± 12.9	39.7 ± 12.8	37.1 ± 10.3
<b>Whole Cohort</b>	<b>31.5 ± 10.1</b>	<b>29.4 ± 10.9</b>	<b>29.6 ± 10.1</b>	<b>28.3 ± 9.6</b>	<b>28.3 ± 9.7</b>

# Intersectional & structurally disadvantaged



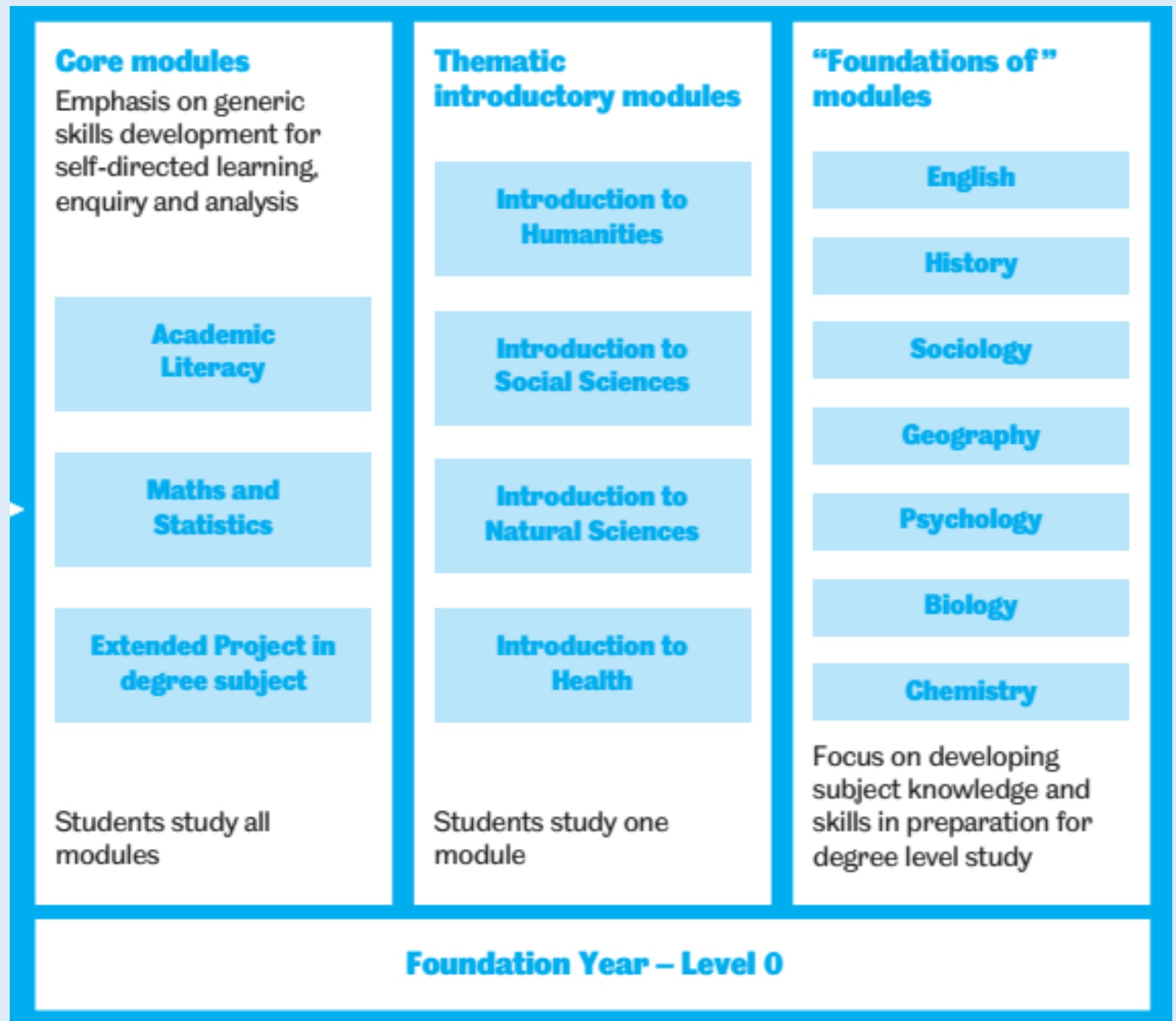
# Recognising institutional limitations – playing to students' strengths

- Focus on **self-starting skills & reflection**
  - celebrate what mature students bring
  - encourage inquiry-based approaches
  - offer appropriate challenge
- Foster **enduring communities of learning**
  - peer support, mentoring, mature student committee, student voice
- **Keep it real; keep 'em talking**
  - dedicated student support and welfare team
  - tutorial support, assessment and feedback
  - supporting a diversity of 'good exits'



# Structure of Foundation Year

- trans- & interdisciplinary
- relational & developmental
- transitional & transformative

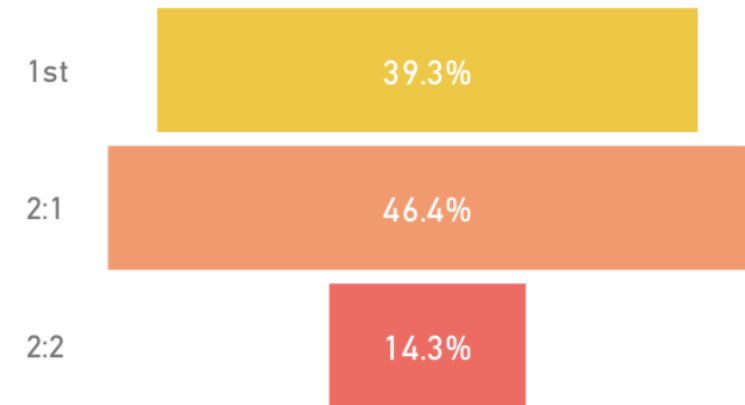


# Celebrating success ... always & everywhere ...

What percentage of our students achieve a good honours degree?



Degree classifications - 2018/9



Since the introduction of full-time degrees with an integrated foundation year, **mature student recruitment to UG first degrees at UoS has increased by 50%**. This increase is **almost entirely attributable** to the provision within DLL (which currently accounts for a **third of UoS annual FT UG home intake**).

# Our approach to attracting mature learners

Helen Roy – Marketing and External Relations Manager,  
Department for Lifelong Learning, University of Sheffield.



# Local Approach

- Strong focus on face to face provision
- Discover course
  - Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley
  - 6 week course
  - In partnership with local museums
  - Focussed around the study of 'objects'
  - Subject tasters and IAG
- On-campus taster events
  - Subject taster sessions
  - Campus tours
  - Sessions on student finance, student support etc



# National Approach

- Website
- Social Media
- Online marketing campaign
- Target emails



Current reflection: what can we learn from the current situation that will help improve our provision for those less able to travel to campus?

# Student Ambassadors

- Vital to our face to face and online provision
- 'Student Story' videos
- Often cited as giving applicants the final 'push'



# Working in Partnership



# Our response to Covid-19

- Discover course: now being delivered online via Google Meet
- Mature student taster 'event':
  - 'Explore DLL' web pages – [www.sheffield.ac.uk/dll/explore](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/dll/explore) - Live on Friday
  - Video presentations
  - Live presentation and Q&A via Blackboard Collaborate
  - Live Q&A with student ambassadors
  - Online 'bitesize' taster sessions via video and Adobe Spark
- Digital Student Ambassadors: available via 'Chat to a student' functionality on University website

# Thank you for listening

Dr Willy Kitchen: Head of Department for Lifelong Learning

[w.kitchen@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:w.kitchen@sheffield.ac.uk)

Helen Roy: Marketing and External Relations Manager

[h.roy@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:h.roy@sheffield.ac.uk)