
Access and Participation Statement

2021/2022: Admissions

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Document control

Revision history

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C=Contributor, R=Reviewer, A=Authoriser

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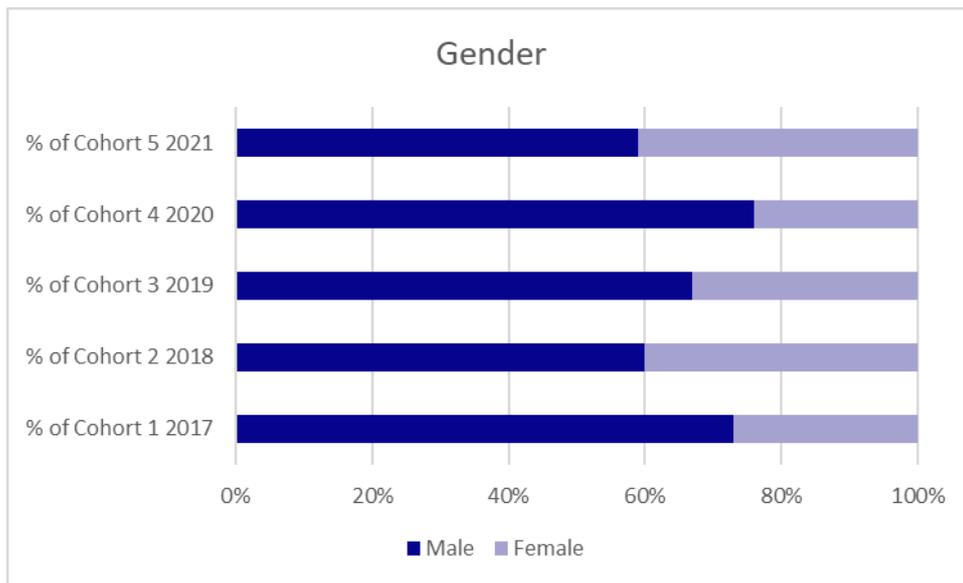
1.0 Access and participation

At the Dyson Institute, our mission is to build challenging and enriching educational experiences which are free, student-centric and aligned with the needs of industry. Offering a free education doesn't mean that those who need it the most are able to benefit from it and therefore we are committed to improving access for students from underrepresented backgrounds. This document outlines our approach to fulfilling our ambition.

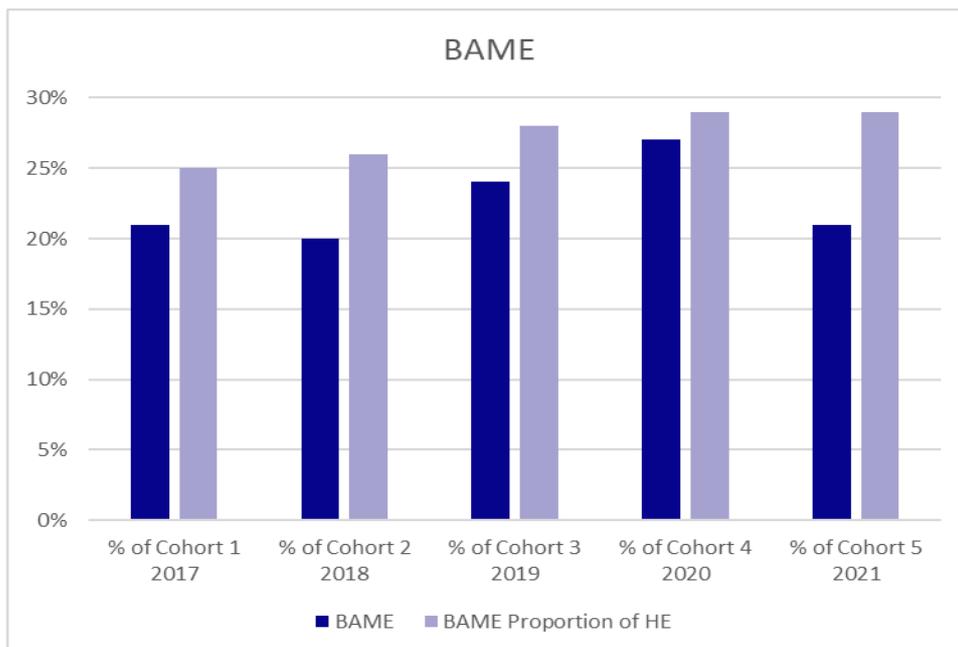
2.0 Make-up of the Dyson Institute student body

Cohorts 1 to 4 have been taught by the University of Warwick. Cohort 5 is taught by the Dyson Institute's academic team as we now have degree awarding powers. A more detailed table outlining our student profile is included as Appendix 1.

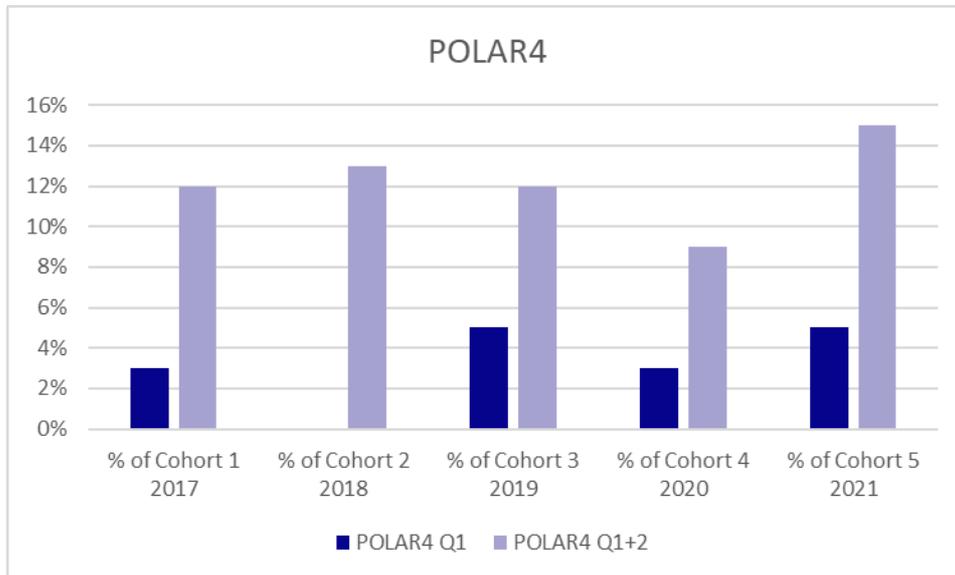
By gender



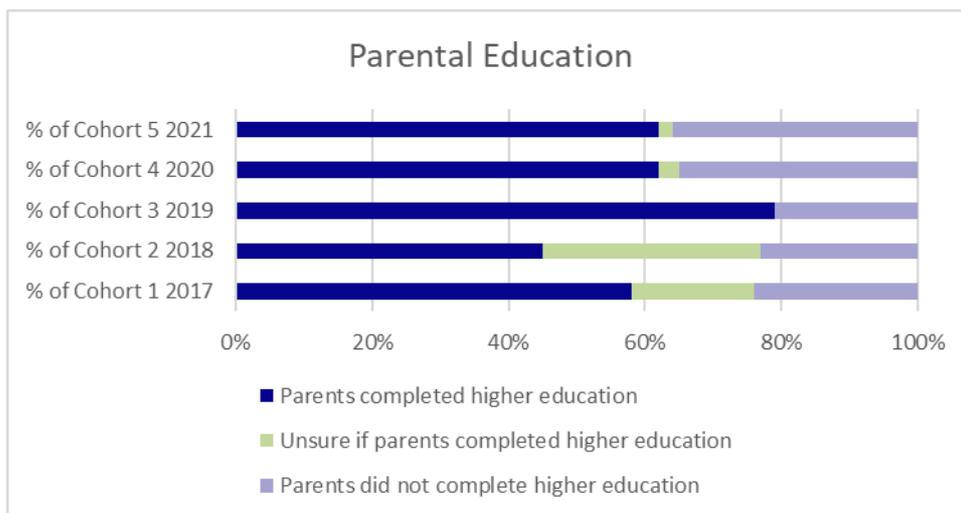
BAME



By POLAR4



Parental education



3.0 Access

As a small provider with class sizes of around 40 students per year, we must set aspirations that are appropriate to our scale and focus. We are also mindful of the fact that a degree apprenticeship does not suit everyone; our admissions process is designed to recruit candidates who are more likely to thrive in this demanding environment; applicants who can demonstrate attributes such as resilience, as well as high academic capability. We also look for students who are passionate about engineering. To support access from all backgrounds, the Admissions team provide information and guidance ahead of each admissions stage on what to expect and how to prepare.

Students at the Dyson Institute pay no fees and receive a competitive salary that increases every year, as they progress through their degree apprenticeship. To make the application process more accessible, candidates and offer holders can get refunds for any travel expenses incurred to attend recruitment events. The Admissions team can make such arrangements for any candidates who find it difficult to make them themselves. The Dyson Institute also offers a Joining Fund of £1,000 to incoming students who may need support with some of the start-up costs of their education, such as travelling to their student accommodation in Malmesbury, buying textbooks, participating in social events or supporting themselves until they receive their first salary. The Joining Fund is available to students from lower income households in receipt of benefits and to students who are estranged from their parents. The Dyson Institute is committed to removing financial barriers for its applicants.

Accommodation for first year students is available onsite, in individual pods with ensuite facilities. Students are not required to pay an accommodation deposit, something that could potentially be difficult for some.

The Dyson Institute is focused on three key areas for access and participation:

- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Female students
- Students from a BAME background

At the end of every recruitment campaign, we review our performance against our targets and set new targets for the year ahead. Our performance is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and ultimately, by the Dyson Institute's Council, our governing body.

3.1 Disadvantaged students

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 requires HE institutions to address the under-representation in higher education and POLAR data is a useful tool to look at educational disadvantage. As we gather more data on other measures of disadvantage, such as young people receiving free school meals, we hope to be able to target more accurately the groups with lower participation (only 13% of English white male pupils in receipt of free school meals go on to higher education). For now, our ambition is to increase the number of students we recruit from the lowest quintiles:

- 10% of new admissions from POLAR4 Q1
- 20% of new admissions from POLAR4 Q1 + Q2

In 2021 we achieved the highest participation of Q1 + Q2 to date: 15% and hope to increase that to 20% in 2022. In future, we will be exploring a system of contextual admissions to support this ambition.

3.2 Female students

The Dyson Institute is passionate about increasing the number of female students pursuing engineering. We make sure we include female engineers, academics, undergraduates and other professionals at every stage of our admissions process. According to data from Engineering UK, only 14.5% of engineers are female and only 7%¹. Our aspiration for 2022 entry is to enrol 40% of female undergraduates in the next intake, to maintain the progress made in 2021.

3.3 Students from a BAME background

Ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in engineering; only 7.8% of engineers in the UK came from a BAME background, compared to 12% of the UK's workforce². According to HESA data, 29% of undergraduate students enrolled on engineering courses in the UK are from a BAME background. Our ambition is to equal the national average.

¹ <https://www.engineeringuk.com/research/briefings/gender-disparity-in-engineering/>

² <https://www.raeng.org.uk/diversity-in-engineering/diversity-and-inclusion-at-the-academy/celebrating-leading-ethnic-minorities-in-engineer#:~:text=While%20the%20engineering%20profession%20is,graduates%20come%20from%20BAME%20backgrounds>

4.0 Progression

Our very thorough admissions process does seem to be effective in terms of selecting students who are able to cope with the demands of the programme; this means that we have a very low number of students who abandon their studies. To date, with only the first cohort graduated, the completion rate for this cohort is 100%: 33 undergraduates started the programme in 2017 and 33 graduated in 2021.

We have looked at the academic results achieved by the first cohort and found that there is no difference in attainment by gender and only a small difference by ethnicity, as shown on the table below:

Gender	Final Average
Male	72
Female	72
Ethnicity	Final Average
White	73
Non-white	68

4.1 Academic support

Our small class sizes allow us to provide individual support to every student. Undergraduates are assigned an Academic Tutor who checks on their academic progress, provides advice when needed and can guide undergraduates when the time comes to choose a stream. The academic team provides study skill seminars, facilitating the transition to higher level study. During teaching days, problem sets are available in the afternoons to allow students to work independently but with support from tutors. Students at the Dyson Institute benefit from a very high level of academic support.

5.0 Outreach

The Recruitment and Admissions team is responsible for this activity at the Dyson Institute, running a busy schedule of outreach events throughout the year. Undergraduates play a vital role in supporting this activity by volunteering at events; they share their personal stories from their education and work lives, talk openly to students about the degree apprenticeship and convey their passion for engineering.

5.1 Outreach partnerships

As a small, independent institution we are keen to collaborate with organisations who have recognised expertise in widening participation and can support us to achieve our ambition.

5.1.1 The James Dyson Foundation

The James Dyson Foundation (JDF) is a registered charity whose mission is to get young people excited about engineering. It does this by providing free educational resources, delivering engineering workshops in schools and offering bursaries. The JDF is also responsible for the James Dyson Award, an international design award that celebrates, encourages and inspires the next generation of design engineers. Through our partnership with the JDF, we can reach out to their network of secondary schools, further education and sixth form colleges. Their outreach activity is prioritised on providers that meet some (or all) of the following criteria:

- Be co-educational or girls' schools
- Be state funded
- Have students from a socially diverse background (based on POLAR4 and ethnicity of local population)

5.1.2 Pathway Careers, Training & Mentoring

Pathway CTM is a social enterprise providing employability training, support and opportunities for schools and students across the UK. Their programmes reach more than 150,000 students in over 500 schools and colleges throughout the UK, helping young people make informed decisions about their next steps post GCSE and A-Level.

Through our partnership with Pathway CTM, the Dyson Institute will run a number of events over the year ahead, tapping into Pathway's database of candidates which is made up of 53% females, 45% from diverse ethnic communities, 25% receiving free school meals and 22% from black heritage. They also track other social mobility indicators such as POLAR4 and first in the family to attend university.

5.1.3 Aimhigher London

Aimhigher London is an organisation dedicated to equality of opportunity in the capital. They believe that everyone who has the potential, should have fair access to benefit from these opportunities, a belief the Dyson Institute wholeheartedly shares. Learners benefiting from Aimhigher's support have the following profile:

- 12% from POLAR Q1 and Q2
- 66% first generation in HE
- 50% BAME
- 30% white working-class male
- 5% in the care of the Local Authority

Aimhigher London works with over 50 partners to engage over 1,000 young people every year in collaborative outreach activities such as conferences, summer schools, subject taster sessions, student ambassador led

sessions, application support and mentoring. We are planning a number of activities with them over the year ahead.

5.1.4 Women's Engineering Society

The Women's Engineering Society (WES) is a charity and a professional network of women engineers, scientists and technologists offering inspiration, support and professional development. Its mission is to inspire and support girls and women to achieve their potential as engineers, applied scientists and technical leaders, and work collaboratively to assist educators, employers and influencers in creating a diverse engineering community. The Dyson Institute is an Educational Partner of WES; this confers the status of Supporter Membership to all the female undergraduates at the Institute. This allows them to:

- Be part of a network of women engineers, and encourage others to join the profession
- Become a role model and spokesperson for young women
- Obtain career help and guidance through WES' mentoring service
- Build their profile and professional networks
- Organise or take part in outreach events to inspire the next generation of young people and students

6.0 Student support

We are committed to offering our undergraduates a supportive and stretching environment in which they can thrive personally as well as academically, as they prepare to become the engineering leaders of the future. We believe in offering a holistic approach to wellbeing: eating well, sleeping well, exercising regularly and taking time out to relax on a regular basis are the foundations of good wellbeing. Our approach to mental wellbeing is based on The Five Ways to Well-being - developed by the New Economics Foundation for the UK government from state-of-the-art research. Our Student Support activity is very highly rated by undergraduates in our yearly surveys but we are not complacent; we constantly review and monitor every activity we carry out.

6.1 Student Support Advisors (SSAs)

Our small class size means that our undergraduates develop meaningful relationships with each other and with the Dyson Institute staff, an important aspect of student wellbeing. Each cohort has a dedicated Student Support Advisor (SSA), who is the first port of call for student support. SSAs arrange individual monthly meetings with the students in their cohorts, supporting them with a broad range of issues, from stress management to mitigating circumstances. SSAs also offer one to one coaching sessions throughout the duration of the degree apprenticeship.

6.2 Disability Support Advisor (DSA)

The DSA provides advice and support to current and prospective students on the availability and provision of different adjustments and needs within academic teaching and workplace learning, helping our students to achieve their full potential. The Dyson Institute provides a wide range of assistive technology to support students with disabilities and/or learning differences.

6.3 Wellbeing & development

Three times a year (once per term), undergraduates attend an offsite event designed to focus on their development and wellbeing. Typically, each cohort spends time offsite separately as the day has a different agenda depending on the stage they're currently at in their development. Some of the topics explored during wellbeing and development days include:

- Mindfulness
- Time management
- Mental health
- Professional goals
- Presentation skills

6.4 Year one induction

Fully aware of the challenges this important life transition poses, we provide a comprehensive two-week induction programme that includes support around the following areas:

- Time management
- Living independently
- Working in teams
- Communication skills
- Safety training
- Academic writing

- Accessing support
- Phased introduction to working in Dyson engineering teams

The induction period includes a busy social programme, designed to help the undergraduates to get to know each other, other cohorts and the Dyson Institute team as well as to familiarise themselves with the local area.

6.5 Medical support

During Induction students are encouraged to register with their local GP practice if they have not already done so. As Dyson employees, students can also choose to join a private healthcare scheme (currently run by Bupa) to cover the cost of private healthcare, from diagnosis to medical treatment. The Bupa policy includes access to the Digital GP app, providing 24/7 access to a GP via video call.

Accessing mental health support through the NHS can sometimes be a slow process. When necessary, we can refer our students to Wilshire Psychology Services, a local independent psychology practice providing psychological assessment and treatment for a variety of problems including stress, depression, anxiety and eating disorders. This service is fully funded by The Dyson Institute (including travel to/from).

6.6 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Dyson offers complementary access to the Employee Assistance Programme, an online tool and phone line which offers confidential support on anything from financial concerns to brief therapy in the form of CBT over the phone or face to face. This resource is also accessible to the rest of the Dyson workforce.

6.7 Fitness

Maintaining an active lifestyle supports our student wellbeing and when the gym is onsite, there really is no excuse for not exercising! The Hangar is the free gym on the Dyson Campus. As well as a fully equipped gym and sports hall, The Hangar offers a number of free exercise classes and provides on-site health and fitness support. Students also organise their own sporting activities via student clubs.

7.0 Student engagement

At the Dyson Institute, we treat students as partners in their educational experience. Students are represented by the Undergraduate Experience Committee (UEC), enabling the student body to have an active voice on the entire student experience, to work in partnership on new initiatives and to provide feedback to improve the provision, including in relation to access and participation. UEC reps are elected by the student body every year. The Head Rep represents the voice of students at the Dyson Institute's Council.

8.0 Graduate outcomes

Dyson Institute students are also Dyson Technology Ltd employees, and work in the company's Research and Development (R&D) department for three days a week during their degree apprenticeship, putting academic theory into practice in the workplace. They participate in rotations across electrical, mechanical and software teams, allowing them to experience a range of engineering disciplines and develop the skills they need to be effective in the workplace. Upon graduation, Dyson Technology offers a permanent role to all undergraduates who achieve a 2:1 or above; however, there is no commitment from the undergraduates to remain at Dyson Technology once they have completed their degree apprenticeship. The graduation of the first cohort of Dyson Institute students took place on 25th September and all graduates have chosen to remain at Dyson Technology.

Appendix 1

The make-up of the new student body is broken down below. These statistics provide a benchmark against which to improve access and participation at The Dyson Institute.

	Characteristic	% of Cohort 1 2017	% of Cohort 2 2018	% of Cohort 3 2019	% of Cohort 4 2020	% of Cohort 5 2021
Gender	Male	73%	60%	67%	76%	59%
	Female (proportion of female undergraduate students studying Engineering & Technology in UK HE, based on HESA data from 2019/20 entry for 2020 onwards)	27%	40%	33%	24% (20%)	41% (20%)
Ethnicity	From a BAME background (proportion of BAME undergraduate students studying Engineering & Technology in UK HE, based on HESA data from 2019/20 entry for 2020 onwards)	21% (25%)	20% (26%)	24% (28%)	27% (29%)	21% (29%)
Disability	Specific disability or learning difference	9%	5%	9%	9%	36% ³
Education	State educated (state selective)	82% (42%)	78% (30%)	84% (33%)	80% (24%)	79% (38%)
	Educated at an English school with more than the mean average of students eligible for free school meals (mean of year)	6% (12.6%)	7%* *only held data for 64% of pop. (12.6%)	0% (14.3%)	24% (16.2%)	5% (19.7%)
	Educated at a school achieving higher than the average A level result (for 2018/19 C+)	85%	77%	49%	53%	74%
POLAR4	POLAR4 Q1	3%	0%	5%	3%	5%
	POLAR4 Q1 +2	12%	13%	12%	9%	15%
Parental Education	Parents completed higher education	58%	45%	79%	62%	62%
	Unsure if parents completed higher education	18%	32%	0%	3%	2%
	Parents did not complete higher education	24%	23%	21%	35%	36%

³ This refers to the number of students who have declared a learning difference, disability or medical need. At the time of writing this document, students had not yet been through the Reasonable Adjustments process and therefore the final figure may change.