

**Access to Southampton Scheme 2021 Entry: Teachers/Referees' Guidance**

**(COVID-19 update)**

Thank you for agreeing to provide an academic reference in support of an application to the Access to Southampton (A2S) scheme. This document gives guidance to school staff on what information should be provided within the reference.

The reference should be written by a teacher, principal/head teacher, head of year/sixth-form, student support staff member or careers advisor at the applicant's current FE institution. The reference should be completed on official letterhead, signed and dated. If this is not available at this time, an email from your school email address will be acceptable, but please ensure your name and job role is in the signature of your email.

Applicants are required to upload the reference as an attachment to their online application form. If your school/college policy does not allow students to hold a copy of any reference, please email your reference to [outreach@soton.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@soton.ac.uk) as soon as possible, and include the words 'A2S scheme applicant reference' in the subject title. Unfortunately, we cannot consider any application that is not supported with a suitable reference. All completed applications and references must reach us by close of business on 30 June 2020.

Competition for places is usually high, so this reference will be used by the University in the shortlisting process for a place on the scheme. It is vital that the referee provides all the information required within their reference.

Please include the following:

- Verification of which eligibility criteria the students meets (see below).
- Comments on the applicant's academic suitability for the programme and general attitude/motivation towards their studies. (If possible, please provide the students predicted grades).
- Any other information relevant to their application.

Students must meet at least one of the below criteria in order to be eligible for the A2S scheme:

- In the first generation of immediate family to apply to Higher Education
- In receipt of a 16-19 bursary or similar grant OR in receipt of FSM at any point during secondary school education
- Attended secondary school that achieved below the national average GCSE score in 2019 (measured by Attainment 8)\*
- Living or grew up in Local Authority care OR are estranged from their family
- Are a Young Carer
- Current home postcode shows that a student lives in an area with low progression to HE (lowest 2 POLAR4 quintiles).
- Current home post code shows that a student lives in area that falls within the lowest 20 per cent of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

\*Or for schools in Wales: Attended a secondary school where the percentage of Year 11 pupils who achieved the Level 2 inclusive threshold (Level 2 including a grade A\*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics) was below average.

We appreciate that in these times, it will be more challenging for school staff to provide as a full a reference as we would normally expect to receive. Thank you for your support in providing at least the minimum information outlined above.

If you have any questions regarding the reference or the A2S scheme in general, please contact the A2S Co-ordinator: 02380 595696 | [outreach@soton.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@soton.ac.uk)