

Universities Scotland update on Reach programme: Summer 2019

We are delighted to take the opportunity to update the Justice Committee on the Reach programme following last year's inquiry.

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funds two national schools programmes to help schools with low progression rates to higher education. One of these programmes, Access to High Demand Professions (AHDP) has a project within it called Reach, focussing on access to economics, law, medicine, veterinary medicine and dentistry.

Four Universities Scotland members (University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh and University of Glasgow) are project partners for Reach's work on access to law.

More than just these four universities offer law degrees and it would be remiss of us not to mention that universities undertake a huge amount of outreach work that is not covered by the Reach programme.

We are not aware that it is possible to get data that tracks law degree students from matriculation to completion using SIMD as a measurement without a bespoke enquiry to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) but we would be more than happy to assist you if that is something the committee wishes to pursue.

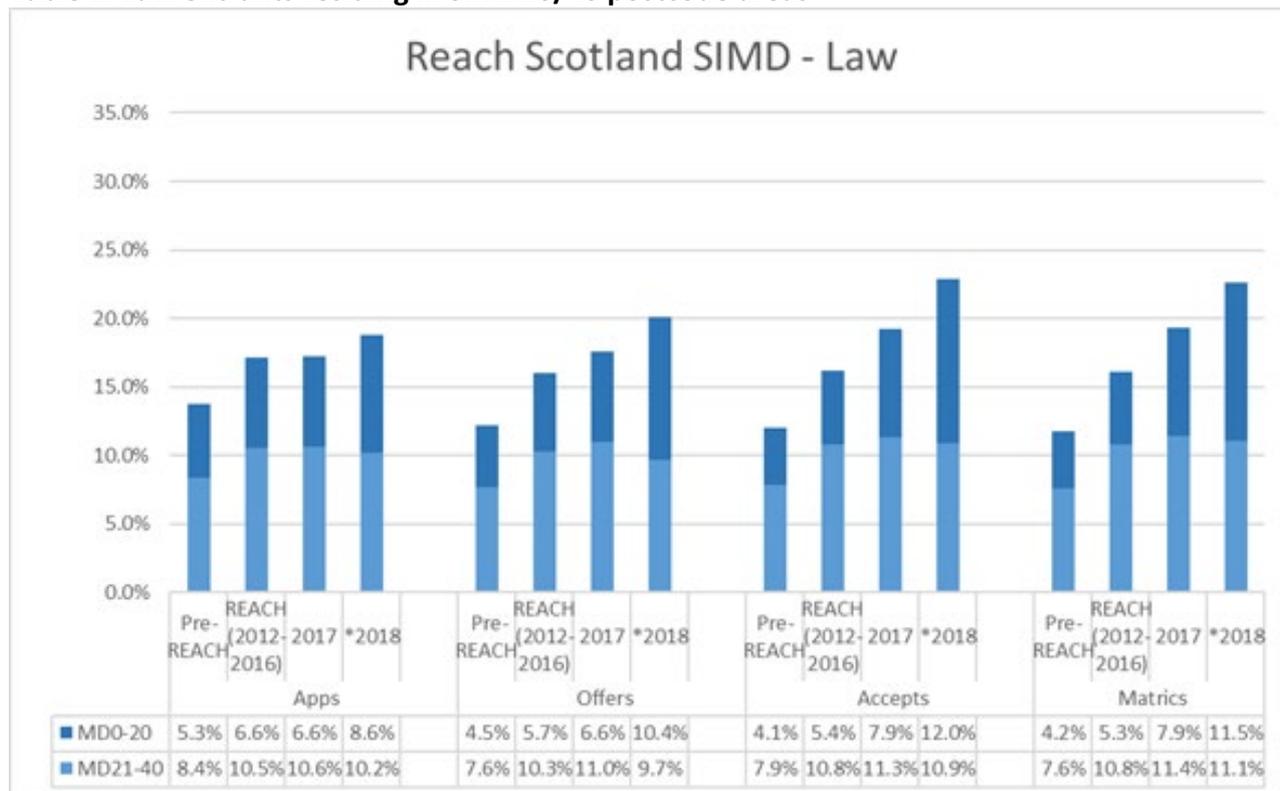
Reach 2017/18

The two tables would suggest that focussed interventions have been a continued success in widening access to law.

In Table 1 you can see a year-to-year increase from 2017 to 2018 in applications, offers, acceptances and matriculation from students from SIMD20 and SIMD40 backgrounds. The success of the Reach scheme can be seen in the numbers of SIMD20 and SIMD40 students matriculating for law degrees, from 11.8% of the cohort pre-Reach in 2011 to 22.6% in 2018.

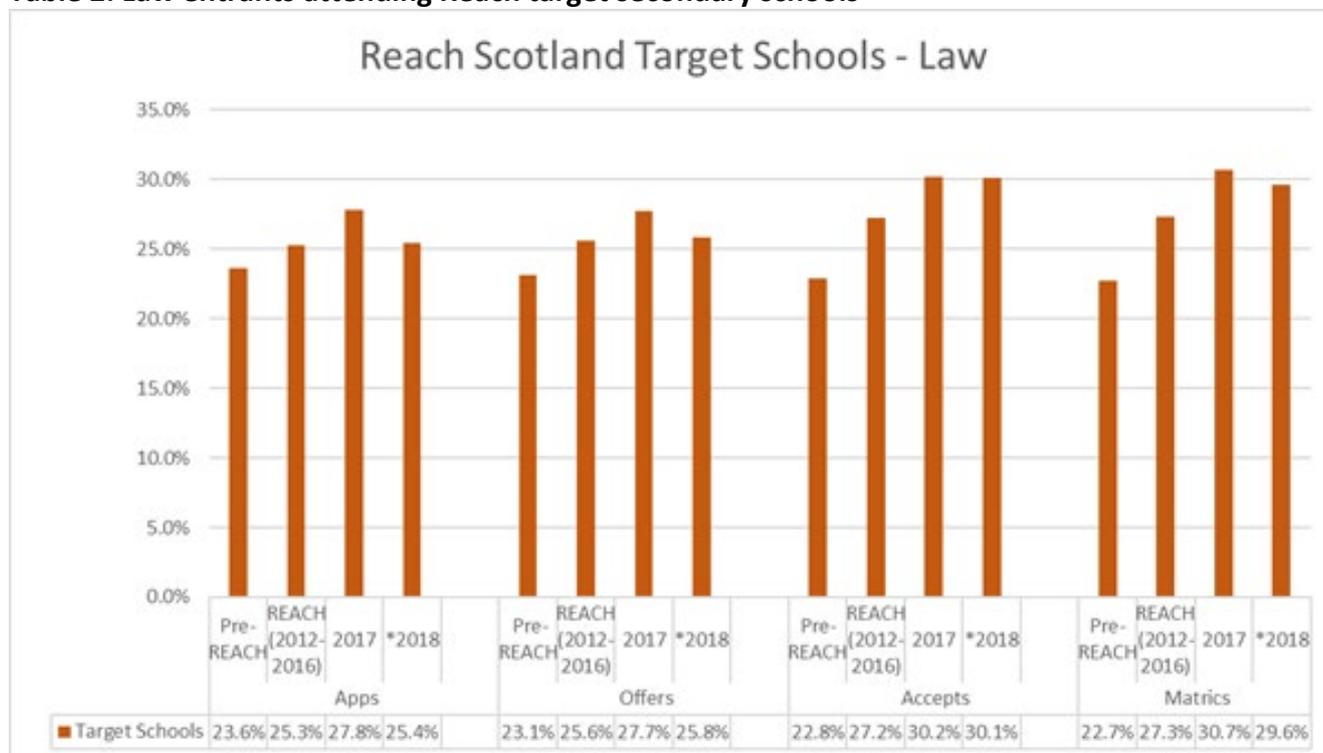


Table 1: Law entrants residing in SIMD20/40 postcode areas



Matriculation from target schools (Table 2) was slightly down in 2018 compared to 2017 but still higher than the Reach average between 2012 and 2016.

Table 2: Law entrants attending Reach target secondary schools



As referenced last year, the work undertaken in the Reach programme is focussed on getting pupils onto university degree programmes, rather than the completion of those degrees. These figures therefore do not cover the wide range of support offered by our members to students whilst they undertake a law undergraduate degree course.

ENDS

Contact:

Duncan McKay; Senior Public Affairs Officer; duncan@universities-scotland.ac.uk;
0131 225 0714

