Widening Participation/Quality Issues:
"The North London Experience"

Yemi Olabiran

Trushar Adatia

Chris Branford White

(Les Jervis)

UNL Mission
(now London Metropolitan University)

- "the provision of education for personal development and social change"
- Aspects
  - Access and Equal Opportunities
  - Quality
  - Regionalism
  - Internationalism
    *now London Metropolitan University

Foundation Course Background

- HITECC , Higher Introductory Technology & Engineering Conversion Course

- Started (late 80's) as part of government scheme to encourage mature students into science.

- Cohort size has increased steadily from 25 in late 80's to 530 this current academic session.

Routes/Pathways

- 2 major routes
  - BCF (biology/chemistry), 1/3 of cohort
  - CMF (computing/maths), 2/3 of cohort.
- Pathways
  - Degrees in Biological Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Health and Nutrition and Sports Science
  - Degrees in Computing, Business Information Systems, Multimedia and Engineering.

Growth Statistics

Increase in student numbers recruited to BCF and CMF routes of foundation course
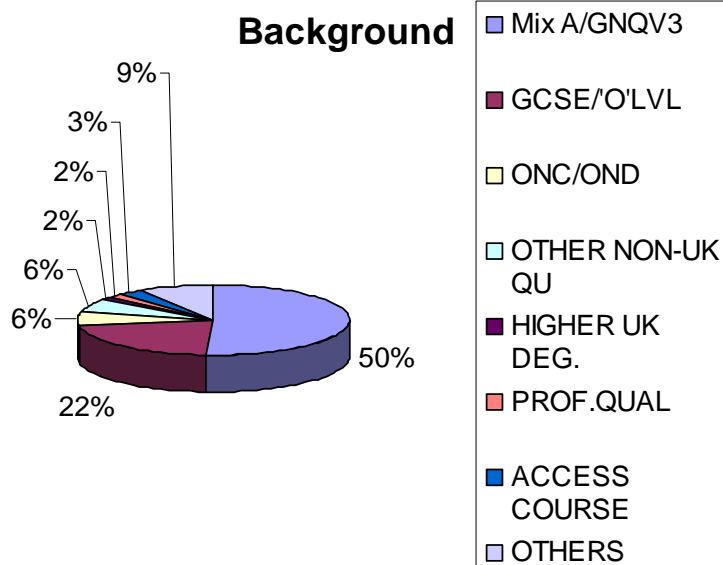
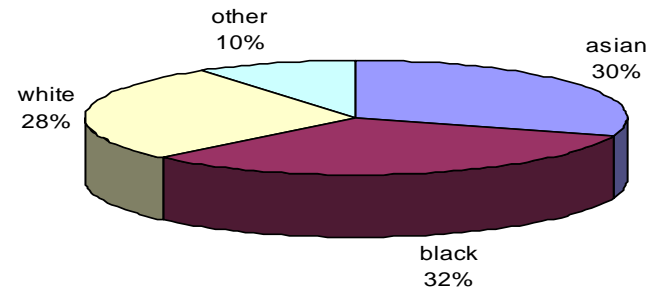**Growth in cohort size**
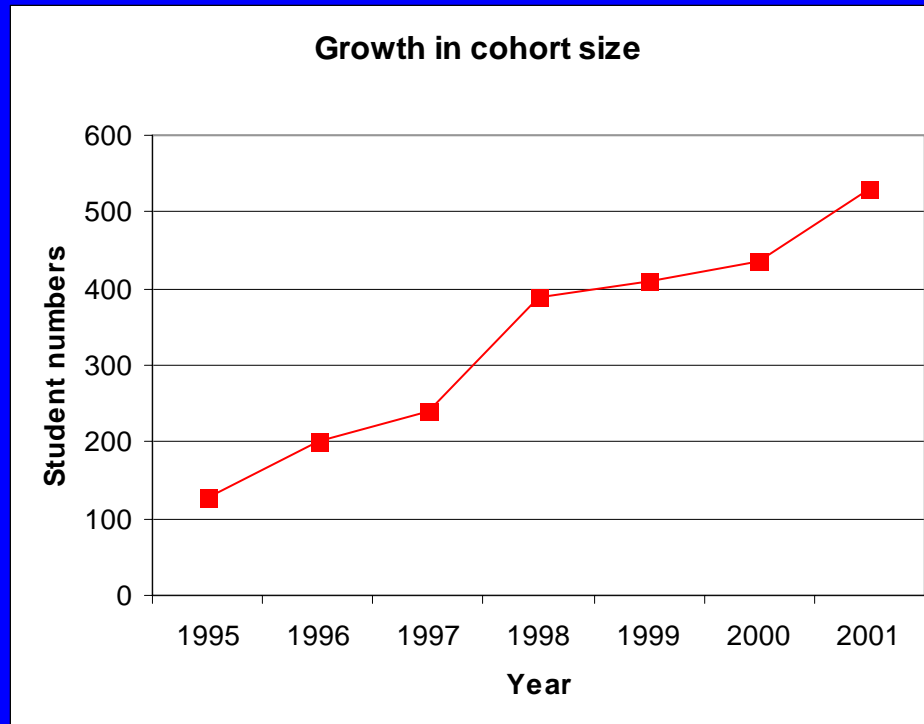
BCF Students

- 1/3(about 100) of total number of students.

- Typically mature, female, with high expectations of success.

- Smaller number in this group allows more staff/student interaction

BCF Cohort Statistics 2001/02
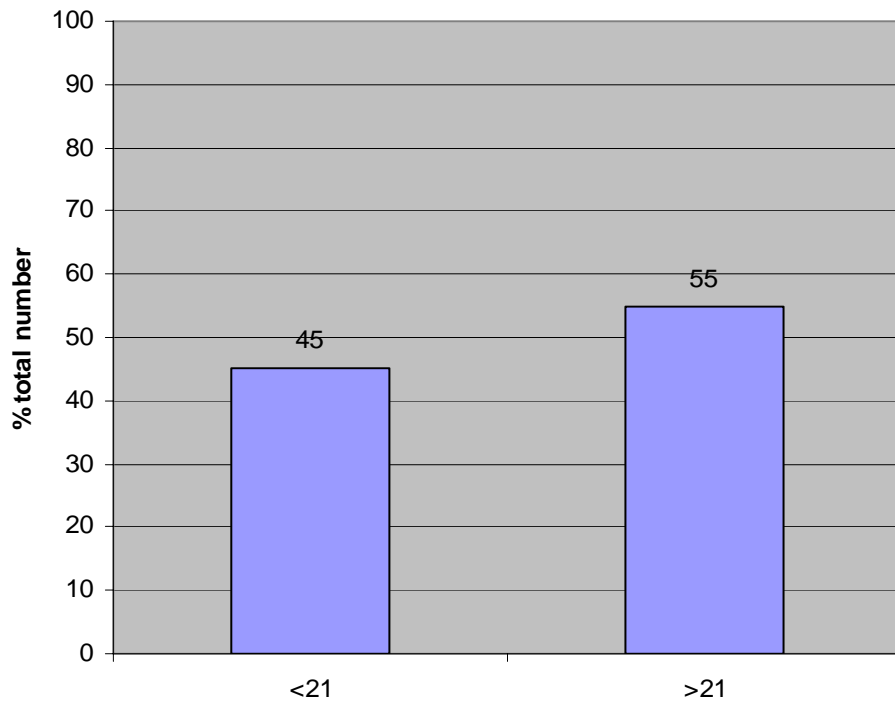
BCF Students: Educational Background

- Mix A/GNQV3
- GCSE/'O'LVL
- ONC/OND
- OTHER NON-UK QU
- HIGHER UK DEG.
- PROF.QUAL
- ACCESS COURSE
- OTHERS

9%
3%
2%
2%
6%
6%
50%
22%

BCF Students: Ethnic Background

other 10%
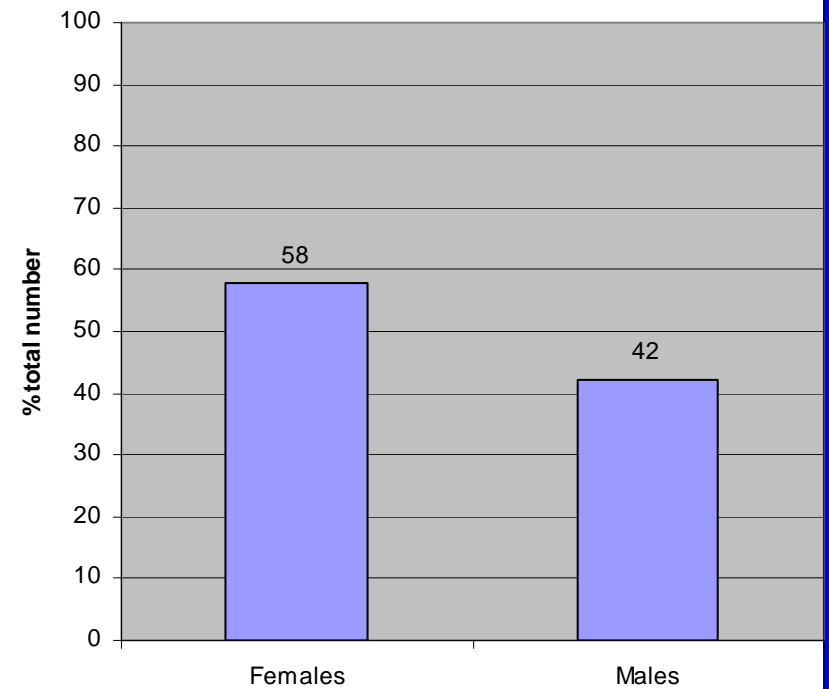asian 30%
white 28%
black 32%

BCF Cohort Statistics 2001/02

BCF Students : Age

BCF Students: Gender

Recruitment

- Recruit students from North-east London (mainly)
- Catchment area of approx. 1.5-2 million people
  - Haringey, Holloway, Islington, Newham, Hackney & Southwark
  - Some overseas students
- Feeder Colleges/Schools
- Community groups

Curriculum Design

- Re-designed the curriculum (2001)

- Addressed; non-traditional background, future degree options, student feedback, external examiners comments.

- Result; course with modular structure, but limited choices to allow focus on laboratory work, problem solving, C& IT skills embedded

Staffing

- Experienced team working at 25:1 SSR
- 100 students split into 2 lecture groups with 2 staff members.
- Continuity of staff
- Develop good student/staff relationship through the personal tutor scheme
- PASS; peer assisted support scheme run by previous foundation year students

Out comes: core module pass rates
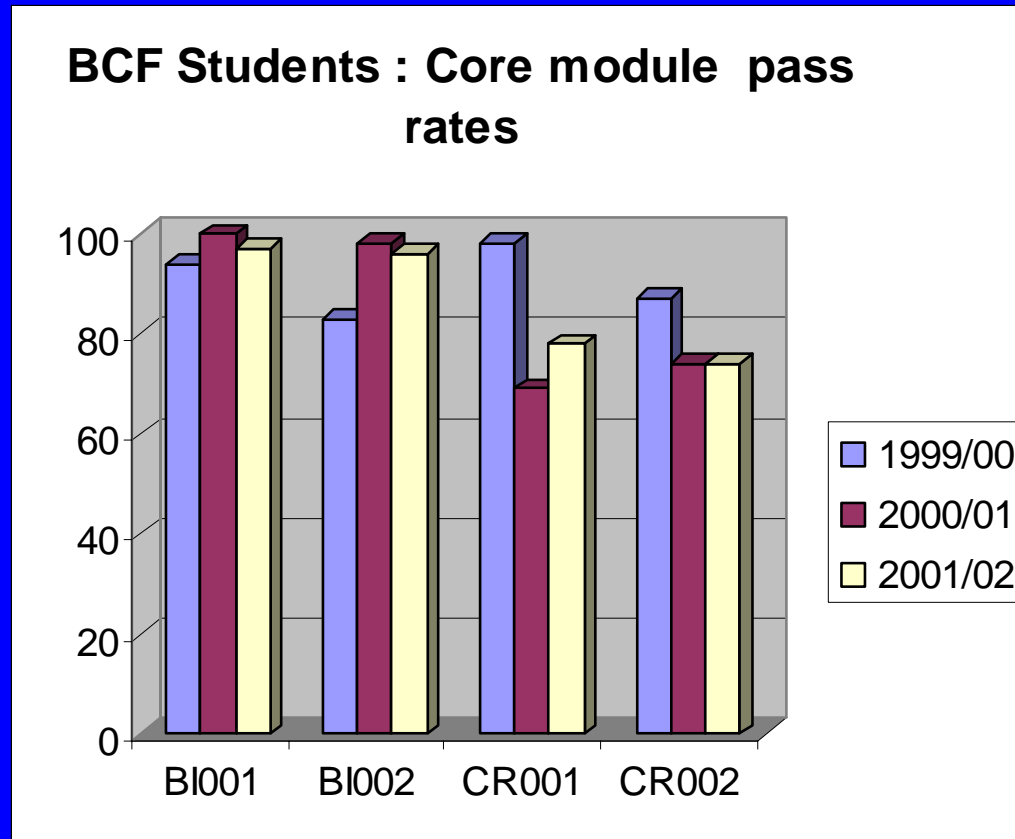
Outcomes 2: Retention

BCF increased by 30% since 2000/01

BCF and CMF students: Number enrolled versus pass rate
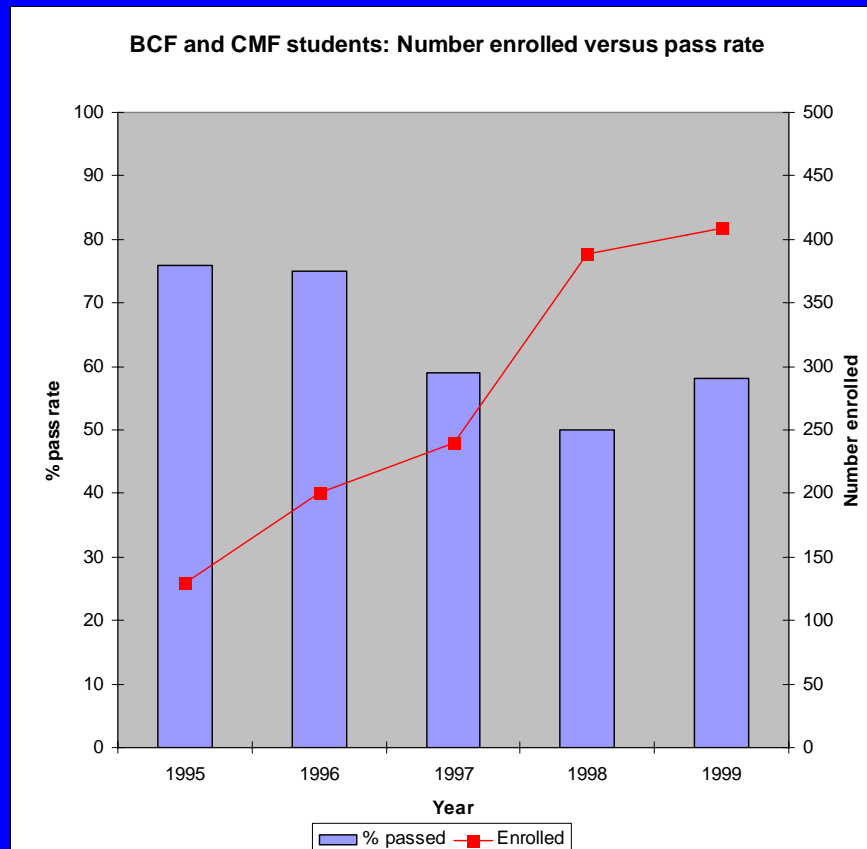
Conclusion

- Effective admissions criteria

- Realising the needs of a special cohort

- Allocation of appropriate resources

- Effective induction, nurturing & pastoral care

- Regular course review in conjunction with external peers

- Institutional commitment