

The University of

2020 Access and Participation Plan

There are no significant gaps in continuation between students from areas in different POLAR quintiles or IMD quintiles. In line with the national KPM we will aim to maintain our performance according to these measures but we have not set ourselves a target based on them.

Success: Attainment: percentage of degrees awarded that are a 1st or 2.1

Attainment		Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
POLAR4 Q1	-	-	-	-	-
POLAR4 Q2	-	-	-	-	60
POLAR4 Q3	-	-	-	55	60
POLAR4 Q4	-	-	-	50	60
POLAR4 Q5	-	75	-	30	54

Attainment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
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Success: Continuation: percentage of students continuing from year 1 of study to year 2

Continuation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Asian	-	-	87	92	91
Black	-	-	-	90	90
Mixed	-	-	-	-	90
Other	-	-	-	-	-
White	-	95	92	95	95

Continuation for white students is higher than other ethnicities. Continuation is broadly similar for all non-white ethnicities; we have set a target to reduce the gap

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There is a gap between continuation of young and mature students, which we have set as a target to eliminate.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

The overall themes of our performance are similar to our previous Plan: we have a diverse student body with strong representation of

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Our Targets and Investment Plan also sets out our investment for access and participation. The University currently has a high/high to medium proportion of students from underrepresented groups and as such it plans to invest 18.2% of higher fee income into initiatives across access, success, progression and financial support. The balance of investment has been guided by the University's assessment of our own performance and has been revised as a result of reviewing our financial support provision as part of the 2023-24 variation process:

Area of investment	Percentage of APP spend 2020-21 to 2022-23	Percentage of APP spend 2023-24	Percentage of APP spend 2024-25	Percentage of APP spend 2025-26
Access				

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support with school governance through our staff volunteering and student ProBono opportunities.

Priority C: Set out how access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups leads to successful participation on high quality courses and good graduate outcomes.

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internal Learning & Teaching Conference. Staff and students represent the University at external conferences, feeding back what they have learned via the working groups and our dedicated internal intranet site. The Widening Participation and Access Committee reports to the Academic Board, which in turn reports to the Academic Standards Committee of the University of

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- ◁ Embedding our mental health training and support so that all staff have the knowledge and skills to react appropriately where there is a concern about student mental health.
- ◁ Recruitment in 2019 of an additional mental health adviser, with funding for which will come from ~~our~~ grant funding (t

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attainment as well as an important means of data collection for the evaluation of other projects. As learner analytics will enable us to view groups of students based on different characteristics it will allow us to target interventions at our identified target groups of IMD Q1-2 and BAME students more easily. It will also allow us to assess the success of initiatives specifically aimed at these target groups.

A thorough procurement process was undertaken in order to select an external provider, with full engagement of the Executive Board, the Vice

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it is well documented that BAME students are more likely to suffer from mental health problems than white students.

Most of this programme was delivered through an eight session initiative focusing on self-awareness, resilience and stress management. Multiple sessions on the same topic were timetabled to allow for flexibility: the timing of the sessions impacted attendance which was typically 75% overall. This initiative was complemented by budgeting sessions delivered in conjunction with Barclays Life Skills.

As part of the evaluation of this initiative, a pre and post-survey was carried out which required students to self-assess their wellbeing by ranking

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We are developing a specific *Life module* embedded in the curriculum which encapsulates 'Employability for Life'. It includes employability skills primarily at the higher end; volunteering, including Pro Bono extra-curricular support will very much remain. Also included are elements that address personal financial management (student loans, credit rating, mortgages, pension planning and beyond), emotional well-being (mental resilience, diet, exercise, addictions, social media, work/life balance, mindfulness) and familial relationships (marriage/partnerships, children, parents and beyond).

We are actively working with employers to provide paid internships and work placements, with financial support to attend such opportunities being made available through our WP budget.

Financial Support

Bursaries

As a result of a review of our performance for the 2023-24 variations, and in light of the increased cost of living that our students are facing with increased energy, fuel and food costs, we have decided to provide additional financial support to our students from the lowest household incomes. We will provide

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3.3 Student consultation

Student Association representatives participate fully in our Widening Participation & Access Committee and all its working groups. They have been involved throughout the year in developing our capacity to deliver our first APP from August 2019, including participating fully in the Learner Analytics procurement process. The Student Association has participated fully in drawing up this 2020 APP, including the setting of targets. We do not really think of this as consultation, as there has been constant dialogue, but rather as collaboration.

We have also collaborated with our student body on the variations to this Access and Participation Plan for the academic year 2023-24.

3.4 Evaluation strategy

Evaluation self-assessment

All members of the Widening Participation & Access Committee and its working groups (including student members), together with the University's Planning team, were invited to complete the self-assessment tool. Their input was amalgamated into the Evaluation Tool and discussed at a meeting of the Committee, revised and submitted with this application. In general, scores and comments were not dissimilar across contributors. Scores were higher where stakeholders were closely involved in existing projects (for instance our disability and learning support teams) or had greater awareness of how we evaluate (for instance our Planning team and members of the Executive Board, including our Vice Chancellor).

The Evaluation Tool submitted with our APP reflects the views of the majority consulted. Strategic Context and Design Programme (activity/initiative) had consistently high scores; Evaluation Implementation and Learning had consistently lower scores. This could be summarised by a typical answer to:

Question: Regardless of what type of evaluation you have chosen, do you know whether your access and participation interventions are having the effect you intend?
Answer: It is too early to say (first APP kicks in August 2019) but this is being considered as part of a [development] process.

Evaluation Framework

In line with the University's strategic theory of change approach to access and participation and to ensure continuous improvement through evaluation, the University is developing a programme-level evaluation framework to evaluate the overall success of all access and participation interventions. This framework be implemented for the start of the University's new financial year in November 2019.

The framework will follow a logic chain model, linking the interventions specifically to the relevant targets identified in this plan. As all interventions undergo a standard process of approval for resource, this will include the requirement to produce a clear logic chain and an explanation of which evaluation methods will be used to measure the success of the intervention, for instance:

- < Data on applications/enrolments, continuation, attainment, student satisfaction and progression to employment (much of this data will be accessible through our learner analytics platform)
- < Uptake/engagement with interventions
- < Standardised pre- and post- intervention questionnaires,

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3.5 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Our Widening Participation and Access Committee has a standard agenda item to monitor our performance directly against our targets as well as to ensure that we are continuing to maintain our performance across the areas where we currently have no gaps. The committee and its working groups also have a standard agenda item to monitor progress of activities and interventions in delivering targets. Monitoring at this informed level is key to our strategy. A core senior team (including the Student Association President, the Director for Access and Part 6-4(c)11(-4)6(p)11(at)16(i)6(o)114(,) T

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