

2019-2020 Access and Participation Plan

Executive summary

The University of Bedfordshire is committed by its mission and values to providing access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. **We are an opportunity university** and we seek to promote access for learners from the local area, from the lower socio-economic groups, from neighbourhoods with low rates of participation in higher education, from minority ethnic groups that are under-represented in higher education, from vulnerable groups such as young people leaving care and from learners with disabilities. It is of the utmost importance that we meet the needs of learners and of the national economy, to provide all our students, irrespective of their starting point, with a first-rate educational experience, which will give them the best chance of achieving the success they seek and helping them make the best possible contribution to the wider economy. Our Access and Participation Plan has been written in the context of the University Strategic Plan 2017-20 which commits us to:

1. Inspiring our diverse student body to achieve ambitious goals;
2. Engaging our people in innovation and development;
3. Expanding Higher Education opportunities;
4. Broadening understanding and horizons across the communities we engage.

As such, access and participation is a **whole University approach** based on our inclusive access, learning and teaching and employability strategies and reflected in our new Strategic Plan. This approach was singled out for commendation in the QAA HER of 2015. Within this inclusive approach some groups perform better than others and we will continue to monitor these gaps and tweak and finesse our approach to support and intervention to reduce those gaps and to make sure all of our students have the opportunity to achieve and fulfil their potential.

Section 1 of this plan provides an assessment of our current performance in terms of access to the University and the success and progression of our diverse student body. We are committed to maintaining the diversity of our student body, as we seek to expand higher education opportunities, and ensure the success and progression of all our different student groups. Our ambition and strategy is outlined in section 2. This detail our strategic ambitions for access and participation, how we develop and deliver a high-quality learning experience for our diverse group of students, and how we monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our activities to widen access and improve success and progression. Section 3 presents the activities and support measures that we will use to achieve our objectives and the priorities we have identified for access and participation. Our activities and support measures are presented across four key areas: access and outreach, raising attainment in schools and colleges, student success and progression to graduate level employment or further study. Section 4 summarises the level of investment we will make in 2019-20 and section 5 details how we will provide information to prospective and current students and publish the approved plan.

1. Assessment of current performance

Our assessment of our current performance is based on our TEF metrics, HESA data and the UoB OFFA Access Agreement for 2018-19. It follows the student lifecycle through the consideration of: Access; Success (continuation, academic progression and academic outcomes); and Progression into employment and further study; building on the data and targets used in the Access Agreement to provide continuity and the ability to track developments and progress over a period.

We have used four main sources of data to undertake our assessment: HESA performance indicator data; Teaching Excellence Framework core metrics data (run number 1, 19/10/2017); University data for full-time undergraduate home EU students (Sept-Oct start) and data from the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) tracking report 2007-08 to 2015-16. We will continue to develop our use of data to assess performance and evaluate the impact of our widening participation activities.

1.1 Access Performance

The University of Bedfordshire is committed by its mission and values to providing access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. Over 70% of our students are from widening participation backgrounds and we are committed to maintain this and meeting the needs of our diverse student body. According to the HEAT tracking report 2007-08 to 2015-16, 60% of the University's tracked cohort¹ declared themselves First Generation Higher Education.

Our TEF metrics reflect the diversity of the students at the University of Bedfordshire. Of the total student headcount of 10,535 students: 88% are studying full-time and the remainder completing their studies on a part-time basis; 37% are aged 21 or above which is a stand out performance in the sector; 61% are female; and 9% have a disability. In terms of ethnicity, where this is known: 31% are black, 18% are Asian, 42% are white and 7% classified as other. Local students account for 24% of the total headcount and 30% of the students are from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2.

We target state schools in our access and outreach activity. Our aim is to maintain the number of our undergraduate entrants from state schools above 97.5% (HESA T1a). During 2015-16 this percentage rose to 99% and in 2016-17 it was 98.9%. Target learners and target schools and colleges are identified by reference to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and HEFCE POLAR database. We target learners from postcodes associated with income deprivation, educational deprivation and low participation in higher education and we target schools and colleges with high concentrations of such learners.

We are an opportunity university and we seek to promote access for learners from the local area, from the lower socio-economic groups, from neighbourhoods with low rates of participation in higher education, from minority ethnic groups that are under-represented in higher education, from vulnerable groups such as young people leaving care and from learners with disabilities and from mature learners.

With regards to the proportion of young, full-time, undergraduate entrants recruited from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPNs), there was an increase of 1.8% against the figure for 2015-16 and we met our annual target/yearly milestone for 2016-17 (HESA T1b) of 11.2%. The HEAT tracking report 2007-08 to 2015-16 showed that 46% of the University of Bedfordshire's tracked cohort, with known POLAR3 postcodes, were from POLAR3 quintiles 1 and 2 (lowest participation neighbourhoods).

Almost 60% of our undergraduate home students were from BME backgrounds in 2016-17 and this has grown from 54% in 2014-15.

The number of care leavers within the full-time undergraduate population went down from 55 in 2015-16 to 49 in 2016-17, just below the target of 50. We met our OFFA Access Agreement yearly milestone for 2016-17 and remain strongly committed to this group, with dedicated access and outreach activity, including a summer school specifically targeted at this group. It should be noted that the number of care leavers varies on an annual basis and is subject to external factors relating to population and environment which are outside of our control. However, we remain committed to supporting this group and maintaining recruitment, working closely with our local authority to maintain recruitment from it.

The University has seen a significant growth in the proportion of mature students bucking the sector-wide trend. This is supported by the growth in academic partnerships and study centres. In 2012-13, mature students accounted for over 22% of undergraduate entrants and by 2016-17 this had almost doubled to 43% (HESA T2a). We have opened study centres with private providers in London and most recently Birmingham, to enable us to provide our courses off campus. These have provided access opportunities for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education.

4.9% of full-time, undergraduate entrants were in receipt of a DSA 2014-15 and 2016-17 (HESA T7). This rose to 5.7% in 2015-16. The University started to target those students in receipt of a DSA in the Access Agreement 2018-19, following regulatory changes around disability and as a way of providing a clearer methodology to monitor students with disabilities. This measure will be further developed in the coming months to reflect the changes in DSA arrangements and the internal mechanisms to fund and support disabled students.

- Target groups based on assessment of performance: all disadvantaged groups and particularly care leavers and disabled applicants.

¹ Tracked Student Data includes all students extracted from the HEAT database who HESA have tracked into HE from the entry year of 2007-08 up to and including the most recent year for which data are available.

1.2 Success Performance – Non-Continuation, Academic Progression and Outcomes

1.2.1 Non-Continuation and Academic Progression Rates for Students from Under-Represented Groups

Our TEF metrics demonstrate that overall we are above benchmark for the continuation of full-time and part-time students.

There is, however, some variation above and below benchmark across different groups and in particular we are below benchmark for continuation rates for POLAR quintiles 3, 4 and 5, disabled and male students. The most significant variance is for full-time disabled students (-2.4%).

In our monitoring of student progress across the academic lifecycle, we also assess academic progression between levels of study as this is an indicator of student success in their target award. In terms of the overall academic progression of full-time students in 2016-17, students from underrepresented groups generally performed better than other students, except in relation to students of particular ethnicities. For example: students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR 3, quintiles 1 and 2) perform better (74%) than their peers from quintiles 3 to 5 (70%) and similarly to non-UK students (EU, Channel islands etc.) (73%); students in receipt of a DSA are performing better (77%) than those with no disability (71%) and those who have declared a disability but are not in receipt of DSA (70%); and students from lower socio-economic classes (NS-Sec 4-7) are progressing slightly better (73%) than their peers from more advantaged backgrounds (70%).

Overall, the progression of white full-time students in 2016-17 was better (80%) than those from BME backgrounds, with the exception of Chinese students whose progression was 100%. The worst performing students are from Black-African, Black-Caribbean and other black backgrounds (60% overall and 54% from level 4 to 5).

Historically the progression of mature full-time students was better than young students but, in the last academic year 2016-17, their progression rate has fallen by 7% to 70%. This was due to a *one-off issue* at a large study centre² where an atypical cohort was recruited. The issue has been wholly rectified through pro-active engagement and focus with students, and we expect the progression of mature students to revert to benchmark in the next academic year. Nevertheless we will continue to identify mature students as a specific group warranting intervention and support.

Target groups based on assessment of performance: POLAR quintiles 3,4,5, disabled students, black students and male students.

1.2.2 Reducing Attainment Gaps

In terms of the percentage of full-time students achieving their intended award in their final year of study in 2016-17: students from Low Participating Neighbourhoods (POLAR 3, quintiles 1 and 2) (75%) performed better than those from more advantaged backgrounds (69%); students from lower socio-economic classes (NS-Sec 4-7) performed better (79%) than their peers from more advantaged backgrounds (74%); and the proportion of students in receipt of DSA who achieved an intended award is higher by 11% than the average rate for students with no disability.

Historically, mature students (60% in 2016-17) have performed worse than the young (85% in 2016-17) and the gap has significantly increased from 10% in 2014-15 to 25% in 2016-17, impacted by the introduction of study centres, as explained above.

In terms of achieving their intended awards and ethnicity, White students are performing better than their peers from other ethnic backgrounds. Overall there has been a decline in the proportion of students achieving their intended awards from 83% in 2014-15 to 71% in 2016-17. The change for non-white BME students over that period was from 80% to 63%.

Target groups based on assessment of performance: BME students, mature students.

1.3 Performance in Progression to Graduate Level Employment and or Further Study

² The recent expansion of study centres within our home partnership activity has had an impact on student performance including progression and academic outcomes. We have opened study centres with private providers in London and Birmingham. These have provided access opportunities for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. Student performance at the study centres has improved through the initial period of operation, however, initial student outcomes have impacted on overall progression rates and the achievement of intended awards for the University. The initial underperformance has been addressed through specific actions including improvements to the recruitment process, enhanced support and tailoring the curriculum to address the needs of students. For example, we have now introduced level 3 Foundation Year courses in the study centres.

As indicated in TEF metrics, we are below benchmark overall in terms of progression to graduate-level employment or further study - 62.2% (4.7% below benchmark) for full-time and 58.8% (7.6% below benchmark) for part-time. We have, however, seen a sustained and significant performance improvement in our DLHE data since 2013-14, beyond that of the sector and competitors, and current Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data shows that we are ahead of the sector in specific areas relating to sustained employment.

In that context, and based on TEF metrics, we have statistically significant gaps in progression to graduate level employment and further study across *all* underrepresented groups except for mature and disabled students. Based on comparisons with internal data, we have identified significant gaps in progression for Asian female graduates, IMD Q1 and 2 and POLAR Q1-5. As such our focus will continue to be a whole institution approach but with particular targeting of those groups.

Target groups based on assessment of performance: BME (particularly Bangladeshi/Pakistani females), POLAR 1-5, IMD Q1 and 2

2. Ambition and strategy

2.1 Strategic ambitions for access and participation

The University of Bedfordshire's mission is to provide access to higher education for learners from backgrounds including those under-represented in higher education. We are an opportunity university promoting access for learners from the local area, lower socio-economic groups, neighbourhoods with low rates of participation in higher education, minority ethnic groups under-represented in higher education, and vulnerable groups such as young people leaving care and from learners with disabilities. *As such, our access and participation plan reflects our mainstream core business – it is not a distinct and separable area of activity.* We provide *all* our students with a first-rate educational experience, giving them the best chance of achieving the success they themselves seek, and helping them make the best possible contribution to society and the economy. We do this based on our students' individual starting points and ambitions taking into account their characteristics and background.

The University's 2017 strategic plan has reconfirmed its vision to be 'inspire our diverse student body to achieve ambitious goals'. The University's contextual data shows the diversity of its student population in age (37% over 21) and ethnicity (49% BME), with 54% within the top two most deprived IMD quintiles, 39% with low tariff entry qualifications and 21% non-tariff.

In 2013 the University commissioned a significant research project to provide an evidential basis for its targeted action in respect of participation and attainment. The project used three years of student data to create a retention (continuation) model that would predict the likely retention outcome of the full-time undergraduate student population and identify the specific factors in an individual student's profile that would indicate a requirement of a particular level of support within their first year of study. The University recommissioned this study in 2016-17 based on the then most recent three years of student data. In each research study, a wide range of candidate factors were evaluated to produce a retention model specification that allowed the University to locate students in three continuation categories at entry – safe, at risk, and high risk – recognizing that their individual predicted continuation was a function of a range of pre-entry characteristics associated with their often complex widening participation profiles.

Students who are multiply disadvantaged face particular challenges, and the University focuses strategically on providing a curriculum that makes achievement accessible to all students, through four strategic objectives:

- Supporting our students' ambitions through an active and inclusive approach to teaching and learning;
- Rooting learning in real-world research, professional practice and community engagement;
- Engaging students fully in their own personal journey of learning and development;
- Working in partnership with our student body to create the conditions for each student, whatever their background, to succeed.

The central role of the student experience, at all stages of the student journey, is critical to this strategy. Increasing students' engagement and listening to their voice in all matters relating to their studies remains central to our approach to delivering this strategy. The Centre for Academic Partnerships (CAP) coordinates and delivers access and outreach activity, working in partnership with University Faculties, Admissions and nominated Outreach Champions. Raising the aspirations of applicants and students is a priority. High quality learning resources and excellent and targeted student support are areas where we have continued to build on existing strengths to support our diverse student body in achieving improved academic outcomes. Our Careers and Employability service works to

develop students' confidence and ambition, to increase their understanding of options and routes to success, and growing their ability to compete for the careers of their choice. This support is offered from pre-application to post-graduation, and is supported by the work of Faculties and of the Innovation and Enterprise Service in developing and maintaining business and industry links of value to our students and graduates.

Supporting students from underrepresented groups to succeed and excel at University is at the core of our activities and embedded in our strategy plan and underpinning strategies. We also recognize that within the broad definition of 'underrepresented groups' we have some areas where the data shows that certain groups are underperforming in terms of attainment and progression to graduate level employment and further study. As such, and as set out in this plan, we will target particular groups in the coming five years in order that we facilitate parity of attainment and progression. Those groups, set out in section 1 above, include BME, POLAR 3,4,5, disabled and mature students and combinations thereof. Our inclusive approach to learning and teaching, set out below, will be tailored from 18/19 to target key interventions, such as personal tutor support, skills development, coaching, at groups which we have identified in section 1 as underperforming academically and in terms of progression compared to those from non-disadvantaged groups. To reiterate, these included disabled, POLAR 3,4,5, mature and BME. Our 'whole institution' strategy embraces the needs and expectations of all students groups including those from a wider range of disadvantaged backgrounds.

2.2 Developing and delivering a high-quality learning experience

Our track record in delivering a high-quality learning experience for our diverse population is strong. The 2015 QAA Higher Education Review (HER) of our provision undertaken in June 2015 identified eight features of good practice, including 'the open and proactive approach taken to seeking out, listening and responding to the taught student voice at all levels of the institution'. In addition, the enhancement of student learning opportunities was commended. Only a third of institutions received such a commendation.

The University's admissions policy ensures that the University provides opportunity on a fair and transparent basis, and in particular that all applicants are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner, all those with the demonstrable ability to benefit from admission to one of our courses are enabled to do so, where a suitable vacancy exists; all entry routes of comparable standard are accorded parity of esteem; and the social background of the student body reflects the institutional commitment to widening participation and fair access.

The policy and process are reviewed regularly by Academic Board in the context of equality legislation, national expectations and sector guidance on good practice in admissions. The University has a policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning that enables admission on the basis of a wide range of credit and experience profiles mapped against expected entry standards. We provide specific support for individuals who may decide late within the recruitment cycle that they wish to apply for University study, as well as for those recruited within the UCAS clearing process. Academic staff are available throughout the summer period to provide advice and guidance, and are central to the clearing process, to ensure that teams are aware of, and can prepare for, the cohorts they will teach and support. Where late registration is proposed on the basis of a student's personal circumstances, the University requires, prior to approval, confirmation by the course coordinator and head of academic department that induction and any additional support required are in place.

Based on the 2013 and 2017 research outcomes (see above), a range of pre-entry characteristics, are analysed for their potential impact on retention and progression. The overall risk profile of an individual student, comprising the cumulative impact of factors identified as significant through the two commissioned research studies, produces a general risk profile for each student based on their likely retention (without supportive action). The thresholds for this model are set to provide a high level of support for the majority widening participation, while also identifying particularly complex individual profiles, i.e.

- **Safe:** 92.00% (predicted retention) and above
- **At Risk:** 70.00% - 92.00%
- **High Risk:** 70.00% and below

Each student is allocated a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT), and the University's Personal Academic Tutoring policy provides detailed guidance for Personal Academic Tutors on supporting their tutees. It is through this system that the University focuses its range of support services on the targeted needs of individual learners. A Personal Academic Tutor, meeting their tutee, will identify specific support requirements, and through a customised online PAT support system (PATAdmin) students already identified to PATs as at a particular retention risk level, are referred directly to the expert services best placed to provide proactive support. Personal Academic Tutors

identify the support requirements within the system, which automatically directs the request to the service involved. There is a further automated protocol for the update and, where possible, closure of student cases. PATs play an important role in ensuring that students get access to, and engage with, the specialist support on offer.

Structured diagnostic testing then forms part of the initial student experience enabling those students with particular learning needs or who may be at higher risk to be identified at an early stage. This may be previously undiagnosed disabilities, such as dyslexia, but equally may relate to support with their academic English or numeracy skills. A research-based diagnostic test developed by the University's world-leading Centre for English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA) provides individualised assessment linked to a range of developmental opportunities for students to improve their enabling academic skills at all levels of performance (including support for students who demonstrate early potential to succeed at the highest levels). Diagnostic outcomes are automatically made available to Personal Academic Tutors through the University's customised online PAT support system (PATAdmin) with specific guidance to PATs on the type of support required by each tutee. In 2018-19, additional skills support (numeracy etc.) will be added to this system. The QAA2015 HER identified as good practice 'the integrated and pastoral support for students' and this view is supported by students where the impact of these developments is again evident in increasingly positive BUS outcomes.

The University's specified objective in relation to contact time is to support the learner journey with a range of interactions of clearly defined purpose and impact. A significant proportion of our full-time students work to support their studies and/or have caring responsibilities which make demands on their time. High levels of additional commitments impact on students' outcomes and the extent to which they can engage with the full range of opportunities. The University takes account of this in planning the delivery of the curriculum, and provides as much flexibility as possible for students with external commitments to engage in a full range of developmental opportunities. The nature and timing of interactions is as important as the total hours. Learning contact is categorised as scheduled (timetabled contact), guided (structured and outside scheduled hours), independent (tutor-advised) and autonomous (learner-defined). Curricula are mapped to show this relationship across years, within course approval, and expectations are clearly signposted to students together with appropriate support mechanisms. Given their prior experience, many students arrive with high levels of learner dependency and our approach explicitly aims to develop them as independent learners, enabling all students to be challenged to maximize their outcomes. Scheduled contact hours stay relatively constant across levels, while the nature of the student-staff interaction changes. The volume of independent and autonomous learning in student workload increases as that of guided learning decreases.

We work closely with our students to help ensure that they understand the importance of actively committing to the learning experiences provided and there are opportunities for students to co- create some of these opportunities with their tutors (See CRe8, R6). As well as course-based initiatives, Student Experience Projects (StEPs) have enabled students, with staff support, to identify projects that enhance or enrich the student experience at the course or institutional level. We have committed over £500k to these projects since they started in 2013/14 and they include curricular activities (such as the development of e- learning materials in Sports Therapy), co- curricular (for example the i-CARE conference in healthcare, Step-Up in Performing Arts and the Law Clinic) and extra-curricular opportunities such as Bulls TV. The outcomes have featured at national conferences such as the RAISE conference this year, and been taken up by other institutions. The University's innovative teaching practices have recently been recognised through the awarding of two Hefce Catalyst A grants.

Curriculum design and teaching practices are designed to be inclusive. All units have a VLE site designed to a University-defined minimum specification, providing a variety of resources that support student learning including unit descriptors, course handbooks, study skills materials, links to reading and digital resources, as well as course materials and assessment briefs. Online resources are audited annually and monitored through responses to questions in the Bedfordshire Unit Survey (BUS).

The University has made a significant investment in its estate to provide spaces which support students' learning as envisioned by the CRe8 framework. These include new lecture spaces, more rooms for small-group teaching and social spaces to enable students to learn together and undertake group projects. The recently built £25m 'Gateway' building (Bedford campus) and the £46m Library on the Luton campus enact this approach, as will the £40m specialist teaching building (opening in 2019) for STEM subjects.

The Academic Reading and Resourcing Strategy ensures that library collections and spaces are targeted and used effectively. Departmental evaluations and action plans highlight level of student engagement with 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan

resources, and identify how departments improve engagement through reading lists and other learning resources. The Digital First purchasing initiative has supported the accessibility of resources to all students across all campuses. This has resulted in improved satisfaction ratings by students who have completed the recent NSS (88% from 84%) and in internal (BUS) surveys.

The importance of effective assessment in supporting transitions is recognised and supported both through assessment design and in mechanisms that enable students to recover any early failure or to direct students to appropriate supporting resources. As part of course approval, the developmental aspect of assessment tasks is carefully considered and course teams are required to submit an 'Assessment Map' which indicates the timing of assessments across the year to support engagement and achievement through an even and appropriate workload pace. All assessments have detailed assessment briefs that include the assessment criteria which indicate to students what they need to do to achieve the threshold standards and to achieve beyond that. The University's 2Q assessment feedback process was developed in conjunction with its students, and introduced through the strategic curriculum review (2012). It requires staff to provide focussed feedback around two areas: how well the students did against the provided assessment criteria (feedback) and how they might improve in similar tasks in the future (feedforward). Many staff may go beyond this, but University policy prioritises the effective guidance over excessive detail. In a further stage of development, the University is now piloting assignment briefs, developed in partnership with students, that will support a tutor-tutee dialogue based on students' own evaluation of the quality of their assessed work, their progress, and their potential. An online classification predictor allows students to assess their learning gain and likely honours degree outcome. This was developed in response to requests from students to know their possible outcomes, recognising the motivational impact this can have particularly for those at the borderlines.

A key feature of the undergraduate experience is Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL), recognising the importance of student-student interactions in support of the learning experience. All first-year curricula are supported through PAL which typically involves second year students assisting first years through structured learning activities across the year. Each year over 200 PAL leaders are recruited, trained and supported in their roles. Student feedback has been very positive. The most recent PAL annual report indicates that between 70 and 80% of students rate the PAL experience as excellent or very good and all PAL leaders report on the transformational impact this has had on them personally. Being a PAL and engaging in PAL activities makes a material difference to students confidence – which can be a barrier to student success for students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Throughout the academic year, the University's personal academic tutoring system (PATAdmin) collects and makes available for PATs a range of information in relation to student behaviours identified through internal research as indicative of future withdrawal or failure. Research conducted by the Retention and Performance Action Group in 2010-11 confirmed that the failure to submit an assessment was more closely correlated with early-stage continuation and progression that was grade achieved, with those achieving low grades having opportunities to recover their academic standing. In 2017-18, the University started to import to PATAdmin near-real-time information on assignment non-submission, enabling the development of policy and regulation around opportunities for recovery that also draw on the two-year pilot of early referral opportunities for level 4 students. This information sits alongside data on the early use of the University's *My Beds* money card and weekly on-campus engagement, to provide tutors with early information based on indicators evidenced as relevant to continuation. PATs meet all tutees regularly during the year to provide individualised support but are enabled through current information on student engagement to focus their attention on those students whose entry profiles and/or subsequent behaviours indicate particular requirements for general and specific support.

Many, but not all, students enter with clear educational and professional goals. Thus the University's curriculum is designed both to enhance academic attainment and to allow students to explore alternative personal and professional goals. This is reflected in the Employability strand of CRe8 which provides the basis for curriculum design and in a range of curriculum, co-curricular and extra-curricular offerings. Knowledge skills and attributes are defined at the course level through Graduate Impact Statements which are designed to articulate to employers what a graduate from that course will be able to do for them in broad terms. Employers are involved in approval events to ensure that the Graduate Impact Statements are relevant to employment in the area. Each department has mapped its curriculum in detail to identify the key elements that contribute to employability and to ensure that there is a full curricular and co-curricular offering. The resultant Employability Maps cover four dimensions: practitioner and transferable skills; personal and professional development; professional recognition and endorsement; and portfolio experience. They are explored with students so that they understand how their curriculum and activities relate to future employment. A StEPs project with an initial focus on the professional values and behaviours expected by graduate employers has expanded to include the importance of relating academic development to personal development, through the assessment and

feedback process. Our students consistently rated the University in the top quartile on the pre-2017 NSS questions on personal development (confidence, communication skills and ability to tackle unfamiliar problems), and our first year of UKES confirms the effective support provided for skills development.

Specialist careers advice is available through the Careers and Employability Service which works closely with both individual students and course teams. Throughout the 2017/18 academic year, 72% of students who engaged with the service for IAG were of a BME background. This figure has increased significantly in comparison to 2016/17. In respect of the optional Careers questions in the NSS, the University is consistently placed above the sector average in terms of responses across the sector on the career-specific questions. We commit significant curriculum space and resource to broadening our students' horizons and aspirations. Extra-curricular offerings include a suite of credit bearing employability units, skills awards and the Go Global scheme (which is very subsidised by the University and was shortlisted for the THE Outstanding International Strategy award) which supports students to experience short periods abroad. Over the past four years more than 1000 UK/EU students have had the opportunity of a 'Go Global' experience in various locations including China, Vietnam, Malaysia, and New York. Some students have aspirations to start their own companies and this is facilitated by specialist short-courses as well as by the inclusion of 'enterprise skills' introduced in 2012 as one of the generic skills developed within each course curriculum.

The University's general approach is to embed employability-related initiatives within the curriculum to ensure that these are available to all, and through a range of additional activities to enable students to explore and develop through opportunities offered flexibly, to be taken up at a point in their studies convenient to them. The University considers carefully the needs of its diverse student body and commits significant resources to learner support available to students on a flexible basis in addition to core scheduled hours. Learning is further enriched by a range of co- and extra- curricular activities that provide exposure to research and/or professional practice appropriate to each subject. Examples include talks by experienced professionals, visits to professional settings (such as the BBC for media students and professional sports clubs for sports scientists), opportunities for real work experience on or off campus and 'Junior Research Institutes' where students become an extended part of a postgraduate research institute actively engaged in research activities. These experiences form part of the approved Employability Maps (discussed later) for each subject area. In 2017, the University's Sustainability Forum was shortlisted for the Higher Education Academy's Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE). The Sustainability Forum is a cross-disciplinary community which collaborates in research and teaching innovation, and works to engage students to construct healthy futures for themselves, their communities and the planet as part of the University's commitment to developing its students as active citizens, as evidenced in the UKES outcomes (2017).

The number of undergraduate courses with a year-long placement has increased from 20 to over 90 this academic year. Recognising the importance of the placement year, and the potential financial barriers, no fee is charged. This provision is relatively new but expanding with 231 students currently registered on this type of provision. We also recognise, however, that for many of our students, there is, for reasons of personal or family circumstance, no realistic opportunity to take up a work placement, or to extend their engagement through scheduled contact. A portfolio of short, credit-bearing employability units has been expanded to enable students to develop their personal 'brand', professional behaviours for the world of work, networking, freelancing, foreign languages and understanding of business start-up are offered at different times across the year (502 students registered in 2017-18), and the University has recently started to offer recruitment assessment centre days, allowing students to register for a simulation of the recruitment assessment centre experience, including online testing, group exercises and interviews.

Because of these and related activities, since 2012-13 our performance improvement in the DLHE has outstripped that of the sector increase and our competitor institutions. Between 2011-12 and 2015-16, there was a circa 16% increase in graduate employment outcomes. The current Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data considers the percentages in employment and/or further study one, three and five years after graduation for the 2012/13, 2010/11, 2008/09, 2003/04 cohorts. This shows that the University is ahead of the sector in the 'Sustained Employment' and 'Sustained employment with or without further study' categories, and only marginally behind the sector on 'Further study, sustained employment or both' (81.4 vs. sector 82.0 [FT students]). This further indicates the longer-term employability gain the University's curriculum provides for its students.

We recognize that the graduate employment of BME students is a particular challenge. Employment rates for BME graduates lag behind those of their white counterparts nationally and a recent DfE report found that "region of domicile, social disadvantage (as measured by POLAR), disability, and type of degree obtained were statistically significant factors." Thus the challenges faced by multiply disadvantaged sections of our

student population may not be fully reflected in the metrics. For example there is national evidence to indicate that Bangladeshi and Pakistani women are less likely to be in employment and analysis of our DLHE data indicates that employment or further study rates for female Bangladeshi-Asian students lag 10% behind their male counterparts. A further factor is that, although geographically in the affluent south-east, many of our students, as noted earlier, have caring and family commitments, and are restricted in their employment mobility and therefore opportunity. The University is aware of the attainment and employability gap for certain sections of its student population and has a range of targeted actions specifically designed to address this including supporting the Ethnic Minority Undergraduate Scheme via the National Mentoring Consortium, where we encourage a range of BME mentors to support and actively targeting BME students for some of the additional opportunities available (for example, PAL leaders, where the White:BME ratio has moved from 70:30 in 2013/14 to 57:43). An annual Graduate Development Programme (GDP) providing work experience and structured post-graduation careers advice. 83% of the 2016 cohort and 84% of the 2017 cohort on this programme were BME with 71% of the 2017 BME cohort female. While we recognise that more work is required to address inequalities, the University clearly provides significantly improved outcomes and learning gain for its diverse student body, through a strategy that focuses on the meaningful accessibility of high-value development opportunities offered as flexibly as possible, personalised support for individual ambition and circumstances, and a focus on raising learner aspiration and confidence.

In 2016-17, the University undertook pilot research into the initial confidence levels of its students, using a research validated psychometric instrument. On the basis of these findings and a preliminary review of the progress of this cohort (whose on-target completion of studies will be at the end of 2017-18), the University has identified confidence as potentially particularly significant to both academic and post-graduation outcomes. On this basis, a new project will launch in October 2018 to track and evaluate student perceptions of confidence (through self-report and psychometric testing) at the start and completion of their studies. Alongside this, the University will implement the findings of HEFCE's career readiness research (<https://www.thecareersgroup.co.uk/research/research-projects/careers-registration-learning-gain-project/>) through entry and exit survey, and also an objective test of verbal and numerical reasoning skills drawn from a professional recruitment assessment centre provider.

Using all three indicators – career readiness, confidence, and key employability skills, the University will be able to extend its current personal tutoring scheme to provide targeted careers guidance and employability support. The career readiness outcome for each student will be uploaded to PATAdmin, and the additional information on confidence and skill will be provided separately. This will be implemented in 2018-19, and the scheme will be extended to the graduate development programme at the start and finish points. Through this targeted approach, the University will be able to evaluate the impact of actions based on these measures and therefore the measures themselves.

The Careers and Employability Service are developing specific resources to support care leavers and those students who identify themselves with a disability. We have a specific liaison employability adviser who is working with employers, community and disability associations specialising in identifying pathways and opportunities for student with disabilities and long-term health conditions on how to manage their career progression.

For students who identify themselves as needing additional support, work is currently being undertaken with the Careers & Employability Service and Beds Student Union to plan specific provision

2.3 Targeted groups

Our Access and Participation Plan and the associated activities and support measures target the following main groups:

- Students from low higher education participation neighbourhoods and/or low socioeconomic status
- BME students and sub-groups in this category (eg Bangladeshi/Pakistani females into employment and further study)
- Mature students
- Disabled students
- Care leavers
- Students with more than one of the characteristics above

2.4 Evaluation and continuous improvement

2.4.1 Introduction

The University places considerable emphasis on the importance of monitoring widening participation and assessing the effectiveness and impact of the initiatives detailed within this plan.

2.4.2 Institutional governance and oversight of access and participation

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the University's Access and Participation Plan.

Evaluation and monitoring is conducted at two levels – strategic and operational.

The University has conducted regular monitoring of its performance in the retention, achievement and employment outcomes of its student population through the committee structure outlined below (in this section). The University's provision of support for targeted groups of students has been informed by periodic review of the impact of that support (see section 2). Based on its introduction in 2018-19 of a range of new aspects to that support, and the University's adoption of the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit, the University will operate a revised evaluation and monitoring framework from 2018-19, integrating the non-financial aspects of evaluation with the framework offered by the financial support evaluation toolkit.

The monitoring and evaluation framework has been revised to provide:

- Comprehensive review of progress to inform target review and review of financial support;
- The allocation of initial reviews to the formal committees with the most relevance to this remit;
- An integrated overarching evaluation based on those initial reviews and informing the revised Access and Participation Plan;
- A clear feed through from strategic monitoring and evaluation to operational enhancement and continuous improvement;
- A tracked evidential link between operational support and continuous improvement, and the University's strategic priorities identified within this plan.

The revised framework comprises five review cycles, which combine to inform an overall evaluation reviewed by Academic Board and the VCEG.

Monitoring cycle 1

Within this revised evaluation and monitoring framework, at strategic level, the University's Student Learning and Success Committee (SLSC) will conduct the initial monitoring of the impact of financial support provision on retention, degree completion, and graduate outcome, according to the specification provided by OfS, using the statistical and interview tools. This evaluation will be conducted in April each year and annually thereafter, and will inform the University's revisions to its financial support profile through report to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG), as well as through overview report to Academic Board.

Monitoring cycle 2

The University will continue to evaluate and monitor the University's effective engagement with access initiatives by evaluating its recruitment of students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds, and in particular LPN, mature, BME groupings disability and care leavers. This review will cover targets T16a_01, T16a_02, T16a_04, T16a_09, T16a_10, T16a_12. It will be conducted in January 2019 and annually thereafter, by the Recruitment, Marketing and Outreach Committee, which reports to VCEG and is chaired by the Vice Chancellor. It will supplement this review with an evaluation of access initiatives, where data is available on the HEAT database (target T16b_04).

Monitoring cycle 3

In parallel with this, the SLSC will monitor progress against targets for student success and progression using a modified version of the approach adopted within the financial toolkit. This monitoring cycle will focus on the University's progress in the continuation, success and progression of students in specific target groups and will monitor targets T16a_03, T16a_05, T16a_06, T16a_07, T16a_08, T16a_11, T16a_15, T16a_16, T16a_17. It will be conducted in April 2019 and annually thereafter, and the University will seek the information to allow it to include target T16b_03 in this review.

Monitoring cycle 4

The fourth review cycle will consider progression and will cover targets T16a_13, T16a_14, T16a_18, T16a_19, T16a_20, T16a_21. It will be conducted in April 2019 and annually thereafter by the SLSC, and will be based on subject groupings (HECOS coded).

Monitoring cycle 5

The final cycle of review will be conducted by the University's Collaborative Provision Committee in March/April 2019 and annually thereafter, and will focus on targets T16b_01, and T16b_02.

Monitoring cycles 1 and 2 will inform the University's revisions to its financial support profile through report to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG).

A note of the conclusions of this consideration will be added to an overall evaluation of access and participation, focused on the outcomes of monitoring cycles 3-5, reviewed by the SLSC and recommended to Academic Board and the VCEG in May 2019 (and annually thereafter). This will inform the revision of the Access and Participation Plan annually, which will be considered by the Equality and Diversity Committee through Equality Impact Assessment.

The University will also undertake a longitudinal evaluation in 2020-21, including analysis of pooled cohorts where these become robust on the basis of multi-year review.

2.4.3 Monitoring improvements in access and participation

The monitoring cycles above will inform the operational enhancement and continuous improvement through feed through to additional committees and groups that operationalize University strategy and monitor delivery of initiatives and operational enhancements.

The SLSC sub-committee, Retention and Performance Action Group (RPAG) has led on the strategic developments designed to improve student retention and support, including Personal Academic Tutoring and the use of data analytics to assess and monitor retention and progression risk for PAT action, within PATAdmin. It will use outputs of monitoring cycle 3 in particular to reflect on its monitoring of support provided through the current and new data informing its personal tutoring scheme, and its provision of study support more broadly, as well as initiatives to target support more effectively towards groups identified within the Access and Participation Plan.

The SLSC sub-committee, Employability Action Group (VCEAG) has led on the development of a revised employability framework with widespread stakeholder consultation, staff development activities and a distillation of the 'offer' made to students through departmental charts. It will use the outputs of monitoring cycle 4 in particular to review and revise the overall employability support provided, as well as initiatives to target support more effectively towards groups identified within the Access and Participation Plan.

The SLSC sub-committee, Student Partnership Group (SPG) oversees action planning arising from key student surveys and the National Student Survey (NSS) as a key driver for improving satisfaction. The group has led on improving our participation rates and then supporting change that improves the satisfaction of our students, and will include the outputs of monitoring cycle 3 within its consideration of further and continuous improvement.

2.5 Student engagement

We have engaged students in the production of this Access and Participation plan and will involve them through the equality impact assessment of the plan.

The University's success in improving the student experience has been driven substantially by its partnership with its students. Student representatives are involved in setting policy agendas, as well as developing funding proposals for enhancement projects through the Student Experience Fund, and the StEPS programme. To support staff across the University, Associate Deans (Student Experience) have been appointed to each Faculty. Their work is coordinated by the Director for Student Experience, whose team supports the analysis of data across sources and the planning and monitoring of actions. The University also holds regular workshops for staff, including with external input that ensures that the University benefits from sector best practice.

The University works closely with Beds SU to promote an effective system of student representation and students can access details of their student representative through the BREO gateway. Academic staff assist in the course selection process, whilst professional support staff identify elected representatives on the student record system to ensure their speedy integration into Beds SU's training and support arrangements. The VCSEG monitors the coverage of this system.

Since 2012, the Beds SU President has been a full member of the VC's Executive Group that meets fortnightly to review and determine key strategic and operational matters. Beds SU executive officers participate in strategic planning for student engagement and the enhancement of the learning experience as members of the Academic Board, TQSC and SLSC. Faculty and course representatives engage with quality processes through memberships of Faculty committees. The University's UoB-Beds SU liaison group provides a regular forum for the raising and resolution of issues, and consideration of initiatives for change.

In addition, and with the expressed purpose of engaging students in the enhancement of quality at course level, in 2013 the University instituted students as formal members of course teams. Course teams meet regularly and provide opportunities for key staff and student cohort representatives to discuss matters arising in the student experience and take early action to resolve any matters of concern. This initiative, enhancing the previous approach to course journals composed by staff, arose from the 2011 UoB-Beds SU conference. Initiated in 2011/12, the annual Beds SU-University conference is a strategic forum for policy making in partnership. From these jointly-led workshops have emerged a series of strategic initiatives including the change to percentage grading system, online assessment feedback and the revised personal academic tutoring scheme as well as service enhancements such as 24/7 library opening, and estate design including the new library (Luton) and gateway building (Bedford). In addition, formal consultations are supplemented by broader engagement of the student perspective through surveys, and focus groups that ensure that the diversity of the student population is represented.

External and internal surveys ensure the engagement of the wider student body in feedback about their educational experience as the basis for continuous enhancement, including partner institutions. Teaching quality is monitored through the Bedfordshire Unit Survey (BUS). Surveys take place during the teaching of the unit so that any issues can be identified and resolved immediately. Units giving cause for concern are immediately investigated. Action is taken and acknowledged to students. Students' satisfaction with teaching and their units is calculated in the same way as the NSS and is generally high and increasing. The Vice-Chancellor's Student Experience Group provides the forum at which the full range of feedback evidence is triangulated to develop a shared interpretation and support integrated action-planning. Feedback outcomes are shared across the institution. A quantitative analysis of cohort feedback on the BUS (unit-level) survey is provided centrally for BREO sites, supported by a response from the unit coordinator detailing action planning. These are rolled forward to close the feedback loop for the following cohort. Formal feedback is contextualised by a range of informal channels for hearing the student voice, such as surveys delivered through Opinion Dashboard, and the online scheme "Tell Us", implemented at the start of 2013/14, as well as face-to-face feedback sessions led by senior managers. Issues surfaced through these are actioned and responses are provided to students through the 'You said, we did' campaign, which supports student recognition of the value of their feedback to the University and to the improvement of the student experience.

The Vice Chancellors Employability Action group (VCEAG) has representation from BedsSU to input into the employability agenda to ensure fair representation from all groups.

2.6 Complementarity and collaboration

The University is fully committed to a range of informal and formal partnerships to support widening participation and achievement.

As a University with a long-established reputation as an access university, we work closely with a range of organisations including the Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE), and the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) and we participate in national groups. We wish to help build networks within our region and beyond which can promote collaboration between universities, cultivate reflective practice among access practitioners and contribute to research and policy analysis in this field.

Aspire Higher is a consortium built upon the existing relationship between the University of Hertfordshire and the University of Bedfordshire. Both institutions are targeting five wards across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme from January 2017 to December 2018. A range of joint activities are being used to increase progression to HE including: an Aspire Advocacy Programme to incentivise schools to target students from Gaps areas, a youth advisory panel to involve students in the design of their outreach programme; enhanced schools outreach to encourage schools to collaborate, out of school outreach, the delivery of additional qualifications and information on progression routes.

The University of Bedfordshire is an Associate Partner of Study Higher which is a collaborative partnership between the University of Oxford, Bucks New University, Oxford Brookes University, the University of Reading and six local further education colleges to help raise aspirations and educational attainment among young people. We have developed a programme of STEM related activities to support the schools' curriculum for Year 9 – 12 students. Be

developing bespoke workshops with an element of outdoor learning, the ambition is to engage students by enabling them to gain a new and positive educational experience, wider than the classroom.

Following the success of the National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO), we have further collaborated with the University of Hertfordshire through Aspire Higher, with the HEFCE funded, National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), where we target specific outreach work with the Goldington ward. In addition, we are an Associate Partner in the Study Higher NCOP, with Oxford Brookes University as the lead institution, where we work with the low participation neighbourhood, Eaton Bray, in Milton Keynes. We continue to engage with the Eastern Region Care Leavers working group (comprising Anglia Ruskin University, UEA, UCS, Norwich University College of the Arts, and the universities of Bedfordshire, Cambridge, Essex and Hertfordshire) to share best practice and facilitate collaborative working in the region, increasing the engagement of schools in the east. We also work in partnership with the University of Kent by being a host institution for the South East regional HEAT Hub and play an active role in the HEAT forum of higher education providers in order to enhance the quality and consistency of our evaluation and tracking data.

In addition, we work collaboratively with our target schools, colleges and other stakeholders to raise attainment in schools and colleges through projects and activities, which link to the curriculum to help raise attainment and awareness of opportunities in higher education. An example of this is the Jekyll and Hyde project which was a school curriculum project developed and delivered in 2017 in collaboration with external stakeholders, University faculties and our target schools. It was developed following the success of a previous curriculum based project based on Roald Dahl. The project was in response to the curriculum changes within the English literature at Key Stage 4 with the emphasis placed upon Victorian prose, specifically the text of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and the changes in grading structure moving to a numerical based attainment system. The project had two main aims a) to support GCSE English Literature students in Bedfordshire 'target schools' to better understand and learn the context narrative of Jekyll and Hyde, prior to examinations and b) to support and increase cultural capital within the theatre setting for GCSE English Literature students in Bedfordshire. The project additionally aimed to increase the awareness of the Access and Outreach Team, and to illustrate how projects can be subject-specific and support GCSE attainment. We further looked at collaborative work and offering a high-quality piece of Theatre in Education to 'target schools' and supporting schools to access a professional performance for free at their school site. We worked collaboratively with Trestle Theatre Company and Luton Borough Council and worked closely with schools, including Heads of English to further develop the project. We ensured the project had a wider impact within the University, by offering a series of in-reach activities, wider than our existing Associate Scheme.

2.7 Equality and diversity

Our Equality and Diversity Policy commits the University to promoting equality of opportunity in all its activities including ensuring that all University policies, procedures and practices reflect these principles. The University recognises and appreciates the diversity of its student body and the community it serves, and works to develop a curriculum to meet the needs of a varied, contemporary society. We take steps to foster an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated. Our equality impact assessment of this Access and Participation plan confirms that it supports the implementation of our equality and diversity policy and that it is designed to contribute positively to the educational opportunities and student experience of a diverse community.

2.8 Targets and milestones

Our Access and Participation Plan targets, aligned to the student lifecycle, are as follows:-

Access	1.To increase the proportion of students recruited from Low Participation Neighbourhoods
Access	2.To maintain the proportion of mature undergraduate entrants at or above 30%
Access	3.To maintain the number of undergraduate home entrants from BME groups at 50% or above
Access	4.To increase the proportion of full-time undergraduate students in receipt of DSA (9)
Access	5.To maintain the number of young, full-time, first degree entrants from state schools
Access	6.To increase the number of care leavers within the full-time undergraduate population
Access	7.To investigate and target people estranged from their families, as an example of a student group where national data indicates there are particular equality gaps
Access	8.To undertake curriculum based events at target schools with a minimum of 15 schools per year
Access	9.To undertake a fixed number of collaborative projects per year each working with a range of collaborative partners including schools, colleges, other universities and external stakeholders
Access	10.To deliver long term outreach activity by targeting identified cohorts of students through a range of successive interventions, such as mentoring and curriculum based approaches
Continuation	11.To reduce the non-continuation rate of young, full-time, first degree entrants no longer in HE after one year
Continuation	12.To reduce the non-continuation rate of mature, full-time, first degree entrants no longer in HE after one year
Continuation	13.To reduce the non-continuation rate of all, full-time, first degree entrants no longer in HE after one year
Continuation	14.To reduce the non-continuation rate of young, full-time, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods no longer in HE after one year
Continuation	15.To increase the continuation of full-time disabled undergraduate students to the benchmark level within the TEF metrics
Academic Progression	16. To narrow the gap for level 4 to level 5 progression between BME and white full-time students
Academic attainment	17.To increase the proportion of full-time first degree students projected to be awarded a degree
Academic attainment	18. To increase the proportion of full-time mature students achieving their intended awards
Academic attainment	19. To increase the proportion of full-time BME students achieving their intended awards
Progression to grad employ or further study	20.To increase the proportion of graduates in graduate level employment or further study (based on DLHE data)
Progression to grad employ or further study	21.To increase the number of full-time first degree qualifiers who are working or studying 6 months after completing their studies
Progression to grad employ or further study	22 To increase the number of POLAR3 graduates who are working or studying 6 months after completing their studies
Progression to grad employ or further study	23 To increase the number of mature graduates who are working or studying 6 months after completing their studies
Progression to grad employ or further study	To increase the number of disabled graduates who are working or studying 6 months after completing their studies

Progression to grad employ or further study	To increase the number of BME graduates who are working or studying 6 months after completing their studies
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3. Access, student success and progression measures

This section provides an overview of the activities and support measures that we will undertake in 2019-20 to achieve our objectives and the priorities we have identified for access and participation. Our activities and support measures can be categorized into three key areas: *Access and Outreach*, *Raising Attainment in Schools and College* and *Student Success and Progression to Graduate Level Employment and Further Study within the University*, as detailed below.

We continue to seek to shift funding away from bursaries and scholarships towards increased investment in specific initiatives, projects and programmes with measurable outcomes targeting disadvantaged and under-represented groups across all stages of the student lifecycle. This reflects our assessment of where there are gaps in our performance, and will be supported with the evaluation of our activities to inform future funding priorities.

3.1 Access and Outreach

The follow activities and support measures are designed to support the delivery of our targets relating to access and outreach and to thereby sustain and support this area, in line the University's mission and values to provide access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education.

- The Access and Outreach team deliver an engagement framework for target schools and colleges – in the form of a coherent, progressive programme of activity for learners in schools and across the student population in further education colleges, including those on Access Courses. This programme targets those schools and colleges which are associated with measures of deprivation such as income deprivation, educational deprivation, child poverty and low higher education participation.
- *Primary engagement:* A targeted early intervention engagement programme for primary aged children (years 4, 5 and 6, Key Stages 1 - 2) which aims to establish, at an early age, the aspiration to participate in higher education among learners from particularly hard to reach groups. We have identified within the sector the lack of career aspiration and appropriate guidance and aim to target white working class male group and their parents/carers as one that would benefit from early and sustained intervention to encourage progression to Higher Education.
- *Access Partnership Programme:* An engagement framework for target schools and colleges in the form of a coherent progressive programme of activity for learners, typically running from year 7 to 13 in schools and across the student population in further education colleges. This programme targets, in particular, those schools and colleges which are associated with measures of deprivation such as income deprivation, educational deprivation, child poverty and low higher education participation.
- *The Associate Scheme:* This scheme employs an undergraduate and postgraduate student workforce, mainly from a widening participation background, to engage in paid outreach work with our target schools and colleges. The scheme provides students with valuable knowledge and work experience, contributing to student success, progression and retention.
- *Looked after children (LAC) support into and through University:* A programme of university visits, taster days and summer schools for young people currently in care or who have progressed to become care leavers. Students who are care leavers receive an enhanced level of support as detailed in the student financial support section, below.
- *Summer Schools:* A summer school programme, including bespoke programmes aimed at years 12 and 13, mature students, part-time students, vocational learners and specific targeted groups, such as care leavers and young carers.
- *Access all Areas:* A progression programme to support progression from level 3 programmes (including Access Courses) in target FE colleges to higher education programmes in the University and from Foundation Degrees (and other sub-graduate courses) in our partner colleges to Honours degrees in the University. We see this work with further education colleges as providing one of the key opportunities for engagement with part-time and mature learners.
- *Young Carers and Young Adult Carers Initiative:* We will introduce a range of measures directed to ensuring access to (and success within) higher education for carers and young adult carers. We will ensure their involvement in our outreach and student success and progression activities and we will use the HEAT database to track their participation. We also provide access to enhanced funding for identified young adult carers as part of our additional investment in the Access to Learning Fund.

- *Innovation and partnership with schools:* We work systematically to support the development of curriculum pathways and new forms of school such as Academies, Free Schools and University Technical Colleges, to help bring about new opportunities for young people, especially in areas of deprivation. Within Luton, we work with representatives from the Borough Council, local schools and education and training provider representatives to consider the opportunities and curriculum pathways available from Key Stage 4 to post 16 and beyond, focusing on ways to raise awareness and facilitate progression.
- *Enhanced information, advice and guidance:* Through the provision of conferences and events for teachers and advisers in schools, colleges and other agencies we seek to help to bridge the gap left by changes to the provision of information, advice and guidance about higher education. We run a Teachers and Advisers Conference each year with relevant keynote speakers, workshops and higher education information and guidance.

3.2 Raising Attainment in Schools and Colleges

We have developed a comprehensive set of approaches to working with schools and colleges to raise attainment for those from disadvantaged and under-represented groups, based on previous and existing activity. We work in close partnership with our target schools and colleges, co-sponsor and directly support an academy, mentor pupils in our target schools and colleges, provide curriculum related initiatives to support the delivery of the school curriculum and provide a range of courses specifically designed to facilitate entry to higher education. Good practice will be shared through local and regional groups and, where the opportunity arises, at a national level through dissemination at conferences.

- *Strategic links with schools:* The University will continue to maintain and develop strategic links with schools and colleges. It will further develop beneficial partnerships and target outreach activities to help raise attainment for those from disadvantaged and under-represented groups. We are committed to our work as a co-sponsor of the All Saints Academy Dunstable. All Saints is an 11-18 Academy and we are supporting governance and initiatives to improve teaching and learning and pupil outcomes. Associated activities have included: workshops on promoting 'active' lessons, promoting differentiation in the classroom and the identification of strengths and areas of development leading to teaching improvement plans; and an away-day at a University campus. In addition, we will continue to provide accessible training opportunities for existing teachers and our trainees entering schools and colleges. Our courses in Education Studies and Initial Teacher Training are delivered flexibly, in partnership via different modes of study, at alternative times and local venues, to facilitate and widen access and participation for those already working in schools, wishing to undertake continuous professional development or seeking to enter the profession.

Curriculum related projects, events and activities (including creative curriculum and STEM): We will develop and deliver, in collaboration with our target schools, University faculties and external stakeholders, a series of bespoke projects, events and activities which support the delivery of the school curriculum (including key stage 4 (14-15 years) and 5 (16-18 years)) and link to University course and curriculum developments and community related outreach projects. The aim is to create a range of educational initiatives for particular cohorts as a means of raising attainment, specifically target pupil premium, BME students, SEN students, white working class boys, looked after and young carers. Our existing work in this area has led to improvements in our offer and a closer dialogue with our target schools. As a result, we are committed to aligning our activity to current developments, such as qualification reforms and increasing mental health awareness, and providing a comprehensive framework to schools with follow up workshops, teacher CPD and resources.

- *Mentoring:* The delivery of intensive and long-term mentoring projects in our target secondary schools and colleges. The aim is to support the raising of aspirations and attainment, helping students to realise their potential and understand why they might be underachieving. This initiative contributes to raising attainment by allowing the student to review aspirations in the short and long term, providing careers support and course choices, setting personal goals, overcoming barriers and creating opportunities to learn from others. The cohorts are determined with the school or college and may target particular groups such as pupil premium students. This intervention is developed in collaboration with the institution and the particular cohort and is delivered through our Associate Scheme.
- *Foundation Year courses prior to degree study:* Our level 3 Foundation Year courses raise attainment and widen participation by providing an additional year of study for students from a variety of backgrounds who require help and support to enable them to access an undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year builds academic skills, subject knowledge and confidence within the chosen discipline and allows students to gain an understanding of the subject before confirming the route within which they wish to specialise. It is designed to

appeal to a variety of target groups, including mature students who are returning to learning and students who did not achieve the grades for direct entry to an undergraduate degree. Special Foundation Year bursaries are available to students starting our Foundation Year programmes.

3.3 Student Success and Academic Progression

These activities are designed to support the achievement of our targets relating to student success and progression.

3.3.1 Student success

- *New Student Welcome:* The first few weeks at University are one of the highest risk points for students deciding to leave for a number of reasons. The key ones being, homesickness, poor organisation, limited opportunities to make friends or lack of money to participate. At the University of Bedfordshire, it is our belief students are more likely to succeed if given the best possible start to their student journey.
- Prior to joining the University, prospective students will be able to access a pre-arrival Welcome gateway through our virtual learning environment. This will house resources to support the student transition into university.
- The scheme, developed in partnership with Beds Students' Union, will provide a series of events both academic and just for fun at no cost to students to enable them to participate fully in the university experience. The events focus on student and staff integration with daily themes. Examples include International, well-being, clubs and societies, non-academic special interest classes and course base zones to enable networking with course teams, support staff and other students.
- The investment in the new student welcome will include a 'refreshers' week, about six weeks in to the first term. This provides opportunity for students to further engage with support functions and other areas of the university. This is aimed to provide further opportunities for students who may be at risk of withdrawing to further engage enhance their chances of success whilst further enhancing and improving the student experience for the wider university community. The new student welcome is designed to encompass all parts of the university community including mature students and other non-traditional learners to maximise student success opportunities for all elements of the university community.
- *Peer-mentoring and peer-assisted learning:* Initiatives to enhance retention by raising levels of student progression, improving resilience and helping to maintain academic momentum towards their target award. To do this we focus on students' preparedness for success, their ambition and recognition of their own potential, and the visibility and accessibility of academic support services. We provide a peer mentoring scheme, part of the Access Partnership Associate Scheme, working with fellow students providing frequent contact and support for progression and success.
- We make a significant investment in the quality of the student experience by means of, for example, improved forms of "coaching", personal tutoring, and support networks and expanded and enhanced arrangements for peer-assisted learning.
- *Professional and Academic Development:* In addition to a comprehensive programme of drop-in learning support, we provide targeted in-session support to prioritised courses and student groups, identified through consideration of student profiles and our access agreement targets and priorities. This will enable us to identify and target support for areas where there are, for example, incidence of white males from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, black minority ethnic students, students with disabilities and mature and part-time learners.
- *Student Money Advice:* We invest in a service to deliver a programme of workshops, and targeted sessions throughout the academic year focusing on providing proactive support and empowering students to manage their finances effectively. The Student Money Advice service works in partnership with the Student Union and external providers to ensure students receive targeted advice and guidance to embed good money practices throughout their degree and to stand them in good stead as successful graduates.
- *Internship Support Scheme:* We recognise that a difficult economic climate exacerbates the challenges faced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds in the labour market. This is why we are increasing our investment in initiatives to enhance employment outcomes for our students and to support graduates in our target groups. We will therefore further invest in our recently-piloted Internship Support Scheme designed to 'level the playing

field' for students from poorer backgrounds and enable them to take part in internships from which they would have otherwise been excluded. This will include work with professional groups with whom we have close links such as in law and medicine to negotiate 'fair access' internship opportunities.

- *Advice and recruitment service for work experience:* We are also aware that one of the key enablers to achieving graduate-level employment is gaining relevant and high quality work experience. We are therefore establishing a Centre within our Careers Service to lead on the further development of the placements, internships and work experience offer to our students. This Centre operates as an advice and recruitment service for those seeking additional employability experience – be that as part of their course (Placements), as a paid Intern, or short-term career-related work experience (which may or may not be paid). The Centre draws on the skills of experienced and qualified staff who are actively engaged with employers, to support students and the academic staff who work with them while out on placements. In addition, the University will provide financial support to help disadvantaged students with the costs of undertaking career related work experience where that work experience is either unpaid, low paid or the student would incur additional costs associated with taking up the opportunity. This funding can be used to cover travel or accommodation (where the work location is not local) and/or dependent care costs incurred as a result of undertaking the work experience. This funding is required as the issues outlined above are often a barrier to students undertaking such opportunities.
- *Support for students with disabilities:* The University's approach to supporting students with disabilities is to provide reasonable adjustments for those students with assessed need as well as enhancing the accessibility of the curriculum for all. Changes to the Disabled Students' Allowance has not changed this fundamental approach although the balance of provision between DSA-funded support and that provided by the University will change. It is anticipated that changes to DSA may particularly affect the eligibility of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD). The University will continue to provide all disabled students with appropriate disability-related study support.
- *Support for mature students:* We have developed a number of commitments designed better to support mature students. These include the commitment to filter and focus communications with mature students better to reflect their needs and concerns (to allow students to select and focus on the information which they value most, run a programme of pre-arrival skills sessions for parents, establish a co-curricular strand of activity comprising, for example, specific academic skills sessions, with a social / networking dimension. departmentally-focused scoping projects where there are identified clusters of mature students and establish explicit links to the University's employability strategy. Foundation courses are designed to raise attainment and widen participation by providing an additional year of study for students from a variety of backgrounds who require help and support to enable them to access an undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year builds academic skills, subject knowledge and confidence within the chosen discipline and allows students to gain an understanding of the subject before confirming and progressing to the route within which they wish to specialise. They are designed to appeal to a variety of target groups, including mature students who are returning to learning, those with specific learning needs and students who did not achieve the grades for direct entry to an undergraduate degree. The Foundation Year course has been highly successful on-campus and we are now delivering the same courses and applying similar approaches in our study centres where there is a high proportion of mature students. In 2016-17, 99% of the students were retained and 85% of the students who started the Foundation Year course on-campus were eligible to progress to level 4 and 78% of the students returned and registered. Notwithstanding this and as noted earlier, our TEF metrics indicate that we are above benchmark for the continuation of full-time and part-time students.
-
- Implementation of a new project will launch in October 2018 to track and evaluate student perceptions of confidence (through self-report and psychometric testing) at the start and completion of their studies, to evaluate our effectiveness in developing student confidence in their academic ability and their progression prospects (see section 2 above).

3.3.2 *Progression to further study and employment*

- *Progression to PG study:* We will further develop mentoring and coaching schemes to support progression to PG study where the improvement in the participation of students from a WP background at UG level is not reflected in increased progression to advanced study. The University offers a Postgraduate Higher Achievers Scholarship to undergraduate students to encourage progression to postgraduate study; this has a value of £300k.
- *Graduate Development Programme:* We have introduced a scheme to provide an opportunity to gain real life employability skills within graduate level roles. The scheme is aimed at graduates who are not in employment 6 months after they graduate. As part of the programme bespoke masterclasses are delivered by the Careers

& Employability Service offering advice and guidance relating to job hunting, CV writing, applications, networking and self-employment alongside a 4 – 6 week work experience placement. Accommodation and expenses are provided at no extra cost to the graduates to ensure barriers to accessing the Programme are removed. The masterclasses are predominantly delivered on cultural awareness and valuing diversity themes.

- *Go Global:* This is a student mobility initiative which is delivered in collaboration with global educational business partners. This is a heavily subsidized scheme which enables students to travel to have a global experience as an extra-curricular activity. As part of the trip, the students will visit historic, cultural and heritage sites and local companies, often with partner students. They will also receive a lecture on the economy and job market. The scheme aims to produce globally aware students and broaden their potential career horizons; to provide students with the taste of the culture, economy and in some cases language of an overseas country and some idea of the job market and job prospects; to develop networks for the students both amongst the other participating University of Bedfordshire students and amongst overseas staff, students and locals in the country; and to students' CV's and make them more marketable and employable. We are committed to ensuring this initiative is accessible to all students and we will seek a comparable rate of engagement among students from POLAR 1 and 2 backgrounds and BME students.
- *Formal recognition of extra-curricular activities:* The University of Bedfordshire encourages student to engage in extracurricular activities through Awards which formally recognise the participation of their students in activities which enhance their experience and employability such as *The Global Leadership Award*. In 19/20 we will launch a new integrated Bedfordshire Employability and Achievement Award (BEAA) jointly developed with BedSU which will have greater reach and appeal to a wider range of students, and particularly those from under-represented groups.
- Adopting *the HEFCE Career Registration Framework* (<https://www.thecareersgroup.co.uk/research/research-projects/careers-registration-learning-gain-project/>) as a more targeted approach to the progression of groups with progression gaps, through which the University will be able to evaluate the impact of actions based on these measures and therefore the measures themselves.
- The Careers and Employability Service will implement *specific resources to support care leavers* and those students who identify themselves with a disability and specific provision for students who identify themselves as needing additional support, work is currently being undertaken with the Careers & Employability Service and Beds Student Union to plan specific provision.

4 Investment

4.1 Financial commitments under this Access and Participation Plan

This Access and Participation Plan sets out the commitment we make to widening access and promoting student success. It describes an investment totaling £10.3m (of which £6.7m is OfS countable) in four areas: financial support for students, access (activities to reach out to and engage learners who are under-represented in higher education), and student success (activities to raise the attainment and support the retention of our students and progression (to enhance the progression of our students to advanced study and employment)).

We will provide £2.3m for student financial support (of which £1.8m is predicted to be OfS countable).

We will spend £1.8m on access measures (of which £1.5m is OfS countable).

We will spend £4.7m on measures to enhance student success (of which £3.0m is OfS countable)

We will spend £1.54m on measures to enhance student progression (including postgraduate, of which £0.4m is OfS countable).

We will revise these figures upwards or downwards, in the light of significant variation from the projected student numbers, to maintain the expected proportional expenditure.

Overall the University is committing to investment for 2019/20 totaling 32.4% of Higher Fee Income.

4.2 Tuition fees

At the point of submission of this plan, the proposed fees per year for new entrants in 2019/20 are summarized in the table below.

Course	Fee per year	
	Full-time	Part-time
Honours Degrees (including initial teacher training)	£9,250	£4624 (maximum 90 credits)
Foundation Degrees	£6165	
Postgraduate initial teacher training	£9,250	N/A

Permitted real terms fee rises

The University will annually review the tuition fees above in line with inflation and in order to be compliant with any future regulatory changes.

The University has not applied any inflation to our tuition fees as we await outcomes of the Post 18 funding review. If the outcomes of the review allow for inflation increases to our tuition fee, we would revise our access and participation plan accordingly.

New entrants to University of Bedfordshire awards at our partner colleges

The tuition fee arrangements in our partner colleges are negotiated bilaterally with each partner. In 2019/20, they are expected to range from £1541 to £9250 subject to the type and nature of the award, level, mode of study, and arrangement.

4.3 Student financial support

Our student financial support package is available to all new home entrants to full-time Honours Degrees, NHS or postgraduate initial teacher training courses who are liable for the payment of their own tuition fees. The package is designed to be able to respond flexibly to student need and to aid retention by spreading funding over all (normally 3) years of study.

We will continue to provide a **Student Success Fund** for all such students. This will include £50 credit towards printing costs per year for each of three years and a further sum which will vary according to the level of students' need and the costs of their course but which is expected to average £300 per student. Students with additionally challenging financial circumstances, such as 'young carers' will benefit from enhanced levels of support from within this fund. The fund provides discretionary additional support to students to help them access and remain in higher education if they need help to meet extra costs that cannot be met by other types of support. It is available for UG and PG UK and EU students who are funded by the Student Loans Company and applied for all funding they are eligible for. Students from all groups (including under-represented groups) can apply.

We will maintain a **Progression Fund** for our partner colleges. Each partner college will be given £2,000 to be allocated against specified criteria which recognise the achievements of students progressing to programmes at the University from courses delivered in collaboration. The criteria for the award will align with our commitment to widen access and promote student success. There will be a focus on the background of the students, their improvement during their studies and the value that has been added. These partner colleges are currently: -

Aylesbury College
Barnfield College
Bedford College*
Central Bedfordshire College
Grantham College
Milton Keynes College
New College, Stamford
Tresham College, Kettering*

*Tresham College has merged with Bedford College.

Students who are **care leavers** will receive an enhanced level of support as described in the table below.

Support for care leavers	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Welcome package	£350	£50	£50
Flexible payment (providing support according to student needs for example to meet the cost of childcare or private accommodation)	£1650	£300	£300
Cash	£1000	£1000	£1000
Total	£3000	£1,350	£1,350

We will continue to provide an **Access to Learning Fund up** of £300,000 per annum to support students in hardship. One use of this fund will be to support students with disabilities.

We provide a range of funds for undergraduate and postgraduate students, more information can be found on our website: <http://www.beds.ac.uk/howtoapply/money/scholarships>

5 Provision of information to students

We are committed to ensuring that our information is clear, informative, relevant and understandable by our target groups. Beyond the material required by the Unistats data sets, we will extend and focus information to assist our target groups - within our website, at our Open Days and through school liaison, and through the wide range of interaction with staff based in University and at our partner colleges and schools.

The material in this Access and Participation Plan will be publicised after approval and key information will be provided on our website with appropriate caveats in the interim.

* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

The University has not applied any inflation to our tuition fees as we await outcomes of the Post 18 funding review. If the outcomes of the review allow for inflation increases to our tuition fee, we would revise our access and participation plan accordingly

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		£6,165
Foundation year / Year 0		£6,165
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		£0
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£4,624
First degree	Barnfield College 10000534 -	£4,624
First degree	Bedford College 10000610 -	£4,624
First degree	Central Bedfordshire College 10002061 -	£4,624
First degree	Grantham College 10002743 -	£4,624
First degree	Tresham College of Further and Higher Education 10007035 -	£4,624
First degree	Aylesbury College 10000473 -	£4,624
Foundation degree		£4,624
Foundation degree	Barnfield College 10000534 -	£4,624
Foundation degree	Bedford College 10000610 -	£4,624
Foundation degree	Central Bedfordshire College 10002061 -	£4,624
Foundation degree	Grantham College 10002743 -	£4,624
Foundation degree	Tresham College of Further and Higher Education 10007035 -	£4,624
Foundation degree	Aylesbury College 10000473 -	£4,624
Foundation year / Year 0		£4,624
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£4,624
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

Table 8a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1b - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	To increase the proportion of students recruited from LPNs	No	2015-16	9.5%	10.3%	10.5%	10.7%	10.9%	11%	
T16a_02	Access	Mature	HESA T2a - (Mature, full-time, first degree entrants)	To maintain the proportion of mature undergraduate entrants at or above 30%	No	2013-14	32.7%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	
T16a_03	Student success	Multiple	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	To increase the proportion of students projected to be award a degree	No	2015-16	68%	72%	74%	75%	76%	77%	
T16a_04	Access	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	To maintain the number of undergraduate home entrants from BME groups at 50% or above	No	2015-16	54.4%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	
T16a_05	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	To reduce non-continuation rate of young, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2015-16	12.5%	11.5%	11.0%	10.5%	10.0%	9.5%	
T16a_06	Student success	Mature	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Mature, full-time, first degree entrants)	To reduce non-continuation rate of mature, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2015-16	14.2%	13.5%	13.0%	12.5%	12.0%	11.5%	
T16a_07	Student success	Multiple	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, first degree entrants)	To reduce non-continuation rate of All, full-time, first degree entrants	No	2015-16	13.2%	12.5%	12.0%	11.5%	11.0%	10.5%	
T16a_08	Student success	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T3b - No longer in HE after 1 year & in low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR 3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	To reduce non-continuation rate of young, full-time, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods	No	2013-14	9.8%	8.8%	8.6%	8.4%	8.2%	8%	
T16a_09	Access	Disabled	HESA T7 - Students in receipt of DSA (full-time, all undergraduate entrants)	To increase the proportion of Full-time students in receipt of DSA/equivalent	No	2013-14	4.7%	5.5%	5.8%	6.0%	6.2%	6.4%	
T16a_10	Access	State school	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	To maintain our number of our undergraduate entrants above 97.5%	No	2014-15	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	
T16a_11	Student success	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	To increase the proportion of full-time mature students achieving their intended awards	No	2016-17	59.7%	61%	62%	63%	64%	65%	

T16a_12	Access	Care-leavers	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	To increase the number of care leavers within the full-time undergraduate population	No	2014-15	43	50	51	52	52	53	
T16a_13	Progression	Multiple	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To increase the proportion of graduates in graduate level employment or further study (based on DHLE data)	No	2014-15	59.7%	69.0%	72.0%	75.0%	75.0%	76%	
T16a_14	Progression	Multiple	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To increase number of full-time first degree qualifiers who are working or studying six months after completing their studies, HESA Table E1a	No	2015-16	89.7%	91.0%	92.0%	93.0%	93.0%	94%	
T16a_15	Success	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	To increase the continuation of full-time disabled undergraduate students to the benchmark level within the TEF metrics	No	2016-17	-2.4%	-2.3%	-2.2%	-2.1%	-2.0%	-1.9%	
T16a_16	Success	Other (please give details in Description column)	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	To reduce or narrow the gap for level 4 to level 5 progression between BME and white full-time students	No	2016-17	18.9%	17%	16%	15%	14%	13%	
T16a_17	Success	Multiple	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	To increase the proportion of full-time BME students achieving their intended awards	No	2016-17	63.3%	65%	66%	67%	68%	69%	
T16a_18	Progression	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To improve the graduate level employment for POLAR 3 students for quintiles 3, 4 and 5.	No	2015-16	75.3%	79%	80%	82%	84%	85%	
T16a_19	Progression	Mature	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To improve the graduate level employment for mature students (age on entry 21 and over).	No	2015-16	83.1%	84%	84.5%	85%	85.5%	86%	
T16a_20	Progression	Disabled	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To improve the graduate level employment for disabled students.	No	2015-16	75.4%	79%	80%	82%	84%	85%	
T16a_21	Progression	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	To improve the graduate level employment for BME students.	No	2015-16	69.1%	79%	80%	82%	84%	85%	

Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Undertake curriculum based events at target schools with a minimum of 15 schools per year (new target)	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	NA	15	15	15	15	15	
T16b_02	Multiple	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Undertake a fixed number of collaborative projects per year each working with a range of collaborative partners including schools, colleges, other universities and external stakeholders (new target)	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	NA	5	5	5	5	5	
T16b_03	Success	Other (please give details in Description column)	Other (please give details in Description column)	To investigate and target people estranged from their families, as an example of a student group where national data indicates there are particular equality gaps	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	NA	Identify baseline data from which to work	Design and deliver targeted interventions and approaches	Targets will be determined after initial investigations are assessed and appropriate interventions identified.			
T16b_04	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	To deliver long term outreach activity by targeting identified cohorts of students through a range of successive interventions, such as mentoring and curriculum based approach	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	NA	Deliver interventions for 5 cohorts of students as part of long term outreach activity	Deliver interventions for 5 cohorts of students as part of long term outreach activity	Deliver interventions for 5 cohorts of students as part of long term outreach activity	Deliver interventions for 5 cohorts of students as part of long term outreach activity	Deliver interventions for 5 cohorts of students as part of long term outreach activity	Targets will be determined after initial investigations are assessed and appropriate interventions identified.