

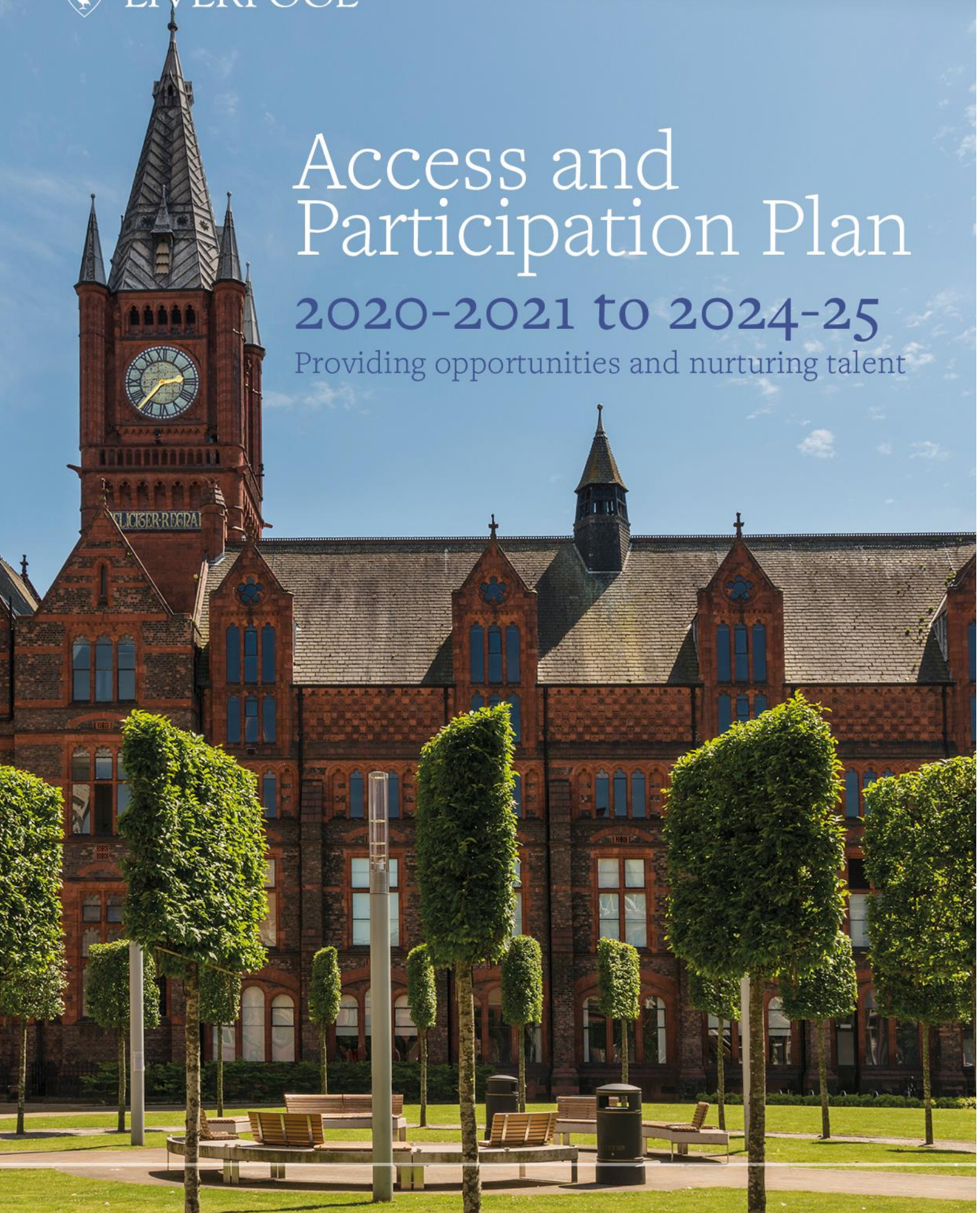


UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

Access and Participation Plan

2020-2021 to 2024-25

Providing opportunities and nurturing talent



Foreword

Universities transform lives.

At the University of Liverpool we have a long-standing track record of improving the social mobility of our students by enabling access to and participation in Higher Education.

The University's success is rooted in creating opportunities for all of our students, and we are proud of our reputation as one of the most successful Russell Group universities for widening participation.

However, to fully contribute to social mobility nationally, we will need to build on this reputation and have used the development of our Access and Participation Plan to think carefully about the best way to ensure that our University is a welcoming and supportive place for students from a diverse range of backgrounds.

In particular, we recognise the need to provide smooth transitions for students across each stage of their university experience: from choosing to study here, through their time with us and on to their degree award and future employment/study.

As a Civic University based in a distinctive world city, our success is indistinguishable from that of the people we serve and the many well-developed educational and charitable partnerships we already invest in to realise our access and participation aims. Recognising the importance of working together with others who share our aims, we will actively nurture these partnerships and forge new ones to ensure we are truly an engine for social mobility locally and nationally.

On behalf of the University and the Guild of Students, we are ambitious in our shared commitment to realising this plan over the next five years. We will do this by: identifying what the barriers to access and participation really are and what works in tackling them; adapting and changing those policies and practices that are found to impede success; and by creating a culture that enables students to fully engage within our community of learning, whatever their background.

We look forward to working with the Office for Students, government and our wider alumni and supporter networks to achieve this ambition.



Professor Dame Janet Beer
Vice-Chancellor, University of Liverpool



Rory Hughes
President, Liverpool Guild of Students



University of Liverpool

Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

The University of Liverpool (UoL) is a research-intensive university, with over 16,400 UK undergraduate and over 1,500 UK postgraduate students (as of 2019). The main campus is based in the City of Liverpool however we also have a presence in London (focused on postgraduate and professional courses); and internationally in China, Singapore and online.

While the University attracts students from across the UK and internationally, almost 46% of our UK undergraduate students come from within 60 miles of the University of Liverpool main campus. This in part reflects University of Liverpool's long-standing strategic priority to improve Higher Education (HE) access and progression for underrepresented groups of students from our local geography, as set out in our founding mission: *"For the advancement of learning and ennoblement of life"*.

However, within our immediate metropolitan area (the Liverpool City Region, LCR), there remain multiple challenges to social mobility, many of which impact on HE access and progression. For example, 25.6% of all LCR children are living in poverty – a figure much higher than the national average of 18.6% – and higher than other cities and city regions in the north¹. In addition, while the City Region's level of educational attainment is improving from a low base, widespread variations in attainment across Merseyside are still prevalent. For example, in 2018, just 21% of students in Knowsley achieved GCSE grades 9-5 in Maths and English, compared to 35.9% across the City Region and 40.2% in England as a whole.²

Liverpool has many attributes of a student City, with the University of Liverpool operating alongside four other city-based HE providers and a further six HE providers in the surrounding area. This diverse mix of provision in a tight geographical boundary creates a healthy range of HE courses for prospective students to access and as a higher tariff University we work collaboratively with other local providers wherever possible (for example as Lead Provider for the National Collaborative Outreach Programme locally) to ensure learners can make the informed choices and decisions that are right for them.

Our 5 year Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how the University of Liverpool will contribute towards overcoming institutional, regional and national access and participation challenges. It fully aligns to our various university strategies, including to create a diverse student body across our three Faculties (Health and Life Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences and Science and Engineering) and to provide fair access and participation for anyone who can benefit from higher education.

Ultimately, this plan sets out our ambition to support the Office for Students' Strategic Objective 1:

'All students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.'

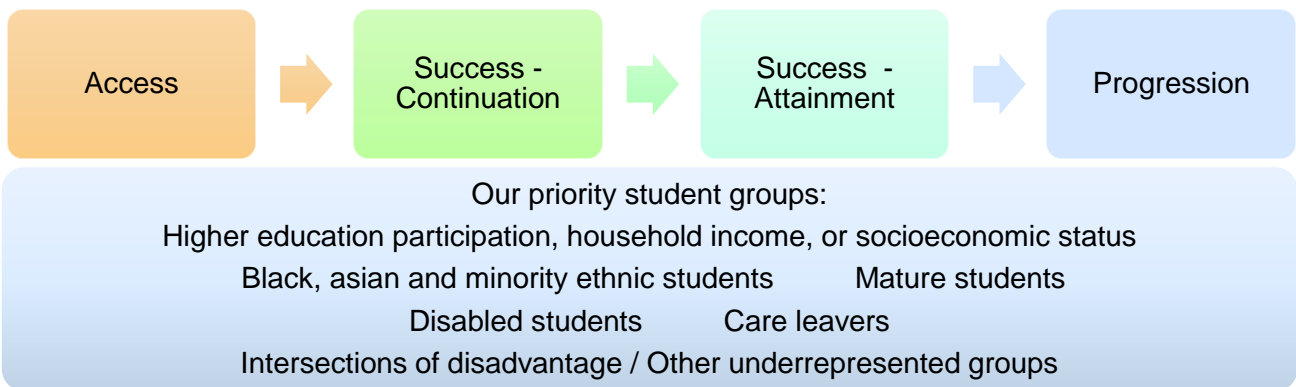
¹ See https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/FEC_2019.pdf

² See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-4-and-multi-academy-trust-performance-2018-revised>

1. Assessment of performance

Assessment of our performance is a continuous process within the University of Liverpool. Most recently, we have reviewed the Access and Participation dataset provided by the Office for Students (OfS) and cross referenced this against both internal and external datasets to provide a new baseline on which progress can be measured. This section summarises this analysis, to better understand what this means for our students and how we can target interventions to drive improved experiences for all. N.B. graphs and relevant commentary are sourced from the OfS Access and Participation dataset and relate to all Undergraduate Full Time or Apprenticeship students, unless otherwise stated. References to KPM (Key Performance Measures) are those indicators identified by the Office for Students.

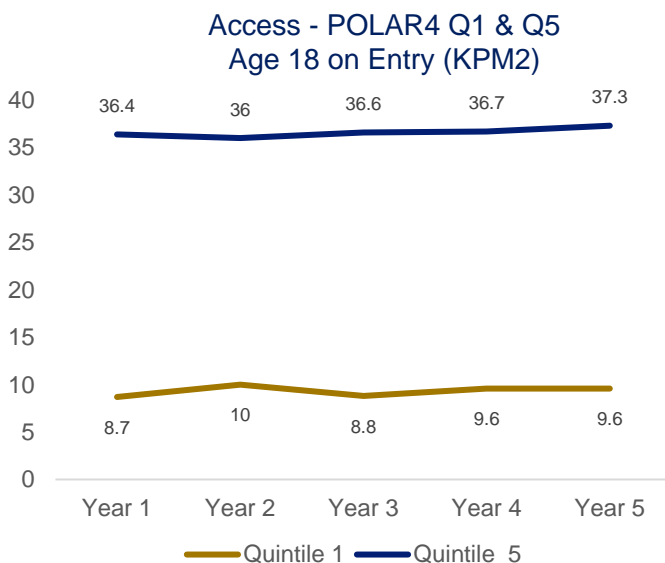
Performance at each stage of the student lifecycle is assessed and presented against each of the identified target groups as follows:



1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

The chosen measure for this target area is the Participation Of Local Areas (POLAR4) classification groups, the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education. It addresses how likely young people are to participate in higher education across the UK and how this varies by area. Across the Merseyside region, there are many areas of low participation, represented by POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2, with higher participation classed as being within quintiles 3, 4 and 5.

Access



- We have a positive track record in recruiting students from state schools and from POLAR4. Quintile 1-2 low participation neighbourhoods, with performance consistently within the top 3 Russell Group institutions.
- The adoption of KPM 2 by the OfS (to reduce the ratio nationally between Quintile 5: Quintile 1 students aged 18 on entry to 3:1) has led us to review our absolute performance on access via this new measure.
- In terms of trend, the UoL ratio has positively decreased from 4.2:1 to 3.9:1, below the national average of 5:1.
- We recognise the need to be ambitious to contribute more fully towards the national target.

Further explanation

For this Key Performance Measure, the national target is to ensure that for every three students from areas with a high proportion of students accessing Higher Education, there will be at least one from areas with lower proportions e.g. 3:1.

The University of Liverpool already has a strong track record in supporting access, most notably demonstrated by our current Q5 to Q1 ratio of 3.9:1 compared to a 6:1 average across the Russell Group. As a higher tariff institution in a lower socioeconomic urban area however, we recognise our primary strategic focus should still be in widening participation, as recognised by a target to close our access gap to 3:1 by 2024-25, to meet OfS Key Performance Measure 2.

In the current HE sector context, we do not underestimate the challenge this commitment will represent to the Institution – Office for National Statistics (ONS) data shows the demographic dip in 18-19 year olds in Liverpool City Region is deeper and more prolonged than nationally. In addition, it is recognised that many other HE providers will likely be trying to target some of the same Quintile 1 students for support from our own locality. Thus, collaborative access targets with other HE providers will be supported wherever possible.

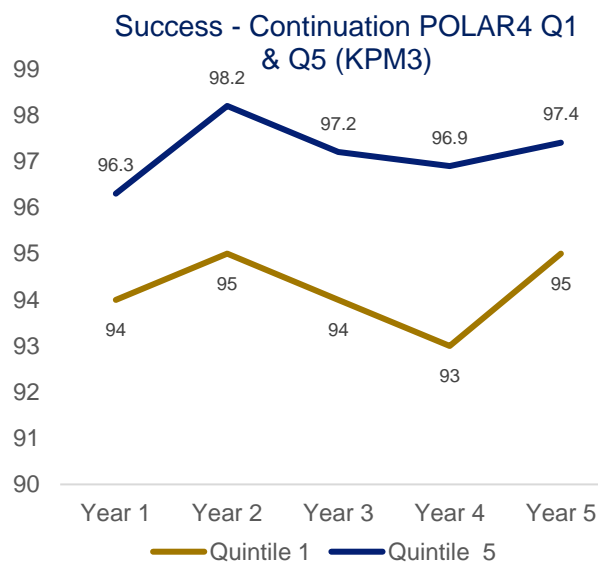
The University recognises the importance of supplementing POLAR4 based geographical measures of disadvantage with indicators of individual circumstance. We will therefore continue to target, record and monitor supported outreach projects and progression to HE with supplementary intersecting measures of underrepresentation such as Free School Meals, Pupil Premium and Care Experience.

Further explanation

For the purposes of this document, 'higher tariff' providers are the top third of English higher education providers (excluding specialist providers) when ranked by average tariff (i.e. entry qualifications) score of UK domiciled undergraduate entrants.

Success

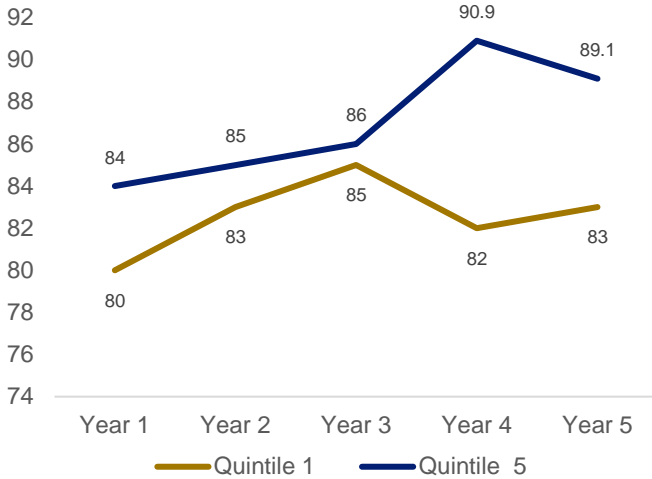
- In year 5 (2016-17), we recorded a 2.4% gap in continuation between Q5 and Q1 students, compared to a 5% sector average. This was also our lowest gap across the five years of data.
- In comparison, across the previous 4 years, the gap averaged 3.2%, with the drop in Q1 continuation in year 4 attributed to a smaller cohort in this year.
- Continuation is typically managed at the subject level within the institution (e.g. via academic advising) or supported by the recent introduction of our KnowHow programme, which provides more generic cross-university academic skills support.
- Further work has been commissioned to better understand the reasons for non-continuation, especially at the subject level.



Further explanation

The rate of continuation in this measure relates to the percentage of students continuing between years one and two in Higher Education, whether this is within the University of Liverpool or through transfer to another provider.

Success - Attainment POLAR4 Q1 & Q5



- Performance for this metric has fluctuated over the 5 years, to just a 1% gap in 2015/16 (Year 3). This gap then widened, however more recent performance has begun to reduce this once again.
- The Year 5 gap equates to a difference of 6.1%, the second highest after year 4.
- This gap is also still apparent when using our TEF data and combining Quintiles 1&2 together.
- In absolute numbers, Year 5 represents the second highest number of students achieving a 1st & 2:1, however the cohort size increased at a higher rate in this year, thus the gap still remains.

In addition, based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data, the Year 5 Q1 to Q5 degree outcomes gap is 4.1% higher than under the POLAR4 data, measuring 10.2%. Any target for closing the gap in socio-economic attainment could usefully use the IMD measure, as it may reveal multiple measures of socio-economic disadvantage, (beyond POLAR4's singular focus on progression to HE).

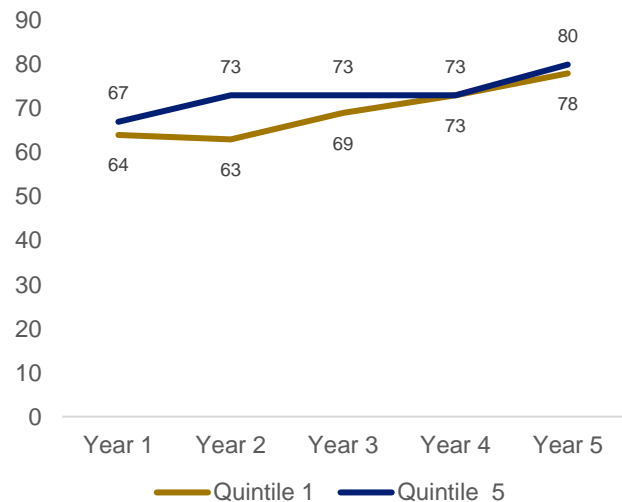
Further explanation

This measure relates to the percentage of students obtaining a first or 2:1. Although TEF measures do not map perfectly to the OfS measures in terms of the time series of data they use, they can be reviewed to give further understanding and context around performance.

Progression to employment or further study

- There is a 2% gap between Q1 and Q5 in year 5, the second smallest gap of all years.
- Increases were achieved for Q1 students in 4 of the 5 years reviewed.
- UoL has developed a new approach to its careers and employability provision, which includes increased emphasis on faculty specific advice and guidance. As part of this work and analysis of our TEF data, UoL will continue to take a subject area focus to reducing employability gaps for this and other groups.

Progression POLAR4 Q1 & Q5

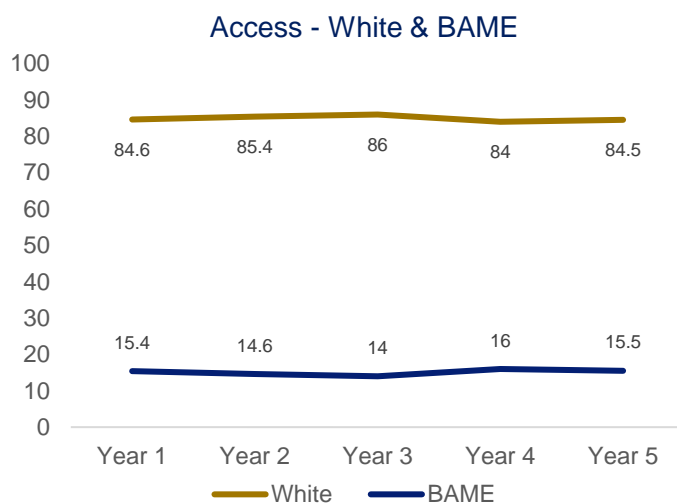


Further explanation

This data relates to those students progressing to all employment and further study. In the most recent data collection, 85% of our students progressed to highly skilled employment or further study – a classification determined by the UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students (BAME)

Access



- Years 4 and 5 recorded the lowest gaps between the percentage of white and BAME entrants, also consistent with our gap between white and black students.
- The percentage of Asian students accessing the University has increased back to levels recorded in year 1, after a slight decrease in years 2 and 3.
- UoL has a longstanding BAME mentoring programme (Fast Trackers³), that was featured in recent OfS commissioned guidance on supporting students on to HE progression routes via Key Stage 4 (GCSE) academic and pastoral mentoring.
- Further work has been commissioned internally with the Equality Steering Group to draw comparisons against regional demographics, particularly for future cohorts of 18-19 year old students over the APP period.

Further explanation

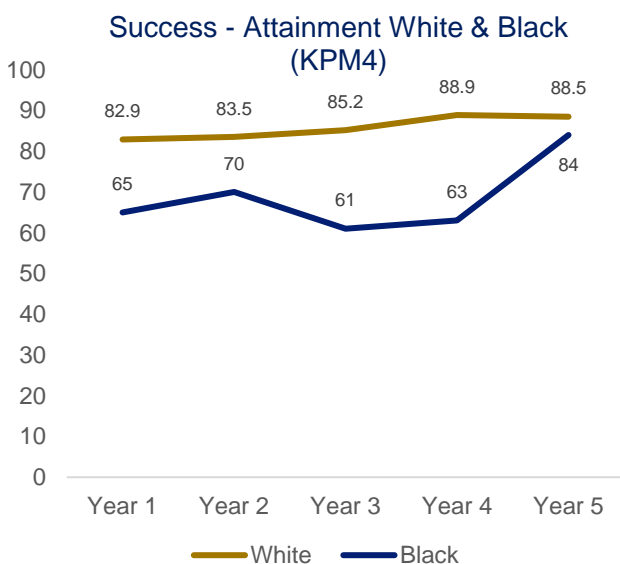
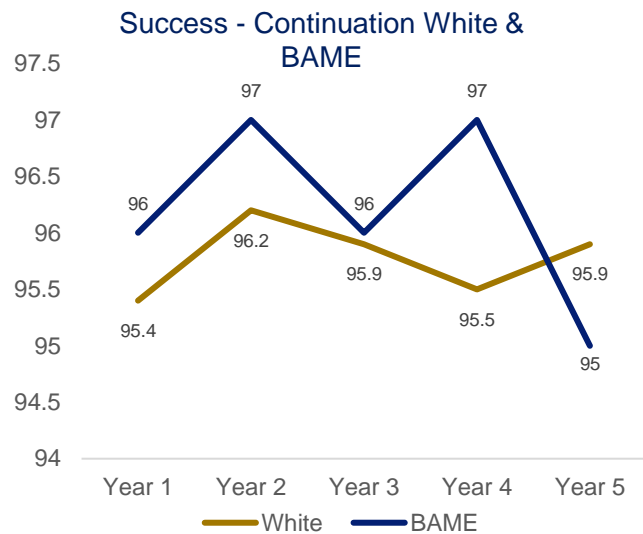
The aggregation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students is also referred to by the OfS as 'ABMO' - Aggregation of Asian, black, mixed and other ethnicities.

While the recruitment of BAME students to the University has been broadly consistent over the preceding 5 years, the University commits as part of preparing for APP 2020-25 to better understand our recruitment performance as compared to local and regional demographics and comparator institutions for BAME numbers.

³ See [Understanding and overcoming the challenges of targeting students from under-represented and disadvantaged ethnic background](#)

Success

- The most recent year of data is the first time continuation rates for BAME students has dropped below that of white students, although the difference still remains minimal (0.9%).
- Continuation has decreased across all ethnicity splits, except solely black students, for year 5.
- Asian students recorded the biggest decrease in continuation compared to previous averages (\approx 2% decrease).
- TEF performance remains above benchmark in this area for BAME students.
- As with other target areas, a programme of work has begun to better understand the reasons for non-continuation.

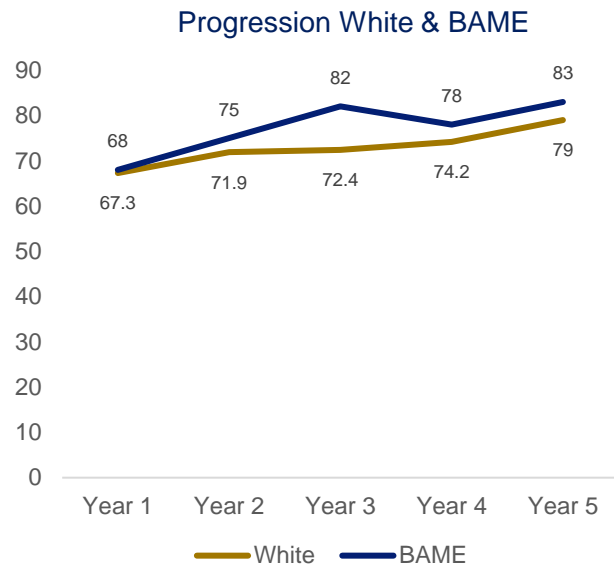


- This measure compares just white and black students, not BAME, – in line with Key Performance Measure 4.
- The Year 5 gap in attainment (% gaining a 1st or 2:1) between black and white students is 4.5%.
- Future performance is to be monitored to better understand if this is a continuing trend, as this gap is over 15% lower than previous year averages.
- As the student numbers involved are small, minor fluctuations in absolute degree outcomes can disproportionately impact on the overall percentage gap.
- An as example of this, while the number of black students almost doubled between years 1 and 5, the numbers achieving a 1st and 2:1 increased by a rate of 2.3.

The percentage of BAME students achieving a first or 2:1 increased to 79% in 2017/18, from 67% five years previously – equivalent to a 12% increase. Although this increase was larger than that of the rate for white students (5.6% over the same five years), the attainment of BAME students is still lower than that of white students overall. The gap is, however, closing as per the above Key Performance Measure and the target for this indicator and a further indicator for BAME attainment will seek to reduce this even further.

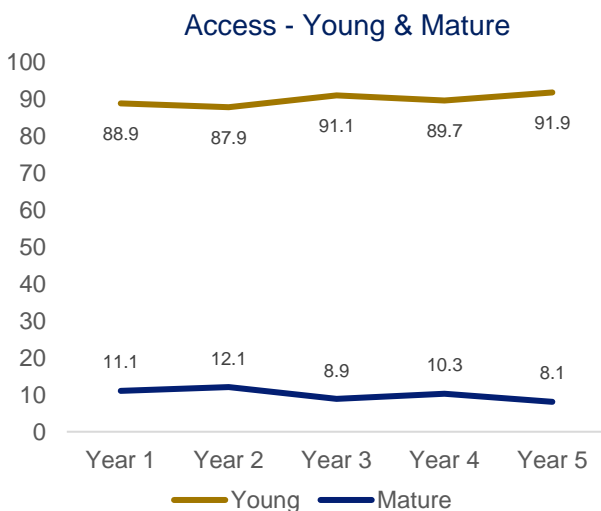
Progression to employment or further study

- BAME progression to highly skilled employment or further study has remained consistently higher than that of white students over the past 5 years.
- This is also reflected in UoL's TEF performance over benchmark.
- Of all ethnicities, the performance for black students was lower than for other splits, however this difference was not significant.
- Subject level analysis of data does not highlight significant trends in any specific subject area.



1.3 Mature students

Access



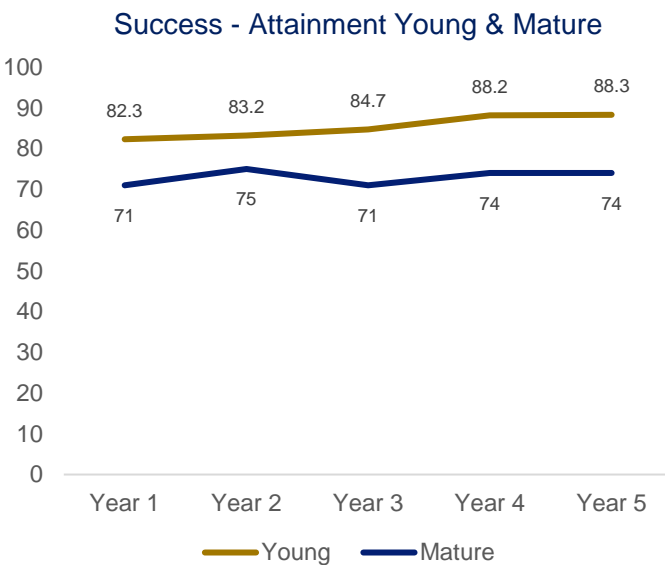
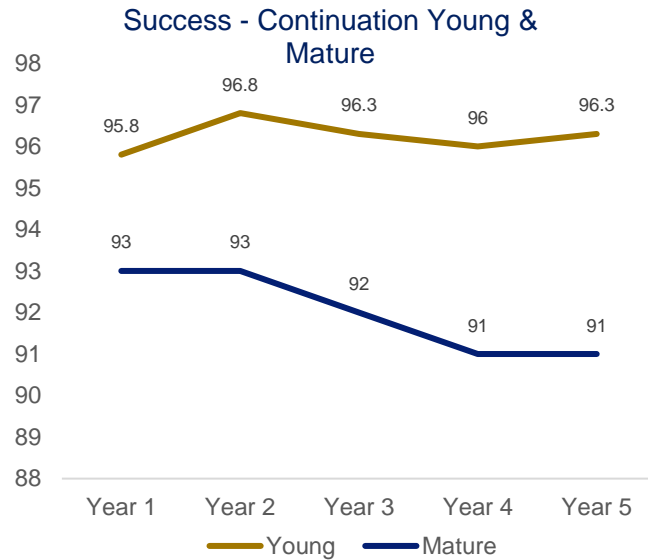
- Year 5 recorded the lowest percentage of mature students (aged 21 and over) accessing the University.
- This is also reflected in absolute numbers – with year 5 recording the second lowest number of mature students enrolling – a reduction of ≈ 100 students compared with year 4.
- The most significant decrease was recorded in students aged between 21 and 25 – dropping by almost 2% compared to the previous average and year 4 performance.

The structural reasons for the downward trend in this measure are well evidenced and include changes to mature student funding, a larger percentage of the population already having HE level qualifications and a trend towards more employer responsive training through the Apprenticeship Levy. In the face of these changes however, the University remains committed to maintaining its traditional mature student pipelines, including foundation programmes with local partner colleges covering a range of science, engineering and clinical subjects; plus Go Higher, our access programme for Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences subjects.

We have also developed our first L7 Degree Apprenticeship 'Advanced Clinical Practitioner', which has 40 mature students currently enrolled on it from local NHS Hospital Trusts. Given the state of flux in the mature student market nationally and the growth of non-UoL accredited HE in Further Education provision locally, the University is not in a position to set a specific numerical target for mature student access at this stage. However, we will set a long term objective to support existing and consider developing new mature access programmes including building on the success of our healthcare related Degree Apprenticeship programmes.

Success

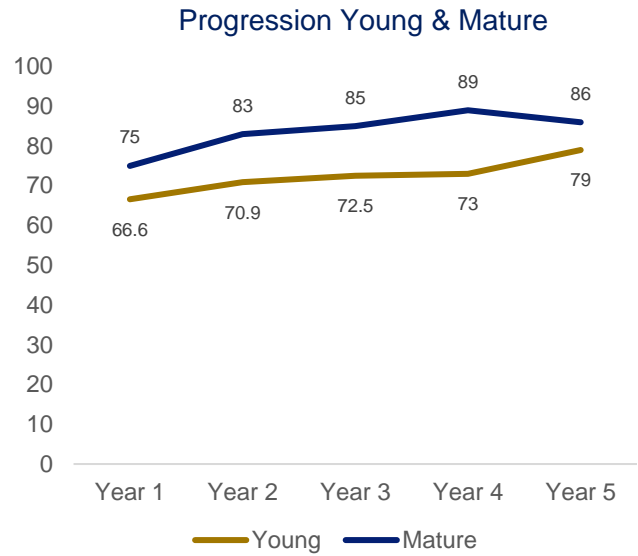
- Continuation rates are consistently lower for mature students compared to their younger peers.
- The gap has increased to the highest level recorded across all 5 years – a 5.3% difference.
- Absolute numbers of mature students leaving has increased and this impacts percentages where cohort numbers are relatively small.
- TEF performance for mature student continuation does however remain above benchmark and is positively flagged in the most recent TEF dataset.
- The research to be commissioned on reasons for non-continuation will create opportunities to review provision to support all student cohorts.



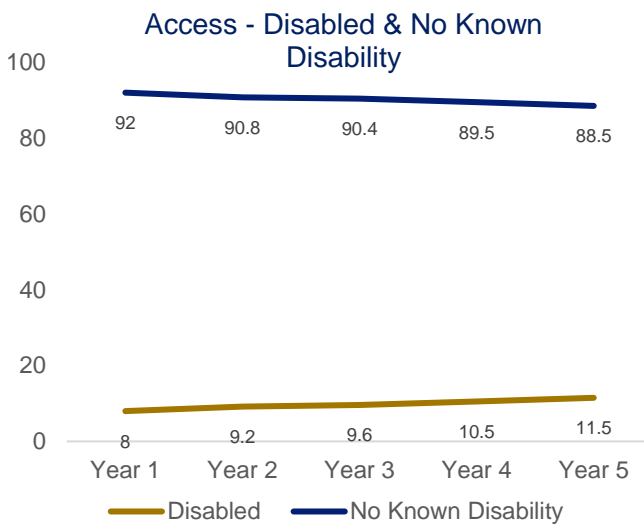
- The year 5 gap in attainment between young and mature students is 14.3%, higher than in previous years.
- Attainment for young students has increased consistently, while mature student performance has fluctuated across the five years.
- This is also reflected in TEF performance, with attainment levels for mature students consistently lower than for their younger peers.
- Mature student performance has actually improved across all age splits except for students aged 21 – 25, where persistent drops in attainment have been significant enough to affect the mature cohort as a whole.

Progression to employment or further study

- Mature progression to highly skilled employment or further study has remained consistently higher than that of young students over the past 5 years.
- Gaps are positively widest in subjects such as Medical Sciences, Psychology and Law.
- The gap has however narrowed in the most recent year, where mature student progression rates have decreased slightly for the first time, however they still remain above the performance of younger cohorts and the sector average.



1.4 Disabled students - Access



- The proportion of UK-domiciled undergraduate first degree students with a registered disability at UoL has risen steadily year on year, equivalent to a 3.5% increase over 5 years.
- There have been sustained increases in the number of students with Cognitive & Learning disabilities accessing the University.
- The percentage of students with registered mental health issues has doubled in the last 5 years.
- Provision of support for these students has increased to reflect the changing needs of students and this will continue to improve over the course of the implementation of this plan.

Further explanation

Disability information included within the access and participation data has been recorded on the basis of the student's own self-assessment.

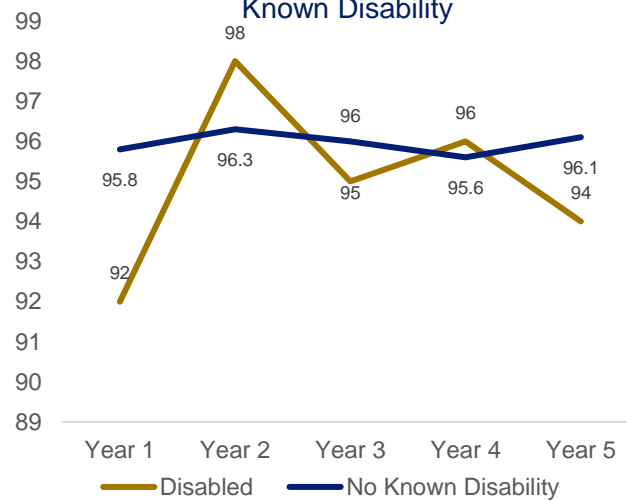
Some examples of increased student support for those with disabilities includes:

- Learning and Teaching Support Officers to provide additional support to students.
- Support plans which allow reasonable adjustments such as sitting exams in smaller rooms, provisions for rest breaks during exams, deadline extensions upon request and longer library book loan periods.
- A review of funding for dyslexia and autism assessments.
- Support for staff and students through implementation of Mental Health First Aid courses.

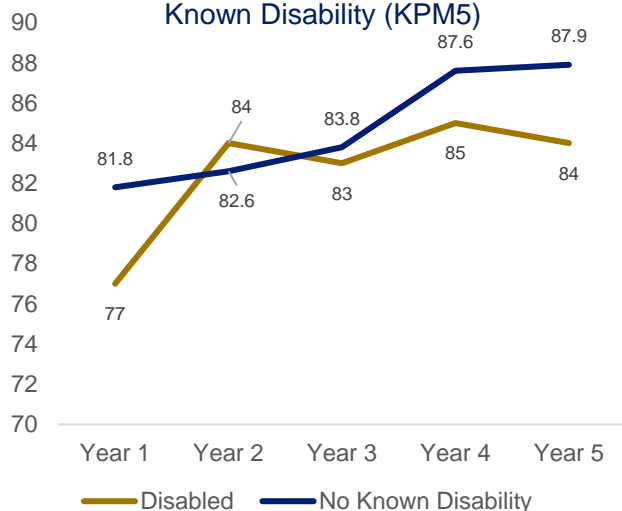
Success

- Continuation rates for students with registered disabilities has fluctuated across all years, caused by relatively small numbers of students in the cohorts having large impacts on percentages.
- The gap between students with no known disability has fluctuated as a result – from a 3.8% negative gap in year 1 to a 1.7% positive gap in favour of students with disabilities in year 2.
- Students with mental health issues have consistently lower continuation rates than those with any other disabilities.
- A positive TEF flag was received for continuation rates amongst disabled students, with performance 2.5% over benchmark.

Success - Continuation Disabled & No Known Disability



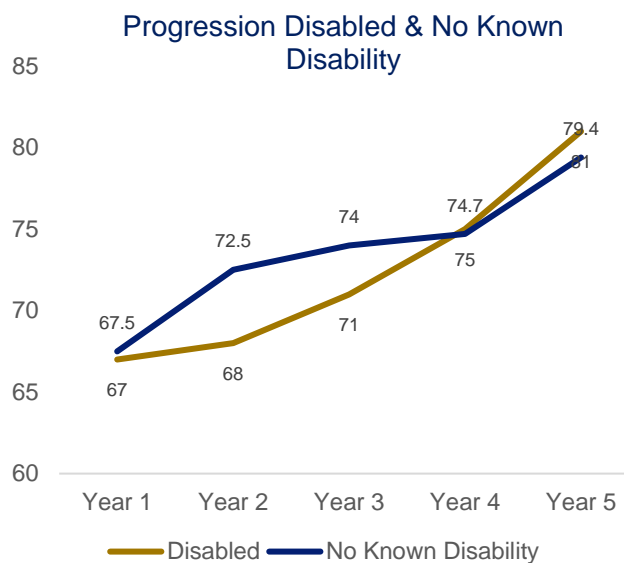
Success - Attainment Disabled & No Known Disability (KPM5)



- OfS Key Performance Measure 5 aims to remove the gap in attainment between students with and without registered disabilities.
- While the Year 5 gap in attainment is the highest since year 1 (at 3.9%), this is not reflective of our TEF data, where full time students have had consistently higher levels of 1st and 2:1s compared to those with no known disability.
- In 2019-2020, as part of preparing for APP delivery 2020-2025, further work will be commissioned with our Student Administration and Support service to better understand the student support issues behind this data.

Progression to employment or further study

- The progression to highly skilled employment or further study for students with registered disabilities has remained above that of students with no known disability for years 4 and 5.
- Performance has risen consistently year on year for students with registered disabilities.
- This is also reflected in UoL's TEF performance over benchmark.



1.5 Care leavers and Care Experienced Students

The University of Liverpool currently collects self-disclosed data on care experienced students accessing HE study via our Disrupted Education programme: 31 such students were recorded in 2018, an increase from 19 in 2015. We attribute this increase in part to bespoke support for care experienced students in the 18 months prior to HE entry, including but not limited to mentoring support, subject specific taster visits and transitional and financial support on entry.

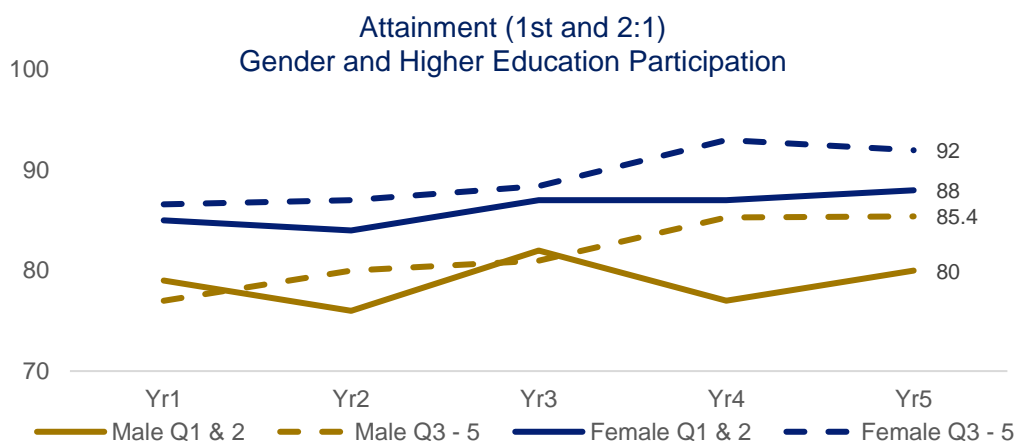
Our definition of care experienced students comprises of two groups: *Care Leavers* – ‘students who have self-declared their care status via UCAS and have provided further information to confirm they have spent time in the care of the Local Authority’; and *Care Experienced* - ‘a young person who has had involvement with social services during their childhood’.

Specifically, Care Experienced students are those young people who have been adopted or were in Care, but had the Care order removed before their 18th birthday, and vulnerable young people from troubled families - assessed as a child in need, team around the child, child protection orders etc.

Trends on continuation, attainment and progression for care experienced students are currently not reported at an institutional level against the student lifecycle. However, as part of our approach to student support, these individuals are known to relevant teams who are able to address their needs and any emerging issues at each stage of the lifecycle. From 2020-21, the University of Liverpool will monitor continuation, success and progression for Disrupted Education programme beneficiaries as part of our APP evaluation work. The University is also in discussions about signing up to the Care Leaver Covenant and related national pledges/initiatives for other vulnerable student groups.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

As a university, we recognise that different factors of underrepresentation can intersect to create compound impacts on social mobility. For example, our assessment of performance has identified a correlation between attainment rates when cross referenced against the gender and POLAR4 classifications of our students, as reflected in the following graph:



Performance in the most recent year illustrates that attainment for females is consistently higher than that of males and this is also further compounded by the POLAR4 classification of these students. Notably, the gap between males from low participation areas and females from higher participation areas equates to a 12% difference in degree attainment. Performance in this area will be reviewed as part of the overall measure reviewing the attainment of different POLAR4 groups.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Much of our work relating to 'other underrepresented groups' (i.e. young carers, estranged students, gypsy and traveller communities, refugees and young people from military families) is led by our widening participation team and housed under the umbrella title of our 'disrupted education' project.

As currently there is no central formalised means of establishing the status of (non-care leaver) disrupted education students through the UCAS process, these students would typically be self-disclosed. As a result, we have very limited analysis of data in terms of access, success or progression. Instead, we have summarised below how we work with each group. The University will also continue to work closely with UCAS to ensure effective roll out of additional contextual data flags for vulnerable students on application e.g. for estranged students and young adult carers.

Asylum Seekers / Refugees. Liverpool is a UK dispersal city for asylum seekers, and to support arrivals and promote community cohesion, in 2017 the University of Liverpool developed a bespoke package for asylum seekers and forced migrants. This consists of pre-entry advice and guidance and a competitive scholarship (including for foundation year / pre-sessional English, as required). Since its launch, the University has doubled the number of scholarships available and is planning to extend the award into postgraduate study from academic year 2019-20.

Estranged Students / Gypsy Traveller / Young People from Military Families / Young Adult Carers. As part of our Disrupted Education project, we receive both direct enquiries for support and referrals from public bodies for bespoke advice and guidance for these student groups including for subject tasters, support to attend Open Days and specific referrals into student support services on entry.

As well as direct marketing of our services we have recently made modifications to our website to allow students of all ages, from across the country, to refer their circumstances around disrupted

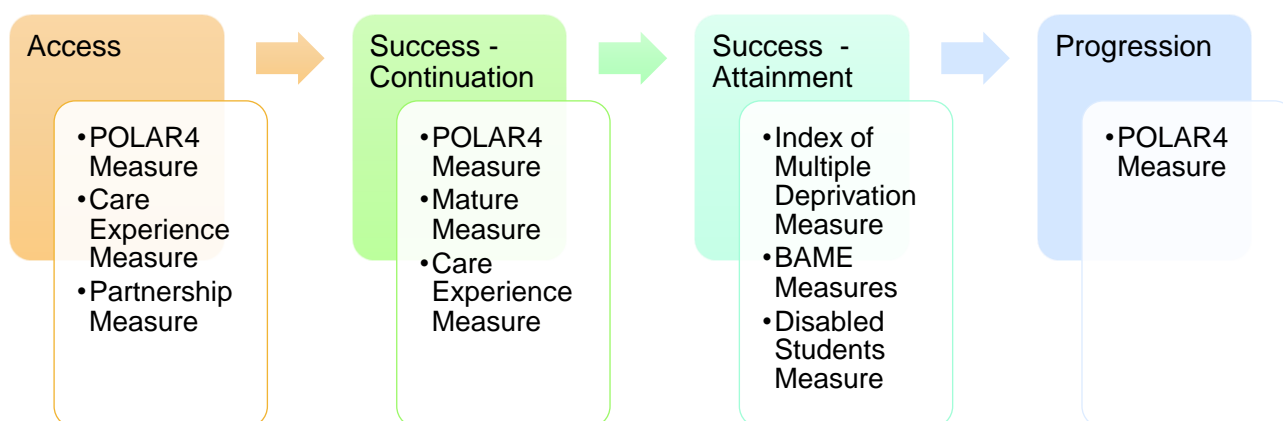
education to a dedicated member of staff who can assess what support we can provide. This includes bespoke campus visits, funding to attend on campus events, attainment-raising mentoring and potentially a contextual offer.

The University understands that all students have bespoke and changing needs across their lifecycle and future plans will keep this area of work under active review, to best respond to future demand and governmental priorities and initiatives.

1.8 Assessment of performance - Summary

Where some areas have seen improved performance across all groups, there is clearly still work to be done to address disparities and provide opportunities and support for all of our students.

In order to focus attention on areas where our gaps between most and least represented groups are, we have developed a series of performance measures to be implemented across the student lifecycle, in addition to the KPMs as established by the OfS. The following diagram summarises how these will be spread, with further details on page 19 and in the Appendix.



Given the sometimes small student cohort sizes affected and their spread across a diverse range of subject programmes, our approach to delivery of focused performance will be to analyse intelligence relating to key areas such as student transition points and University-wide approaches to inclusivity and study skills support. Where any clusters of underrepresented student groups exist, this may also be complemented with bespoke support packages.

Given the transition to the new Graduate Outcomes metric for assessing progression performance, we note that our strong performance on progression outcomes for underrepresented student groups may change over the course of APP 2020-25 and will keep this under review. Our approach to careers and employability has already undergone a complete transformation at the University, culminating in the careers service being selected as a national trailblazer for the OfS Industrial Strategy and Skills Challenge Fund (see case study in Appendix). This trailblazer will provide us with an opportunity to develop and use supplementary skills, job, career and progression metrics, focused on commuter students.

Although our assessment of performance has been in reference to students in full time Higher Education Provision, it must be noted that there are also areas of focus for us in relation to part-time students, who make up 2% of our overall student body. Reviews of performance across the lifecycle have been undertaken for our part-time provision however such small cohorts of students mean that overall performance monitoring becomes more complex due to data protection regulation. Although activities over the period of this plan will not be prioritised to part-time provision at this stage, our part-time students will benefit from the activities and developments established to improve outcomes for all.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Aims and objectives

The University of Liverpool's overarching strategic APP mission is to improve access and participation outcomes for key groups of underrepresented students. To bring this mission to life, we have summarised it as: **“Providing opportunities and nurturing talent”**. In support of this mission, the key aims of our strategy are to:

Aim	Description
1	Ensure all prospective students, regardless of background, believe the University of Liverpool offers them a viable and aspirational Higher Education choice.
2	Create a distinctive Liverpool Welcome and package of support for students to aid their continued study and sense of belonging at the University.
3	Harness our attainment information at an institutional level to predict, prevent and address unexplained degree outcome differentials within the student body.
4	Develop the cultural capital, professional networks and work experience of students, to overcome the barriers to their gaining graduate level employment and/or further study.
5	Cultivate an effective Civic University approach to APP delivery, working together with public, private and charitable partners to achieve a strategic place-based approach centred on Liverpool City Region.
6	Challenge and secure continuous improvements in our access and participation culture, systems and impacts by evaluating ‘what works’ and ‘why it works.’

Aim Rationale

These aims reflect the issues arising from our assessment of performance and adopt a lifecycle approach. They are designed to be internally consistent and mutually supportive, so that they can drive continuous improvements and draw on sector wide best practice, including from the new Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education ([TASO](#)).

Our longer term commitment outside of this plan would be to eliminate all gaps for students across the lifecycle, regardless of cohort. The strategic measures established to support this plan look to narrow these gaps in some areas over the next five years, with a longer term commitment to eliminating them completely in the years that follow. Our longer term projects conducting further research on internal data and engaging with our student body will allow us to better understand how we can support and deliver structured cross-cutting activities that support our aims.

The targets within this plan therefore seek to eliminate gaps wherever possible such as degree attainment for students with disabilities and close the gaps in other areas, such as attainment for students from low socioeconomic areas. These targets have been established based on further understanding of the current gaps and areas where plans are already in place to review student support.

Where gaps will not be eliminated within the timescales of this plan, remaining gaps and any emerging issues for success measures will be addressed by subsequent plans, to be eliminated by 2031. In line with KPM2 and the OfS ambition to eliminate the gap for access to HE for students from low participation backgrounds, we will aim to deliver this by 2039.

Aim 1	Ensure all prospective students, regardless of background, believe the University of Liverpool offers them a viable and aspirational Higher Education choice
Lifecycle Stage	Access

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Review our widening participation and outreach strategy to ensure fitness for purpose for APP 2020-25 outcomes delivery	<p>Produce a new Widening Participation Strategy for 2020-25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · To inform APP strategic focus and UoL widening participation delivery, in consultation with key external stakeholders. · Determine 'what works' and should be adopted, adapted and or scaled (up or down) · Ensure we have the right balance and mix of interventions (for recruitment, outreach and admissions) for APP 2020-25 outcomes delivery. <p>The strategy will draw on national best practice evidence, to review the following current UoL widening participation projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Pre-16 Progression Framework for Schools Outreach · Liverpool Scholars · Merseyside Young Medics / Destination Medicine / Destination Veterinary · Fast Trackers – BAME mentoring · Disrupted Education - care experienced students/ young adult carers / estranged students / Asylum Seekers. 	By December 2019
Continue to collaborate on area based and mission group orientated outreach / widening participation initiatives to significantly reduce access gaps	<p>On-going investment of time and resources in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provision of effective information, advice and guidance for all students aspiring to a selective higher education (and the teachers and advisers supporting them) via the Russell Group Informed Choices website and the Advancing Access digital CPD resources platform. · A sustained and progressive framework of HE outreach for target ward students and other underrepresented groups via UoL's role as Lead Provider for Shaping Futures (NCOP) and support of the new HE outreach hub for Liverpool City Region. · Supporting access and understanding of the benefits of studying at a research-intensive university for students across England via Realising Opportunities. 	On-going throughout APP 2020-25
Commission research to identify measures to improve BAME student numbers	<p>Internal report to be produced, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Establishing a baseline for comparing BAME student recruitment performance, relative to local and national demographics. · Recommendations to improve BAME student numbers, including: potential target schools for outreach, UoL programme strengths and gaps; and links to current community outreach projects. · Develop an APP target for BAME student intake from 2021 onwards. 	Proposed target to be included in the APP Impact Report, due November 2020
Develop a LCR mature student evidence base, to inform UoL's future mature access and participation work	<p>Evidence base to be assembled to better understand the local LCR mature student market, reviewing current UoL collaborative offer (e.g. HE in FE pathways), future growth opportunities and how UoL can best aid mature access and participation locally. This evidence base will be used to produce a Mature Student Strategy (including recommendations on any further APP mature target setting for UoL), with the Strategy to be produced by December 2020.</p> <p>Continued provision of traditional mature student pipelines, covering a range of science, engineering and clinical subjects; plus Go Higher, our access programme for Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences subjects. Further development of Degree Apprenticeships (DA), in response to employer demand. For example, our first DA is a Level 7 'Advanced Clinical Practitioner', which has 40 mature students currently enrolled on it from local NHS Hospital Trusts.</p>	<p>UoL Mature Student Strategy (by December 2020)</p> <p>On-going throughout APP 2020-25</p>
Outcomes	Targets	
That any prospective student can access UoL regardless of social or life circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · OfS KPM2 / UoL PTA1 · UoL PTA2 · UoL PTA3 	

Aim 2	Create a distinctive Liverpool Welcome and package of support for students to aid their continued study and sense of belonging at the University
Lifecycle Stage	Success - Continuation

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Develop and embed <i>Liverpool Welcome</i> - a high quality and coherent welcome for students at key points throughout the academic year. To minimise continuation gaps.	<p>Curate and deliver a student welcome experience, working closely with our Guild of Students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate the choice of studying at Liverpool – ensuring a smooth transition to studying and university life and reaffirming students’ choices via positive formative experiences. • Equip underrepresented students to succeed – a package of pastoral, study and employability support throughout the student lifecycle targeted at students in receipt of WP bursaries. • Build a sense of community and belonging all year round - e.g. ensure mainstreaming of commuter student involvement on campus via an ‘asset based’ approach to leverage their local knowledge to welcome and advise fellow students and by providing a dedicated hub space for commuter students to use on campus. 	Trial from Sept 2019, for full roll-out from Sept 2020
Outcomes		Targets
That any prospective student can access UoL regardless of social or life circumstances That all types of students have an equal chance of success		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OfS KPM3 / UoL PTS1 • UoL PTS2 • UoL PTS3

Aim 3	Harness our attainment information at an institutional level to predict, prevent and address unexplained degree outcome differentials within the student body
Lifecycle Stage	Success - Attainment

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Prioritise access and participation information as an early priority within our institutional Data Improvement Programme – to use analytics, forecasting and reporting to minimise degree attainment gaps	<p>Agree and implement a monitoring and performance management regime for UoL’s Access and Participation Hub and Education Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use predictive analytics to investigate unexplained degree outcome differentials down to programme level to inform APP actions. • Develop a UoL Success Strategy, to determine what attainment-raising interventions UoL should adopt and in what context (in support of our Education Strategy). • Roll out the Success Strategy and ensure its early implementation in clusters of subject areas with concentrations of underrepresented groups. 	<p>Pilot attainment dataset from December 2019 onwards</p> <p>Success Strategy implementation from 2020-21 academic year</p> <p>Standardise the use of cohort tracking for predicting the attainment of underrepresented groups by 2021-22</p>
Outcomes		Targets
That all types of students have an equal chance of success		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UoL PTS4 • OfS KPM4 / UoL PTS5-6 • OfS KPM5 / PTS7-8

Aim 4	Develop the cultural capital, professional networks and work experience of students, to overcome the barriers to their gaining graduate level employment and/or further study
Lifecycle Stage	Progression

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Provide financial support for underrepresented groups of students to be able to Study Abroad. To reduce progression gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studying abroad⁴ aids employability and academic attainment and this is particularly pronounced for underrepresented students - over the last 4 years, 352 UoL students with one or more underrepresented (WP) characteristics undertook an optional study abroad opportunity (either semester abroad, summer abroad or Year in China). This was 40% of the total cohort. Over APP 2020-25, UoL will continue to provide Study Abroad grants to WP students and ring-fence places on summer schools, including at our China campus, solely to students in receipt of one of our Widening Participation bursaries. 	On-going throughout APP 2020-25
Develop a targeted employability offer for underrepresented student groups. To reduce progression gaps	<p>To reduce employment outcome gaps via the following 3 stage model for underrepresented students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better promotion and signposting of the open access Careers and Employability offer on arrival at UoL. Provide advice and guidance to these students on applying for UoL Career Coach and Student Ambassador vacancies, to aid their employability. Develop a programme of employability opportunities targeted at underrepresented groups e.g. internships and work experience opportunities. Deliver and mainstream the OfS funded Digital Grad accelerator, to provide digital training and funded internships to commuter students (including POLAR4 Q1-2). 	<p>Signposting and targeted opportunities - throughout APP 2020-25</p> <p>Digital Grad accelerator initially to 2020-21</p>
Outcomes	Targets	
That all types of students have an equal chance of progression	· UoL PTP1	

Aim 5	Cultivate an effective Civic University approach to APP delivery, working together with public, private and charitable partners to achieve a strategic place-based approach centred on Liverpool City Region
Lifecycle Stage	All

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Co-sponsorship of INTOUniversity – North Liverpool’s (Anfield) Centre with Liverpool Football Club Foundation. To close multiple gaps	<p>Using <u>INTO’s proven model</u> to embed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A community-based approach to HE outreach in Anfield – a community with entrenched deprivation⁵. Working with LFC foundation brings enhanced engagement outputs, due to the cultural relevance and cache of football. Context specific outputs e.g. effective in attracting BAME student cohorts in higher concentrations than a solely school-based outreach model could in the local geography. Evaluation plan adopted to assess intermediate and progression outcomes e.g. attitudinal and attainment shifts and progression to HE. 	On-going outreach throughout APP 2020-25

⁴ See [Gone International – Mobility Works](#)

⁵ For example, the Anfield area has multiple wards within the top 100 most deprived nationally (based on IMD 2015) and is a POLAR4 Quintile 1 area.

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Attainment raising with local secondary school pupils. To aid progression to HE for multiple groups	<p>We are also responding to the government's call to raise attainment and develop our most talented local young people (regardless of background):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our civic mission to improve academic attainment and promote good governance, our School Governors Initiative now has 57 staff members signed up as Governors in local schools and UoL will continue to expand the scheme further. the University of Liverpool also sponsors two secondary schools within the Northern Schools Trust and has established mentor-based attainment raising programmes with a number of other local secondary schools to work with underrepresented groups. The University is also sponsoring the University of Liverpool Mathematics School, which will offer a new stretching STEM based curriculum for its students. At the heart of the school's admissions code is a desire to recruit the most talented, with a focus on underrepresented groups. The school will also conduct outreach activity to cater not only for prospective students, but to benefit students (of all abilities) and teachers of mathematics across the whole region. We want to help raise both GCSE attainment and interest in mathematics across the LCR. 	On-going outreach throughout APP 2020-25
Supporting national policy priorities	<p>The University will continue to help improve social mobility nationally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By supporting those current and emerging government initiatives where we can best create impact. For example, we are one of the main partners in the OfS funded 'I see the difference' campaign, which is raising awareness nationally of allied health professions such as orthoptics and thereby helping to recruit and train the next generation of healthcare professionals (currently funded to July 2020). 	On-going outreach throughout APP 2020-25
Supporting young people from military families	<p>The Service Children's Progression Alliance (SciP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University will work with the SCiP North West hub (based at the University of Central Lancashire) to improve the outcomes of young people from military families, by aiding its work to build a collaborative programme that engages young people from military families with HE outreach activity. Through the North West SCiP Alliance Hubs, we will work collaboratively with other HE providers across the North West of England to engage young people from military families. In addition to our work with the SCiP, we are entering into discussions to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant. 	On-going outreach throughout APP 2020-25
Outcomes		Targets
<p>That any prospective student can access UoL regardless of social or life circumstances</p> <p>That all types of students have an equal chance of success and progression</p>		In support of all targets




Aim 6	Challenge and secure continuous improvements in our access and participation culture, systems and impacts by evaluating 'what works' and 'why it works'
Lifecycle Stage	All

Objectives	Strategic Measures	Milestones
Develop an initial programme of evaluation work in support of APP outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List and agree via the UoL Access and Participation Hub priorities for short, medium and long term APP evaluation work, using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool as a baseline. Short-term evaluation work will focus on the effectiveness of maths support for 'BTEC-route' students; focus-group work with students who have 'experienced the care system', and faculty-based outreach e.g. Year 12 master-classes. 	<p>2019-20</p> <p>2020-21</p>
Identifying 'what works' and 'why it works'. To close/reduce multiple gaps	<p>Actively engage and support best practice sharing via the following forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UoL APP Research and Evaluation Forum to be established Russell Group WP Evaluation Group NEON Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in HE (TASO) 	On-going throughout APP 2020-25
Outcomes		Targets
<p>That any prospective student can access UoL regardless of social or life circumstances</p> <p>That all types of students have an equal chance of success and progression</p>		In support of all targets

2.2 Target groups

Through analysis of the assessment of performance and reflecting our aims and objectives, the following areas have been identified for targets (see Appendix for details):

Key

	Office For Students Key Performance Measure (KPM) Contributing Target
	University of Liverpool Locally Identified Priority Target (PT)
	Performance maintained through ongoing Access and Participation work

Target Group / Project	Lifecycle Stage			
	Access	Success - Continuation	Success - Attainment	Progression
Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status	OfS KPM2 UoL PTA1	OfS KPM3 UoL PTS1	UoL PTS4	UoL PTP1
Black, Asian and minority ethnic students			OfS KPM4 UoL PTS5 UoL PTS6	
Mature students		UoL PT2		
Disabled students			OfS KPM5 UoL PTS7/8	
Care leavers	UoL PTA2	UoL PTS3		
Challenge Fund - Digital Grad Accelerator				UoL PTP1
Collaborative Target 1: Realising Opportunities	UoL PTA3			

Although these measures are intended to set our ambitions in a number of focused areas where we believe progress is most needed, continuous improvement of the student experience across all stages of the student lifecycle, for all cohorts will also remain a key driver for the University.

The University will achieve these targets by implementing the range of outputs (strategic measures) set out earlier in this section and focused on: our access projects, student welcome and early transition/continuation, using our data to better understand and address success – attainment issues, cultural capital and employability, partnerships and collaboration and evaluation.

3. Strategic measures

This section builds on our aims, objectives and outputs to set out the overarching approach of the University to strategic APP delivery.

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

For the University of Liverpool, APP 2020-25 provides a holistic platform to drive forward our existing ambition and strategic focus on providing an excellent education and to make our programmes open to all who are able to benefit.

Through the preceding sections, the University has analysed what is required to succeed - we need to raise awareness of, and the ambition to achieve, our proposed outputs (strategic measures), reducing attainment gaps and wider barriers to participation, employing clear and fair admissions procedures, supporting students with transition, taking steps to ensure student success and attainment, providing an environment that encourages wellbeing, providing opportunities to build social and cultural capital and encouraging those least likely to participate to do so; and linking students with employers and supporting graduates to get on the employment ladder.

This APP has been produced to align with our current suite of institutional strategy documents which aim to ensure:

“We are an inclusive institution, committed to the provision of opportunity for those with the capacity to benefit as individuals but also as members of a wider community dedicated to a sustainable and just society”. ([Strategy 2026](#))

“We will provide opportunities for all our students, irrespective of background, to become highly employable and well-connected global citizens”. (UoL Education Strategy)

In support of our Strategy 2026 and Education Strategy, UoL’s [Curriculum 2021](#) framework sets out three Liverpool Hallmarks of: Digital Fluency, Confidence and Global Citizenship. Our Centre for Innovation in Education leads on supporting the embedding of hallmarks into programmes and will monitor and make recommendations on how the hallmarks can be realised by all student cohorts, including underrepresented groups.

The University’s ‘Values and Ethical Principles’ encourages all students, whatever their background, to become engaged in wider University life, and the University actively fosters and promotes cross-cultural exchange to enrich the experience of our students.

Our Equality Framework Action Plan and recent BAME Attainment Pledge using the NUS/UUK Framework consider the student journey for underrepresented groups with protected characteristics and enable us to closely monitor our progress holistically. The outputs (strategic measures) and targets from APP 2020-25 will be incorporated into this area of work and also reported on regularly to the University Education Committee, Wellbeing Board, Student Experience and Enhancement Group and University Council.

In summary, our Strategy, our plans and our actions cover all the main areas of Access and Participation needed to ensure good outcomes, but the University recognises that we can and must do more to close our gaps.

Access and Participation Hub. To achieve our stated aim and targets via a holistic approach, the University will create a new Access and Participation Hub. Coordinated by our External Relations department (which includes our widening participation team), the Hub will draw together data analysis, policy development and implementation for APP 2020-25 and engage with staff and students across the University. In this way, the hub will build on our strategic work to date and drive the University to new levels of access and participation effectiveness.

It will do this by bringing together senior leadership, cross-disciplinary expertise and joint resources to deliver the strategy. Hub members will meet regularly to review and progress agreed APP delivery plans, adopting a three phase approach to the work:

- Short term (2019-20 and 2020-21): working across the University, early stakeholder engagement to develop a set of aligned and coherent APP interventions that are ready for delivery from 2020-21 onwards
- Medium term: (2021-2022 – 2023-24): focused on refining and mainstreaming interventions, including making any corrective or mitigating actions identified through monitoring of performance
- Long term, (2024-25+): meta evaluation of impact against long term objectives, to feed into the next APP cycle and ensure continuous improvement

The Access and Participation Hub group will report regularly into the University of Liverpool’s existing governance structures including University Council, who will have oversight of APP delivery and ensure continued alignment and coherence between the APP and overall University strategy.

Development of this APP has included reviewing and re-calibrating our previous 2019-20 APP targets, including opting via this APP to re-prioritise away from specific output-based targets and free up the time to implement new ways of working for APP 2020-2025. As a result of this

assessment, the University of Liverpool proposes to discontinue a small number of APP 2019-20 targets (from Table 8b, 'other milestones and targets' of the University of Liverpool 2019-20 APP) in order to refocus our work (see Appendix for detail).

The Appendix includes five case studies to illustrate how our strategic APP approach will work in practice going forward, covering: contextual admissions, supported access, academic skills support, student support services and progression.

3.2 Student consultation

Our Guild of Students have been involved in the APPs development and will continue to be closely involved in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of our access and participation work.

Statement from Rory Hughes, President, Liverpool Guild of Students:

“All four elected Student Officers have been highly involved in the development of this APP. The University ensured we were full-members of a regular APP Development Workshop and were involved in all four Task & Finish Groups that sought to explore different areas of the APP. The University provided us with access to as much information and data as possible to ensure we were able to contribute confidently, both individually and as an organisation, to the production of the APP.

I feel extremely satisfied that the student voice has been listened to throughout the process and confident in the assurances that it won't stop here. Once the targets are approved by the OfS, the Guild is looking forward to facilitating further direct engagement between the University and students to identify areas for policy change, culture-shift and investment for the purpose of meeting those targets. It is vital that the voice of students from demographics identified in the APP are heard and their ideas put at the forefront of any strategic interventions.

The University and the Guild have worked very closely on several Access and Participation initiatives for many years, such as our Societies in Schools programme, and we look forward to continuing and expanding upon this work in years to come. In addition, the Guild recognises that our own activity can also contribute toward the aims of improving Access and Participation. Through the ongoing development of our own new Strategic Plan we have identified several student demographics that engage with our services such as democracy, societies and advice less than others. Extra-Curricular activity and support can have a substantial impact on the success of students at University and beyond. We want to ensure the Guild continues to be a powerful and supportive union and community for all students and we will seek to align changes in our working with the development of the University's new Widening Participation Strategy.

On a personal note, I have worked extremely closely with the University over the last year and acted as a critical friend on key Access and Participation issues including disability support and access and the additional financial costs of being a student at Liverpool. Having seen the University's ability to hear the student voice, invest and make change on these issues I am confident that Access and Participation will remain high up their agenda”.

As demonstrated by the above, our student body (including representation from BAME students) has been heavily involved in each stage of the APP. For example, our approach to targeted support for underrepresented groups of students, based on subject clusters (where there are cohort concentrations and/or gaps) and via individual students who are in receipt of WP bursaries, is a direct result of student engagement in our APP Task and Finish Groups. Engaging students from the outset in this targeting discussion enabled honest conversations about the barriers to access and participation and how to tackle them via targeted support (as outlined in our aims and objectives).

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Building on our experience of taking part in the OfS standards of evidence pilot, UoL will work to embed improved cohort tracking and data analytics into its monitoring of APP cohorts. This will greatly aid the delivery of all elements of the APP, enabling our Access and Participation Hub to routinely analyse institutional trends. UoL's recent and ongoing evaluation work includes the following projects:

- Evaluation of our Scholars supported access programme, (as part of our wider involvement in the OfS standards of evidence pilot) based upon a survey to Year 1 'Scholars-route' undergraduates; and outcomes analysis. We found Scholars had been effective in preparing them for student life and study at HE level.
- A case study on the Fast Trackers project for OfS commissioned research on overcoming the challenges of supporting ethnic underrepresentation⁶. UoL will use this APP (2020-2025) to investigate how this programme develops a 'sense of belonging'; and whether this in turn improves success and progression outcomes.
- UoL is using the 'financial support evaluation toolkit' developed by OFFA/OfS. This has found that receipt of financial support closely correlates to equal outcomes for: continuation from Year 1 to Year 2; attainment ('good honours' and 'first'); and progression.

Programme design. UoL recognises that to potential students from underrepresented groups, higher tariff HE providers can present barriers, both real and perceived, that frustrate entry into university. UoL works hard to remove such barriers wherever they appear.

Our theory of change is based on research that shows how 'learner dispositions' can either positively or negatively affect the educational motivations and eventual success of such students. We are influenced here by Pierre Bourdieu's 'Social Capital' theory; and within it the concept of 'habitus'.⁷ This approach also draws upon previous evaluation work conducted with school pupils on the UoL Scholars programme. Secondly for the 'undergraduate journey', our theory-of-change considers milestones, conceptualised as 'gates'.⁸ This brings a continuous critical scrutiny to bear upon internal structures and processes that support educational outcomes and student-life.

Evaluation design. We will use 'realist informed' evaluation, to link what is already known from a range of sources to test with practitioners the underlying assumptions, causality and effects within projects.⁹ This can then be tested by further research, to achieve increasing levels of attribution. Evaluation rigour will be achieved by: combining annual datasets to increase 'effect sizes'; using multivariate analysis; and where feasible, using experimental approaches (to move from Type 2 to Type 3¹⁰ impact studies for 'success' and 'progression'). Projects being planned with this approach include: evaluation of the effectiveness of maths support for 'BTEC-route' students; focus-group work with students who have 'experienced the care system', and faculty-based outreach e.g. Year 12 master-classes. See Logic Chain diagram below for details.

Previous access evaluation work has investigated the 'Relationships Model' of outreach with local schools using professional stakeholder assessments of impact. Plus, pupils on the Year 12 Scholars programme have also been surveyed for their experience. Access outreach evaluation is being strengthened with the use of: the HE Access Tracker (now populated with data for five years); exit-surveys of pupils who leave outreach programmes; and evaluation exercises for specific groups e.g. focus groups with pupils from the care system; a study to explore the contribution that the UoL outreach team make to the 'aspirational-culture' for pupils within our 'partner schools'.

⁶ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/d21cb263-526d-401c-bc74-299c748e9ecd/ethnicity-targeting-research-report.pdf>

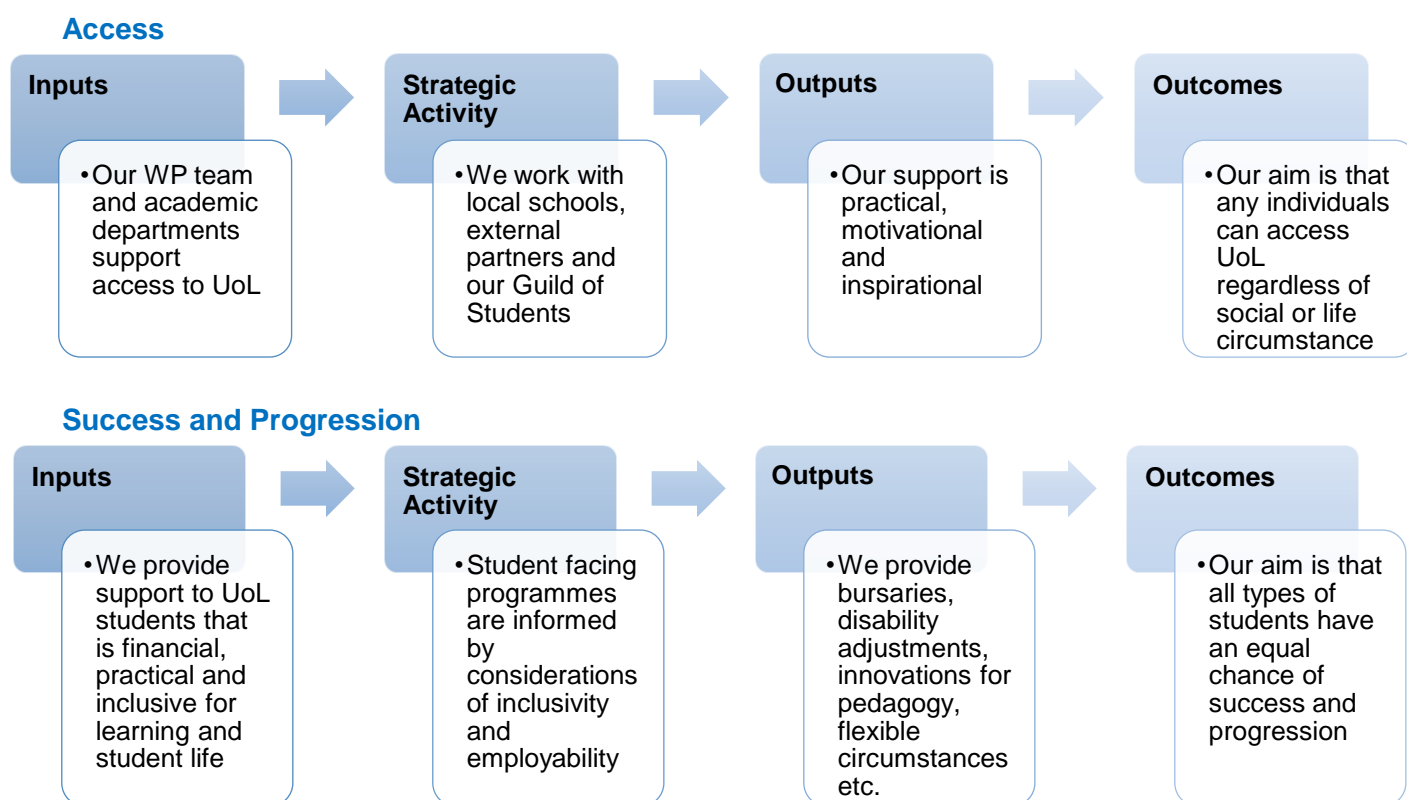
⁷ Lizardo, O. 2004, "The cognitive origins of Bourdieu's Habitus", *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, V34:4, pp. 375-447.

⁸ 'Gatekeeping Theory' identifies as key elements: 'gates', 'gatekeepers', 'filters', 'social-constellations', 'social-channels', and 'alternative-channels'.

⁹ Pawson, R. and Tilley, N., (1997; 2014), *Realistic Evaluation*, Sage.

¹⁰ As described in OfS document *Using Standards of Evidence to Evaluate Impact of Outreach*, pp. 2-9.

University of Liverpool Access and Participation Plan Logic Model (abstract)¹¹



Evaluation implementation. The University has dedicated resourcing for evaluation to provide strategic evaluation design and implementation. We aim to become a ‘Learning Organisation’ for APP. The model being implemented is that of ‘embedded evaluation’ whereby APP evaluation becomes routine.

We are also committed to a ‘whole provider’ approach. A ‘hub and spoke’ model is being implemented, whereby evaluation, academic and professional colleagues will lead on the evaluations of their own interventions and activities. The Access and Participation Hub will designate evaluation leads to larger projects, to ensure adequate time resourcing and to build in evaluation at the outset.

Learning to shape improvements. The recommendations that emerge from this multi-scalar approach are developed through consultation with appropriate bodies e.g. the Education Committee, University Council and the Liverpool Guild of Students; and through institutional review cycles e.g. Institutional Periodic Review and School Scrutiny panels.

A range of types of recommendation are made from High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs)¹² at the institutional- and faculty-levels; and programme-specific recommendations for improvements at school- and departmental-levels.

We are working to improve the connections between evaluation and institutional structures and processes, so that ‘evaluation’ becomes progressively better positioned for policy and practice. An archive of APP evaluation outputs of all types is being established for central availability.

Effective research to ensure impact to plan. The strategy will be responsive to needs and adaptable to opportunities as they arise; making use of academic research funding, where

¹¹ See Appendix for detailed logic chain

¹² See Kuh, G. (2009), *High-Impact Educational Practices; What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter* at <http://provost.tufts.edu/celt/files/High-Impact-Ed-Practices1.pdf>.

appropriate and available. Recently, research has been conducted to explore attainment-gaps for 'BTEC-route' students.

An 'APP evaluation and research forum' will be established. This will provide opportunities for the sharing and discussion of evaluation insights and research findings. It will also draw upon relevant areas of change, such as the University's Curriculum 2021 agenda which will provide case studies of inclusivity for teaching and learning. Research and evaluation outputs will be shared with the HE sector; including with the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education ([TASO](#)).

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Future developments in key data sets will be used to regularly inform and report on our on-going progress to our Access and Participation Hub and periodically to the Equality Working Group, Education Committee and Council. APP performance monitoring will take place via the Access and Participation Hub in the first instance (and this will include student engagement), with catch up actions agreed via the Hub where variance is identified against plan targets and objectives.

Additional data may be collected as required in order to evaluate specific projects where data is not centrally available, including conducting equality analysis/impact assessment processes.

A combination of institutional, partnership, faculty, team and individual level work will achieve a culture of embedded data-led decision making and evaluation for all forms of WP activity, to underpin and inform our ambition and strategy.

4. Provision of information to students

This plan will be published online, easily accessible to both current and prospective students. In addition, we are committed to providing relevant and timely information, including articulation of progression routes, to all prospective students. We evaluate the impact of communications to ensure they meet evolving student needs.

We use a range of feedback and evaluation from applicants to continuously develop and improve our communications. In particular, financial communications are produced to ensure that students fully understand financial arrangements and the range of financial packages and support currently available to them.

The University's Prospectus is used to signpost students to a dedicated area of our website which contains timely and detailed fees and finance information: (www.liv.ac.uk/money).

Financial Information is shared using a range of digital media to reach a wider audience and increase our accessibility. This includes webinars (offered outside school/working hours and targeted at prospective students and their supporters), an online student finance calculator, emails that link in with National Student Money Week and the use of social media channels.

We proactively work with target schools and colleges to provide face to face advice, information and guidance on finance in higher education. In addition, finance workshops and presentations are offered as part of on-campus visits. Prospective students, offer holders and parents and supporters are also offered presentations on student finance and funding at the University-wide Open Days and subject-based Applicant Discovery Days. A number of the University's main presentations at Open Days, including some finance talks, also have a sign language interpreter available.

We have a dedicated resource committed to providing timely and accurate information to UCAS so that they can populate their course database in good time to inform applications. We maintain a good relationship with our Student Loan Company representative to ensure all staff are fully aware of the most up to date information.

4.1 Targeted Bursaries, Scholarships and Fee Discounts

As part of our substantial investment in our Widening Participation activities we will continue to provide generous financial support to students via targeted bursaries and scholarships. For 2019-20 entrants, students with a household income of up to £25,000 will receive a £2,000 bursary*. Students whose household income falls between £25,000 and £35,000 will receive a bursary of £750*.

In addition to these bursaries for students from low income households we also offer the following bursaries for disadvantaged groups:

- **Care Leavers' Opportunity Bursary*** for UK students who have spent a minimum of 13 weeks in Local Authority care since the age of 14 and are under 28 years of age. Students receive £3,000 which can be taken as a cash bursary or as partial of a fee waiver
- **Scholars/Realising Opportunities*** for UK students who enter the University of Liverpool as part of the programme. Students receive £2,000 per year which can be taken either as a cash award or part of a fee reduction
- **Estranged Student Bursary*** for UK students estranged from their parents or carers who successfully complete an application and attend an eligibility interview. Students receive £1,000 as a cash bursary of a partial fee waiver
- **Young Adult Carer Bursary*** for UK students who are defined as young adult carers (aged 18-25 providing care for a dependent other than their own child) and in receipt of a carer's allowance. Students receive a £1,000 cash bursary or partial fee waiver
- **Mature Student Bursary*** for students entering the University aged over 25 years old and embarking on their first degree of study and not in receipt of any other University financial award. Students will receive £1,000 as a cash bursary or partial fee waiver for one year
- **Postgraduate Opportunity Bursary*** for UK University of Liverpool graduates who are progressing to a standard master's course, including MRes programmes, within two years of graduation from their undergraduate degree. Graduates must have been in receipt of one of the University's Widening Access Awards during their undergraduate studies. Students will receive £3,000 to be taken either as a cash bursary or partial fee waiver
- **Asylum Seekers Bursary*** available for up to four undergraduate students who have sought asylum in the UK and are embarking on their first degree of study. The bursary covers the cost of tuition and provides awards from £3,000 to support living costs for each year of study
- **Employability Bursary*** of up to £500 to help students with the costs of travel, accommodation or a work experience opportunity or other activity which they intend to pursue to enhance their student employability

*To ensure that our student financial support remains impactful we will continue to assess the impact of this via the self-assessment tool developed by OFFA/OfS. Specifically, we will look to evaluate our offer once we have a multi-year evidence base (starting from entry 2021 for new students). As a result of this, should a change to our financial support need to be introduced within the lifetime of our APP for new students, UoL will engage with our Guild of Students and submit an APP change request to the OfS for approval in the first instance. N.B. We would ensure this did not reduce the financial support entitlement of current students in receipt of a multi-year bursary award.

5. Appendix

5.1 APP Case Studies

Access: Contextual Admissions

The University uses contextual data to identify on application UK widening participation cohorts using a series of agreed indicators. These students can then be prioritised during interview processes for clinical programmes and when considering near-miss applications at confirmation. Contextual data also continues to be used to prioritise unsuccessful applicants for foundation programmes. For 2020 entry, the access markers will be expanded to cover both UCAS application information and self-declarations for disrupted education cohorts.

In addition to above, for 2020 entry and beyond the University will implement contextualised admissions where applicants with a certain number of widening participation indicators will be considered for a reduced academic programme offer. The University will consider relevant research into contextualised admissions within the HE sector¹³ to ensure fairness and consistency in our own approach.

The University recognises that the use of contextual admissions is a rapidly developing policy area¹⁴ and stands ready to work with OfS and other HE sector bodies on promoting fairness and enhancing contextual admissions practices as part of APP 2020-25.

Access: Liverpool Scholars Project

Our flagship supported admissions project offers Year 12 underrepresented students a sustained and progressive set of activities to support progression to HE, e.g. application guidance masterclasses, lectures and academic key skills workshops. These activities are delivered in partnership with academics, students and professional staff across UoL.

For those students who complete the project (including an academic assignment), Scholars provides:

- A guaranteed conditional offer of a place at the University of Liverpool (this offer is reduced by up to 2 A-level grades or equivalent);
- A non-repayable financial bursary to support continuation (by alleviating any financial impediments to study)

Scholars impact (2016-18):

- 331 students completing the project, with 147 (44%) students progressing to UoL and the balance going onto HE study elsewhere
- 69% of completers are from POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2

To date, 139 Scholars have gone on to be awarded University of Liverpool degrees, 80% of these students graduating with a First or 2:1 degree classification. This is higher than the University's average of 73% (HESA, 2018).

The University evaluated Scholars as part of the OfS commissioned 'Using Standards of Evidence Pilot.'¹⁵ As a result of this research, greater student voice opportunities and enhanced transitional advice and support were added into future Scholars cycles to further enhance student experience. Future Scholars evaluation work for APP 2020-25 will also conduct a student outcomes analysis to benchmark Scholars continuation and attainment rates against a comparator group.

¹³ Using contextualised admissions to widen access to higher education: a guide to the evidence base, Vikki Boliver, Stephen Gorard and Nadia Siddiqui – Durham University – April 2019

¹⁴ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/contextual-admissions-promoting-fairness-and-rethinking-merit/>

¹⁵ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/standards-of-evidence-and-evaluating-impact-of-outreach/>

Success Case Study: Knowhow academic skills support

Developed by UoL Library Service following student consultation, [KnowHow](#) offers students face to face workshops and online tutorials aimed at breaking down barriers to their academic success.

KnowHow workshops are facilitated by a range of experts on campus (e.g. Library, Careers and Employability, Counselling, English Language Centre) and cover skills such as academic writing, exam preparation, managing stress, successful presentations and more. Feedback from students enables the development of a rich programme, and a partnership model ensures that the provision is designed around the student rather than purely by profession or university department.

The service already collects some user data (e.g. over 1,000 delegates attending workshops in 2018-19), but as part of APP 2020-25 the University will signpost the service to underrepresented groups and plans to enhance monitoring of user uptake and impact on continuation and attainment.

Success Case Study: A Strategic Approach to Student Support

We are taking a whole university approach towards mental health and wellbeing, using the UUK Step Change approach and reporting regularly on progress to UoL's Wellbeing Board. Mental wellbeing is a strategic priority for the University. This commitment includes:

- Co-design and development of services with our Guild of Students to ensure we best meet student needs, e.g. by convening joint Mental Health Forums for effective student consultation
- Additional staffing, including a new team of Wellbeing Advisors, additional Mental Health Advisers and a further Disability Advisor. This team operates centrally, with a faculty link model to advise academic and school support staff on how to support their students.
- A University Disability Support Network, with disabled students and support staff to input into relevant policies and procedures and to enable peer support.
- Our Inclusive Campus Steering Group has a remit to promote equality and inclusion and supports the delivery of a fully inclusive campus e.g. by facilities improvements to the University estate.
- Staff training to support students with mental health needs e.g. mental health first aid and suicide prevention training for academic and support staff.
- Drop in sessions to provide a single point of access for students who want to talk to someone same day and tailored support for clinical and vet students when on-placement.
- Greater use of online services to provide out-of-hours support e.g. Big White Wall and Silver Cloud, both of which are recommended by the NHS.

As part of APP 2020-25, we will continue to achieve student outcomes via strategic and operational partnerships e.g. with Mersey Care NHS Trust and other partners to contribute to the development of mental health services for young people aged 0-25 in Liverpool and to ensure swift access to mental health care. As another example, the University is working with a specialist provider to increase the number of disabled students taking part in sport.

Progression Case Study: The Digital Grad Accelerator

This OfS funded project aims to improve graduate employment outcomes for UoL commuter students in the local LCR labour market. It will engage with 200 businesses to provide structured internships, training and mentoring for a team of Digital Coaches who will then provide peer to peer digital skills training for over 1000 students at the University.

The project will be independently evaluated to understand the return on investment, including for students and the wider economic spill over effects for those employers taking part.

5.2 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan Targets

As noted in the main document, in order to re-prioritise our APP work onto closing/reducing both access and participation gaps, the University proposes to discontinue a small number of 2019-2020 APP targets, as below:

Target Ref	Target Description	Rationale for discontinuation (2019-2021)
T16b_08	Number of pupils in primary schools who take part in 'Professor Fluffy'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Output based target, inconsistent with OfS impact / outcome approach · Forthcoming University of Liverpool WP Strategy to review methods and modes of delivery to younger pre-16 age groups in general, so future outreach aligns with APP 2020-25 theory of change / outcome based targets
T16b_10	Year 7-11 activities on campus and in Central Teaching Labs for local Partner/Associate and other WP schools	
T16b_13	Year 7-11 activities off campus for local Partner/Associate and other WP schools. Target relates to number of young people	

The University remains committed to a sustained and progressive outreach model.

5.3 Targeted Bursaries, Scholarships and Fee Discounts

The University offers a range of targeted bursaries and scholarships. Please see the financial support pages of our [website](#) to check the latest bursaries and scholarships that are available as these could change and adapt over time.

To ensure that our student financial support remains impactful we are taking part in the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit to assess the impact of our student financial support package and we will look to evaluate our offer once the findings from this work have been fully assessed and understood.

University of Liverpool Detailed Logic Chain

Lifecycle Stage	Input areas	Activities (overall strategic design)	Outputs (examples of specific types of support and intervention)	Outcomes (Short Term)	Outcomes (Long Term)
Access	Outreach team	A 'Progression Model' provides strategy through all key stages; within a 'Relationships Model' with Partner schools.	Activities run by the outreach team: Pre-16, Post-16, community engagement, professions/subject-related activities.	To achieve a year-on-year narrowing of all priority-group gaps in UCAS applications and conversions.	That any prospective student can access UoL regardless of social or life circumstances
	Faculty-based outreach	Wide range of outreach activities in local schools run by academic staff from all faculties.	Activities run by the Faculties of: Health and Life Sciences, Science and Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences.	Increased interest in specific academic subjects. Priority-group students more likely to choose UoL for those subjects.	
	External partnerships	Shaping Futures ; IntoUniversity ; Tutor Trust ; Pathways-to-Law ; Realising Opportunities ; School Governor Scheme ; School sponsorship arrangements.	A range of types of activity: professional interactions; access to communities; events; etc.	Improvement of the profile of UoL in local communities and education services. Extending the number of beneficiaries and extending reach beyond the local area.	
	Guild of Students (LGoS)	Activities that bring young people in local communities into contact with UoL students.	Societies-in-Schools ; I Have a dream to Thrive conference creating opportunities for role-modelling.	Increasing numbers of young people in local schools who see UoL as a familiar institution, at which 'someone-like-them' can succeed.	
	Subject-level selection processes	Positive selection processes for students coming through non-traditional routes.	Admissions processes; tariff reductions; contextual data (used for confirmations); Non Traditional Qualifications (NTQs) - BTEC, Access/Foundation, Year 0 , etc.; GoHigher .	Increasing recognition of the value and status of non-A-level routes into HE. Issues of unconscious, social and cultural bias are identified, addressed and overcome.	
Success	Student fees, funding and advice	Financial Support e.g. bursaries, scholarships. Grants e.g. DSA and UoL hardship fund.	Provision of financial support (see UoL website for details).	Decreasing numbers of students who do not succeed because of financial difficulties.	Outcomes for all 'priority groups' just as good as any other for: continuation; completion of a first degree; attainment of a 'Good' Honours degree (a First or 2:1).
	Central support for academic inclusivity	Centre for Innovation in Education; The Academy; Library; Alumni Office; Student Success and Academic Advising models.	Inclusivity themes in HEA PGCAP , UoL PG Dip/MA in 'Learning and Teaching in HE' and the new curriculum agenda ' Curriculum 2021 '; library disability adjustments ; peer mentoring .	Continuous improvement in inclusive practice for teaching and learning.	
	Subject-level support for academic inclusivity	Academic Advisors; Senior Tutors; Learning and Teaching Support Officers. Inclusive institutional processes e.g. Institutional Periodic Review (IPR) and School Scrutiny (SS); NTQ transitional support.	'Additional Maths' for BTEC engineering students; credited Maths module for chemistry students; Honours Select (flexible curriculum)	Decreasing numbers of students who do not succeed because of their characteristics, circumstances or educational route.	
	Inclusive support for 'Student life'	Student Administration and Support ; LGoS; Student Advocate Programme .	Many types of specific needs-based support, inclusive extra-curricular activity; effective advice and guidance; Residential Advisors in student accommodation.	Decreasing numbers of students who do not succeed because of negative experiences of student life.	
Progression	Support for student employability	Careers and Employability ; Centre for Innovation in Education ; LGoS; Student Advocate Programme .	Employability considerations built into new curriculum agendas e.g. 'Curriculum 2021'; co-curricular activity; effective advice and guidance; employability internships; work placement modules; study abroad; KnowHow ; experience in student societies.	Improvements in progression of students from priority groups into graduate employment and / or further study.	Equal progression outcomes for all types of student.



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Access and Participation Plan – The University of Liverpool Variation Statement

UKPRN10006842

This addition to our approved [Access and Participation Plan \(2020-25\)](#) sets out how the University of Liverpool is meeting the Office for Students new priorities for access and participation across four themes:

Attainment Raising

UoL works with local schools and community organisations to support attainment raising in the following ways:

[University of Liverpool Maths School](#) – provides a range of on-line and in-person outreach sessions for maths and physics, including revision boosters for GCSE and A-Level.

[Fast Trackers](#) – provides after school academic mentoring to support GCSE study for minority ethnics students from Liverpool schools. Also supplemented by in-community academic mentoring with a local Arabic supplementary school. Project was highlighted as a Case Study of Good Practice by OfS in 2019.

[Merseyside Young Medics and Life Scientists](#) – widening access project for local Year 9-11 students, including an element of academic mentoring.

[Care Experienced](#) students that engage with the University Pre-Access have the opportunity to have an academic mentor assigned to with their studies.

Our two Post 16 Supported Access programmes ([Liverpool Scholars](#) and [Realising Opportunities](#)) also now provide academic attainment raising mentoring for students in need of additional support during their Level 3 / Key Stage 5 courses.

Over the next year, the University will explore how we can further integrate these projects into a cohesive evaluation methodology and work with the local council and schools to ensure effective tracking of outcomes and destinations data (subject to data protection/GDPR).

School-University Partnership

The University is currently re-visiting its approach to working with local schools in areas of socio-economic disadvantage in Liverpool City Region. This has been prompted by a desire to re-engage post-pandemic our 25 priority secondary schools, who are targeted for support based socio-economic indicators, and to continue with a hybrid delivery model e.g., to continue with on-line tutoring and also bring school groups on to campus e.g., via our recent research themed visit days.

The University also has three formal school partnerships:

- Sponsor for the [University of Liverpool Maths School](#)
- Appoints a sponsor governor for two schools in the Northern School's Trust chain ([North Liverpool Academy](#) and [Liverpool Life Sciences UTC](#)), also prioritising the schools for outreach and provision of financial support for eligible learners coming to study at UoL.

In addition, for the past 5 years UoL has been a co-sponsor of INTO University North Liverpool which offers higher education advice and guidance, outreach activities and attainment support to Primary and Secondary age students within the North Liverpool area.

Alternative Pathways to Higher Education

The University has two long-standing access partnerships to provide alternative pathways to HE, one with Carmel College in St Helens and Wirral Metropolitan College in Birkenhead.

[Foundation programmes - University of Liverpool](#)

UoL also runs an Access Diploma course centred on arts and humanities undergraduate access: [Go Higher](#).

The University is an approved Degree Apprenticeship provider and currently provides a Level 7 Advanced Clinical Practitioner course in partnership with local NHS providers. The University is also exploring what other gaps in Degree Apprenticeship provision locally exist, where UoL has a strong alignment of programme expertise.

Evaluation

Evaluation underpins all of the above work, and the University has conducted a mix of one-off thematic and multi-year programme-based evaluations of the APP. These evaluation reports have included:

- Scholars interim impact report (submitted May 2019 for 'Access' theme)
- Financial support interim impact report (submitted May 2019 for 'Success' theme)
- Transitional support for 'Non-traditional Qualifications' undergraduates (submitted May 2019 for 'Success' theme)
- Undergraduate progression (submitted May 2019 for 'Progression' theme)

The above reports have been shared with TASO 'what works' best practice and evaluation centre already. New reports ready for submission are:

- The Liverpool Scholars Supported Access Programme - 'levelling-up' through academic challenge
- Financial support: what difference does it make?
- Studying with autism - student experience and professional insights
- Supporting students with 'Disrupted Education' backgrounds - professional insights.

During the pandemic, our evaluation work was focused primarily upon the 'Success' and 'Progression' themes. Now that work within schools is possible once more, we will return to our pre-pandemic focus upon the following areas under the 'Access' theme:

- attainment raising (with a focus upon School-University partnerships)
- subject-specific outreach (with a focus upon [Merseyside Young Medics and Life Scientists](#))

The University is also a member of the Northwest Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Group (led by Edge Hill University). The group is open to Northwest institutions and Uni-Connect colleagues who have an active role in ensuring that Widening Participation work (across access, success, and progression) is research and evidence informed, and effectively evaluated, in line with OfS and TASO expectations.

The group meet at least three times per academic year, where evaluation approaches and findings from the North West's access, success and progression related initiatives are presented. Processes such as evaluation planning and ethics are discussed, and effective practice and lessons learnt are shared. In the meeting, members provide advice, constructive feedback, and guidance on the shared evaluation practices in an informal peer review manner.

The Group are keen to develop this work further to support the new OfS priorities by:

- Sharing new evidence-based initiatives with TASO
- Strengthening the Peer-to-Peer review of APP initiatives between HE providers.

Regionally, the University is the lead institution for Shaping Futures, the Uniconnect partnership for Liverpool City Region. The project partners are actively engaged in planning how the programme can best complement and add value to existing attainment raising / school improvement strategies over the next academic year and beyond.

Nationally, the University is a member of the Realising Opportunities partnership, which promotes access via 14 research-intensive universities. The partnership is exploring how it can further enhance attainment raising support for the students it works with over the coming years.

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of Liverpool

Provider UKPRN: 10006842

Investment summary

The OfS requires providers to report on their planned investment in access, financial support and research and evaluation in their access and participation plan. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

Note about the data:

The figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£1,529,766.99	£1,579,666.98	£1,632,061.96	£1,687,076.69	£1,744,842.16
Access (pre-16)	£460,219.51	£469,782.36	£479,823.35	£490,366.38	£501,436.57
Access (post-16)	£586,803.46	£605,253.40	£624,625.83	£644,966.89	£666,325.00
Access (adults and the community)	£115,000.00	£118,500.00	£122,175.00	£126,033.75	£130,085.44
Access (other)	£367,744.02	£386,131.22	£405,437.78	£425,709.67	£446,995.15
Financial support (£)	£10,652,970.90	£10,241,955.98	£10,195,203.69	£10,294,077.67	£10,294,077.67
Research and evaluation (£)	£200,000.00	£220,000.00	£240,000.00	£260,000.00	£280,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£50,832,775.00	£50,481,130.00	£50,582,980.00	£50,758,870.00	£50,768,170.00
Access investment	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	3.4%
Financial support	21.0%	20.3%	20.2%	20.3%	20.3%
Research and evaluation	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
Total investment (as %HFI)	24.4%	23.9%	23.9%	24.1%	24.3%

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of Liverpool

Provider UKPRN: 10006842

Targets

Table 4a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	2020-21 milestones	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups for 18 year olds (expressed as a ratio)	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Reduce the ratio in entry rates for POLAR4 quintile 5; quintile 1 students at the University of Liverpool	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	3.9:1	3.8:1	3.6:1	3.4:1	3.2:1	3:1	In support of OFS Key Performance Measure (KPM) 2
To increase the percentage of entrants for students who have been in local authority care	PTA_2	Care-leavers	Increase in care experienced students progressing into higher education at the University of Liverpool (expressed as a proportion of total UGT Home student numbers)	No	Other data source	2017-18	0.6%	0.70%	0.80%	0.90%	1.0%	1.1%	Defined as care experienced students, comprising: Care Leavers – 'students who have self-declared their care status via UCAS and have provided further information to confirm they have spent time in the care of the Local Authority'; and 'a young person who has had involvement with social services during their childhood' based on self-declaration and follow-up validation by the University.
Proportion of Realising Opportunities students who are tracked into HE who will access a research intensive university (RIU) within two years of becoming 'HE ready' and completing their Post-16 studies	PTA_3	Multiple	Proportion of RO students* who are tracked into HE who will access a research intensive university (RIU) within two years of becoming 'HE ready' and completing their Post-16 studies *RO uses a robust targeting criteria and all RO students are from groups underrepresented in higher education	Yes	HEAT data	2015-16	42%	50%	51%	52%	53%	54%	RO wishes to demonstrate maximum ambition for RO students and track two years of access to RIUs using HEAT data. RO will therefore only be able to report on a milestone after two years, to allow for HESA data to be gathered via HEAT. For example, data for reporting on 2020-21's milestone will be available from Spring 2023.

Table 4b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	2020-21 milestones	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To eliminate the percentage gap in continuation between the most and least represented groups	PTS_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage difference in non-continuation rates between POLAR4 quintile 5 and quintile 1 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	2.4%	2.0%	1.5%	1.0%	0.5%	0%	Working the OFS KPM3 target to eliminate the unexplained gap.
To reduce the percentage gap in continuation between mature and young students	PTS_2	Mature	Percentage difference in non-continuation rates between mature and young students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	5.3%	5.0%	4.6%	3.8%	2.9%	2.3%	To reduce the current unexplained gap by 3% by the end of this plan, with future plans looking to eliminate the gap.
To reduce the percentage gap in continuation between care experienced students and those not from care experience	PTS_3	Care-leavers	Percentage difference in non-continuation rates between care experienced students and those not from care experience	No	Other data source	2017-18	7.8%	7.8%	7.8%	6.8%	6.4%	5.8%	UoL performance in this area has already improved over time. N.B. given the cohort size involved, minor variations in raw numbers can disproportionately impact on % performance
To reduce the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between students from most and least deprived areas	PTS_4	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between students from most and least deprived areas (based on IMD)	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	10.2%	9.0%	8.0%	6.0%	4.5%	3.0%	Smoother target to begin with to address lag between implementation and outcomes of initiatives, also considering some of these students are already part-way through their studies and the gap is large.
To eliminate the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white and black students	PTS_5	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between white and black students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	4.5%	4.0%	4.0%	3.0%	2.0%	0%	Working towards OFS target KPM4. Smoother target to begin with to address lag between implementation and outcomes of initiatives, also considering some of these students are already part-way through their studies.
To reduce the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white and BAME students	PTS_6	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between white and BAME students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	9.5%	8.5%	7.5%	6.0%	5.0%	3.0%	To reduce the unexplained gap by over 6% by the end of this plan, with future plans looking to eliminate the gap. Smoother target to begin with to address lag between implementation and outcomes of initiatives, also considering some of these students are already part-way through their studies.
To eliminate the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled and non-disabled students	PTS_7	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between disabled and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	3.9%	3.5%	3.0%	2.0%	1.0%	0%	Working towards OFS target KPM5. Smoother target to begin with to address lag between implementation and outcomes of initiatives, also considering some of these students are already part-way through their studies.
To eliminate the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between students with registered mental health disabilities and non-disabled students	PTS_8	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between students with registered mental health disabilities and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	5.8%	5.0%	4.0%	3.0%	2.0%	0%	Working towards OFS target KPM5. Smoother target to begin with to address lag between implementation and outcomes of initiatives, also considering some of these students are already part-way through their studies.

Table 4c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	2020-21 milestones	2021-22 milestones	2022-23 milestones	2023-24 milestones	2024-25 milestones	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the gap in progression between the most and least represented groups (focused on commuter students from POLAR Q1-2)	PTP_1	Multiple	Close UoL graduate employment outcomes gap for LCR resident and non LCR resident students (from 5% to 0%, based on internal data)	Yes	Other data source	2016-17	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Through delivery of the 2 year OFS funded Digital Grad Skills Accelerator challenge project we will reduce the progression gaps by upskilling students with digital skills in demand in Liverpool City Region. Impact to be measured by an independent evaluation reported to OFS.