

## 1. Assessment of performance

**Table 1: The University of Cumbria Student Population, Overview:**

2017/18 (End-of-Year Stats)	All registered		FT headcount (% of total)	PT headcount (% of total)	UG headcount (% of total)	PGT/PGCE (headcount (% of total))	Apprentices headcount (% of total)	PGR headcount (% of total)
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>7582</b>	Of whom:	68.8%	31.2%	76.3%	21.7%	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Male</b>	<b>2427</b>	Of whom:	65.4%	34.6%	78.5%	19.7%	0.4%	1.4%
<b>Female</b>	<b>5148</b>	Of whom:	70.4%	29.6%	75.2%	22.7%	1.3%	0.8%
<b>POLAR4 1&amp;2 (U21 Only)</b>	<b>1101</b>	Of whom:	92.4%	7.6%	99.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
<b>IMD 1&amp;2</b>	<b>2599</b>	Of whom:	74.3%	25.7%	79.3%	18.2%	1.8%	0.7%
<b>Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic</b>	<b>869</b>	Of whom:	82.5%	17.5%	79.6%	18.5%	0.6%	1.3%
<b>Mature (21+)</b>	<b>4570</b>	Of whom:	51.8%	48.2%	60.9%	36.0%	1.4%	1.7%
<b>With Disability</b>	<b>1102</b>	Of whom:	80.0%	20.0%	81.0%	17.0%	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Care Leavers</b>	<b>35</b>	Of whom:	94.3%	5.7%	94.3%	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%

The University of Cumbria was established to meet the needs of communities in Cumbria and North Lancashire with historically low rates of HE participation and, accordingly, an underskilled local workforce. We have been successful in recruiting, and supporting, mature and female learners, although we do not take these groups for granted and continue to work proactively to attract them. Cumbria as a county has particularly poor rates of HE participation for male school- and college-leavers, and this population is a significant priority in our outreach and recruitment work.

Our assessment, informed both by OfS data and internal data sources, indicates that we continue to fulfil our mission in making Higher Education accessible to learners from a variety of backgrounds. Success rates in both Continuation and the Attainment of good degrees are comparable for most underrepresented groups and the whole student population, with gaps for some groups (details are in the analysis below). We have closed gaps in performance for a number of groups over the last five years, and we have strong evidence in all these areas of how targeted action within the University has achieved this. In a few important areas we see new performance gaps in the most recent data, or we have a gap that is closing too slowly; in these cases, we are defining specific areas of focus and targets in this Access and Participation Plan (APP).

We are aware of the importance of considering the structural factors creating disadvantage – such as entry qualifications or financial circumstances, for example – for students from underrepresented groups. These structural factors are often deeply rooted in societal, cultural and practical realities. There is also a significant body of evidence, nationally and internationally, about the “unexplained” reasons for gaps in Access and Success for students from underrepresented groups; we know these to include such factors, for example, as a lack of visible role models among academic staff and industry leaders; curriculum and learning materials which reinforce a sense of exclusion; or inflexible regulations relating to time off study for ill health. The effects of both structural and unexplained factors are complex and often cannot be captured or monitored through quantitative data alone. The University of Cumbria is committed to developing further our understanding of where the different types of gaps occur for our students from underrepresented groups and to using that understanding to inform our ongoing work to close gaps wherever possible. We will include qualitative work focussed on the identification of structural and unexplained gaps in our Evaluation activity in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The outcomes of this inquiry will inform development of ongoing activity to support the achievement of the targets in this Plan during 2022/23-2024/25. We will also consider through the Evaluation process whether there is value in commissioning focussed research in any specific area(s) relating to the impact of, and measures to overcome, unexplained gaps for target groups of students. We anticipate undertaking further work through the Evaluation process from 2024/25 to focus on understanding and ultimately eliminating gaps due to structural factors.

Our analysis of external and internal data has shown that students from some underrepresented groups are less likely to join professional programmes (such as Initial Teacher Education, Nursing and Midwifery, Medical Imaging, Physiotherapy). This leads to a small but noticeable effect of clustering students from underrepresented groups in a subset of programmes with less likelihood of highly skilled employment immediately after graduation, due not to the achievements of the graduate but to the structure of the industries they enter. The move from measuring graduate destinations at 6 months after graduation (through the DLHE survey) to a measurement at 15 months (through the Graduate Outcomes survey) is expected in future years to give a more holistic representation of the career trajectory of those graduates whose industries routinely allow entry only lower on the career ladder. Our new Employability Plan, implemented in September 2019, has specific targets which include work with employers to enable students to secure graduate-level employment; support for student entrepreneurship; and programme-based subject interventions across

the student lifecycle. These dovetail with the specific provisions in this plan to use employer engagement, mentoring and a bespoke job-finder service to improve Progression outcomes for students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPNs), those from backgrounds of socioeconomic disadvantage, students of Mixed Ethnicity and female students with disability. The interventions at subject level allow us to target students in all underrepresented groups studying on programmes (notably Education Studies, Forestry, Sports, and Family, Youth & Community Work) where typical post-graduation employment does not meet the Office for Students definition of “highly skilled”.

We have confirmed through this assessment that at the University of Cumbria, young men from LPNs remain significantly underrepresented. Promoting the Access of these young men to the professional programmes is a long-term project, to raise awareness and aspiration in children before they choose their GCSEs and to ensure that they see the value in aiming for the best possible exam results. This is a significant focus of our collaborative outreach work through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP).

## Part-time students

**Table 2: Part-time students data overview\***

Table Part a	Polar4 Q1	Polar4 Q5	Gap	IMDQ 1	IMDQ5	Gap	ABMO	White	Gap
Access Rates	30%	20%		11%	19%		4.2%	95.8%	
Population	10	10		80	140		30	720	
Continuation Rates	nd	nd	n/a	77%	76%	-1	84.2%	77.5%	-6.7
Population	nd	nd		70	90		40	475	
Attainment Rates	nd	nd	n/a	nd	60%	n/a	nd	59%	n/a
Population	nd	nd		nd	30		nd	85	
Progression Rates	nd	nd	n/a	nd	nd	n/a	83.3%	97%	13.7
Population	nd	nd		nd	nd		20	205	

Table Part b	Mature	Young	Gap	With Disability	Without disability	Gap	Female	Male	Gap
Access Rates	94.1%	5.9%		7.1%	92.9%		56.7%	43.3%	
Population	715	45		55	705		430	330	
Continuation Rates	77.4%	82.7%	5.3	77.3%	77.9%	0.6	76.2%	79.8%	3.6
Population	475	50		45	485		280	250	
Attainment Rates	56.2%	nd	nd	nd	51.9%	nd	50.6%	60%	9.4
Population	135	nd		nd	135		85	60	
Progression Rates	94.9%	97.1%	2.2	87.5%	95.8%	8.3	91.7%	98.4%	6.7
Population	185	35		15	215		110	120	

\*The data in this table is derived from raw, not rounded, data in the OfS APP dataset and compares Part-time students in underrepresented groups to other Part-time students.

The Part-time (PT) population in the OfS data set has a markedly different composition from the Full-time (FT) population. Over 75% of PT students in the Access (588 students) and Continuation (405 students) data, and over 50% in the Attainment and Progression data, are on a distinct group of highly specialised, employer-led courses in Paramedic Practice, Healthcare and nuclear industry-related subjects. This accounts for the PT population being dominated by mature students (over 94% in the Access data were over 21 on commencement of study). Many of these students study on awards below degree level and many also study flexibly, taking a number of years to accumulate the credit for their sub-degree awards on a Continuing Professional Development basis.

There is also a small PT population of students studying alongside FT students on a wide range of UoC programmes, often as the only, or one of a very few PT students on that course (the Access population for this group is 63 and the Continuation population 21). The flexibility to study part-time is an important option for many students, including those in underrepresented groups, for whom full-time study may not be possible or suitable for individual reasons. Many of these students are studying part-time as a result of encountering adverse personal or academic circumstances, and the intention is to support a transfer to full-time study if circumstances permit. We recognise that these students may face specific challenges in accessing support and the initiatives identified in this plan for all students, and we make a commitment to ensure that students from underrepresented groups studying PT alongside FT students are identified and flagged through the Personal Tutor system for enhanced support. These students are included in any relevant activities and objectives relating to their group and lifecycle stage, within groups and individually where applicable (e.g. enhanced Personal Tutoring or mentoring).

As the summary which follows shows, the performance of PT students in underrepresented groups is often better than the performance of their FT peers. Gaps between PT students in underrepresented groups and their FT peers over the last five years are fluctuating, with no gaps in some years, and negative gaps in others (as well as some positive gaps). The small population sizes make intersectional analysis unreliable.

We have identified possible persistent gaps in Continuation for all groups and Attainment for Mature students, and in response we are initiating enhanced monitoring with a view to setting targets at the review point in 2021/22. This analysis appears in the relevant main Assessment section for each student group.

These fluctuations are, we believe, due to the small numbers in many populations. We need to investigate each Success stage to distinguish between outcomes for students whose PT status is a positive choice and those for whom it is an outcome of adverse circumstances or restricted opportunity. Close monitoring of the outcomes for these disaggregated groups will, we hope, determine whether there are any established positive gaps for PT students in underrepresented groups. We will therefore undertake detailed monitoring of all PT students in underrepresented groups on Attainment and Progression measures throughout 2020/21 and 2021/22, and commit to establishing objectives and targets to address any persistent gaps evident at that point for implementation of activity in September 2022.

While **Access** for students from underrepresented groups – particularly students from ABMO backgrounds (4%) and those with Disability (7%) – is lower in our PT population than in our FT population, we believe this is reflective of the composition of the Ambulance Service, NHS workforce and nuclear industry from which the employer-defined cohorts are drawn. As a University we make the same commitments to equality of opportunity and inclusive practice on these employer-led courses as on all others, and recognise that recruitment to the programmes is largely beyond our direct control. There is a gap in Access for PT students from IMD Quintile 1 – the Year 5 data shows we recruited 11% of PT students from IMD Q1, against a population metric of 22.1% (OfS APP dashboard data). This is due to the fact that the majority (75% in Year 5) of our PT students are mature students in current employment with the NHS, Ambulance Service or the nuclear industry and therefore earning professional-level salaries, which exclude them from the lowest IMD quintiles.

**Continuation** of PT students from underrepresented groups, both when compared to other PT students and to FT students from the same underrepresented groups, tends to fluctuate and trends are not clear; however, this is an area in the Year 5 data where significant gaps are evident and Continuation for PT students from underrepresented groups is discussed in the relevant Assessment sections below. Given the complexity of the different types of PT student, our standard data offers limited insight into the reasons for the fluctuations. We will therefore undertake enhanced monitoring of Continuation for all PT students in the course of 2019/20 and 2020/21 to gain insight into the factors affecting Continuation for each of the groups and to determine whether the fluctuations in data conceal any trends or persistent factors requiring intervention. We have set a review point relating to this in July 2021 and will consider then whether focussed activity and a specific target is indicated for one or more underrepresented groups.

The very small numbers of ABMO students and students with Disability in the PT **Attainment** data make the identification of significant gaps impossible. Numbers of PT POLAR4 Q1 & 2 students are too low for reporting; Attainment for PT students from IMD Q1 & Q2 shows a negative gap of -14.9% ahead of PT IMD Q 3-5 students. Attainment of PT Mature students discussed in the relevant Assessment section below.

**Progression** of PT students is very strong, with PT students from every underrepresented group outperforming all FT students on this measure; this is attributable to the fact that the majority of the PT population are mature students, already in highly skilled employment or studying with their employer's support for promotion to such employment. OfS data shows gaps in Progression for PT students in underrepresented groups compared to PT students outside those groups; these gaps have fluctuated over time, with no consistent pattern, and given that student numbers are small and Progression is very strong for PT students from underrepresented groups, we do not consider targets in this area proportionate.

### Explanatory notes

Throughout this assessment, we have analysed exact (not rounded) data; the summary table at the top of each student group in Section 1 represents data rounded using the OfS method. OfS data includes undergraduate students only and this is the population represented in all tables. The data tables throughout the Assessment section of this Plan give FT data only, for clarity, with PT student data summarised and analysed where statistically meaningful in the narrative section for each group and lifecycle stage.

Throughout this Plan, we have used the detailed analysis of data to identify gaps where we are already confident of understanding the drivers and therefore can design activity and targets in response; we have also identified gaps where, by reason of a population being small, data contradictory, or the context particularly complex, we recognise that we need to establish a firmer evidence base through research and/or pilot activity before determining action. In these cases, we have set a review point for evaluation and consideration of target-setting. We have suppressed data where the small size of a population could enable the identification of individuals and this appears in tables as "nd" ("no data"). Year 5 is the most recent year in the official data – for Access and Attainment this is data from 2017/18. The Continuation measure draws on the population of PT students who commenced study in 2015/16, and of FT students who commenced study in 2016/17. The Progression measure is of students who graduated in 2016/17 and were surveyed in the 2017/18 year. We have used internal data on all measures to generate fuller insights into factors (such as the choice of subject of study) influencing the outcomes for underrepresented students, and to look at the whole student journey. Our internal Continuation data has been cross-referenced; there is a slight discrepancy with OfS data as the internal data treats students who have transferred to other Higher Education providers as non-continuing, whereas the OfS data treats them as continuing.

## New Priorities from 2023/24

We fully embrace the OfS's new priorities for Access and Participation, and this plan has been updated to reflect the additional areas of focus.

In summary:

**Priority A: Make access and participation plans more accessible in a way that prospective and current students, their parents and other stakeholders can easily understand.**

A new summary has been produced for publication and is available on the University's website.

**Priority B: Develop, enhance and expand their partnerships with schools and other local and national organisations, to help raise the pre-16 attainment of young people from underrepresented groups across England.**

Our existing outreach work, including subject taster days, continues. Our partnerships with the Lancashire UniConnect (Future You) and the Cumbria UniConnect (Hello Future) are strong and will provide further opportunities for joint projects in raising pre-16 attainment. We will implement two new pilot programmes which build on existing work with partner schools, both led by our Institute of Education: 1, targeted tutoring for children from underrepresented groups and 2, CPD for teachers to guide their implementation of evidence-based practice to raise attainment in the context of socioeconomic disadvantage. We have added a new aim on page 19.

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

Our commitment to this is evident in our longstanding and continuing targeting of measures to achieve this. Our existing APP Success targets demonstrate our ambition and progress against them is strong. Monitoring of outcomes at the end of the 2020/21 year gives us confidence that our approach is effective and we will continue to commit effort and resources to achieving the original targets of this plan.

**Priority D: Seek to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of flexible Level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships.**

We have diversified our portfolio significantly since 2017 and we are now a leading provider of Apprenticeships leading to qualifications at levels 5, 6 and 7 with a national reach through substantial employer partnerships. Our CPD provision offers a highly flexible route for upskilling to those working in the Health and Social care sectors. These are key growth areas for us and will be augmented, from 2024/5, by the implementation of Higher Technical Qualifications. We have added a new aim to reflect this on page 19.

Our Strategic Aims and Objectives have been updated to include our work on Priorities A, B and D. We have also developed our Evaluation approach significantly, through work within the University and in external partnership, and this is reflected in Section 3.3 (page 32).

## 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

**Table 3: Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status:**

Note: in all tables, a positive gap shows that the nationally underrepresented group experience worse outcomes than the comparator population

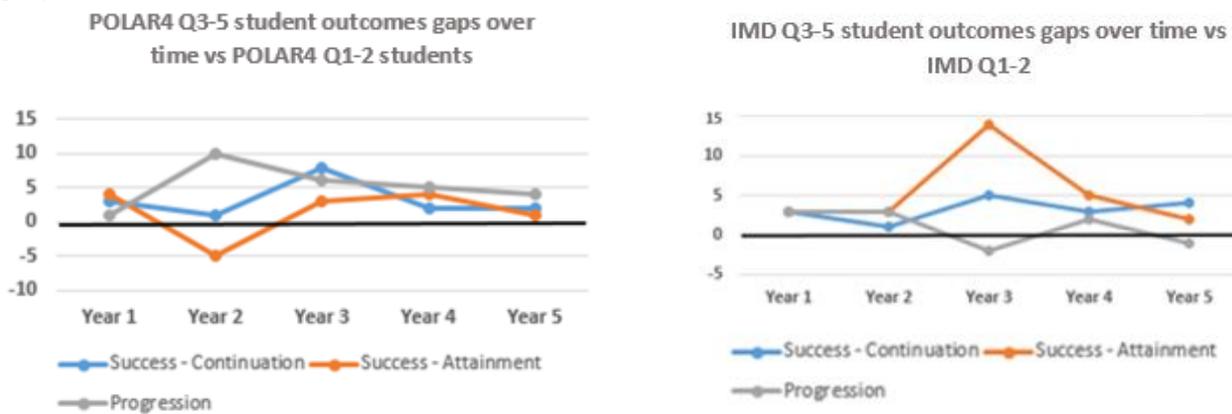
	POLAR4 Q3-5	POLAR4 Q1-2	Gap (% pts)	POLAR4 Q5	POLAR4 Q1	Gap (% pts)	IMD Q5	IMD Q1	Gap (% pts)
<b>Access</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	60%	40%		15%	20%		14%	24%	
<b>Population (2017/18 entrants)</b>	580	380		150	200		210	360	
<b>Success - Continuation</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	90%	89%	2	88%	88%	1	93%	87%	6
<b>Population (2016/17 entrants)</b>	690	440		190	220		240	360	
<b>Success - Attainment</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	67%	66%	1	66%	63%	3	72%	66%	7
<b>Population (2017/18 graduates)</b>	550	240		170	110		180	220	

Progression									
Rates	68%	64%	4	68%	60%	8	74%	69%	5
Population (2016/17 graduates)	440	250		130	120		180	190	

Table 3 shows – on the basis of the Office for Students published APP data in Year 5 for each measure – that students from LPNs or backgrounds with low household income are successfully recruited to the University (making up at least 40% of the student population and matching or exceeding the proportion of the relevant group in the wider population) but that there is some underperformance in relation to Continuation, Attainment and Progression by this group.

Trends for this group of students over five years (in the graphs below) show a generally improving outcome profile, but there remain gaps between these students and those from backgrounds of greater affluence and HE participation. At the University of Cumbria, we keep both POLAR4 and IMD measures in scope as the distinctive geography of our regions (small urban centres, coast and countryside in the North West, and London with its unusually high participation rates overall) and the extreme wealth gaps in these same areas need to be measured and understood, taking a complex range of markers of disadvantage into account.

Note: where a marker is above the solid line, this shows that performance of the nationally underrepresented group is lower than the comparator group



### Access

Table 3 above shows that our intake of students from LPNs is already significantly better than sector norms (OfS data indicates that 67% of English Higher Education providers recruited less than 18.1% of their 18-year-old entrants from POLAR4 Quintile1 (Q1)). The University of Cumbria is particularly proud of its success in recruiting students from the least represented areas and communities. In 2017/18, 20.3% of our entrants aged under 21 at the commencement of study were from POLAR4 Q1 backgrounds – those neighbourhoods with the lowest rates of participation in Higher Education. This is the highest percentage in the past five years; we have maintained intake levels for this group at over 18% of our “young” students. We focus on POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 and on IMD Q1 and Q2 in our recruitment work. Our POLAR4 Q5:Q1 rate in 2017/18 was 0.75:1.

As part of our ongoing commitment to widening participation, we will maintain and extend our outreach work (including collaborative outreach) to improve awareness and preparedness in young people from LPNs. We recognise that young men from POLAR4 Q1 backgrounds are less likely to enrol at University of Cumbria than are young women from the same areas, and increasing Access nationally from those in the lowest quintile requires a particular focus on male candidates. In 2017/18, 27% of our POLAR4 Q1 entrants were male. We therefore have a specific **target (PTA\_1)** to increase our intake of men under 21 from POLAR4 Q1 homes.

### Success

#### Non-continuation

**Table 4: Non-continuation by socioeconomic/ participation group, over time:**

	2015/16 entrants (Year 4)	Gap		2016-17 entrants (Year 5)	Gap
All Students	16.0%			12.6%	
POLAR4 Q1 (all U21)	21.1%	6.6		15.7%	1.9

POLAR4 Q5 (all U21)	14.5%			13.8%	
IMD Q1 U21	22.2%	4.1		18.2%	7.8
IMD Q5 U21	18.1%			10.4%	
IMD Q1 All ages	21.5%	5.7		16.2%	7.1
IMD Q5 All ages	15.8%			9.1%	
IMD Q1 21+	20.2%	10.2		12.2%	5.9
IMD Q5 21+	10%			6.3%	

Across the whole student population, the non-continuation rate for all FT UG students in Year 5 (2016/17 data, shown in Table 4) shows significant improvement over Year 4. As Table 3 above shows, there is a gap between the Continuation rates of POLAR4 Q1 and IMD Q1 groups and students from Q5 backgrounds, noting that the gap is much larger for IMD Q1 students (the discrepancy is due almost entirely to the fact that 97% of students at the London campus are classed as POLAR4 Q3, Q4 or Q5 but 92% of these same students are in IMD Q1 or Q2). For students from backgrounds of low participation and socioeconomic disadvantage, Continuation in Year 4 was markedly poorer than for their peers. The absolute rate of non-continuation for all students in POLAR4 Q1 and IMD Q1 has improved between Year 4 and Year 5, but the gaps between these students and their respective Quintile 5 peers in Year 5 remain significant. Mature IMD Q1 students slightly outperform the University average in Year 5 – a significant improvement in absolute terms over Year 4 – but a significant gap of 5.9 compared to their Mature IMD Q5 peers remains.

The distinctive student profile on our London campus presents a challenge for us in supporting Continuation in a student population that has a majority of first in family, IMD Q1 and Q2, and ABMO students. The challenges in London will be increased as we use the campus to offer top-up study in subjects other than Education to additional disadvantaged local groups and the infrastructure for support continues to improve in its capacity to respond to the needs of students at the same time as we bring these new groups into Higher Education there. It is likely that Continuation in London will slightly decline in the early years of this Plan as a result, but we remain committed to this important work to improve Access in East London. The Carlisle campuses have poorer Continuation of POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 students; this reflects local Cumbrian LPNs where we are recruiting students who have not benefitted from full preparation and support for Higher Education study and for whom the transition to HE is exceptionally challenging. The Cumbria Collaborative Outreach Programme (CCOP) is working to raise aspirations and preparation for the reality of university life in Cumbrian target communities early. The Cumbria Bursary, open to students from low-income households, has been shown to increase the Continuation of these students and remains an important element of our strategy to support this group to succeed at university. The most significantly disadvantaged students in the Year 5 data are those in IMD Q1 and we have set a specific **target (PTS\_1)** to raise their rate of Continuation over the life of this plan. Our Evaluation of activity in this area will seek to differentiate between Young and Mature students as the latter gap has been closing whereas the former has widened from Year 4 to Year 5 and we intend to monitor these trends within the whole IMD Q1 population closely.

For PT students, the POLAR4 Q1 & Q2 population is too small to be reportable. IMD Q1& Q2 students have a non-continuation rate of 22.6% in Year 5, and detailed investigation during 2019/20 and 2020/21 for the whole PT cohort will deliver fuller insight into the specific drivers of non-continuation in this group.

## Attainment

**Table 5: Achievement of First and Upper Second Class degrees, Year 5 (2017/18 graduates), by socioeconomic/participation group:**

	Number	Whole group 1sts and 2:1s	Gap (all students)	Female 1sts and 2:1s	Gap	Male 1sts and 2:1s	Gap
All students	1216	68.8%		71%		62.8%	
All students 21+	425	72.9%	-6.3	72.8%	-2.7	73.2%	-17.1
All students U21	791	66.6%		70.1%		56.1%	
POLAR4 Q1 (all U21)	113	62.8%	3.1	63.2%	6.1	60%	-2.3
POLAR4 Q5 (all U21)	167	65.9%		69.3%		57.7%	
IMD Q1 U21	149	61.7%	5.8	64.7%	6.4	48.3%	8
IMD Q5 U21	123	67.5%		71.1%		56.3%	

<b>IMD Q1 all ages</b>	222	65.8%	6.7	68.6%	7	54.3%	8.7
<b>IMD Q5 all ages</b>	178	72.5%		75.6%		63%	
<b>IMD Q1 21+</b>	73	74%	9.6	76.8%	8.6	64.7%	13.9
<b>IMD Q5 21+</b>	55	83.6%		85.4%		78.6%	

As Table 3 above shows, there is a significant gap in the Attainment of First and Upper Second class degrees for students from LPNs and backgrounds of socioeconomic disadvantage. The detailed analysis in Table 5 shows significant gaps for POLAR4 Q1 students (3.1 points) and for Young IMD Q1 students (5.8) when compared to the respective Q5 group. There is also a very significant gap of 13.9 for mature male IMD Q1 students compared to mature male IMD Q5 students, although it should be noted that this is a small population (17 students in Year 5). The pattern is more complex for female students, who outperform male students in most metrics. However, young female students from POLAR4 Q1 and IMD Q1 have lower Attainment than the University average and there are significant gaps compared to young female students in POLAR4 Q5 and IMD Q5 respectively. It is notable that although Mature IMD Q1 students have a large gap (9.6) compared to Mature IMD Q5 students, they nonetheless outperform all Young students on this measure. The difference in this measure between males and females is significant.

Over the last five years, Attainment for IMD Q1 and POLAR4 Q1 students show a pattern of small gaps in Years 1 and 2, and a much larger gap (around 10 points) in Year 3 due to the combined effect of absolute levels of Attainment for Q1 students dropping at the same time as they rose for Q5 students. Since this dip, Year 5 shows good progress to narrow the gap in each case but the remaining gaps and the recent history of significantly larger gaps leads us to set specific targets for Attainment by students in IMD Q1 and POLAR4 Q1.

We have set a **target (PTS\_7)** in this plan to address Attainment for all students from IMD Q1 backgrounds, which includes Young and Mature students, and a linked **target (PTS\_8)** to address Attainment for all students from POLAR4 Q1 backgrounds, a group that includes only those under 21 on commencement of study.

The data show that there is a gap in Attainment of First and Upper Second Class degrees for Black and Mixed Race students who come from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 and IMD Q1 and Q2 backgrounds; this is discussed in section 1.2 (Attainment).

**Table 6: Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level, Year 5 (2016/17 graduates), by socioeconomic/participation group:**

	Number	All group Positive	Gap (all students)	Female Positive	Male Positive	ABMO Positive	White Positive	Disability Positive
All students	1087	71.6%		72%	70.5%	72.7%	71.5%	68.4%
All students U21	693	66.8%		68%	63.5%	74.4%	66.3%	65.4%
POLAR4 Q1 (all U21)	119	59.7%	8	60%	57.1%	nd	62.6%	64.7%
POLAR4 Q 5 (all U21)	133	67.7%		68.7%	64.7%	72.2%	66.4%	57.1%
IMD Q1 U21	116	64.7%	5.2	63.6%	68.8%	66.7%	64.7%	53.3%
IMD Q5 U21	123	69.9%		72.7%	62.9%	nd	68.9%	57.9%
IMD Q1 all ages	191	68.6%	5	67.5%	72.2%	66.7%	69.9%	57.7%
IMD Q5 all ages	182	73.6		75.4%	70.3%	nd	73.3%	68%
IMD Q1 21+	75	74.7%	6.7	74.5%	75%	66.7%	78.4%	63.6%
IMD Q5 21+	59	81.4%		83.3%	79.3	nd	82.5	nd

The external factors of our region and our subject mix require careful analysis to interpret the gap in outcomes shown in Table 3, with a gap of 8 points on the POLAR4 measure and 5 points on IMD. Table 6 summarises key intersections of underrepresentation to support this detailed analysis and action planning.

Analysis shows that we have not made consistent progress in closing gaps for these students in relation to Progression. For IMD Q1 students, the gaps have fluctuated but Year 5 is larger at 5 points than Year 4 at 2.3 points (and Year 3 at .8). For POLAR4 Q1 students, Year 2 to Year 4 showed a steady narrowing of the gap with Q5 from 15 points to 5.5, but Year 5 reverses this trend with a gap of 8, attributable to the absolute rate of positive Progression for Q1 students dropping slightly and the absolute rate for Q5 rising significantly.

The positive effect of being over 21 on commencement is visible in the Progression of students (all U21) from POLAR4 Q1, and very much highlighted in the differences in outcomes for young IMD Q1 students compared to those from the same socioeconomic groups but over 21 at the time of commencement. We are confident in our interpretation that the better Progression outcomes for mature students arise from the fact that these students are proportionately overrepresented in professional programmes such as Nursing and Teaching; they are also more likely than Young students to be continuing during study on an established career path, or resuming that path on graduation.

All groups intersected with POLAR4 Q1 experience more negative outcomes, but the groups need to be disaggregated with care. Asian students outperform White students, largely as a result of the significant numbers of Asian students studying Education or Teacher Training. Black and Mixed Ethnicity students, in relatively small numbers at the University of Cumbria, generally have significantly lower levels of positive Progression to highly skilled employment and further study at a higher level, and that is amplified when intersected with POLAR4 Q1 or IMD Q1. Our **targets (PTP\_1, PTP\_3)** focus on young students from LPNs and students of all ages from backgrounds of socioeconomic deprivation.

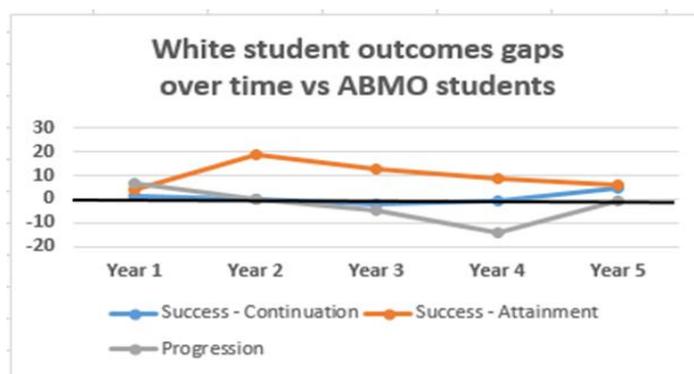
## 1.2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students

**Table 7: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students:**

	White	ABMO	Gap (% pts)		Asian	Gap (% pts)		Black	Gap (% pts)
<b>Access</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	86%	14%			9%			3%	
<b>Population (2017/18 entrants)</b>	1410	230			150			50	
<b>Success - Continuation</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	90%	85%	5		85%	5		85%	5
<b>Population (2016/17 entrants)</b>	1530	220			130			50	
<b>Success - Attainment</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	71%	65%	6		68%	4		50%	25*
<b>Population (2017/18 graduates)</b>	1000	170			110			30	
<b>Progression</b>									
<b>Rates</b>	72%	73%	-1		82%	-11		70%	0*
<b>Population (2016/17 graduates)</b>	950	120			60			30	

\*These are the published OfS APP Dashboard gaps, which are affected by the rounding methodology used. Analysis in the section that follows uses raw data for greater accuracy in discussing these small student populations.

Table 7 shows – on the basis of the OfS published APP data in Year 5 for each measure – that students from Ethnic Minority backgrounds are recruited to the University in proportions below the national average but broadly commensurate with the less diverse populations of North West England. The exception is our London campus, where the majority of students are Asian with a small Black population and a smaller White population. Table 7 highlights underperformance in relation to Continuation, Attainment and Progression by ABMO students, resulting in gaps in these outcomes between these students and White students.



The graph above illustrates the trend in performance over 5 years; from Year 4 to Year 5, the gap for Continuation has widened slightly, while the Attainment gap has narrowed. Progression is strong but as the detailed analysis below reveals, this masks a significant difference in outcomes between Asian and Black students.

**Table 8: Access to UoC, Year 5 (2017/18 entrants), by ethnic group:**

	Percentage registered at UoC*	England Population (ONS data)		UoC Northwest campuses Percentage registered*	NW England Population (ONS data)		UoC London Campus Percentage Registered*	London Population (ONS data)
<b>ABMO</b>	14%	15%		7.5%	9.5%		82.3%	40%
<b>Asian</b>	9.3%	7.8%		4%	6%		66%	18.5%
<b>Black</b>	2.8%	3.5%		2%	1.4%		11.5%	13%
<b>Mixed</b>	1.5%	2.2%		1.4%	1.5%		2.0%	5%
<b>Other</b>	0.4%	1%		0.1%	0.6%		2.7%	3%
<b>White</b>	85%	85%		92%	90%		14.3%	60%

\*There is a small percentage of students for whom no ethnicity is recorded – hence the totals for UoC registrations are just under 100%

The University of Cumbria is much less diverse in terms of ethnicity than the sector average, reflecting our status in the North West as a regional university recruiting substantially from a geographical area which is much less diverse than the rest of England and, particularly, than the large cities. Table 8 uses ONS Census data from 2011 for England, North West England and London to show the significant difference in the ethnic identity of people in our regions. We recognise that our North West England campuses are not consistently recruiting students from ABMO backgrounds (and especially Asian students) at the level of the population and we are committed to increasing the diversity of our student profile. The proportion of Asian, Black and Minority Ethnic students at the University has risen by 2.2% since the Year 4 intake but this is largely the result of increased numbers at our London campus – the ethnic diversity of Brampton Road, Lancaster and Fusehill Street campuses has declined slightly since Year 4. Activity in our student recruitment will continue to ensure that diverse students are attracted to the NW campuses. The addition of top-up courses in Business and Healthcare at the London campus from 2018 will add further to the diversity of that student community. While recognising the challenges of recruiting students from ABMO backgrounds (and particularly Asian students) in the Northwest of England, and especially outside the larger urban area around Manchester, we have set a **target (PTA\_2)** to increase the intake of these students specifically to the campuses in Cumbria and Lancaster.

## Success

### Non-continuation

**Table 9: Non-continuation, Year 5 (2016/17 entrants), by ethnic group and campus\*:**

Student Characteristic	Number	Non-continuation	Gap (all campuses)		Fusehill Street Campus	Lancaster Campus	London Campus
<b>All Students</b>	1759	12.6%			13.9%	14.5%	15.2%
<b>ABMO</b>	223	19.3%	7.6		24.1%	20%	15.7%
<b>White</b>	1535	11.7%			12.8%	13.6%	nd
<b>Asian</b>	131	18.3%	6.6		31.3%	15.1%	16.7%
<b>Black</b>	46	19.6%	7.9		21.1%	23.5%	nd
<b>Mixed</b>	38	18.4%	6.7		13.3%	nd	nd
<b>Other</b>	8	nd	nd		nd	nd	nd

\*Numbers of ABMO students on Ambleside and Brampton Road campuses are too small to be published.

ABMO students' continuation over five years shows considerable fluctuation in the gaps between disaggregated groups (Asian, Black and Mixed Ethnicity) and White students. Black students have consistently had much lower rates of Continuation than their White peers, ranging from the highest gap of 18 points in Year 1 to 7.9 in Year 5 (Year 3 had a very small gap of 0.2 but this should be seen as a blip, relating to a small population of students). Mixed Ethnicity students have a similarly fluctuating pattern without a clear trajectory. In Years 1 to 4, Asian students outperformed White students in Continuation but this excellent set of outcomes has been reversed in Year 5 with a gap of 6.6 points. This change is the main reason for the Year 5 spike in non-continuation for all ABMO students, with an uncharacteristically high gap of 7.6 points. We have set a target to address Continuation for all ABMO students and will seek through Evaluation to differentiate between Asian and other Minority Ethnicity students, to test whether the Year 5 result is a blip or becomes a persistent gap, and to ensure that our activity is changing the trend for Black and Mixed Ethnicity students.

Year 5 data shows a gap of 5% (OfS rounded data in Table 7; 7.6% in Table 9, using OfS raw data) between White students and those identifying as Asian, Black or belonging to another Minority Ethnic group. Analysis shows that most of our ABMO students are clustered in Education Studies and Initial Teacher Education courses in London, with smaller clusters on programmes in Sports and Exercise Science, and Child, Youth and Family Studies. The overall number of Asian students on Education Studies in London has risen and at the same time, rates of Continuation on this course have worsened in recent years. We believe this is due to Education Studies being a frequent second choice for students aspiring to join the teaching profession but lacking the full qualifications for a Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) course; rates of withdrawal by reason of both academic failure and disengagement are higher on the Education Studies course than on courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status. We work with students in this situation to undertake career development early in their course of study and to map the routes open to them for non-qualified work in Education as well as the options for postgraduate study to achieve QTS. We have appointed additional study skills staff for the London campus, and recent enhancements to the Institute of Education's Students at Risk monitoring will enable more timely intervention for individual students on the Education Studies course in London, reducing the incidence of withdrawal and academic failure.

Black students are more likely than White or Asian students to be from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 backgrounds. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students at the University of Cumbria are as likely as White students to have a disclosed disability. The ABMO population at the University of Cumbria is small and we are aware that in Carlisle, particularly, the opportunities for Black and Asian students to connect socially with a diverse community off campus are limited. We are working with the Students' Union on its Kinship project, a social and cultural programme of engagement focussing on the celebration of diversity, to acknowledge and try to counteract these limitations in the demographic makeup of Carlisle. Feedback from Black and Asian students has indicated that they often feel isolated amongst the majority White student populations on the North-west campuses and Kinship seeks to address this by opening positive dialogue about diversity, promoting cultural awareness and breaking down barriers that can prevent students from different identity groups working and socialising together. We are seeking through this collaboration to improve ABMO students' experience of the learning environment and to increase opportunities for them to engage in, and thus benefit from, the fullest possible interaction with other students.

Recognising that the pattern of non-continuation is a complex one, involving intersections of student characteristic, subject of study and campus, we have set a **target (PTS\_2)** to raise the Continuation of ABMO students and we will continue to pursue this through work at programme and cohort level, improving the effectiveness of financial, academic and personal support for students.

ABMO PT students outperform other PT students on this measure, and their Continuation is comparable to that of FT ABMO students. PT students studying alongside FT students are included in activity for target PTS\_2, and the small number of ABMO students on exclusively PT programmes will be included in enhanced monitoring of PT student Continuation in the course of 2019/20 and 2020/21 with a view to possible target setting at the review point early in 2021/22.

## Attainment

**Table 10: Achievement of First and Upper Second Class degrees, Year 5 (2017/18 graduates), by ethnic group:**

	Number	All group 1sts and 2:1s	Gap (ABMO students compared to White students)	Female 1sts and 2:1s	Male 1sts and 2:1s	Polar 1 (all genders) 1sts and 2:1s	Polar 5 (all genders) 1sts and 2:1s	IMD Q1 (all genders) 1sts and 2:1s	IMD Q5 (all genders) 1sts and 2:1s
<b>All students</b>	1216*	68.8%		71%	62.8%	62.8%	65.9%	65.8%	72.5%
<b>ABMO</b>	167	64.7%	6.4	66.7%	55.2%	65.2%	58.1%	66.7%	46.7%
<b>White</b>	999	71.1%		73.4%	64.7%	69.4%	71.1%	65.2%	74.8%
<b>Asian</b>	111	67.6%	3.5	70.5%	50 %	62.5%	62.5%	74.5%	nd
<b>Black</b>	31	48.4%	22.7	46.2%	nd	nd	nd	58.8%	nd
<b>Mixed</b>	19	73.7%	-2.6	83.3%	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
<b>Other</b>	6	nd		nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd

\*includes 50 students for whom ethnicity was not recorded

Table 7 above highlights a large gap in Attainment between White and Black students. There is a narrowing but still significant gap between the degree Attainment of White students and that of students from all Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic groups. The percentage of ABMO graduates in 2017/18 achieving First or Upper Second Class degrees rose 11.4 points over the graduates of 2016/17 (Year 4); in the same time, White graduates with "good" degrees increased by 8.5 percentage points. Five-year analysis shows that for ABMO students as an aggregated group, there has been sustained progress in narrowing the gap in Attainment (from the Year 2 gap of 19.2 to Year 5's 6.4). The gap

for Asian students had been eliminated in Year 4 but has reoccurred in Year 5; the absolute proportion of First and Upper Second Class degrees attained by Asian students rose in Year 5 but Attainment by White students rose faster, hence the gap. For the relatively small population of Black students, the gap has fluctuated in size but is persistent and very substantial across the last five years and is the focus of a target (PTS\_4). Mixed Ethnicity students are a smaller population still and the gap in their Attainment compared to White students fluctuates considerably, with a negative gap (-2.6) in Year 5. Taking the small size of the Mixed Ethnicity student population, and the welcome negative gap in Year 5, we will continue to monitor Attainment for this group and take action if a settled pattern of positive gaps emerges in future years. Degree Attainment across all student groups in 2016/17 and 2017/18 has been improved by focussed attention to how students engage with and manage the assessment process, supporting them to meet deadlines and access the systems for extensions and extenuating circumstances where relevant. The graduating cohort of 2017/18 is the first to show the full impact of this approach. We are mindful of the need to ensure that improvements in Attainment are accounted for by legitimate causes such as changes to students' qualifications and preparedness for study on entry or enhancements in learning, teaching and assessment.

Men made up only 17% of the ABMO population graduating with Undergraduate degrees in 2017/18 and, distributed across programmes and campuses, as well as across ethnic groups, no distinct pattern emerges. As noted in Section 1.1 (Attainment) however, for male Black and Asian students the intersection of minority ethnic identity with socioeconomic disadvantage is significant. These students are therefore included in the population for our activity seeking to raise Attainment for all students from LPNs and IMD Q1 groups (**targets PTS\_7, PTS\_8**).

Black women at the University of Cumbria achieve First and Upper Second Class degrees less frequently than students in any other group. We anticipate further challenges to close the gap between all Black and all White students' Attainment of "good" degrees as we develop our top-up provision on the London campus. Therefore, we have set a further **target (PTS\_4;** maps to OfS KPM c-i) to address the very large gap in Attainment for all Black students irrespective of gender, age, or socioeconomic background.

#### Progression to employment or further study

**Table 11: Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level, Year 5 (2016/17 graduates), by ethnic group:**

	Number	All group positive	Gap: All students		Female positive	Male positive	POLAR4 Q1&2 (all genders) Positive	IMD Q1&2 (all genders, U21) Positive	IMD Q1&2 (all genders, 21+) Positive
<b>All students</b>	1087	71.6%			72%	70.5%	64%	68.3%	79.9%
<b>ABMO</b>	121	72.7%	-1.2		72.5%	73.3%	58.8%	70.9%	74.3%
<b>White</b>	949	71.5%			72%	70.4%	65.4%	67.9%	81.3%
<b>Asian</b>	57	82.5%	-11		79.2%	nd	nd	77.8%	nd
<b>Black</b>	31	71%	0.5		75%	63.6%	nd	62.5%	75.0%
<b>Mixed</b>	29	58.6%	12.9		57.9%	60%	nd	nd	nd
<b>Other</b>	4	nd	nd		nd	nd	nd	nd	nd

Overall, students from ethnic minority groups outperform White students in progressing to highly skilled employment and further study at a higher level, but detailed analysis (summarised in Table 11) shows that Asian students and Black women have substantially better outcomes than Mixed Ethnicity students and Black men. Analysis of data over the past five years shows that the small negative gap in Year 5 for all ABMO students actually represents a decline in Progression over Year 4 (when the gap was -14.1 points). Gaps fluctuate for the Black and Mixed Ethnicity student groups, to some extent due to the small population sizes; the narrowing of the negative gap in Year 5 for all ABMO students is due to the absolute rate of Progression by Asian students, the single biggest sub-group of ABMO students at the University of Cumbria, remaining unchanged while Progression for White students improved significantly. This five-year analysis shows that action is merited to address the Progression of specific groups.

Black students are about 12% more likely than White students to be from POLAR4 Q1 or Q2, and twice as likely as Asian students. It should be noted, however, that London's exceptionally high HE participation rates mean that very few of the Asian students studying at our London campus are classed as coming from LPNs although the overwhelming majority of this group are classed as IMD Q1 or Q2 and we know that many are First in Family. Asian students' Progression is strongest in Initial Teacher Education courses; we anticipate future changes and possible challenges in this measure as we recruit more Asian students to the Education Studies course which does not lead directly to graduate employment in the way that QTS courses do. The development of top-up courses in Business and Healthcare on the London campus, opening HE to more students from underrepresented groups (mature Asian men

and mature Black women) is positive but the impact on our Progression metrics is likely to be visible from 2021/22, at which point the Progression of the top-up graduates in existing non-professional employment may cause a slight decline in Success rates for this measure. We are working proactively to ensure that we offer tailored career guidance to all students on the London campus, taking into account the distinctive mix of subjects they study and the opportunities presented by the London employment market. We have considered carefully, in the light of complex and deep-rooted social factors, how to address the gap in Progression outcomes for ABMO students who come from LPNs. All students from LPNs or socioeconomically deprived backgrounds will be offered additional support for Progression. We have set **two targets (PTP\_1, PTP\_3)** for these groups in relation to Progression. We recognise that the gap is due in some measure to these students' subject choices, so activity to support this target aims to increase students' awareness of and access to a wider range of employment and further study routes. There is a specific focus on supporting students on programmes in subject areas leading disproportionately to employment not considered highly skilled to identify and promote a fuller range of employment and further study options. Students of Mixed Ethnicity have particularly low rates of Progression. The small numbers of Mixed Ethnicity students make accurate intersectional analysis impossible so we cannot say with confidence that initiatives for students in POLAR4 Q1 and IMD Q1 will include them; we have therefore set an objective and **target (PTP\_4)** to improve outcomes for this small group.

### 1.3 Mature students

Table 12: Mature Students:

	Young	Mature	Gap (% pts)
<b>Access</b>			
<b>Age - Rates</b>	58%	42%	
<b>Age – population (2017/18 entrants)</b>	960	690	
<b>Success - Continuation</b>			
<b>Age - Rates</b>	90%	90%	0
<b>Age – population (2016/17 entrants)</b>	1130	620	
<b>Success - Attainment</b>			
<b>Age - Rates</b>	67%	73%	-6
<b>Age – population (2017/18 graduates)</b>	790	430	
<b>Progression</b>			
<b>Age - Rates</b>	67%	80%	-13
<b>Age – population (2016/17 graduates)</b>	690	390	

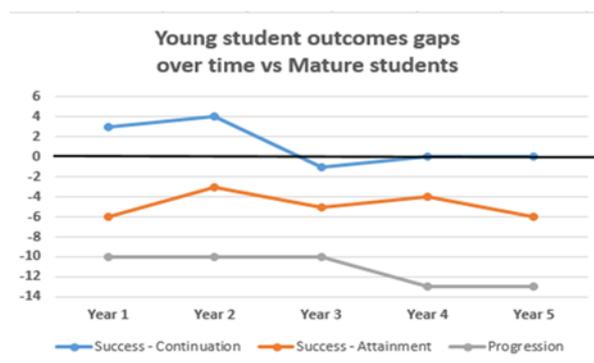


Table 12, showing the Year 5 data, and the five-year trend in the graph above show that our recruitment of Mature students is strong and that those students match or outperform Young students on all measures. We intend to work actively to maintain this level of success and we do not consider any specific targets necessary for this group. Detailed analysis follows.

### Access

**Table 13: Access of Mature students:**

	Number Year 5 (2017/18 entrants)	Male	Female	Other/ not recorded
<b>All students</b>	1651	505	1140	6
<b>Young (U21)</b>	961	279	677	5
<b>Mature 21+</b>	690	226	463	1

At the University of Cumbria, proportions of students aged over 21 on commencement have been maintained or increased as our numbers of entrants under 21 have declined. This is due in large part to successful recruitment in Nursing, Business, Paramedic Science, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy which attract substantial numbers of mature students.

### Success

#### Non-continuation

As Table 12 shows, Mature students at UoC have very similar Continuation rates to those of students under 21; our population of mature students is substantial (35% of the population for Continuation in Year 5, 2016/17). In Year 5, students in the 41-50 age group have a poorer Continuation rate (83.1%) which is associated with a concentration of students in this age group in the Childhood and Youth Studies subject area (7 of the 10 non-continuers were in this subject in Yr 5). Analysis of the reasons for withdrawal does not identify any discernible pattern to account for non-continuation by those in the 41-50 age group and as the level of non-continuation fluctuates year on year it is not deemed necessary to set a target for change in this group.

Mature PT students have lower rates of Continuation than other PT students (5 point gap) and than FT Mature students (13 point gap). It is possible that this is partly the result of the inclusion of students studying flexibly in the Continuing Professional Development Framework, but we cannot assume this to be the whole explanation and these students will be included in enhanced monitoring of PT student Continuation in the course of 2019/20 and 2020/21 with a view to possible target setting at the review point early in 2021/22.

#### Attainment

**Table 14: Achievement of First and Upper Second Class degrees, Year 5 (2017/18 graduates), by age on commencement of study:**

	Number	Positive	Gap
<b>All students</b>	1216	68.8%	
<b>All 21+</b>	425	72.9%	-6.3
<b>Young (U21)</b>	791	66.6%	
<b>26-40</b>	178	78.1%	-11.5
<b>41-50</b>	43	74.4%	-7.8

Mature students consistently outperform young students. While there are a number of mature students in intersectional groups, none of these intersections forms an area of concern or specific focus; rather, students of any

age are supported by the University's open-access support services and where appropriate through the Disability Service. The majority of students over 26 on commencement take courses with a strong vocational or professional goal and we believe that the very goal-oriented approach taken by these students, along with their life experience and access to established personal networks, account for their academic success.

The Year 5 Mature population of PT students for this measure is 135, a relatively small population reflecting the sub-degree nature of many of our employer-led, dedicated PT programmes. Attainment is lower than for FT mature students, with a fluctuating pattern over the past five years of data. Internal data indicates that much of the gap is attributable to outcomes for those studying PT on a FT programme. The small numbers and fluctuating data lead us to conclude that specific activity and targeting is not indicated at this time, but we intend to monitor and support these students closely through the system of enhanced prompts for Personal Tutoring and to review outcomes in early 2021/22.

### Progression to employment or further study

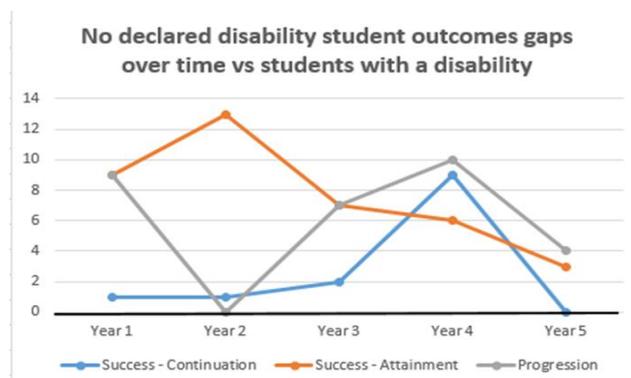
As Table 12 shows, Mature students have consistently higher rates of Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level than those who started their study as Young students. In Year 5 the gap is 13 points. This is largely due to the preponderance of mature students returning to education to train as teachers, nurses, and in allied health professions -- nearly half the graduating population in Yr 5 of students over 21 on entry were on these courses. The University's Strategic Plan includes a significant ongoing focus on professional courses and modes of delivery which meet the needs of mature students as a priority.

## 1.4 Disabled students

**Table 15: Disabled Students:**

	No known Disability	Declared Disability	Gap (% pts)
Access			
Rates	82%	18%	
Population (2017/18 entrants)	1350	300	
Success - Continuation			
Rates	90%	90%	0
Population (2016/17 entrants)	1440	320	
Success - Attainment			
Rates	69%	66%	3
Population (2017/18 graduates)	1060	150	
Progression			
Rates	72%	68%	4
Population (2016/17 graduates)	920	170	

Table 15 highlights significant gaps in Attainment and Progression for students with Disability. In both cases, detailed analysis below reveals the complex factors of disadvantage and we have identified targets to address the most significant student sub-groups in this population.



The five-year trend in the graph above shows a fluctuating level of success in all measures, with considerable narrowing of gaps in Year 5. Some of the fluctuation is due to student populations in this group being relatively small, and therefore less likely to be stable statistically. The detailed analysis below demonstrates that disaggregation of all disabled students to consider specific types of disability and the intersection of other factors of disadvantage requires very targeted action in response.

## Access

**Table 16: Access of students with disability:**

	2016/17 (Year 4 entrants)	2017/18 (Year 5 entrants)
<b>All entrants</b>	1800	1651
<b>No disability</b>	1474	1352
<b>All with disability</b>	326	299
<b>Cognitive disability</b>	149	130
<b>Mental Health</b>	77	82
<b>Multiple disabilities</b>	32	20
<b>Physical disability</b>	47	55
<b>Social/Communication disability</b>	21	12

The intake in the last two years is steady at 18% entrants with known disability (figures for Years 2 and 3 were 14-15%). The gender proportions of the disabled and the whole student population are roughly equivalent (both are approximately 65% female). This proportion of disabled students is consistent with HESA data from 2017/18 which indicated that 16% of Cumbrians entering Higher Education had a declared disability.

## Success

### Non-continuation

In Year 5 there is no gap between Disabled and non-disabled students and we have therefore not set a specific target for this metric. However, the pleasing result in Year 5 follows a problematic year 4 with a gap of 9 points, which followed 3 years of smaller gaps.

Good Continuation for students with either Cognitive Disability or Physical Disability at 89% – a population of 191 in Year 5 – masks the poorer outcomes for those with Mental Health disability (86.1%), Multiple disabilities (84.4%) and Social/Communication disability (81%).

Further analysis indicates that Continuation of students with Mental Health disability is markedly lower at Fusehill Street Campus (82.4%) and Lancaster Campus (75%) than others. These campuses have larger numbers of students on Health and Teaching programmes where Fitness to Practise considerations lead to a number of discontinuations. Mental Health and wellbeing provision at Ambleside and Brampton Road campuses is making a difference following investment in additional staffing for each of those two sites. We keep specialist staffing for each campus under active review, and we have a number of initiatives to support students with all forms of mental ill health. These include annual wellbeing conferences on all campuses, bringing staff and students together to share experiences and hear from experts; the training of many staff as Mental Health first-aiders; promotion of drop-in group sessions for those experiencing any form of difficulty to meet others in similar positions in a supported environment; and interventions to support students with the particular pressures of examinations and coursework deadlines. We work closely with the NHS to seek improvements in access to crisis services and information sharing. While not setting a target for Continuation of students with Mental Health disability, we recognise the need to continue innovating and deploying specialist resource to meet the needs of the growing number of students experiencing mental health challenges during their studies, and to ensure that there is always good access to the specialist Mental Health and Wellbeing team across campuses. The percentage of students declaring a Mental Health disability, measured through the Access dataset, has grown from 0.8% in Year 1 to 5% in Year 5.

There is a gap of under 1 point in Continuation for PT students with disability but this is a very small student population – the Year 5 PT Disabled student population is 35 students – and there has not been a gap in two of the last four years. A specific target is not considered proportionate but students with disability will be part of the wider study of factors influencing Continuation for PT students.

#### Attainment

**Table 17: Achievement of First and Upper Second Class degrees, Year 5 (2017/18 graduates), by students with disability:**

	Number	Positive	Gap
All entrants	1216	68.8%	
All with disability	152	65.8%	3.5
No disability	1064	69.3%	
Cognitive disability	86	60.5%	8.8
Mental Health	16	87.5%	-17.8
Multiple disabilities	23	60.9%	8.4
Physical disability	26	76.9%	-7.7
Social/Communication disability	nd	nd	nd

The gap in degree outcomes between all disabled students and students without disability has narrowed (the gap in Year 4 was 5.7%) but remains significant at 3.5%. Students with Physical Disability have better outcomes in the Year 5 population, which we believe is evidence of the efficacy of support offered by the University and in partnership with external agencies.

The largest group is students with Cognitive disability (approximately 66% of whom were female), which shows a 9-point gap; the gap is even greater at nearly 11 points for students with Cognitive disability who are under 21 at commencement of study. The numbers of students from ethnic minority groups are too small to establish any robust intersectional factors. Overall, POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 is correlated in Year 5 with better outcomes for disabled students but this is due to results for a very small group of students and is not evident in previous years; we will monitor this unusual result in future years but it seems to be an outlier. We have set a **target (PTS\_5)**; maps to OfS KPM d-i) to improve the Attainment of good degrees by students with Cognitive disability to match that of the non-disabled student population. This links to the OfS KPM for the Attainment levels of students with disability. Students with Multiple Disabilities typically have complex needs and, even more than for other groups of students, it must be recognised that each individual's circumstances must be taken into account in designing activity to support them. This small group of students is the subject of a **target (PTS\_6)** for Attainment.

#### Progression to employment or further study

**Table 18: Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level, Year 5 (2016/17 graduates), by students with disability:**

	Number	All group Positive	Gap – both genders	Female Positive	Male Positive
All students	1087	71.6%		72%	70.5%
All with disability	171	68.4%	3.8	65.5%	74.1%
No disability	916	72.2%		73.1%	69.8%
Cognitive disability	101	72.3%	-0.1	68.3%	78.4%
Mental Health disability	16	56.3%	15.9	53.8%	nd
Multiple disabilities	25	52%	20.2	50%	nd
Physical disability	27	77.8%	-5.6	77.3%	nd
Social/Communication disability	2	nd	nd	nd	nd

Analysis shows that success in narrowing and in some years eliminating gaps in Progression for students with Cognitive or Physical disability has had a significant effect on the reduction of the gap for all students with disability from 8.9 points in Year 1 to 3.8 points in Year 5. However, the detailed analysis over five years, leading to the recognition of fluctuations in gaps for those with Cognitive and Physical disability, and acknowledgement of significant and persistent

gaps for those with Multiple disabilities, demonstrates that we need targeted action to make consistent and sustained progress in closing Progression gaps for students with disability.

Students in the largest group, Cognitive disability, are on par with their non-disabled peers in finding highly skilled employment or going on to further study at a higher level after graduation, but Table 18 shows that the outcomes are significantly poorer for students with Mental Health and Multiple disabilities; and outcomes are worse overall for female students with disability than for their male disabled peers. The subjects studied by male and female students in this group are similarly varied and the gap in post-study destinations cannot be explained simply by graduates going into different industries. Female students with disability are therefore the subject of a specific **target (PTP\_2)** for graduate destinations.

## 1.5 Care leavers

The numbers of Care Leavers recruited each year fluctuates – the intake in 2017/18 was 13 students. It is therefore inappropriate to publish detailed data tables for the lifecycle stages, and impossible to draw statistically valid inferences from the data. Low rates of graduation and Progression to employment in this group of students highlight the need for us to continue to work individually with Care Leavers throughout the course of study and to give more focussed attention to their academic success, as well as pastoral care, to raise the numbers completing their target awards within the expected timeframe. We therefore commit to a programme of activity in 2020/21 and 2021/22, delivered through the Student Success and Transition Adviser team, to support and listen to Care Leaver students to gain a fuller understanding of the barriers to Access and Success. This work will allow us to set new objectives for Care Leavers for implementation from September 2022.

### Access

The University has a strong history in creating opportunities for Care leavers to participate in Higher Education. While numbers of this distinct group of students entering vary from year to year (35 in Year 2; 13 in Year 5), we are committed to supporting them fully with financial, pastoral and practical support. The majority of Care leavers are under 21 when they join us; gender mix varies considerably from year to year. Most identify as White (between 77% and 92% over the past five years). Over the last three years, approximately one third of Care leavers entering the University also had at least one disclosed disability – nearly double the rate of disability in the rest of our student population. They are typically dispersed around our programmes and campuses rather than being together in clusters. As outlined above, Access for Care Leavers will be the focus of inquiry during 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### Success

#### Non-continuation

Continuation varies significantly year-to-year for the Care leaver population (these students have all started as Full Time students in recent years). Over the last four years, Level 4 to Level 5 Continuation has varied from 25% to 87.5% for this group; this last figure, for Year 5 (2016/17 entrants), brings this measure of Continuation for Care leavers level with the whole student population. While this is welcome, attention must be focussed on sustaining this level of Continuation, as the low rates of graduation (see Attainment, below) in this group indicate that Continuation at higher levels of study is not consistently good. Analysis of internal registration data from the academic year 2018/19 shows that the Level 5 to Level 6 Continuation rate for all FT UG students (those who commenced in 2016/17) was 97.3%, but the comparable group of Care leaver students had a Level 5 to Level 6 Continuation rate of 90%. As Continuation to Level 6 is the prerequisite for good degree results and success in finding highly skilled work after graduation, we have defined a specific **target (PTS\_3)** to improve the rates of Continuation from Level 5 to Level 6 for Care leavers, measuring their continuation into Year 3 of FT study.

#### Attainment

It is of great concern that only seven Care Leavers have graduated in the expected time frame with Honours degrees since 2013; while most achieved a First or Upper Second class degree, these tiny numbers indicate that our offer to and support for Care Leavers does not fully meet their needs to mitigate the considerable factors of disadvantage they face. The great majority do not complete their target award within the expected timeframe, or at all. While many pass the first level of study, there is a high attrition rate through withdrawal and academic failure after this, leading to the very low number of successful, on-time graduations. We will do more to tailor what we offer these students so as to ensure there is active support for them throughout their course of study, and to ensure that academic and pastoral issues are addressed successfully. It is our goal to address Continuation for the full three years of study in the lifetime of this Plan and, as we improve that, to review and plan initiatives to support degree Attainment if Care Leavers are not achieving as well as those not care experienced.

## Progression to employment or further study

Inevitably, the low level of graduation leads to similarly low levels of post-study Progression and while any success is to be celebrated for these students, we cannot draw any conclusions about their employment and further study destinations until we see more of them graduating. As outlined above, Progression for Care Leavers will be the focus of inquiry during 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

As the analysis above demonstrates, significant areas of focus will be on a number of intersectional groups. The most significant intersecting factor is IMD Q1 and Q2, closely followed by POLAR4 Q1 and Q2; in all lifecycle stages and for most groups of students, students in another underrepresented group will have worse outcomes if they are also from a LPN or come from a background of significant socioeconomic disadvantage.

The second most significant intersecting factor is ethnicity, and specifically disadvantage experienced by Black students. When intersected with POLAR4 Q1 and Q2, IMD Q1 and Q2 or being female, Black students experience some of the most significant gaps in Success and Progression outcomes for our student body.

A further significant intersection at UoC defies national trends in the widespread underperformance of “young” students. Again, across the lifecycle and in intersection with many underrepresented groups, being under 21 years of age on commencement is correlated with poorer outcomes.

Our targets in this plan address outcomes for a number of intersectional groups as a priority. Alongside this targeted approach, our Whole Provider approach and our mainstreaming of inclusive practice aim to address the needs of all students, whether from an underrepresented group or not.

### 1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

The children of military families have relatively low rates of Participation in Higher Education. These students often experience a number of factors of disadvantage. In partnership with Future You (Lancashire NCOP) and its network of partner organisations including local councils and other Higher Education institutions, we are engaging in collaborative work to connect with this group. We are also starting a project to extend defined support to young carers and people estranged from their families. This will consist of pilot work in the 2019/20 year with findings to inform a possible larger-scale initiative in 2020/21.

## 2. Strategic aims and objectives

### Aims:

- To close or substantially reduce unexplained gaps for key groups within our University (areas of focus by lifecycle stage below) within the life of this plan. Where we do not anticipate being able to close a gap completely within the life of this plan, it is our intention to continue relevant targeted activity in the period 2025/26 – 2030/31, supported by the increasing understanding of “unexplained” and structural factors created through our Evaluation activity. Our ambition is to close all unexplained gaps by 2030/31 and by the same date, to have made significant progress in closing structural gaps for the most disadvantaged groups.
- To contribute further to national OfS KPMs with particular emphasis on Access to Higher Education of those from LPNs, and Degree outcomes for Black and Disabled students.
- To maintain our performance in the recruitment and Success of Mature students on professionally orientated programmes.
- To develop our work with Care Leavers in order to maintain their Access and increase their successful Participation and Progression.
- To develop our data for Part-time students to gain a fuller understanding of the complexities of their Continuation and Attainment patterns.
- To raise pre-16 attainment in schools through working collaboratively with schools and colleges, UniConnect and other Higher Education providers in our local areas.
- To continue to develop our portfolio so that we offer a range of course types and entry routes; these include our Level 3 integrated foundation year degrees, apprenticeships leading to qualifications at Level 5 as well as at Levels 6 and 7, and new Higher Technical Qualifications.

### Objectives:

#### Access

1. Increase the intake of young male students from POLAR4 Q1 backgrounds.
2. Increase the intake of students from ABMO backgrounds to study at the campuses in the North West.

Success: Continuation

3. Raise the Continuation rate for students from IMD Q1 backgrounds.
4. Raise the Continuation rate for ABMO students, with particular attention to the gap between Black and White student populations.
5. Improve the Level 5 – Level 6 Continuation rate for Care Leavers so that it is consistently equal to the rate of Continuation for those who are not care experienced.

Success: Attainment

6. Raise the Attainment rate for students from IMD Q1 backgrounds.
7. Raise the Attainment rate for students from POLAR4 Q1 backgrounds.
8. Reduce the gap between Black and White students' achievement of 1sts and 2:1s.
9. Improve the Attainment rate of students with Cognitive disability to match that of the non-disabled student population.
10. Improve the Attainment rate of students with Multiple disabilities to match that of the non-disabled student population.

Progression

11. Improve Progression outcomes for students from LPNs.
12. Improve Progression outcomes for students from backgrounds of socioeconomic deprivation.
13. Improve Progression outcomes for students from Mixed Ethnicity backgrounds.
14. Improve Progression outcomes for students who are both female and disabled.

Raising pre-16 attainment in schools:

15. Offer a tailored programme of school-based or online tutoring for 50 children in primary schools located in low participation neighbourhoods and areas of exclusion or socioeconomic disadvantage
16. Create a programme of CPD for teachers in our schools network using evidence-based practice for raising attainment in the context of socioeconomic disadvantage; deliver this programme in five schools

Offering diverse and flexible routes into Higher Education:

17. Maintain and promote our portfolio offer of Level 3 entry to a range of Honours degrees.
18. Offer additional programmes to be studied on an apprenticeship basis.

**2.1 Target groups (with objective number reference)**

Lifecycle Stage	Low Participation/ Socioeconomic	Ethnicity	Disability	Care Leavers	All learners
<b>Access</b>	Young male students from POLAR4 Q1 (Objective 1, Target PTA_1)	ABMO students studying on NW campuses (Objective 2, Target PTA_2)			Diverse routes into Higher Education (Objectives 17 and 18)
<b>Success: Continuation</b>	Students from IMD Q1 (Objective 3, Target PTS_1)	ABMO students (Objective 4, Target PTS_2)		Care Leavers (Objective 5, Target PTS_3)	
<b>Success: Attainment</b>	Students from IMD Q1 (Objective 6, Target PTS_7) Students from POLAR4 Q 1 (Objective 7, Target PTS_8)	Black students (Objective 8, Target PTS_4)	Students with Cognitive Disability (Objective 9, Target PTS_5) Students with Multiple Disabilities		School-based programmes for teachers and pupils to raise attainment pre-16 (Objectives 15 and 16)

			(Objective 10, Target PTS_6)		
<b>Progression</b>	Students from POLAR4 Q1 (Objective 11, Target PTP_1)  Students from IMD Q1 (Objective 12, Target PTP_3)	Mixed ethnicity students (Objective 13, Target PTP_4)	Female students with Disability (Objective 14, Target PTP_2)		

## 2.2 Aims and objectives

### Targets:

1. Raise the absolute number of young male entrants from POLAR4 Q1 by 8% each year (Baseline 52 entrants; target 2024/25, +8% on 2023/24 entrants) PTA\_1
2. Raise the percentage of ABMO entrants to study at the North-West campuses (Baseline 7.5%; target 2024/25, 10%) PTA\_2
3. Reduce the difference in non-continuation rates between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students (Baseline 7.1 gap; target 2024/25, 0 gap) PTS\_1
4. Reduce the difference in non-continuation rates between ABMO students and White students (Baseline 7.6 gap; target 2024/25, 2.5 gap) PTS\_2
5. Improve the long-term Continuation rate for Care Leaver students to ensure that Care Leaver students continue beyond the beginning of Year 2 study (Baseline 7.3 gap; target 2024/25, 0 gap) PTS\_3
6. Eliminate the difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students (Baseline gap 6.7; target 2024/25, 0 gap) PTS\_7
7. Eliminate the difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between POLAR4 Q1 students and POLAR4 Q5 students (Baseline gap 3.1; target 2024/25, 0 gap) PTS\_8
8. Reduce the difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between Black students and White students (Baseline 22.7 gap; target 2024/25, 5 gap) PTS\_4
9. Reduce the difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between students with cognitive disability and non-disabled students (Baseline 8.8 gap; target 2024/25, 3 gap) PTS\_5
10. Reduce the difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between students with Multiple disabilities and non-disabled students (Baseline 8.4 gap; target 2024/25, 2.5 gap) PTS\_6
11. Reduce the difference in Progression rates between POLAR4 Q1 students and POLAR4 Q5 students (Baseline 8 gap; target 2024/25, 1 gap) PTP\_1
12. Reduce the difference in Progression rates between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students from IMD Q5 (Baseline gap 5; target 2024/25, 0.7 gap) PTP\_3
13. Reduce the difference in Progression rates between Mixed Ethnicity students and White students (Baseline gap 12.9; target 2024/25, 2 gap) PTP\_4
14. Eliminate the difference in Progression rates between female disabled students and all non-disabled students (Baseline 6.7 gap; target 2024/25, 0 gap) PTP\_2

## 3. Strategic measures

### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

#### Overview

The University defines itself as a Widening Participation institution, and staff across the University recognise the value of extending the existing concentration on Access to focus in a more consistent way on the Success of students recruited from underrepresented groups. We have continued to develop our approach to planning and performance since 2016/17, when our new Strategic Plan was launched and we instituted the Annual Operating Plan (AOP). The AOP is a concise, top-level, data-driven plan with measurable targets to focus all parts of the University on the realisation of the Strategic Plan. The AOP targets Student Success and Satisfaction; these targets are reflected in the Business Plans of all academic Institutes, and of professional services as relevant. Our Access and Participation Plans 2019/20 and 2020/21-2024/25 are framed within this institutional context. These plans are approved, and progress against targets monitored, through the deliberative committee structure, ensuring oversight by the Board of Directors and Academic Board, both of which include student as well as staff representation. Progress on the APP is monitored by the Access and Participation Monitoring Group chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (PVCA). The Group includes permanent membership of the Students' Union and invites students to engage and advise on specific projects. This group ensures the linking of insights from our ongoing data analysis to the development and implementation of

activity to support students across the lifecycle, and ensures that a consistent and rigorous approach to evaluation of activity is taken. The Access and Participation Monitoring Group reports to the Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee, which is a subcommittee of Academic Board.

Student Access and Success outcomes data is formally reported to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group where alignment with the Equality and Diversity Plan is tested and assured. This group offers constructive challenge to staff responsible for student recruitment, student support, study skills, curriculum design and teaching from an Equality perspective.

The development of an overarching Theory of Change (reflected in the Logic Table below) and the implementation of an evaluation framework across Access, Success and Progression will support the University to more effectively and robustly assess the impact of its activities. By making interventions and their intended impact explicit, it will enable staff across the institution to focus on supporting students to reach their full potential.

We seek to use quantitative data across the University to measure our challenges and achievements and to evidence progress. In preparing this Access and Participation Plan, we have analysed a range of data from the Office for Students, national and sector sources, and information generated internally by such activities as assessment, students' use of support services, and satisfaction surveys. The Assessment of Performance in this Plan has highlighted current gaps between outcomes for students in underrepresented groups and other students. In some cases, the underrepresented group outperforms the "main" student group. As our areas of focus indicate, we have recognised the need to take purposeful action across two or more life cycle stages for young students (and especially male students) from backgrounds of low HE Participation or socioeconomic disadvantage; for ethnic minority students; and for students with disability. We have also identified a need to enhance our work with Care Leavers and we have targeted the first stage of Success, Continuation, as the most urgent priority for this small group. In all cases we will continue to promote student success through our mainstream approaches to inclusive, accessible curriculum, to innovative Learning, Teaching and Assessment methods, and to academic development which actively promotes success for all students rather than operating a deficit model.

## Alignment with other strategies

Our policies and strategies seek to create the necessary infrastructure and practice to give all students the opportunity to develop in an appropriately challenging and supportive environment. Our Equality and Diversity Plan treats students and staff equally as members of a diverse community with equality of opportunity as its goal. A Diversity Toolkit has been developed to support staff in recognising and responding to issues relating to the Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Staff training is available in areas from Unconscious Bias to Making Reasonable Adjustments; some training is mandatory for those working directly with students or in the Admissions and Recruitment functions.

The Student Achievement Strategy, launching at the start of the academic year 2019/20, brings together the full range of student-facing developmental activity in the University to include: The Curriculum Design Framework (CDF), the Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy, the Student Support Framework and the Employability Plan.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy articulates the essential principles of our practice in supporting learning. The LTA Strategy mandates an inclusive curriculum, varied approaches to learning and authentic assessment as the key building blocks of a practice which is student-centred and focusses on facilitating development and increasing autonomy.

The University's Strategic Plan articulates our core values and aims, and is central to our planning and monitoring practices.

## Strategic measures

The Logic Table below offers a schematic summary of activity planned to achieve our targets. Activity in **Bold** is new activity from the 2020/21 year forward. The code "(e)" indicates the activity is embedded in curriculum delivery; "(a)" indicates that it is accessible to all students of the University.

### **All students have access to, and may experience as embedded, the following:**

- Headstart MOOC: includes transition to University materials, links to UoC information on support, online study skills, digital capabilities.
- "Get Ahead" events available to assist with preparation for HE and to facilitate transition for students from underrepresented groups.
- Curriculum and assessment design takes account of different entry qualifications and meets varying levels of preparation; authentic and varied assessment methods seek to ensure equality of opportunity; LTA and CDF applied to ensure curriculum meets expectations for diversity and inclusivity of content. Anonymised marking will be used where possible. We are initiating a proactive programme in 2019, with the launch of our CDF and the LTA Strategy Action Plan 2019-22, to ensure that new and reviewed curricula embody good practice in inclusivity. Key underpinning evidence is drawn from Kingston University's "Excellence in Inclusive Curriculum Design" initiative and the University of Hertfordshire's Curriculum Design Toolkit. Our Centre for Academic Practice Enhancement leads on the promulgation of inclusive and universal approaches to curriculum design, informed by feedback from students in underrepresented groups.
- **Enhanced academic staff development activity in inclusive assessment design.**

- Personal Tutor system supports students in learning through assessment and developing a personal approach to planning study and accessing support.
- Learning Advisor and Student Success Schemes to develop study skills, academic writing, research confidence.
- Graduates can access the Employability Service throughout their studies and for up to 3 years after graduation, offering a range of services including support for upskilling, certification and CV development.

#### LOGIC TABLE: Focussed interventions and evaluation of impact (Theory of Change model)

<b>Activity: Fuller insight into Continuation of Part-time students</b>		
<b>Identified Need:</b>  Fuller understanding of the diverse and complex PT student populations, and the factors influencing non-continuation	<b>Activity/Input</b>  Review of research literature  Enhanced data collection and monitoring, including real-time reporting to support inquiry with students during active study and assessment periods  Review of HESA and other statutory reporting practice for students on credit-only, flexible and sub-degree programmes	<b>Method of Evaluation:</b> At Review point in early 2021, evaluate:  Insights into impact of academic failure for underrepresented students on different types of programmes  Insights into impact of financial difficulty and employment volatility for underrepresented students on different types of programmes  Insights into the impact of data reporting on representation of the countable population for Continuation measures

<b>Activity: Fuller insight into Attainment of Part-time students</b>		
<b>Identified Need:</b>  Fuller understanding of the diverse and complex PT student populations, and the factors influencing lower degree Attainment	<b>Activity/Input</b>  Review of research literature  Enhanced data collection and monitoring, including real-time reporting to support inquiry with students during active study and assessment periods  Review of HESA and other statutory reporting practice for students on credit-only, flexible and sub-degree programmes	<b>Method of Evaluation:</b> At Review point in 2021/22, evaluate:  Insights into impact of academic failure for underrepresented students on different types of programmes  Insights into the impact of data reporting on representation of the countable population for Attainment measures

<b>Activity: Fuller insight into Progression of Part-time students</b>		
<b>Identified Need:</b>  Fuller understanding of the diverse and complex PT student populations, and the reasons for differences in employment outcomes for underrepresented groups	<b>Activity/Input</b>  Review of research literature  Enhanced data collection and monitoring, including real-time reporting to support inquiry with students during active study and assessment periods  Collaborative investigation with employer partners to gather data on the pre-study and post-study employment status of learners from underrepresented groups	<b>Method of Evaluation:</b> At Review point in 2021/22, evaluate:  Analysis of correlation (if any) between academic outcomes and post-study employment/promotion  Statistical analysis of comparative career Progression for learners in underrepresented groups and their peers in majority groups

<b>Access Aim: Increase the intake of young male students from POLAR4 Q1</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address young men’s motivation through career and financial aspirations</p> <p>Address lack of Level 2 and 3 qualifications as a barrier to Access</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b> ‘Perspectives and Prospects: The educational ambitions and intentions of young white British males from five disadvantaged areas in NW England’ – Dr Neil Raven and NW NCOP Consortia, 2019</p>	<p><b>Activity/ Input</b></p> <p>Promotion of apprenticeship routes to HE</p> <p><b>Regional collaborative work to support aspiration to HE and investment in Level 2 and 3 qualifications (Implementation: September 2019)</b></p> <p>Application of contextual information in offer-making</p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b> Increased intake of young male students from POLAR4 Q1.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b> Ongoing programme of evaluation linked to interventions using the Kirkpatrick Model to assess the engagement, changing perceptions and academic performance of young people.</p> <p>UCAS end of cycle data.</p>

<b>Access Aim: Increase the intake of students from ABMO backgrounds to study at the campuses in the North West</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address lack of Level 2 and 3 qualifications as a barrier to Access</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b> “Access to Advantage” – Rebecca Montacute/Sutton Trust, 2018</p>	<p><b>Activity/ Input</b></p> <p><b>Regional collaborative work to support aspiration to HE and investment in Level 2 and 3 qualifications (Implementation: September 2019)</b></p> <p>Application of contextual information in offer-making</p> <p>Promotion of formerly popular Arts courses</p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b> Increased intake of ABMO students to all NW campuses and particularly courses in Art, Design and Performing Arts in Carlisle</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b> UCAS end of cycle data.</p>

<b>Success Aim: Raise the Continuation rate for all students from IMD Q1</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address financial hardship</p> <p>Build confidence in navigating HE and other professional contexts</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p>‘An evaluation of the effect of bursary and other types of financial support on student outcomes at the University of Cumbria’ – HASCE (2018)</p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Section 1.3.4, “Co-curricular activities: Personal Tutoring and Peer Mentoring” and Chapter 2 Case Study 9, University of Salford) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Cumbria Bursary for eligible students, including provision of pastoral support for managing money and debt.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Personal Tutor role prompts for these students (Implementation: September 2019)</b></p> <p><b>Peer mentoring in Year One of study from Year Two and Three students (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p>Embedded academic skills, assessment literacy, and HE transition in programme of study (e)</p> <p>Access for Level 3 entrants to Transition Advisers (a)</p>	<p><b>Impact Measures:</b> Decreased withdrawal due to financial issues.</p> <p>Improved module pass rates.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b> Number of Personal Tutor and Mentor engagements correlated to academic Success and Continuation.</p> <p>Effect of financial support comparing students receiving and not receiving bursary using OfS toolkit.</p> <p>Successful engagement with MOOC correlated to Continuation rates. Monitor impact of curriculum content and LTA approaches through module pass/fail rates.</p>

<b>Success Aim: Raise the Continuation rate for ABMO students, with particular attention to the gap between Black and White student populations</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address lack of confidence associated with First in Family students to promote fuller engagement with learning and support offer</p> <p>Address financial issues for ABMO students from IMD Q1 and 2</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b> <i>What Works? 2</i> (Section 1.3.4, “Co-curricular activities: Personal Tutoring and Peer Mentoring”) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Dedicated e-mentoring scheme. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p><b>Campaign in collaboration with UCSU: Kinship: valuing and celebrating diverse voices and perspectives (Implementation: September 2019)</b></p> <p>Cumbria Bursary for eligible students.</p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b> Fewer failures and withdrawals from programme.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b> Monitor engagement with mentor scheme and correlate to outcomes.</p> <p>Monitor impact of curriculum content and LTA approaches through module pass/fail rates.</p> <p>Evaluate impact of direct financial support.</p>

Success Aim: Improve the Continuation rate for Care Leavers to equal that of those not Care experienced		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address the deficits (financial support, advice, encouragement, ability to live independently) for this group</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>The Caring University in 2016: Practice, Partnership and Strategy with the Care Experienced Student</i> (Andrew Rawson, <i>Action On Access</i>, 2016)</p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Section 1.3.4, “Co-curricular activities: Personal Tutoring and Peer Mentoring” and Chapter 2 Case Study 9, University of Salford) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Dedicated advice team with a named support adviser and mentor for each student.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Personal Tutor role with additional prompts to support at key stages. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p>Cumbria Bursary scheme</p> <p>Package of University support to ensure that housing, pastoral care, and practical advice are available 52 weeks of the year.</p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failures and withdrawals from programme.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor engagement with support team, advisers, mentor and personal tutor, correlate to completion of Year 2 study.</p> <p>Evaluate impact of direct financial support.</p> <p>Assess use of Hardship Fund during Year 2, correlate to success on programme and student satisfaction level (bespoke survey).</p>

Success Aim: Raise the Attainment rate for students from IMD Q1		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Improve Academic and Assessment Literacy, rewarding positive behaviours to maintain motivation</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Chapter 2 Case Study 7, University of Wolverhampton) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Programme of embedded enhanced academic literacy sessions in targeted programmes. (e)</p> <p>Incentive scheme (non-financial benefits) for students in target group who maintain their module marks above 60%. <b>(Pilot scheme: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failed modules and higher marks on modules.</p> <p>Higher percentage of First and Upper Seconds.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor correlation of the pilot incentive scheme with improved engagement and module marks each year.</p> <p>Monitor impact of curriculum content and LTA approaches through module pass/fail rates.</p>

Success Aim: Raise the Attainment rate for students from POLAR4 Q1		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Improve Academic and Assessment Literacy, rewarding positive behaviours to maintain motivation</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Chapter 2 Case Study 7, University of Wolverhampton) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Programme of embedded enhanced academic literacy sessions in targeted programmes. (e)</p> <p>Incentive scheme (non-financial benefits) for students in target group who maintain their module marks above 60%. <b>(Pilot scheme: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failed modules and higher marks on modules.</p> <p>Higher percentage of First and Upper Seconds.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor correlation of the pilot incentive scheme with improved engagement and module marks each year.</p> <p>Monitor impact of curriculum content and LTA approaches through module pass/fail rates.</p>

<b>Success Aim: Reduce the gap between Black and White students' achievement of 1sts and 2:1s</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Improve Academic and Assessment Literacy</p> <p>Address lack of confidence associated with First in Family students to promote fuller engagement with learning and support offer</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Section 1.3.4, "Co-curricular activities: Personal Tutoring and Peer Mentoring") – HEA, 2017</p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Chapter 2 Case Study 7, University of Wolverhampton) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Programme of embedded enhanced academic literacy sessions in targeted programmes. (e)</p> <p><b>Dedicated e-mentoring scheme. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failed modules and higher marks on modules.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor correlation of the incentive scheme with improved engagement and module marks.</p> <p>Monitor engagement with mentor scheme correlated to academic outcomes.</p> <p>Monitor impact of curriculum content and LTA approaches through module pass/fail rates.</p>

<b>Success Aim: Improve the Attainment rate of students with Cognitive disability to match that of the non-disabled student population</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address specific needs of each student to remove barriers caused by their impairment</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>Disability in Higher Education: A Social Justice Approach</i> -- Nancy J. Evans et al. Jossey Bass, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Close liaison between Study Skills team and academic team to ensure learning materials and activities, and assessments, are as inclusive and barrier-free as possible. (a)</p> <p>Learning materials provided for use outside class.</p> <p><b>Use of a range of assessment feedback formats including audio/video feedback. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failed modules and higher marks on modules.</p> <p>Higher percentage of Firsts and Upper Seconds.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor engagement with Study Skills team to track impact of full engagement on academic outcomes.</p> <p>Monitor accessibility/inclusivity of learning and assessment materials (bespoke student survey).</p>

<b>Success Aim: Improve the Attainment rate of students with Multiple disabilities to match that of the non-disabled student population</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Address specific needs of each student to remove barriers caused by their impairments</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>Disability in Higher Education: A Social Justice Approach -- Nancy J. Evans et al. Jossey Bass, 2017</i></p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p>Close liaison between Study Skills team and academic team to ensure learning materials and activities, and assessments, are as inclusive and barrier-free as possible. (a)</p> <p>Learning materials provided for use outside class.</p> <p>Study Skills team to offer one-to-one mentoring and support for each student, with input from Assistive Technologies experts.</p> <p><b>(Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Fewer failed modules and higher marks on modules.</p> <p>Higher percentage of Firsts and Upper Seconds.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor engagement with Study Skills team to track impact of full engagement on academic outcomes.</p> <p>Monitor accessibility/inclusivity of learning and assessment materials (bespoke student survey).</p>

<b>Progression Aim: Improve Progression outcomes for students from POLAR4 Q1</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Develop students' awareness of a full range of employment and further study options, raising aspirations</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2 (Chapter 2 Case Study 11, Glasgow Caledonian University) – HEA, 2017</i></p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Establish facilitated support groups online and on campus – with some 1-1 career coaching from local businesses and Employability Service staff. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p><b>Bespoke “job finder” service to identify suitable opportunities and support graduating students and recent graduates to apply and prepare for selection processes. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Improved Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor participants' views of the value of the support groups (surveys pre and post graduation).</p> <p>Evaluate success of “job-finder” in placing graduates.</p>

<b>Progression Aim: Improve Progression outcomes for students from IMD Q1</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Develop students' awareness of a full range of employment and further study options, raising aspirations</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2 (Chapter 2 Case Study 11, Glasgow Caledonian University) – HEA, 2017</i></p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Establish facilitated support groups online and on campus – with some 1-1 career coaching from local businesses and Employability Service staff. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p><b>Bespoke “job finder” service to identify suitable opportunities and support graduating students and recent graduates to apply and prepare for selection processes. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Improved Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor participants' views of the value of the support groups (surveys pre and post graduation).</p> <p>Evaluate success of “job-finder” in placing graduates.</p>

<b>Progression Aim: Improve Progression outcomes for Mixed Ethnicity students</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Develop students' awareness of a full range of employment and further study options, raising aspirations</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p><i>What Works? 2</i> (Chapter 2 Case Study 11, Glasgow Caledonian University) – HEA, 2017</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Establish facilitated support groups online and on campus – with some 1-1 career coaching from local businesses and Employability Service staff. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p><b>Bespoke “job finder” service to identify suitable opportunities and support graduating students and recent graduates to apply and prepare for selection processes. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Improved Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor participants' views of the value of the support groups (surveys pre and post graduation).</p> <p>Evaluate success of “job-finder” in placing graduates.</p>

<b>Progression Aim: Improve Progression outcomes for students who are both female and disabled</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Develop students' resilience and skills in self-promotion, and confidence in setting and pursuing career goals</p> <p><b>Underpinning Evidence:</b></p> <p>“Supporting disabled students' transitions from higher education into employment” – HEA, 2014</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Establish facilitated support groups online and on campus – with some 1-1 career coaching from local businesses and Employability Service staff. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p> <p><b>Bespoke “job finder” service to identify suitable opportunities and support graduating students and recent graduates to apply and prepare for selection processes. (Implementation: September 2020)</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure:</b></p> <p>Improved Progression to highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level.</p> <p><b>Method of Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Monitor participants' views of the value of the support groups (surveys pre and post graduation).</p> <p>Evaluate success of “job-finder” in placing graduates.</p>

<b>Pre-16 Attainment Aim: Improve Attainment for Primary School children</b>		
<p><b>Identified Need:</b></p> <p>Low confidence with reading is strongly correlated with poor outcomes in assessments in later years. Children from low-participation neighbourhoods and backgrounds of socioeconomic disadvantage typically achieve lower grades at GCSE and are less likely to progress to A level study than children from more privileged backgrounds.</p>	<p><b>Activity/Input</b></p> <p><b>Online or school-based tutoring in reading for primary school children.</b></p> <p><b>Research-evidenced programme of CPD for teachers offering methods for raising attainment in children at primary schools.</b></p>	<p><b>Impact Measure and Evaluation:</b></p> <p>Published research exists to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach.</p>

<b>Diverse and Flexible Study Options Aim: Provide diverse routes into Higher Education</b>		
<b>Identified Need:</b> Opportunities for students to undertake HE study through routes that offer greater flexibility	<b>Activity/Input</b>  <b>Maintain and actively promote entry to many Honours degrees at Level 3.</b>  <b>Provide increased opportunities for learners to study as apprentices.</b>	<b>Impact Measure and Evaluation:</b>  Recruitment rates for the relevant programmes and cohorts.

#### Student support

All students are assigned an academic Personal Tutor who oversees academic progress and signposts the student to available non-academic support as appropriate. Student and Staff Services offer a full range of services from Counselling to Money Advice. Information Services offers learning skills development. As well as offering a tutorial-based service, Information Services works with academic staff so that this support is often embedded within taught modules. We have specialist teams who support students with SPLD and other disabilities to access learning support. As well as support for study, exams and self-management, the University recognises that money advice, confidence-building and preparation for employment are essential to students from areas of low participation, backgrounds of economic disadvantage, those who are First in Family and those leaving the care system. We offer bursaries to eligible students from low-income homes and Care Leavers; we run a mentoring scheme focussed on building confidence and raising aspirations. The Young Men into HE programme targets this priority group with wraparound support to address the organisational, social and educational factors which can be barriers to Access and Success for men under 21.

Following the acquisition of LinkedIn Learning, the Digital Capabilities Advisor (DCA) has created a digital capabilities pathway, aligned to the sector-recognised JISC Digital Capabilities Framework and specific LinkedIn Learning courses. The purpose of the pathway is to provide students with a structured and coherent approach to developing the digital capabilities needed for study and to complement graduate skills. The pathway embeds LinkedIn Learning resources to support digital skills training and follows a progressive route from step 1 (beginner) to step 5 (digital leader: innovator). This pathway will be rolled out to all students in 2019/20.

The University's Employability Service supports all students and recent graduates with career planning, upskilling and CV development. The Employability Plan has a dedicated set of targets to make visible the specific measures for underrepresented groups. Actions in the plan for 2019/20 include targeted interventions for underrepresented groups; enhanced support for the London campus; and delivery of APP 2019/20 targets relating to employer engagement and encouraging students to earn the Career Ahead award. Students also benefit from embedded activity for careers planning and entrepreneurship in their academic programmes.

#### Collaboration and alignment with other work

The University promotes strong, sustainable and collaborative working, as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2017-2020. We are committed to working closely with other HE providers within both Lancashire and Cumbria to support widening Access for under-represented groups across our regions. As the lead institution for the Cumbria NCOP, and active partner in the Lancashire NCOP, the university will continue to contribute to targeted NCOP outreach and work with a specific focus on Access for young men. It will also share best practice and aspirations around engagement with schools and deliver collaborative outreach activity through both NCOP Outreach Hubs to support all regional schools and colleges and working closely with schools with pupils from areas of high disadvantage. Working through the hubs enhances opportunities for collaboration with a broader range of partners, such as the county councils, local enterprise partnerships, employers and third sector organisations to extend the impact and reach of outreach activity through the sharing of resource, knowledge and expertise.

Collaboration through these partnerships will support activity that aims to close the gaps in Access for specific groups underrepresented in higher education, linking to national and regional as well as institutional priorities. For Cumbria, collaborative activity will prioritise care-experienced students (continuing existing work with both Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils), disabled students and adults living in LPNs, which aligns with the institution's own Access work and complements its focus on Access to HE of young men from Polar4 Q1.

The University takes a strategic and operational approach to supporting school attainment across its regions. The institution's work within Cumbria includes the development of key relationships across the county and active membership by our Institute of Education of a number of groups set up to support attainment in the county. These include the Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders (CASL), the South Lakes Federation (SLF) and county-wide and local careers education groups. All of these groups work at a county level to support school attainment regionally alongside Cumbria County Council's School Improvement Team. They seek to coordinate provision for the benefit of the county as a whole, sharing best practice and expertise, while also building on the local skills agenda promoted through the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership. The University's Institute of Education LED (Research centre) is working closely

with the Energy Coast University Technology College (UTC) on a research project involving all teaching staff at UTC to develop Dialogic teaching. Within this is a strong focus on Pupil premium interventions and impact. This project is co-funded by CCOP (Cumbria Collaborative Outreach Project). The University continues to contribute significantly to the teacher supply in the areas around its campuses. Our student teachers focus on their impact on pupil progress and attainment while undertaking their placements in local schools.

Apprenticeships represent an important opportunity to work in collaboration with employers. Apprenticeships are effective in promoting Access to Higher Education for learners from underrepresented groups for whom full time study, delaying entry to a career or taking on financial debt are significant disincentives. We view the development of apprenticeship provision with our industry and employer partners as crucial to our mission to extend higher education across the region for the benefit of learners and the region's economic and social sustainability.

## Financial Support

The University's 2018 evaluation of the impact of financial support on student outcomes, using the OFFA (now OfS) toolkit, found that recipients of financial support from low-income homes achieved the same outcomes (Continuation into the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study; degree completion; degree result and graduate outcomes) as students from mid-level income homes who were not in receipt of bursaries. Eligible students from low-income homes who did not receive a bursary had significantly worse Continuation outcomes than those who received bursaries.

Given these findings, the institution continues to prioritise targeted financial support alongside defined pastoral support to improve Continuation and Attainment for key underrepresented groups. The institution commits to spending a fixed proportion of higher fee income on financial support and uses a scored prioritisation process to impartially rank all eligible applicants and award 3 and 4 year (up to 5 years for part-time students) bursaries to those with the highest scores. The sole criterion for eligibility is that the student has been assessed as having a household income below £25,000. Because we are not able to fund all eligible students, a points scoring process is used to prioritise the award of bursary support for those from groups identified as experiencing additional barriers to accessing and succeeding in HE. Points are allocated to students from LPNs; those who have been in care; and those with a declared disability. In addition, a defined proportion of bursaries is set aside for mature students with household incomes below £25,000 per annum, also subject to the scoring system to prioritise eligible students. For full-time students, the Cumbria bursary is £1000 for each year of study. The bursary for part-time students is £500 per annum; to be eligible, part-time students must be studying at least 50% of full-time credit.

Eligibility criteria are reviewed annually based on ongoing analysis of impact using the OfS toolkit and qualitative evidence. The toolkit is now embedded and we will continue to use it for evaluation to inform the effective allocation of financial support to the students with the greatest need. The University will meet its commitment to financial support beneficiaries by fulfilling the obligations, and beneficiary entitlements, set out in the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 Access Agreements and the 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan. The University also offers financial assistance, such as Hardship Fund grants and interest-free emergency loans, for which students in underrepresented groups are eligible and may be prioritised.

## 3.2 Student consultation

A student group comprising student representatives from a range of underrepresented groups, led by the University of Cumbria Students' Union (UCSU) Academic Officer, has undertaken to review this plan and to make a separate submission in response. This response will include actions for student members of the Access and Participation Monitoring Group from September 2019 onwards, ensuring a sustained and meaningful route through which the wider community of students from underrepresented groups can influence, be informed about, and engage with the actions mandated by this plan.

Consultation with the student group above, and representations from the UCSU, have influenced the Aims, Objectives and Targets set in this Access and Participation Plan. Feedback from students in underrepresented groups (including individuals who belong to more than one underrepresented group) has reinforced the importance of a Whole Provider approach and of balancing action engaging the individual student with a more diffuse strategy of removing barriers and addressing the needs of all students. Students from underrepresented groups reminded us that anything perceived as "extra" help should be offered constructively and not using a deficit model which assumes that the student is less capable or less motivated than others. In response to this consultation, we have sought to meet our objectives through planned activity that dovetails or overlaps with provision for all students (such as the Personal Tutor system, academic literacy development and the peer mentoring scheme) wherever possible so that students in underrepresented groups are not singled out routinely. We heard a great deal from our students, especially those from minority ethnic backgrounds and backgrounds of socioeconomic disadvantage, about the complex and far-reaching effects of social inequalities beyond the University. In response to this we have included activity which increases students' confidence and resilience, such as collaborating with UCSU on the Kinship project, as well as strictly academic or study-related activity such as the commitment to develop the use of anonymised marking.

The UCSU Academic Officer has made a commitment to working with senior staff of the University to review developing data in the course of 2019/20 in preparation for the launch of this new Access and Participation Plan. The Access and Participation Monitoring Group will continue to engage students on a project basis throughout the life of this plan, and the Evaluation Strategy includes activity to involve students from underrepresented groups in the design and evaluation of initiatives relevant to them.

### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

In order to achieve our targets via activities set out in section 3.1, an evaluation strategy has been developed based on the self-assessment of existing approaches to evaluation of Access and Participation of students in underrepresented groups at the University. The strategy builds on the existing strengths at the institution – areas of strong evidence-informed practice, existing evaluations of our provision, and individuals with strong expertise in evaluation methods and analysis – in order to address gaps and blocks in the current evidence for the impact of targeted interventions.

Using the OfS self-assessment tool, three key areas of development were identified in order to address these gaps: a) the introduction of more consistent approaches to evaluation across all of the student lifecycle; b) deficits in evaluation experience and skills in service areas (with a corresponding impact on the consistency and quality of data collection); and c) the embedding of feedback loops and dissemination of evaluation findings more meaningfully into practice.

The strategy involves implementing three mechanisms to address these areas:

- a) the development of a common evaluation framework to be shared across Access, Success and Progression services, informed by academic input (framework implementation: September 2020). The framework will be overseen by the Access and Participation Monitoring Group, which will provide strategic guidance to the evaluation activities and progress. This will improve the consistency of evaluation activities at delivery level, allow for joined-up analysis of outcomes at strategic level, and via the steering group to provide a demarcated space for feedback loops, allowing findings to be disseminated across all relevant teams and the wider University.
- b) the appointment of a Strategic Lead for Access and Participation whose remit will include developing and embedding the evaluation framework across the student lifecycle, and supporting empirical evaluation of targeted interventions which have the largest investments, enabling more detailed and robust evaluations of complex interventions (start date for this post: no later than 28 February, 2020). The Strategic Lead will embed this framework across the institution through the up-skilling of existing staff across professional services and academic Institutes. This will build on the current opportunities for Widening Participation teams to have conversations about evaluation; for Access and Participation support staff to enhance their evaluation skills and understanding through attendance at NEON masterclasses, and internal workshops run by academic staff with evaluation expertise.
- c) the identifying of 'evaluation champions' in targeted services and academic Institutes (Champion roles effective from September 2020). These members of staff will provide a network for ensuring evaluation is at the centre of programme development, and linking together different aspects of the student journey. They will oversee the evaluation and monitoring of related activities within their Institute; use evidence to identify areas of improvement at Institute and programme level; and work within their Institute to prioritise evaluation of actions for improving student Access and participation. This will embed evaluation at the centre of programme planning and delivery.

The North West Widening Participation Research and Evaluation group was established by Edge Hill University in July 2019. The group is open to North West institutions and UniConnect 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 University of Cumbria continues to be an active member of this group.

The group meet at least three times per academic year, in sessions 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 will develop this work further to support the new OfS priorities by:

- Sharing evidence-based initiatives with TASO
- Strengthening the Peer-to-Peer review process outside of the meetings
- Develop collaborative evaluation processes and research

Taken together, the elements of this strategy provide a firm foundation for the development of an evaluation culture which moves beyond measures of outputs, and towards the evidencing of meaningful outcomes through theory-led evaluation.

#### Evaluation of Financial Support

The University's evaluation of the impact of its financial support on supporting student Success and retention, utilising the OFFA (now OfS) toolkit, was first completed in 2018. The toolkit is now embedded and will continue to be used to evaluate on an ongoing basis to inform the effective allocation of financial support to the students with the greatest need. The compilation of the data set for this analysis allows UoC to use and provide strong evidence on the evaluation of the impact of financial support. This data has not previously been available, and will help to inform further

analysis of student Participation and Success. It can also be enhanced by adding data on, for example, care leaver status.

### 3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The University Student Performance Group will be responsible for ensuring that our data and reporting infrastructure supports the evaluation identified as part of each intervention or activity plan.

The APP will generate detailed local plans for implementation within professional services and academic Institutes relevant to the activity and the impact metrics. The AP Monitoring Group maintains oversight of progress against these plans and formally reports to Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee (SSQAC), a subcommittee of Academic Board. SSQAC determines whether progress is adequate and if not, instigates appropriate action to address the issues. Academic Governance Committee (AGC), a subcommittee of our Board of Directors, receives regular updates on the progress of APP work and is notified when SSQAC has set a requirement for additional or remedial action. AGC determines whether SSQAC's action is appropriate and sufficient, and if not, determines the further action required. AGC ensures that the Board of Directors is regularly updated on progress in relation to the APP at institutional level.

Each academic Institute completes an Annual Monitoring Report which is required formally to analyse outcomes data relevant to the targets in this Plan, and to use that analysis to determine the next year's action plan. Evaluation Champions have a specific role in this task of analysis and planning, and cascading of actions to their colleagues in Institutes and services. Professional services report on their contribution to the achievement of targets through the Annual Operating Plan.

## 4. Provision of information to students

The University is committed to publishing timely, clear and accessible information to existing and prospective students on all aspects of their course and particularly the financial expectations. Particular focus is placed on ensuring that students from underrepresented groups are informed of the financial support that they are entitled to as a result of the provisions set out in this plan. The University is determined that no student will be deterred from exploring and achieving entry to an appropriate UoC programme because of poor information or poor access to information.

The University takes the following actions in this area:

- The annual tuition fee for each programme is stated in formal offer letters alongside details of the basis of any inflationary increases that may be applied during the programme. The fees are also published on the University's website as soon as they are confirmed.
- Eligibility criteria for the Cumbria Bursary, how to apply and the amount of the bursary for full-time and part-time students, are published on the University's website and prominently linked for applicants and current students on the Student Finance page.
- Student Financial Regulations are published each year and students are asked in their offer letter to read these prior to enrolment. These provide details across a range of subjects including how and when the University collects fees and how the University will respond if students are unable to make payments. These Regulations are available on the University's website, enabling prospective students to read these ahead of their application.
- Course webpages provide students with detailed information with respect to fees, additional costs, and the financial support packages we offer.
- The University participates fully in the Unistats official course data scheme as well as providing clear, accessible and up to date information on its website on the fees for each year of entry and the funding support available.
- Outreach staff and Student Money Advisors are trained to provide accurate information, advice and guidance on fees and funding as part of their work to support Access to higher education. Comprehensive guidance is provided on the University's website.
- The University works closely with the Students' Union and through its student support and information services to ensure that students have a clear understanding of student finances and the current loan and payment arrangements.

## 5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

**Provider fee information 2022-23****Summary of 2022-23 course fees**

\*course type not listed by the provider as available in 2022-23. This means that any such course delivered in 2022-23 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

**Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,125
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£11,100
Sandwich year	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£1,650
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students**

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,275
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,275
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Foundation year/Year 0	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,593
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935

Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 students**

<b>Sub-contractual part-time course type:</b>	<b>Additional information:</b>	<b>Cohort:</b>	<b>Course fee:</b>
First degree	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,955
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,955
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Provider fee information 2021-22****Summary of 2021-22 course fees**

\*course type not listed by the provider as available in 2021-22. This means that any such course delivered in 2021-22 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

**Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,000
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£11,100
Sandwich year	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£1,650
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,995
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,995
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Foundation year/Year 0	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£4,500
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935

Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

<b>Sub-contractual part-time course type:</b>	<b>Additional information:</b>	<b>Cohort:</b>	<b>Course fee:</b>
First degree	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,746
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	Belfast Bible College 10000620 - Theology	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,746
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

# Access and participation plan

## Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: The University of Cumbria

Provider UKPRN: 10007842

### Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

\*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2020-21. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2020-21 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

#### Inflationary statement:

Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we intend to increase fees each year using the RPI-X

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0	*	£6,000
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	£9,250
Postgraduate ITT	*	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	£11,100
Sandwich year	*	£1,650
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 students**

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	£6,935
Foundation year/Year 0	*	£4,500
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	£6,935
Postgraduate ITT	*	£6,935
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21**

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of Cumbria

Provider UKPRN: 10007842

## 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
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£518,733.50	£517,414.90	£519,636.10	£519,636.10	£519,636.10
Access (pre-16)	£103,746.70	£103,482.98	£103,927.22	£103,927.22	£103,927.22
Access (post-16)	£259,366.75	£258,707.45	£259,818.05	£259,818.05	£259,818.05
Access (adults and the community)	£155,620.05	£155,224.47	£155,890.83	£155,890.83	£155,890.83
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£572,955.00	£571,867.00	£573,700.00	£573,700.00	£573,700.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£44,906.00	£44,906.00	£44,906.00	£44,906.00	£44,906.00

**Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)**

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (EHFI)</b>	£12,968,338.00	£12,935,373.00	£12,990,903.00	£12,990,903.00	£12,990,903.00
Access investment	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Financial support	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%
Research and evaluation	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	7.6%	7.6%	7.6%	7.6%	7.6%

## Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of Cumbria

Provider UKPRN: 10007842

### 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 in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_1	Multiple	Number of young male entrants from POLAR4 Q1	Yes	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	52	+8%	+8% on 20-21	+8% on 21-22	+8% on 22-23	+8% on 23-24	Target in collaboration with NCOP/Outreach Hubs. Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_2	Ethnicity	Proportion of ABMO entrants to study on NW Campuses	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	7.5%	7.7%	8.1%	8.5%	9%	10%	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.

**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 reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_1	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in Non-continuation rates between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	7.1	6.3	5.3	4	2.2	0	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_2	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in Non-continuation rates between ABMO students and White students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	7.6	6.7	6	5.4	4	2.5	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31. Stated baseline gap is from the raw data behind the Access and Participation Data set. The baseline gap in the published (rounded) Access and Participation Data set is 5 percentage points.
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_3	Care-leavers	Percentage difference in Non-continuation rates Level 5 to Level 6 between Care Leaver students and students who are not care experienced	No	Other data source	2016-17	7.3	6.7	5.7	4	2	0	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. The baseline for PTS_3 uses internal data for registrations in the year 2018/19, measuring Continuation into Year 3 of 2016/17 entrants.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_4	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between Black and White students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	22.7	21	19	16	12	5	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_5	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between students with Cognitive Disability and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	8.8	8.2	7.3	6.1	4.7	3	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_6	Disabled	Percentage difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between students with Multiple Disabilities and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	8.4	7.8	6.9	5.8	4.2	2.5	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_7	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	6.7	6	5.4	4.5	2.2	0	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_8	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage difference in degree Attainment (1st and 2:1) between POLAR4 Q1 students and POLAR4 Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.1	1.1	0	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.

**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 progression gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTP_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage difference in Progression rates between POLAR4 Q1 students and POLAR4 Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	8	7.2	6.2	5	3.5	1	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31
To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTP_2	Multiple	Percentage difference in Progression rates between female disabled students and all non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	6.7	5.5	4.6	3.3	1.7	0	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population.
To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTP_3	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in Progression rates between IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	5	4.2	2.8	2	1.3	0.7	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31
To reduce the progression gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTP_4	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in Progression rates between Mixed Ethnicity students and White students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	12.9	10.8	8.3	6.1	4	2	Baseline and milestone data are those for the full-time student population. We expect to address the remaining gap during the period 2025/26 - 2030/31