

# UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH UKPRN 10007801 - ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN

*Submitted April 2018*

## 1. Introduction

At the heart of the University of Plymouth's vision, there remains a clear and continued commitment to Widening Participation. Throughout the current cycle the University has worked cross-institutionally to continue to focus its widening participation strategy and activity across the student life-cycle, targeting interventions where gaps are significant and where the interventions can be made. Through this Access and Participation Plan the University will aim to clearly support this approach to ensure that the strategy incorporates access to higher education through raising aspirations and attainment, the retention and success of students while at university and successful progression from university into employment or to postgraduate study. In line with our "Students as Partners" strategy, we seek to work with our students both so that their views, experiences and ideas continue to inform our approach, and so that they can contribute actively to widening participation in line with the University's mission, vision and values.

The University is currently delivering an effective programme of widening participation maintaining a student population of around one third of students from widening participation backgrounds. We continue to systematically assess our performance and develop our strategy, which reflects our geographic and socio-demographic context, national policy and guidance and national research and best practice.

The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion sits at the heart of the University's mission and its emerging Education and Student Experience Strategy, with this Access and Participation Plan aligned closely with its Equality Action Plan. The monitoring of equality, diversity and inclusion within the University is included both within the quality assurance framework for taught programmes, and through the University's Annual Equality Report. Students are represented on and actively contribute to the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The diversity of the student voice is further augmented through the University of Plymouth Students' Union (UPSU) governance structures, which include a number of forums, each led by an elected chair, including such groups as mature students, black and minority ethnic (BME) students, students with disabilities, LGBT+ students and postgraduate students.

The University provides support to students from the following groups:

- Mature Students
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students
- Students with Disabilities
- "Looked After Children"/Care Leavers, and those who are estranged from their families
- Lone carers, including both lone parents and those who are lone carers for vulnerable adults
- Students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (identified via POLAR3/4 profiling)

The University recognises the potential difficulties associated with regulatory decisions regarding tuition fees, alongside inflationary pressures and the impact of Brexit and their consequent impact on the real terms value of the funds it can direct to support access and student success. Other policy changes, such as the removal of NHS bursaries and the extension of student loans to cover postgraduate taught study, are and may continue to impact upon the numbers and sociodemographic distribution of students enrolling on University programmes, which may require the University to review its strategy and adjust its activities accordingly.

## 2. Assessment of Current Performance

### 2.1 *The Role of Geography: The Regional and University Profile*

As an HEI based on the South West coast, much of the University's widening participation outreach activities are focused within a geographic area that includes West Somerset, Devon and Cornwall; this focus is evidenced through both the geographic spread of our National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP) partners and schools, and through our network of HE in FE academic partners. Consistently over the last five years, over 60% of our enrolled students are from the South West region. Compared to England and Wales as a whole, the South West's population is, according to the 2011 Census older, increasing in size less rapidly, and less ethnically and linguistically diverse. There is overall outward mobility for people of working age. The higher education participation rate is also lower.

A recent study undertaken by the Sutton Trust using UCAS data suggested that only 32% of young people in the South West applied for a university place in the current application cycle, compared to 37% in England and 47% in London<sup>1</sup>. Participation rates (calculated using POLAR3 methods) are particularly low in wards within Bridgwater, Tiverton, Barnstaple, Bideford, Newton Abbott, Bodmin, Camborne and Redruth, all of which fall below 20%, placing them into the lowest POLAR3 Quintile 1. The major urban centres within the region, Paignton, Exeter and Plymouth all include multiple wards that fall below a 20% participation rate. In some cases, POLAR3 Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 wards are adjacent; within Plymouth for example, Peverell (Quintile 5, 47.5%) sits next to Ham (Quintile 1, 14.9%). The region's profile is further complicated by economic differentiation, including localised low wages and high housing prices, particularly within rural and coastal areas. Transportation can be challenging. While a robust public transportation infrastructure exists within Plymouth itself, students living at home or on placement further afield can face a lengthy commute.

Local economic activity is focused within the service industry, particularly tourism and hospitality, agriculture, and the public services, in particular the National Health Service. A significant proportion of businesses in West Somerset, Devon and Cornwall are small and medium enterprises (SMEs), a majority of which are classified as "microbusinesses" employing less than 10 people. Economic activity is supported through two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), the Heart of the South West (which includes all of Devon and West Somerset) and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; the University is an active partner in both. One of the University's contributions is an ongoing analysis of the region's "skills gap". While local employers report a lower-than-average proportion of their employees lack full proficiency in their current role, compared to the UK as a whole, there are a greater number of hard-to-fill vacancies and a higher proportion of employees with skills and qualifications more advanced than required.<sup>2</sup> This profile means that graduates who are unable to, or do not wish to, leave the region do not have the same level of access to graduate employment opportunities as students who are mobile.

### 2.2 *Reviewing our Performance*

The University has reviewed its progress to date using the most recently published HESA indicators from 2016-17, with some data sets that are 2015-16 due to the data being from other reporting sources. Interim data gathered internally from the current 2017-18 academic year are also being monitored to support forward planning, but these data are yet to go through formal verification and thus are indicative, rather than confirming, of progress. These data and specified internal targets are included within the University's Equality Scheme and reported in the Annual Equality Report<sup>3</sup>. The Report specifically references activities undertaken as part of the University's Access Agreement commitments, demonstrating a deliberate close alignment and joint working between Access and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> BBC News (2017). "University Applications 'Depends Heavily on Where You Live'", 17 Feb. Available from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-38996267>.

<sup>2</sup> SERIO University of Plymouth (2016). "State of Skills in Devon: Workforce Skills Research Programme", available from <http://www.devonomics.info/sites/default/files/documents/State%20Of%20Skills%20In%20Devon%20-%20Workforce%20skills%20Third%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> The Annual Equality Report for 2016-17 is available from [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/11/11515/Annual\\_equality\\_report\\_28\\_March\\_2018\\_.docx](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/11/11515/Annual_equality_report_28_March_2018_.docx), with summary student data also available from [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/11/11514/Student\\_Data\\_2016-17.xlsx](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/11/11514/Student_Data_2016-17.xlsx)

In respect of access, the University had 93.9% of its entrants from state schools. Completion for all undergraduate students is at 94.5% relative to a benchmark of 92.6%.

Table 1 shows a summary of our gap analysis for Plymouth's target groups across the student life-cycle for the 2016-17 academic year. With reference to Table 1, the University's specific challenges as aligned to the Office for Students' strategic priorities include:

- Increasing the higher education participation rate across the region, particularly in the POLAR4 Q1 wards. Given both the gender imbalance and the comparatively low levels of ethnic diversity in the region, a significant target will be raising aspirations, attainment and progression among white working class young men, in particular to develop their skills, build their confidence and reduce the economic and geographic barriers they encounter progressing to graduate employment and further study.
- Supporting mature, part-time and commuting students (many of whom are from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds) through flexible learning options while taking into account transportation limitations that restrict physical attendance, particularly in the evening.
- Addressing the challenges posed by the recorded increase of students with disabilities disclosing mental health difficulties to the University and the structural disadvantages people with disabilities experience within education and employment.
- Recognising the specific support needs of the small BME student population within the context of the region's predominantly white profile.
- Supporting our small population of care leavers with more bespoke guidance to ensure outcomes that are more in line with our student population.

Table 2 illustrates the three year trends for all our underrepresented student groups. For the majority of our underrepresented groups, the data show a consistently improving performance. There are, however, three groups that require attention:

- Mature students, Access: although this is above our target value, this is dropping very slightly, as is the Retention value;
- Disabled students: Good degree outcomes are slightly reducing;
- Care leavers: Progression (GoR) is dropping, and is showing large changes. It should be noted that this is a very small group of students. For example, for the latest GoR data set only 5 students (out of a total care leaver population of 10) had positive GoR destinations, with 9/14, and 2/2 for the previous two years.

### **2.3 Targets**

The University's Access targets span the period from 2015/16 – 2019/20 and use baseline data from 2013-14 and 2012-13:

1. New entrants from state schools - from 93.8% (2013-14) to 94% (2019-20)
2. New entrants from LPN (Low Participation Neighbourhoods) – from 12.2% (2013-14) to 13% (2019-20)
3. Part time entrants from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (POLAR 3/4) from 4.3% (2013-14) to 5.6% (2019-20)
4. Increase participation for disabled learners from 13.5% (2013-14) to 14.6% (2019-20)
5. Mature student (full time undergraduate) participation from 10.3% (2013-14) to 11.3% (2019-20)
6. Participation of care leavers from 0.2% (2013-14) to 0.5% (2019-20)
7. Participation of black and minority ethnic (BME) students from 8.53% (2013-14) to 10% (2019-20)
8. Progression to employment or further study from 62% (2012-13) to 66% (2019-20)
9. No longer in HE after 1 year (young, full time, first degree entrants) – reduction from 5.5% baseline to 4.8% by 2019-20.

The University is in the process of revisiting these targets to ensure that they are aligned with our strategic intent, our changing student and regional profile and our progress to date and moving forward.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/strategy>

**Table 1. Gap analysis for University of Plymouth target groups for the 2016-17 academic year.**

	Proportion of Student Population	Gap to Comparator Group (a –ve indicates that the group’s performance falls BELOW that of the comparator group)			Comments
	Access	Success (Retention)	Success (Good Degrees)	Progression (GoR)	
Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	16.1%	-0.4%	-4.4%	0.2%	Defined as POLAR4 Q1. Some 19.8% of part-time entrants are from POLAR4 Q1 low participation neighbourhoods.
BME students	9.1%	-1.3%	-12.7%	2.8%	Access low compared to national benchmarks but exceeds local BME population.  The positive gap for progression may be the result of over-representation in degree programmes with high graduate employment.
Mature students (age 21+)	41.2%	-4.2%	-3.7%	9.2%	99.2% of PT entrants are age 21 or over  There are a large number of mature students enrolled on health and social care programmes; these programmes themselves have high student numbers and have high graduate employment.
Disabled students	14.2%	-2.2%	-9.7%	-3.6%	Students with mental health difficulties make up 3.4% of the student population, and at 3.6%, are more likely to withdraw by the end of Stage One than a student with another disability (2.5%) or all other students (2.1%).
LPN - men under 21	6.3%	-0.2%	-5.6%	-10.0%	The overall attainment gap for male graduates was 6.9%.  There is an attainment gap of 6.2% between all women from POLAR4 Q1 and all POLAR4 Q2-Q5 women.
LPN - women under 21	7.1%	1.2%	6.8%	-3.6%	

Care leavers	0.8%	-5.8%	-2.8%	-21.5%	Care leavers represent a very small proportion of our overall student population, with just 10 students surveyed for the GoR statistic.
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**Table 2. Trend analysis for University of Plymouth target groups for 2014/15 - 2016-17.**

Group	Measure	Target group performance			3 year change
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	
Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	Access (proportion of population)	15.5%	15.7%	16.1%	↑
	Success(Retention)	88.8%	89.5%	91.5%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	66.5%	69.4%	71.2%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	56.7%	67.9%	71.4%	↑
BME students	Access (proportion of population)	8.6%	8.9%	9.1%	↑
	Success(Retention)	88.8%	89.2%	90.7%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	58.4%	56.0%	63.2%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	60.4%	74.3%	74.0%	↑
Mature students (age 21+)	Access (proportion of population)	41.6%	44.3%	41.2%	↓
	Success(Retention)	89.1%	89.5%	88.9%	↓
	Success(Good Degrees)	72.1%	72.1%	73.8%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	65.9%	74.7%	74.4%	↑
Disabled students	Access (proportion of population)	14.2%	13.0%	14.2%	→
	Success(Retention)	89.5%	89.9%	89.9%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	67.7%	68.1%	67.0%	↓
	Progression (GoR)	56.4%	67.4%	68.4%	↑
LPN - men under 21	Access (proportion of population)	5.4%	6.1%	5.8%	↑
	Success(Retention)	88.0%	90.0%	91.7%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	55.9%	69.1%	73.3%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	46.5%	43.9%	65.6%	↑
LPN - women under 21	Access (proportion of population)	7.3%	7.5%	7.6%	↑
	Success(Retention)	89.8%	90.6%	93.1%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	71.4%	76.5%	82.4%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	44.9%	54.1%	67.6%	↑
Care Leavers	Access (proportion of population)	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	→
	Success(Retention)	84.6%	83.0%	86.0%	↑
	Success(Good Degrees)	47.8%	47.4%	69.2%	↑
	Progression (GoR)	100.0%	64.3%	50.0%	↓

### **3. Ambition and Strategy**

#### **3.1 Our Strategy to Minimise the Gaps**

The University of Plymouth's strategic ambitions for access, success and participation are informed by: OfS' priorities, the analysis of our current population of underrepresented student groups (Section 2.2), and our understanding of the South West regional context (Section 2.1). The ambitions are embedded within the University's refreshed strategy (Advancing Knowledge, Transforming Lives: Our Refreshed Strategy 2016 – 2020), the refreshed Education and Student Experience Strategy (2018 – 2023) (co-created with our Students' Union), and the targets (Section 2.3) are translated into KPIs for Faculty and School annual plans. Progress against our targets is formally reviewed by the University Planning Board during our annual academic and business planning cycle.

Our overriding strategic direction is to reduce and minimise the access, attainment and progression gaps that exist in our underrepresented student populations, whilst supporting our inclusive community of students and scholars in order to ensure the success of all.

Two out of the four high level ambitions in the refreshed Education Strategy are focussed on student access, success and progression:

- The strategy includes an enabling ambition that will 'Provide an infrastructure and inclusive learning environment that supports our students and staff in the delivery of our portfolio'. This comprises our priorities to invest in flexible and fit for purpose learning spaces and resources, to ensure appropriate accessible learning and information technologies, to expand existing networks to facilitate strong social engagement, and to enhance our use of education data management to optimise and support decision-making and interventions.
- The strategy includes an outcomes focused ambition to 'Support and inspire students to achieve their potential and ambitions'. The priorities here are to improve the employability outcomes for all our students, to enhance social mobility and cultural capital, and to ensure we have effective high-quality mechanisms to support lifelong learning.

#### **Our Priorities**

Based on the assessment of our current performance and mapping against OfS' priorities we have identified six priorities for our Access and Participation activities. These include, continuing to address existing A&P gaps in our underrepresented groups, stabilising our long term performance, and carrying out more detailed analysis to identify more accurately our A&P gaps:

1. BME students, Success: as indicated by Good Degree outcomes;
2. Disabled students, Success: as indicated by Good Degree outcomes
3. Low participation neighbourhoods, males (<21 years), Progression: as measured by Graduate Outcomes Record;
4. Care leavers, Progression: but note as identified in Table 2, this is a small group of students resulting in large data fluctuations.
5. To ensure that any significant declining outputs in our three year trend data are stabilised and reversed;
6. To undertake robust intersectional A&P data analysis to identify any multiply-disadvantaged students or groups and points in the student lifecycle that are affected, and use the analysis to set targets and drive action plans.

### **Financial Resources**

The University will spend **21.3%** of additional fee income above the basic tuition fee level on access, student success and financial support in 2019-20, with a stable target of 21.3% for 2020-21 and 2021-22 as reflected in the Resource Plan. The proposed funding of financial support has been restructured, with increased investment in access and student success. While research evidence suggests that within selective universities, scholarships and bursaries do facilitate access from under-represented groups, feedback from our students and market research suggest that this is not the case for Plymouth.

Within our return covering the 16-17 academic year, we reported that:

- The shift in expenditure away from a focus on outreach towards other activities had not impacted on our performance against outreach targets.
- Underspend in some areas has been balanced by increased expenditure on individual financial support.
- For success and progression, evaluation of projects is being undertaken through the University of Plymouth Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory.
- Outreach-based funding to applicants has little impact on their decision to enrol. Further, few students who have subsequently withdrawn have identified financial issues as the only reason for withdrawal, citing instead “personal reasons” suggesting that financial hardship reflects wider challenges within these students’ lives.

Reflecting upon what we reported in our most recent return, planned actions include:

- Maintaining the targeted approach to access, focusing our efforts on activities where there is most need and which have the greatest impact.
- A reduction in the proportion of funding made available for financial support, balanced by an increase in funding supporting success and progression activities.
- Some consolidation where there was overlapping eligibility for financial support.
- Eligibility for the Mayflower Award has been expanded to include students who are enrolled on programmes previously funded through the NHS.
- For all activities funded under this Agreement, a requirement for an evaluation plan that reports into the University’s Widening Access Group.
- The expansion of a specific programme of work focused on addressing the evidenced disadvantages that some widening participation groups experience when entering the workplace
- The continuation of a systematic framework of evaluation for financial support, to include such measures as student satisfaction, retention, and take-up, including use of the OFFA-led evaluation tool.

### **Evaluation**

Work is in progress to consolidate our approach to evaluating our Access and Participation activities. We have robust methods in place to evaluate our Access activities. In terms of continuous improvement, our recent focus has been on improving our data analysis and also our financial evaluation processes. Over the coming years we will extend this work to encompass both Success and Progression projects creating a holistic framework to evaluate our Access and Participation Plan. Currently, our approach is as follows:

#### *(i) Data analysis*

In the last 12 months the University’s management and business data is now provided and analysed by our newly formed Planning and Analytics Office that reports to the Registrar and Secretary. This group provides data analysis to the Widening Access Group, and the same data sets are used for E&D activities, and annual planning. In more detail, a systematic analysis of our corporate information supports the profiling and tracking of individual students and cohorts across the student life-cycle. Through this analysis we identify key areas for intervention, for example, Success(via good degree attainment) and Progression(by graduate outcomes as measured by GoR).

#### *(ii) Financial evaluation*



Financial evaluation is carried out within the Student Funding Unit that provides reports to the Widening Access Group as required. In 2019 we will continue to evaluate our provision of financial support to students, in particular our Mayflower Award. We do this currently using the OFFA recommended toolkit, a survey of recipients of financial support to evaluate how and why such support affects their academic, personal and social outcomes, and an interview of a sample of recipients of financial support to provide more detailed and in-depth understanding of the impact of financial support. This evaluation will help us to inform decisions about this provision in the future, enabling us to target support where it is most impactful upon students' academic outcomes.

#### *(iii) Access*

As noted below (Section 3.3) we work in partnership with other regional HE providers, further education providers and schools in particular through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), for which we lead the Next Steps South West consortium. A diverse range of outreach projects are currently being delivered across the consortium, which includes robust evaluation of impact. This evaluation helps in identifying best practice, and making the best use of resources for improving Access to HE.

Outside of the NCOP consortium, our commitment to evaluating our outreach activities will be reinforced in the 19/20 cycle by the introduction of an Evaluation Officer into the Student Recruitment and Admissions team to give focus to evaluation across the range of activities undertaken.

#### *(iv) Success and Progression*

For Success and Progression, evaluative work on specific projects is undertaken through the University's Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory (PedRIO), with an evaluation and dissemination plan a pre-condition for funding. For example, during the 14/15 cycle the University commissioned a piece of research on our care leavers (see Section 4.2). Subsequently, this work has provided an evaluation model which can be replicated in other projects and activities. Furthermore, we seek to involve our students as co-researchers in these evaluation activities; the University has a strong record of student participation in the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR) which reflects how evaluation and research skills are embedded within curricula, and evaluation activities sponsored by UPSU.

### **3.2 Student Engagement: Our Students as Partners**

Our commitment to promoting the student voice is embedded within the "Students as Partners" strategy, which sets out the principles through which the University and students work together to enhance academic standards and the student experience in line with the University's vision, mission and values. Within this, the University commits itself to actively seeking students' feedback regarding their experiences and to involve students in decision-making. Within the context of the University's governance around widening access and the drafting of this agreement, students have contributed through:

(i) Student representation on the University's Widening Access Group. Oversight of the University's progress under this agreement sits with the Widening Access Group, and the student representatives participated in the first discussions regarding the 2018-19 Access Agreement when the guidance was published at the end of February 2017.

(ii) Active consultation within the Students' Union. The Director of Student Services (chair of the Widening Access Group) consulted with the UPSU Executive, and representative forums and societies, to explore priorities with the Access and Participation Agreement and to gain feedback on early proposals for specific activities. In these consultations, the students emphasised:

- The importance of activities that promote progression to graduate employment, including opportunities to gain work experience through both on-campus and off-campus placement experiences. There is a need to introduce increased flexibility into models for placement and other work-based experiences to facilitate a wider range of programme-related opportunities and to support students who are unable to engage in a full-time placement for at least six months. The students

identified that the cost of re-locating to take up a placement, in particular of accommodation in large urban areas, was a barrier. The students also advised that opportunities for shadowing and mentoring were beneficial.

- The power of peer-assisted learning schemes (PALS), and the willingness of many students to contribute their time and their own experiences to supporting their peers.
- The vulnerability of students experiencing mental health challenges, with negative impact on participation in university life, academic success, and progression to graduate employment.
- The strong interest in progressing to postgraduate taught study among many students, with both lifelong learning and furthering employability cited as motivators. While the move to postgraduate loans is welcome, affordability is still a key concern.
- Mature students, BME students and LGBT+ students all highlighted particular concerns regarding their experiences to date and their career prospects following graduation. For example, mature students highlighted the challenges of balancing family responsibilities with their studies, concerns around commuting and timetabling, and the fact that relocation to take up graduate employment for many is not a viable option. LGBT+ students reported concerns around marginalisation, and in particular were concerned about their prospects of finding graduate employment with an organisation that welcomed diversity.

### **3.3 Education Partners**

The University has a wide range of academic partners spread across the South West who deliver University-approved higher education programmes within a further education context. This set of partnerships facilitates access to higher education opportunities for those who do not have the educational qualifications and/or who are unable to leave their locality due to work and care considerations. Many of the students studying in this HE in FE context are mature, from low participation neighbourhoods, and/or are studying on a part-time basis. Many of these colleges also deliver BTEC, Access to HE and NVQ Awards, and there are advanced plans for the further development and delivery of Higher Education Apprenticeships in partnership with the University.

The University currently enjoys a close working relationship with several local educational establishments as part of our commitment to partnership working:

- Scott Medical and Health College Studio School. Opened in September 2017, the University, working in partnership with Stoke Damerel Community College, is co-sponsoring the Scott Medical and Health College Studio School, which as it grows will offer up to 375 Years 9 to 13 places to develop vocational skills for the wider healthcare sector. It is anticipated that many of these students will progress to achieving accredited qualifications within the health and social care sector, including Higher Level Apprenticeships and degrees.
- Marine Academy Plymouth. This is a specialist all-through school in the marine environment encompassing science, engineering and sustainability education, is in an inner-city location with a persistent number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The University supports the aspirations and achievement of the pupils and families through the sharing of subject expertise and pedagogical practice, and the support and mentoring offered by student ambassadors.
- Mayflower Community Academy and Nursery. Similarly located in an area of social and economic deprivation, the relationship with the University brings access to specialist knowledge, facilities and resources, and provides placement opportunities for University of Plymouth students.

- UTC Plymouth. This University Technical College provides students age 14-19 years with a specialist education focusing on engineering that prepares them to progress to higher education, apprenticeships and technical careers. Many of the students who attend UTC Plymouth have not succeeded in traditional educational environments. A focus is on the development of practical skills, and through industry-set challenges, the integration of learning, creative thinking, and working collaboratively with others.

Raising attainment in schools and colleges within low participation areas is identified as a key element to the national strategy for increasing access to higher education. But, research evidence indicates that raising attainment within schools and colleges can be complex and can take time before interventions have a sustained impact. While applications to higher education are assessed primarily by using post-16 qualifications, attitudes towards learning and achievement are first shaped within the primary years, are heavily influenced by family, peers and the wider community, and are embedded within wider patterns of economic deprivation that result in families experiencing multiple symptoms of disadvantage.

The University's strategy for working in partnership with its schools reflects both the national evidence base for success in raising attainment and the local context within which these schools operate. Within primary settings, we work in partnership with schools to:

- Develop their workforce through the provision of CPD, with particular foci on pedagogies for teaching Maths and English, supporting pupils with special educational needs, digital technologies, and safeguarding.
- Work with school leaders, including parent governors, to develop their leadership skills, including their ability to evaluate progress and develop and implement plans for school improvement
- Through the Students' Union Volunteering programme, provide university students with opportunities to support learning activities within schools, including reading circles, homework clubs, and field trips
- Work with parents and families to help address their social and economic challenges, including information, advice and guidance for accessing lifelong learning opportunities, employability skills, online safety, and health and nutrition.
- Through projects such as the Music Academy Programme which works with target schools to deliver music teaching to enhance attainment in graded music exams, increasing access to Music degrees in Higher Education and the Maths Enrichment project which builds skills in maths knowledge and application for 9-15 years old, enabling greater performance at GCSE and A-level Maths.
- Deliver projects such as the Peninsula Pathways to the Healthcare Professions Programme, which works across a whole year to build attainment and aspiration for year groups 10-13 to access Medicine and Dentistry programmes, in conjunction with e-mentoring and work experience opportunities.

The specialisms within our partner secondary schools closely reflect the nature of the South West's economic and professional employment profile. The curricula within these schools, developed in partnership between each school and subject specialists within the University, is designed to provide students with clear career pathways through secondary school to tertiary education (including foundation degrees, apprenticeships, and professionally accredited degrees) which prepare them for employment within their chosen sector. Opportunities to access University facilities and workshops (including clinical skills, robotics, and the Coastal Ocean and Sediment Transport (COAST) labs), participate in lectures and demonstrations by experts in the field, and subject-led conferences are supplemented by opportunities for shadowing and mentoring of current students, career-relevant information advice and guidance, and summer schools supported by academic staff and trained student ambassadors. Generic to the curricula of all our partner schools is a focus on "business awareness", within which creativity, entrepreneurship, and professional conduct are developed. As above, CPD for schools' staff is available, as is support for school leaders. Student volunteers also work within our partner schools supporting extra-curricular sports and activities.

The University is working in partnership with other regional HE providers, further education providers and schools to raise aspirations and promote multiple points of access to education and training that lead to

sustainable careers. Through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), the University of Plymouth successfully bid to HEFCE to be the lead institution for the Next Steps South West consortium, covering target wards in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. This collaboration builds on the success of the former regional NNCO networks: the Devon Collaborative Outreach Network and Next Steps Cornwall. Working within the targeted remit of the NCOP initiative, this programme focuses on pupils in Years 9-13, identified as medium-high achievers, with low HE aspiration, and domiciled within nominated postcodes (HEFCE POLAR3 and Gaps Analysis). A diverse range of outreach projects are currently being confirmed, designed and delivered collaboratively by partners in the consortium, with robust evaluation of impact throughout. Across the consortium, other benefits of this complementary programme are being maximised to add momentum and efficiency to Widening Participation Access programmes. Through sharing best practice, avoiding duplication, enabling specialisation, allowing a broader representation of partners at a larger number of events, and pooling resources, partners are able to make best use of resources for targeting under-represented groups in HE.

The funding for these projects will continue to sit outside the University's Access Agreement, but their presence within the university directly sits within the broad access and outreach "offer" and contributes to a rich evidence base that can be used to track student access, success and progression throughout the life-cycle. The Next Steps South West provision for target groups complements the broader outreach work to promote higher education to the wider range of WP target groups such as other age groups or those with other indicators of disadvantage.

The University of Plymouth will collaborate with nineteen other universities to fund, maintain, develop and promote the free to use, careers and progression planning websites managed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium (WVPC) based at the University of Bath:

- Lifepilot: engaging and supporting mature and part-time students in progressing to higher level study ([www.life-pilot.co.uk](http://www.life-pilot.co.uk));
- Careerpilot: an award-winning website providing one-stop inspirational, impartial pathway and progression information to 13-19 year olds, parents and advisers in the South of England region. The site was used by 420,000+ users in 2017-18. ([www.careerpilot.org.uk](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk));
- HE Skills Map supports post 16 students and adults in recognising skills and experiences relevant to progression to HE.

#### **4. Access, Student Success and Progression Measures**

In line with previous Access Agreements and with the guidance and reporting mechanisms for the Office for Students, there are five strands to the University's planned expenditure:

- Outreach
- Individual financial support (including bursaries and scholarships)
- Retention and student success
- Progression to graduate employment and further study
- Research, monitoring and evaluation

These are embedded within a cross-institutional approach, ensuring that its central student service infrastructure, working with Schools, Faculties, partners and the Students' Union, enables the delivery and evaluation of activities efficiently, effectively and with equity.

#### 4.1 Access

The University will continue with its aim of effectively embedding a widening participation approach to all outreach and recruitment activity, recognising that those from underrepresented groups are to be found in any school or college, at home or within the workplace, and of any age.

From an access perspective, the student life-cycle approach now commences much earlier and with this understanding the University will continue to build its younger years work to ensure that aspiration and attainment are part of the access strategy for widening participation. Many of the University partnerships with academies seek to deliver this “early years” approach, as does our work as part of the Children’s University network, and focused work such as STEM engagement through the SciTech Showcase and British Science Week events.

The involvement of Faculties in the University’s widening participation activity is significant. They will continue to provide or support inspirational subject-based outreach activity, some of it explicitly supporting under-representation targets such as women into computing and engineering.

The University’s current campus undergraduate enrolments are largely full-time, reflecting the challenges of timetabling part-time pathways, the weak transportation links within the South West region in the evenings in particular, and that many professionally-accredited programmes are only approved to run on a full-time basis. Proportionally more part-time undergraduate students study with our partners, and a number of our postgraduate taught programmes successfully facilitate part-time study. Our new digital learning environment combined with current reviews of timetabling and estates seeks to increase flexibility, supporting the delivery of blended and distance learning, reducing space pressures and the need for students to travel.

The Devon and Cornwall Children’s University represents an important programme within our Access strategy, supporting engagement with learning at the primary levels. A significant number of its partner schools are based within low participation neighbourhoods. A “graduation ceremony” is organised at the University each year at which the participants receive their awards, with parents, teachers and representatives from the University in attendance to celebrate their success. Evaluation to date suggests that there is a positive impact on aspiration among the children themselves and their parents. We will be focusing further evaluation activities on attainment, replicating the evaluation work undertaken of the Children’s University in Sheffield, which demonstrates a sustained positive link between participation, and achievement and academic performance<sup>5</sup>.

The University of Plymouth is a member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) membership service which assists Higher Education Institutions in England to target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activity. By working collaboratively, we can critically reflect on our approach to outreach data management which in turn helps us to continuously improve the way we monitor, evaluate and build evidence of impact.

The University has adopted the HEAT database. It has been used effectively to analyse applicant data for 2018 year of entry. At the 2018 Applicant Days held in January, February and March 2,015 undergraduate applicants attended. 31.9% (672 applicants) were identified as POLAR3 quintile 1 and 2. The Indices of Deprivation (ID) provide a relative national ranking according to small area geography (Lower Super Output Areas - LSOAs) levels of deprivation. The LSOA ranks the region as one the most deprived, this represented 16.5% of applicants that attended the events.

Travel bursaries were offered to applicants outside of the South West region to encourage participation to higher education. 459 applicants took advantage of the bursary. The bursary excluded applicants from TR, PL, EX, TA, TQ postal codes to encourage out of the south region applicants to attend the events by financially supporting travel costs and reducing barriers to progress to higher education. Analysis of the data through HEAT indicates that 30% of applicants outside of the southwest region are from a POLAR4 1 or 2-quintile area in the

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<sup>5</sup> Hamshaw, Katie (2016). *Sheffield Children’s University: Participation and Performance Analysis: Evidencing the Impact of Out-of-School Learning Accredited and Celebrated by Children’s University in Sheffield*. Available from <http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/cu>.

UK. 9% of these students came from a National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) consortium network in the UK.

#### **4.2 Retention and Student Success**

The University continues to acknowledge the importance of academic support and intervention in ensuring success across its student population.

Bridging the gap between the academic and the pastoral, the PALS scheme (peer assisted learning), which trains current students to support the learning of students in lower years of the same programme, continues to be well received, with the programme now expanded to include subject areas and student cohorts across the institution.

The Faculties hold the main responsibility for all students' academic programmes and their learning and, in association with relevant support services, encourage retention and academic achievement. Primary academic responsibility for the provision of pastoral care and support rests with the personal tutor. It is a University requirement that every student is allocated a personal tutor, and it is an expectation that most academic staff will be personal tutors as part of their normal duties. The University's Personal Tutoring Policy sets out minimum requirements for personal tutoring, including at least 3 face-to-face meetings with each personal tutee within the academic year.

Personal tutors are supported both by the programme leader, who has primary operational responsibility for the organisation of the academic programme, the Associate Head of School for Teaching and Learning, who provides operational leadership within the School, and the School Senior Personal Tutor, who oversees personal tutoring activities. A student will have considerable contact with his/her programme leader, particularly where the student has challenging personal circumstances that require support above and beyond what the personal tutor is able to give.

The University continues to focus on the enhancement of its personal tutoring provision; this will be a key focus in the refreshed Education and Student Experience Strategy as it emerges over the coming months. Key foci include:

- Providing support for students that is consistent across the institution while reflecting the local academic context and related professional and employability considerations.
- The changing policy context, including revisions to the Disabled Students Allowance, and the introduction of the Prevent duty.
- The documented increase in students experiencing mental health challenges
- The need to support students who are victimised as a result of incidents of hate, sexual misconduct, and aggression and abuse, including incidents occurring within social media

Alongside the implementation of a "causes for concern" framework, which will give personal tutors clear referral and support lines to specialist services, enhanced guidance and support for personal tutors and other colleagues (including those within the Students' Union) who have incidents disclosed to them by students are being developed. Building on the successful student-led SHINE resources promoting positive mental health and wellbeing<sup>6</sup>, self-help resources and enhanced information about community resources and services are being developed. The University is also working with Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to establish a third party crime and incident reporting centre on campus.

Provision through Student Services includes:

- Counselling and mental health support. Since 2015-16 the University has appointed three mental health specialists and a qualified social worker to work with students and with colleagues to both support students experiencing mental ill-health but also to promote healthy behaviours.

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/services/learning-gateway/shine>

- Disability Services. As well as providing support to individual students, Disability Services also works with academic staff to ensure that “reasonable adjustments” are put in to place that facilitate student success, and increasingly advise on the development of inclusive assessment. This work sits alongside that of Teaching and Learning Support providing pedagogical guidance, promoting inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practice.
- Learning Development. The Service provides a range of supports including 1:1 coaching sessions, workshops for students covering a range of learning skills, and supports the Writing Café (literacy, academic and creative writing), SUM:UP (numeracy and statistical skills) and works alongside the Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS). There is bespoke PALS support available for mature students who come to the University with an Access to HE qualification.
- Employability and Careers. The Careers and Employability Service (CES) is increasingly providing targeted support for students across the life-cycle, including bespoke support for students with disabilities seeking inclusive placements and career opportunities. The CES also coordinates the provision of mentor support for BME students that request it, and is working with Academic Partnerships to develop a bespoke programme of activities for students who have progressed from an HE in FE partner to “top up” to degree level. Many of the students are from low participation backgrounds and less likely for a variety of reasons to leave the region to seek graduate employment opportunities.

Student Services also provides advice and support to professional colleagues working with students within our partner institution universities. Electronic resources are also accessible by students enrolled at our partner colleges, providing support for both success (e.g. through the development of digital literacy skills and the provision of resources promoting resilience and wellbeing) and progression (e.g. through guidance on interview skills).

In addition, Complaints, Appeals and Conduct, together with the Chaplaincy service, provide support focussing on the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes working with students who have been victims of incidents of hate, sexual misconduct and violent assault. While this support does not concentrate exclusively on activities for widening participation target groups, evidence suggests students from some target groups are more likely to be victimised. A sustained programme of work undertaken in partnership with UPSU and Residence Life includes campaigns promoting diversity, inclusion and community coherence, training for staff and for student leaders in victim support and intervention, and a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and bullying in all of its forms. Based on specific feedback from the UPSU BME and LGBT+ forums, a workshop focusing on workplace rights and supporting diversity in the workplace has been developed by Careers and Employability and UPSU, extending that promotional activity into progression to graduate employment and seeking to address some of the structural disadvantages that exist within the workplace.

An extension to this partnership working model involves developing student resilience and wellbeing and its evidenced positive impact on retention and attainment through a programme of work focusing on inclusive opportunities for sport and exercise, social activity and volunteering, and accessing “green space”. Students engaging with Disability Services and Counselling and Wellbeing, along with those approaching the front-desk Student Gateway expressing concerns about “coping” will have recommended to them opportunities to engage with the programme of sport and exercise activities put on by UPSU. We can also promote student wellbeing through engagement with the environment via our partners at Dartmoor Zoo, Schumacher College, and the Eden Project, including workshops and volunteering opportunities.

During the 14-15 cycle the University commissioned a piece of research entitled ‘Investigating the Experience of Care Leavers at Plymouth University’<sup>7</sup>. This excellent and insightful piece of work demonstrates the University’s commitment to Care Leavers as part of its widening participation strategy. It has been used to support and guide activities related to ensuring access, success and progression of care leavers at Plymouth, and also provides a model for evaluation which can be replicated in other projects and activities. This holistic support

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<sup>7</sup> [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/3/3293/FINAL\\_Report\\_Care\\_Leavers\\_Research\\_2\\_.pdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/3/3293/FINAL_Report_Care_Leavers_Research_2_.pdf) - Cotton, Kneale and Nash, October 2014

model is effective in its ability to coordinate support in response to the complex needs of care leavers across the student life-cycle, beginning with application, pre-entry and induction support, following through to academic and social support, and a programme of skills development, mentoring and work experience to enhance career opportunities.

The University is continuing to monitor non-completion rates across target groups, including young students from low participation neighbourhoods. We routinely survey students who withdraw (not including those who withdraw due to failure) from the University regarding their reasons. The most frequently occurring response is “personal reasons”; when this is unpicked, such issues as transportation, care responsibilities and other family-related pressures, and poor health. For students within health and social care programmes, the first placement represents a key decision point regarding continuation. Financial pressures, including the need to work also feature. Reviews of patterns of engagement including attendance, use of the digital learning environment and the library, and accessing support through personal tutors, Learning Development and Careers and Employability suggest a correlation between low engagement and academic failure. Research undertaken both at the University and nationally emphasises the importance of “engagement” broadly defined, including engagement with co-curricular opportunities and Students’ Union activities. Participation in the life of a university community is a key positive indicator for success.

Feedback from students who communicate, work, or have care responsibilities highlights the University’s teaching timetable as a source of frustration. In addition to developing digital delivery of learning as a means for flexible provision, a project is focused on rationalising the timetable to ensure stability from week to week, to reduce the number of days within a week that a student is required to attend, and to publish much earlier the timetable for the following academic year. It is anticipated that improvement will be experienced for September 2018, with full impact for September 2019.

#### **4.3 Progression**

To ensure effective preparation for progression the University will continue to have an enhanced focus on employability to enable students to access the range of career opportunities, including postgraduate study, that their more advantaged peers could expect and that society and the economy requires.

The rebalancing of funding proposed in this Access and Participation Plan will support a significant growth in work within the University’s Careers and Employability Service to support the progression of underrepresented groups to take up placement and work-based learning opportunities and to support higher levels of progression into employment and/or postgraduate study. Academic programmes explicitly embed employability development within the curriculum, including invited speakers from industry, the use of live case studies and authentic assessment; and opportunities for placements, internships and shadowing. This approach is complemented by wider co-curricular opportunities provided by the Students’ Union, for volunteering, involvement in student sports and societies and through the Student Jobs part time jobs service. Based on the feedback from students and from analysis of GoR and other data sources and reports, we will be targeting the broadening of “work experience” initiatives on and off campus, in particular targeting students with little or no work experience and students who are drawn from groups (e.g. students with disabilities, BME students) who are known to be disadvantaged within the labour market, regardless of their degree subject or outcome. A programme of activities designed specifically to promote professional postgraduate skills has also been introduced.

Other initiatives include:

- An online “career readiness profiling tool” at enrolment that will identify those that need help the most and will target an appropriate offer of support to students. This was introduced within the September 2016 induction period, and starting with the February 2017 intake of nursing students, is now a requirement of the enrolment process. This digital support was extended to include online self-assessment, profiling and planning tools, starting in September 2017. Academic Support Technology and Innovation, working with JISC, is leading on the development of learning analytics, which will bring together these data and tools with academic profiling and engagement data.



- Targeted skills development sessions focussing on career planning, skills development for employability and managing digital footprints is complemented by the delivery of business challenges, enterprise mentoring and networking events.
- Targeted and funded national and international alumni networking and mentoring opportunities have been introduced alongside a redeveloped information, advice and guidance provision to support those at university while the graduate internship scheme will be extended to enhance pre- employment and progression opportunities.
- A co-curricular offer has been developed that includes access to a range of learning resources which enhance employability, including both University-led resources focusing on such areas as privacy, data protection and freedom of information and unconscious bias, and through institutional subscriptions to Lynda.com.
- Workshops, coaching and mentoring for students in target groups who are considering undertaking postgraduate study, including research degrees.

#### **4.4 University Programme of Activities and Events**

The University supports its widening participation agenda through a series of activities and events that are aimed at all widening participation students, or in some instances on specific targeted groups.

Examples of these are listed in Table 3 but there is also a suite of activities which aim to have an impact across the breadth of the widening participation target groups. These include:

- Student Shadowing
- Subject specific Taster days
- Careers and Employability advice and support for schools and colleges and for individuals looking to return to study
- Facilitated groups for students, e.g. lone carers, students with autism
- Provision of interactive digital resources focused on wellbeing, study and career planning, and financial management
- British Science Week, Science and Technology showcase, Health and Arts showcases and the ESRC Festival of Social Science
- Attendance at Parents' Evenings & HE Fairs
- Focused talks and interactive sessions on: Applying through UCAS, Fees & Funding, The benefits of/choosing a University and Student Life.

**Table 3. Illustrative sample of Access, Success and Progression activities**

	Access	Success (Retention and Good Degrees)	Progression (GoR)
<b>Low participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)</b>	Experiential learning days for target schools and populations	Personal tutoring	Online career readiness profiling tool
	Financial support for applicants to Applicant Days from POLAR3 Q1 geographically targeted areas.	Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS)	Targeted skills development sessions including delivery of business challenges, enterprise mentoring and networking events
	“So You Want to...” age-specific interactive guidance, setting out pathways into specific careers	Equality, Diversity and inclusion work through the Chaplaincy	Targeted and funded national and international alumni networking and mentoring opportunities
	Scitech showcase and British Science week activities with particular focus of girls into STEM	Financial support funds whilst at University	Access to a range of learning resources to enhance employability
	Women into computing and engineering tasters		Mentor support
	Access to a range of bursaries to support financial costs of going to University and financial support for applicants to attend Applicant Days from POLAR3 Q1 geographically targeted areas.	Counselling and mental health support	Postgraduate Hub and Careers and Employability Hub to give greater access to information, advice and guidance for those progressing on into PG study or employment
	Working alongside NCOP to encourage attainment and aspiration and enable access into HE from target schools in LPNs		
<b>BME students</b>	Regional outreach and marketing focused on BME groups	Personal tutoring	Mentor support for BME students by successful BME employers and researchers
		Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS)	Targeted work experience opportunities
	IT courses delivered with the Racial Equality Council	Equality, Diversity and inclusion work through the Chaplaincy	Postgraduate Hub and Careers and Employability Hub to give greater access to information, advice and guidance for those progressing on into PG study or employment
		Counselling and mental health support	Workshop on workplace rights and diversity in the workplace
			Access to a range of learning resources to enhance employability
<b>Care Leavers</b>		Personal tutoring	

	Application and pre-entry and induction support		Skills development, mentoring and work experience
	Adoption of the Standalone Pledge by the University to encourage and support estranged students	Academic and social support	Postgraduate Hub and Careers and Employability Hub to give greater access to information, advice and guidance for those progressing on into PG study or employment
	Access to a range of bursaries to support financial costs of going to University	Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS)	Targeted work experience opportunities
		Financial support funds whilst at University	Access to a range of learning resources to enhance employability
<b>Disabled students</b>	Provision of extensive Disability Service in the University		Targeted work experience opportunities
	Supported theatre project for people with experience of mental health difficulties	Inclusive opportunities for sport and exercise, social activity and volunteering with UPSU	Access to a range of learning resources to enhance employability
		Equality, Diversity and inclusion work through the Chaplaincy	
	Targeted advertising and advertorials in Disability publications	Personal tutoring	Bespoke mentoring and coaching for employability
		Counselling and mental health support	
		Peer assisted learning for empowerment for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties	Postgraduate Hub and Careers and Employability Hub to give greater access to information, advice and guidance for those progressing on into PG study or employment
		Financial support funds whilst at University	Workshop on workplace rights and diversity in the workplace
<b>Mature students</b>	Information, advice and guidance for accessing lifelong learning opportunities, employability skills and return to study	Personal tutoring	Skills development, mentoring and work experience
	Financial support for applicants to attend Applicant Days from POLAR3 Q1 geographically targeted areas.	Bespoke Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS)	Postgraduate Hub and Careers and Employability Hub to give greater access to information, advice and guidance for those progressing on into PG study or employment
	Women into computing and engineering tasters	Financial support funds whilst at University	Access to a range of learning resources to enhance employability
	Talks on Funding for mature students	Counselling and mental health support	

#### 4.5 Awards and Bursaries

The University offers the following programme of awards and bursaries which is published on the University website: [www.plymouth.ac.uk/alumni-friends/alumni/get-involved/awards-and-scholarships](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/alumni-friends/alumni/get-involved/awards-and-scholarships). The webpage also contains information on eligibility and application processes for accessing financial support.

The Mayflower Award	<p>The University has made available to students who are entering into their first year of study on their first course, are identified as being domiciled in England and whose household income is below £25,000.</p> <p>The Mayflower Award is broken down into two tiers; the Higher Rate and the Lower Rate;</p> <p>The Higher Rate will be paid to qualifying students whose household income is below £16,000, and the Lower Rate will be paid to qualifying students whose household income is between £16,001 and £25,000.</p> <p>The Mayflower Award is payable only in the first year of study and will not be repeated in subsequent years.</p> <p>There is no application process for this award.</p> <p>All recipients will be automatically identified from University and Student Finance England systems, with those who had their full SFE funding approved by the beginning of November and who meet the other required criteria being eligible for the award. If funding had not been approved by this date, no award can be made.</p>
Summer Support Fund	<p>The Summer Support Fund can provide basic assistance to students who are unable to work during the summer period. Non-final year students are expected to financially support themselves during the summer. However, the following students are eligible to apply to the Summer Support Fund:</p> <p>Students with dependants under the age of 14 and who have applied for all benefit entitlements.</p> <p>Students who are ill or have a disability and are therefore unable to undertake work, and for whom other benefits are not available.</p> <p>Students who are the primary carer of a disabled or seriously ill person.</p> <p>Students on an integral (not voluntary) placement throughout the summer vacation and who have no other income source once your Maintenance Loan has been exhausted.</p> <p>Students who are unexpectedly required to resubmit elements of their course either in or out of attendance across the summer which prevents them from seeking work.</p> <p>Care Leavers/Estranged Students.</p> <p>To apply for the fund, students in one of the above categories must be full-time home undergraduates who have paid all tuition fees in full and are in receipt of the full entitlement of Maintenance Loan. Postgraduates will be expected to have made realistic provision for their studies and the cost of living throughout the summer period.</p>

Financial Support Fund	This fund provides discretionary financial assistance to help students access and remain in Higher Education, particularly if s/he needs financial help to meet extra costs that cannot be met from other sources of support. The fund can help to alleviate unexpected financial hardship. The University particularly encourages students who may be considering leaving Higher Education because of financial problems to apply.
“What Just Happened” Fund	The “What Just Happened” Fund provides help for a student and his/her family if s/he is receiving emergency hospital care. The fund provides limited financial support for a student– and/or close family or friends – for costs incurred at short notice if a student unexpectedly requires treatment for a serious injury or illness while studying at the University. The financial help available can be used towards the cost of travel, accommodation, and food and drink during the stay.
Helena Kennedy Foundation Award	The Helena Kennedy Foundation offers support to disadvantaged students who have overcome significant barriers in order to continue with their education at university level. Each year, the Helena Kennedy Foundation invites FE Colleges, Adult Education Centres and Sixth Form Colleges to nominate a student to receive a £1,500 bursary sponsored by the University of Plymouth, to support their progression to higher education. The Foundation administers the Award directly.
Unite Foundation Scholarship	<p>The Unite Foundation scholarship offers students the full cost of accommodation in a Plymouth Unite student property plus a cash scholarship of £3,000 per year, for the duration of their course. These scholarships are administered by the University of Plymouth for its own students.</p> <p>Plymouth will be offering five Unite Foundation scholarships each year to those successfully applying for entry to full-time undergraduate courses. Accommodation will be covered for a full 52 weeks each year during the period of the award.</p> <p>Applications are open to students who meet the eligibility criteria listed. However, these scholarships are intended to support access to higher education for students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have previously been in the care of, or accommodated by, a local authority for three months or more (and have not been adopted)</li> <li>are irreconcilably estranged from their parents (as assessed by Student Finance England or Student Finance Wales); or</li> <li>have been residing, for three months or more, in Foyer premises operated by The Foyer Foundation or similar residential provision for young homeless adults in the UK</li> </ul>
The Reid Access Bursary	<p>This bursary can provide financial support for up to three civil and coastal engineering undergraduate students studying at Plymouth. The bursary has been provided to the University by a Trust, the Guildford Academic Associates, and aims to support the advancement of education in the science and technology areas.</p> <p>To be eligible for this award a student will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be a civil and coastal engineering student at the University of Plymouth</li> </ul>

	<p>be preferably female  have a household income below £25k  be the first family member to attend university.</p>
Roland Levinsky Memorial Fund	<p>The Roland Levinsky Memorial Fund offers current students who have completed their first year at University the opportunity to enhance their University experience through extra-curricular activities, despite any financial restrictions they may be experiencing. Awards of up to £1,500 enable a student to take part in activities which could include anything from participation in a sports club or society, to undertaking a volunteering project overseas.</p> <p>Awards will often be granted to individuals who demonstrate the extent to which the award will benefit not only themselves, but also the wider community. The type of projects that have previously been supported include: Creative projects, Field trips and internships, Research expeditions, Sports and societies, Travel, Volunteering and charity work.</p>
The Tamar Engineering Project	<p>Available to high achievers whose background or personal circumstances may prevent studying at a higher education level, successful applicants will receive</p> <p>£3,000 towards living costs  A £1,500 fee waiver  One-to-one mentoring with an industry expert</p> <p>for each year of study. Applicants must have a good academic achievement record, be a UK or EU resident, not already enrolled on a University programme that progresses to an engineering course, and have accepted a firm offer from the University for an identified engineering course. Applicants must also meet at least one of the below selection criteria:</p> <p>Have a family income of less than £25,000 per annum  Live in a postcode area identified as a low participation neighbourhood (ie POLAR3 quintiles 1 or 2)  Be a looked after young person or a care leaver  An unpaid carer of a person with a disability, long-term illness, mental health condition or addiction  Irreconcilably estranged from parents</p> <p>Up to 5 awards are available.</p>

## 5. Investment for 2019-20

During 2019/20 our plan is to commit £8,900,000 (21.3%) of our higher fee income to Access and Participation activities and support. This represents a £200,000 increase on our commitment in the 2018/19 Access Agreement.

The table below presents this commitment across the 4 strands of Access and Participation.

	<b>2019/20 £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 %</b>
<b>Forecast Higher Fee Income</b>	<b>£41,787</b>	
Access Investment	£2,200	5.3%
Success Investment	£3,600	8.6%
Progression Investment	£1,350	3.2%
Financial Support Investment	£1,750	4.2%
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>21.3%</b>

We intend to maintain this commitment through future years, adjusting where appropriate to ensure investment remains focussed, appropriate and effective.

	<b>2020/21 £'000</b>	<b>2020/21 %</b>	<b>2021/22 £'000</b>	<b>2021/22 %</b>	<b>2022/23 £'000</b>	<b>2022/23 %</b>
<b>Forecast Higher Fee Income</b>	<b>£42,885</b>		<b>£42,924</b>		<b>£42,924</b>	
Access Investment	£2,300	5.4%	£2,300	5.4%	£2,300	5.4%
Success Investment	£3,750	8.7%	£3,750	8.7%	£3,750	8.7%
Progression Investment	£1,500	3.5%	£1,500	3.5%	£1,500	3.5%
Financial Support Investment	£1,600	3.7%	£1,580	3.7%	£1,580	3.7%
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>£9,150</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>£9,130</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>£9,130</b>	<b>21.3%</b>

In addition to this investment, we will continue to invest funds received in respect of Student Opportunity from the Office for Students, which in 2019/20 is forecast to be in the region of £2.6m, given planned reductions in funding this area. We also play a lead role in the National Collaboration for Outreach Project (NCOP) and intend to continue the investment in this area.

## **6. Provision of Information to Students**

The University makes available its latest, approved Access Agreement on its website, via a link to the OFFA website, to enable it to be accessed by current and prospective students. The 18/19 agreement can be found at <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us> in the section, 'Further Useful Information...', at the bottom of the page.

In line with the Competition and Markets Authority guidance and our obligations under the QAA Code of Practice, the University is committed to publishing clear and accessible information regarding its fees and financial support for prospective and existing students. This information is provided in a range of formats, through recruitment publications and on the website [www.plymouth.ac.uk/study/fees/tuition-fees](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/study/fees/tuition-fees). As part of the commitment to giving clarity to fees and funding information, the following statement is provided both in publications and on the website:

*Please note that fees are reviewed on an annual basis. Fees and the conditions that apply to them shown in the prospectus are correct at the time of going to print. Fees shown on the web are the most up to date. Continuing students may receive an annual increase in line with an appropriate inflationary measure (within the appropriate maximum fee cap).*

Information regarding fees is also detailed in the University's offer letters for admissions, with applicants also being directed to the University's website for the most up to date information.

Prospective students can also access support and guidance on fees and funding from the Student Funding team, who offer a dedicated service as part of the Student Services team.

\* course type not listed.

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

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

Please note that fees are reviewed on an annual basis. Fees and the conditions that apply to them shown in the prospectus are correct at the time of going to print. Fees shown on the web are the most up to date. Continuing students may receive an annual increase in line with an appropriate inflationary measure (within the appropriate maximum fee cap).

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		£9,250
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree	BSc Business Management & BSc Business Enterprise and Entrepreneurship	£11,100
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,350
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	British College of Osteopathy Medicine - 10000911	£9,250
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	University of Plymouth 10007801 -	£6,935
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0	University of Plymouth 10007801 -	£6,935
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other	University of Plymouth 10007801 - BSc Professional Management (Chartered Manager)	£6,000



**Table 8a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or studentbody

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	State school	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	From state schools or colleges	No	2013-14	93.8%	94%	94.5%	95%	95%	95%	93.9% For 2015-16; Maintain proportion as already exceeding benchmark
T16a_02	Student success	Socio-economic	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	All entrants	No	2013-14	5.5%	5.2%	5.0%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	7.2% in 15-16.
T16a_03	Access	Disabled	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	Based on HESA Disability code 00, 99, 98	No	2013-14	13.5%	14.4%	14.6%	14.6	14.6	14.6	15.3% for 2015-16; Already exceeded benchmark; Stabilisation of proportion of entrants with increased focus on success and progression
T16a_04	Access	Care-leavers	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	% of Undergraduate care leavers	No	2013-14	0.2%	0.45%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	Stable at 0.2% for 2015-16. This includes HESA codes 01 and 04
T16a_05	Access	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	Participation of BAME students	No	2013-14	8.5%	9.75%	10%	10%	10%	10%	8.6% for 2015-16. As reported last year, amended to reflect Home/EU only. Change in reference to BAME ("Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic") to match contemporary practice.
T16a_06	Progression	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Employability - GoR % of UK and EU leavers in professional occupation	No	2013-14	62%	65%	66%	68%	68%	68%	69.8% for 2015-16. Exceeded benchmark in 2015-16 for the first time.
T16a_07	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Young, full time, undergraduate, POLAR 3	No	2013-14	12.2%	12.8%	13%	13%	13%	13%	14.1% for 2015-16
T16a_08	Access	Mature	HESA T2a - (Mature, full-time, all undergraduate entrants)	Mature, full time undergraduate LPN, using POLAR 3	No	2013-14	10.3%	11.1%	11.3%	11.3%	11.3%	11.3%	Declining sector so reflects slow growth



**Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.**

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Socio-economic	Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	% of students attending summer schools who enrolled into the University from WP backgrounds	No	2014-15	18	25%	30%	32%	32%	32%	
T16b_02	Access	Socio-economic	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Number of applications from students engaging in shadowing scheme from WP background	No	2014-15	6	20	25	35	35	35	
T16b_03	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Increase the proportion of students applying to HE from 10 targeted regional schools with high WP populations	Yes	2014-15	303	380	410	450	450	450	
T16b_04	Student success	Socio-economic	Student support services	Number of WP students accessing the Peer Assisted Learning Support scheme	No	2016-17	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	See commentary below.
T16b_05	Student success	Socio-economic	Mission targets	Number of WP students completing placements or work based learning	No	2016-17	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	Currently no baseline data as this is the first time that this scheme will have been measured in this way
T16b_06	Student success	Socio-economic	Student support services	Number of students from WP backgrounds becoming Peer Supporters for our Student Counselling and Personal Development Service	No	2016-17	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	Measured locally within the PALS programme for the first time in 2016/17
T16b_07	Progression	Socio-economic	Management targets	Number of WP students accessing the Careers Service	No	2016-17	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	Currently no baseline data as this is the first time that this scheme will have been measured in this way
T16b_08	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Number of students from WP backgrounds participating in the Peninsula Pathways to the Healthcare Professions Programme into Medicine and Dentistry (Years 10-13)	No	2018-19	102	102	107	115	124	136	Number of participants attending
T16b_09	Access	Attainment raising	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Proportion of students attending Music Academy programme achieving 2 grades in musical tuition and 1 grade in musical theory per academic year.	No	2018-19	0	4	8	12	16	20	Currently no baseline data as this is a new scheme. This is the number of participants