Wigan and Leigh College

Access and participation plan (APP)

[2020-21 to 2024-25]

1. Assessment of performance

Wigan and Leigh College context:

Wigan & Leigh College (WLC) is a large college of further and higher education operating from two main campuses: one in Wigan and one in the neighbouring town of Leigh. The College has delivered higher education courses since 1946 and currently offers technical and professional based programmes to serve the local learning and skills needs in the areas of engineering, construction, education studies, business studies, health and social care, early years, art and design, performance, sport, science and computing. The College offers higher national certificates and diplomas (awarded by Pearson), foundation degrees, top-up bachelor degrees and a small number of postgraduate certificates and diplomas (awarded by the University of Central Lancashire, UCLan). There are over 600 students enrolled on prescribed higher education programmes.

The College makes a significant contribution to the local economy and has a critical role in supporting regional businesses and promoting engagement within local communities. The local demographic population includes a higher-than-average proportion of residents in routine, intermediate and lower-managerial occupations and as a result, the College has a strong emphasis on widening participation to help address the regional skills agenda.

From entrants in 2017-18[1] there is an equal split of full-time (including apprentices) and part-time students. 34% of the full-time courses are one year courses including top-up degrees, PGCE and Certificate in Education. 53% of entrants to full-time courses were female and female participation in full-time HE in the College has been larger than male participation for the past 5 years.

For part-time entrants the majority of students are studying engineering and construction (80%) and 87% of these entrants were male. 80% of entrants are on part-time courses lasting 2 years or less. The College has worked closely to introduce new Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Standards in engineering and construction since 2016-17. The recruitment pattern is changing in the local area and whereas a number of local employers were sponsoring their employees to undertake part-time HNC provision, this is shifting towards delivery of HNC, HND and top-up degrees within apprenticeship standards. The location of the college makes it easily accessible for large employers from a Warrington science and industry innovation area.

The College has no student accommodation and all students commute to College and of the entrants in 2018, 75.3% of full-time and 73.9% of part-time students came from Wigan Borough. This effects the demographic of entrants to the College and alongside the curriculum mix, explains some of the differences in the College HE population compared to the sector. In relation to Wigan Borough the last census took place on 27 March 2011 with the results creating a snapshot of the Borough's population. The Male to Female ratio is approximately 50:50, with an average age of 40 years. 95.0% of the local population were born in England with 98.1% having English as a first language and other languages the largest of which is Polish (0.4%). In the Borough the population is 95.5% White British; 1.3% Other White; 1.1% Asian/Asian British and 2.1% other. In terms of religion 77.8% are Christian; 0.7% Muslim 0.5% Other and 15.0% have no religion. 46.6% of the population are married; 12.9% cohabit with the opposite sex and 0.7% with the same sex; 23.5% are single and 9.0% separated/divorced. Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), Employee earnings in the UK[2]: 2018 shows median full-time weekly earnings increased 3.5% compared with 2017, to £569 and this is significantly higher than the median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees for Wigan local authority, by place of work, which is £488. Wigan is in the bottom 20% of local authorities.

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[1] College proachieve data
[2] file:///H:/OfS/ofs/access%20and%20participation%20plans/20-21/Employee%20earnings%20in%20the%20UK%202018.pdf

Sources of Evidence

The College has used the following sources of evidence to inform an analysis of performance: the OfS access and participation dataset; other quantitative data from College data sets; qualitative data from student consultation and student feedback and quantitative data from TEF4.

We have used the OfS dataset to focus on gaps that exist for different groups, based on the 5 year trends and on the most recent year of available data[3]:

a. For measures of access this is the proportion of entrants to higher education who are from different groups.

b. We used continuation or completion (for full-time courses one year or less and part-time courses two years or less). Continuation data is available for 2017-18 for full-time students who started in 2016-17, and for part-time students who started in 2015-16.

c. Attainment reflects the proportion of higher education qualifiers who were awarded first or upper second class honours degrees,

d. Progression outcomes come from responses to the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey, conducted for the final time for higher education qualifiers in academic year 2016-17.

We have referred to 'gaps' using the same methodology as OfS and a positive gap means that the first group (the more represented group in national data) has a higher value than the second (the underrepresented group in national data). In the report a positive gap mean the underrepresented group is performing worse than their peers, whatever the lifecycle stage.

There are limitations in our use of quantitative data because of the relatively small numbers of students, especially when disaggregated. For this reason we have focused solely on all undergraduates in using the OfS dataset. In addition, we have used a number of sets of data in our assessment of performance. We have used the OfS dataset[4] where this was in place, particularly for access and continuation data, as this data is publicly available. This has been supplemented by College data[5] where this enables a fuller analysis of absolute gaps and trends in provision across several years. TEF4 data[6] has been used to inform our analysis of progression and to help support the statistical significance of gaps. However the main differences between TEF4 data and the OfS dataset are as follows:

- TEF data attributes students where they are taught, Access and Participation data attributes students where they are registered.
- TEF data will include students from the rest of the EU and international students, although we do not have any international students and very few from the EU
- TEF data will aggregate the latest 3 years' worth of data to form their indicators rather than splitting them out into a five year time series as in the Access and Participation data
- The progression metric is slightly different in methodology to that in Access and Participation. The latter uses highly skilled employment or further study at a higher level for the progression indicator. In TEF the closest equivalent metric uses highly skilled employment or further study.
- TEF compares POLAR4 Q1&2 to Q3-5 (as does IMD) while Access and Participation is interested in gaps between the most and least represented groups (generally between Q1 and Q5 or Q1&2 and Q5).

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[3] file:///H:/OfS/ofs/access%20and%20participation%20plans/20-21/guidance/access-and-participation-data-resources_summary2019.pdf
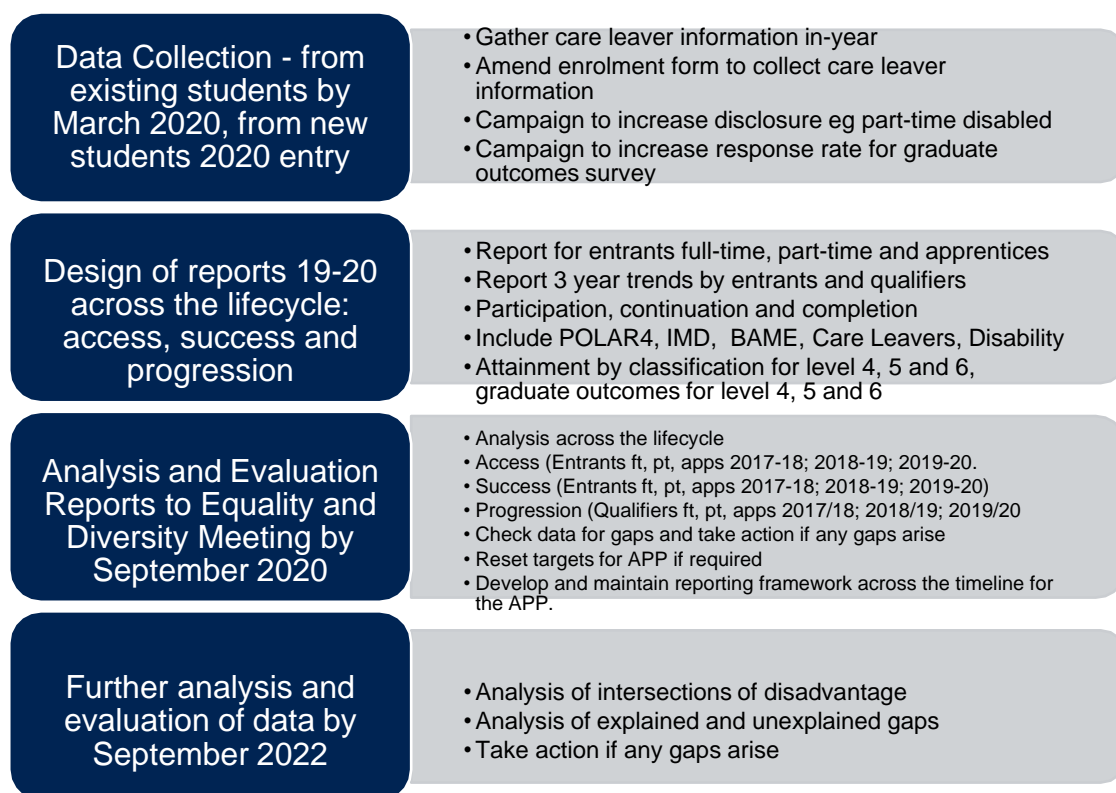
[4] Data and analysis about higher education students and providers published by the Office for Students www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/

[5] College data provided using Proachieve

[6] Metrics, data and provider submissions used in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-data/get-the-data/

In relation to attainment only 15% of our 260 qualifiers in 2017-18 completed degree qualifications, the majority study other qualifications HNC, Foundation Degree, HND, Certificate in Education and Postgraduate Certificate in Education. We have recognised that our own college data has not supported the analysis and evaluation of the OfS data. Internally we use different measures of performance and this is reflected in the software packages we use for analysis of the data. We have committed to developing our own data capabilities over the course of 2019-20 and carefully monitoring and addressing any gaps as required. We have set our timescales and the extent of the data requirements in Diagram 1 to address shortfalls across the lifecycle of the student journey.

Diagram 1 – Commitments to Improvements and Timescales in Data Collection, Reporting, Evaluation and Monitoring

Data Collection - from existing students by March 2020, from new students 2020 entry	• Gather care leaver information in-year • Amend enrolment form to collect care leaver information • Campaign to increase disclosure eg part-time disabled • Campaign to increase response rate for graduate outcomes survey
Design of reports 19-20 across the lifecycle: access, success and progression	• Report for entrants full-time, part-time and apprentices • Report 3 year trends by entrants and qualifiers • Participation, continuation and completion • Include POLAR4, IMD, BAME, Care Leavers, Disability • Attainment by classification for level 4, 5 and 6, graduate outcomes for level 4, 5 and 6
Analysis and Evaluation Reports to Equality and Diversity Meeting by September 2020	• Analysis across the lifecycle • Access (Entrants ft, pt, apps 2017-18; 2018-19; 2019-20. • Success (Entrants ft, pt, apps 2017-18; 2018-19; 2019-20) • Progression (Qualifiers ft, pt, apps 2017/18; 2018/19; 2019/20 • Check data for gaps and take action if any gaps arise • Reset targets for APP if required • Develop and maintain reporting framework across the timeline for the APP.
Further analysis and evaluation of data by September 2022	• Analysis of intersections of disadvantage • Analysis of explained and unexplained gaps • Take action if any gaps arise

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

Table 1 focuses on the gaps in the proportion of least represented 18 year olds (POLAR4 Q1) entering College and entering the sector compared to the population for full-time and part-time entrants. For full-time students entering College from 13-14 to 17-18, the proportion of 18 year olds least represented in HE has been greater than the overall population. This is different to the sector. In 2017-18 the gap in College has narrowed to -6.4 pp, but we continue to provide HE opportunities in line with our widening participation mission.

For part-time students entering College for 13-14 to 17-18, the proportion of 18 year olds least represented in HE has been lower than the overall population. This is a larger gap than in the sector, although it is not statistically significant because of the small numbers in the cohort. In 2017-18 the gap was 6.1 pp and has varied from 6.5 pp to -0.6 pp over the 5 year period shown. The lower proportion of part-time students from underrepresented groups is reflective of the students studying specialised engineering and construction courses and being mainly in skilled employment in this area. Locally in this area we are providing part-time one day delivery which is meeting employer demand in this area and the students are directed to college via their employer, giving college less influence over recruitment.

Table 1 Gaps in the proportion of least represented students in HE (Quintile 1 POLAR4) in the population compared with all HEIs and College for full-time and apprentices and for part-time, all undergraduates [shaded areas are statistically significant].

	WLC					Sector				
Full-time	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Proportion in the population (pp)	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1
Proportion in HE (pp)	33.9	34.1	34.5	33.5	24.6	10.4	11.1	11.2	11.3	11.5
Gap	-15.4	-15.6	-16.0	-15.3	-6.4	8.1	7.4	7.3	6.9	6.7
Part-time										
Proportion in HE (pp)	14.3	12.0	19.0	12.9	12.0	16.2	17.1	16.8	15.6	16.9
Gap	4.2	6.5	-0.6	5.3	6.1	2.4	1.4	1.7	2.6	1.3

Table 2 compares gaps in participation in college with the sector for the least represented (POLAR Q1) compared to the most represented (POLAR4 Q5), for entrants under 21. This is OfS data. For full-time entrants in 2017-18 to WLC there are a greater proportion of entrants from Q1 than Q5 (33.0% compared to 9.0% respectively). The gap is -21pp between sector entrants and the College in 2017-18. For Q5 in 2017-18, the gap is +21.3 pp between Sector entrants and the College ie full-time College entrants, unlike the sector, are drawn from areas of lower participation in higher education. The gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students at WLC has varied over the past 5 years between -28pp and -8pp. For part-time entrants under 21 to WLC there are a lower proportion of entrants from Q1 than Q5 (11.0 % participation compared to 17.0 % respectively in 2017-18). Whilst the gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students at WLC has fluctuated over the 5 year period it has remained between 4 to 11 pp different and this gap is bigger than the gap in the sector. This is probably due to the employed nature of our College part-time students and reflects our part-time offer that is mainly in the engineering and construction sector. For this reason we shall not be setting a target for widening participation in part-time provision.

We anticipate that there will be changes in these proportions in the future because of the inclusion of apprenticeships in the full time data set and the rise in recruitment of higher and degree apprentices in the local engineering sector from 2016-17. This means that there will potentially be a change in the proportions of full-time and part-time and the difference in Q1 and Q5 will narrow. It is important to note that this change does not mean that College has changed recruitment in terms of 'traditional' full time students in this area. Traditional full time students are more likely to come from areas of lower participation, whereas our higher and degree apprentices are already in employment and are up skilling or being recruited for training by employers. A recent OfS report[7] noted apprenticeships in general attract lower proportions of disadvantaged learners the higher the level. Consequently HE participation is one which the College will monitor very closely, continuing to work with partners in the Wigan Borough over the course of this plan and providing a curriculum that supports young people locally to access HE provision from all backgrounds.

Table 3 uses the index of multiple deprivation measure (IMD) that includes all entrants, rather than just those under 21. For full-time entrants for the past 3 years from 2015-16, the college has more entrants from Q1, the most deprived areas, and fewest from Q5, the least deprived. The gap from Q5 to Q1 has fluctuated over this period from -17.8 pp to -31.3 pp. This would be expected as full-time students are recruited from the local area. For part-time entrants over the 5 year period shown the gap from Q5 to Q1 has fluctuated from -8.7pp in 13-14 to +8.9pp in 2015-16. In 2017-18 there was a greater proportion of part-time students entered from Q5 compared to Q1 (21% compared to 18.8% respectively), part-time students being more likely to be in employment in the engineering and construction sector, as previously discussed in relation to POLAR4.

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[7] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/analysis-of-degree-apprenticeships/

Table 2. Gaps in participation for the least represented (POLAR Q1) and the most represented in HE (POLAR Q5) using OfS data on access and all young undergraduates (under 21)

| | Young participation (POLAR 4) population | | | | | | | | | |
| | WLC | | | | | Sector | | | | |
	13/14 entry	14/15 entry	15/16 entry	16/17 entry	17/18 entry	13/14 entry	14/15 entry	15/16 entry	16/17 entry	17/18 entry
Full-time										
Population	130	100	100	70	120	281925	294135	305405	308055	308645
Q1 (% participation)	29.0	35.0	31.0	29.0	33.0	11.1	11.6	11.7	11.8	12.0
Q5 (% participation)	5.0	7.0	6.0	11.0	9.0	31.0	30.5	30.4	30.4	30.3
Part-time										
Population	50	60	60	70	80	11245	11210	11280	10315	9815
Q1 (% participation)	15.0	11.0	16.0	10.0	11.0	17.0	16.6	17.2	16.9	17.5
Q5 (% participation)	20.0	22.0	20.0	21.0	17.0	20.3	21.4	20.8	20.5	20.5

Shaded boxes indicate that the value is significantly different to the overall population

Table 3 – OfS dataset showing proportions of all undergraduate entrants in the college and sector by the Index of Deprivation (IMD) IMD Q1 being most deprived and IMD Q5, least deprived

| | WLC | | | | | Sector | | | | |
	13/14 entry	14/15 entry	15/16 entry	16/17 entry	17/18 entry	13/14 entry	14/15 entry	15/16 entry	16/17 entry	17/18 entry
Full-time										
Population	200	160	165	120	180	359,620	386,620	403,720	410,715	414,400
IMD Q1 (%)	31.8	32.9	30.7	39.8	31.5	19	20.4	20.9	21.2	21.6
IMD Q2 (%)	20.7	23.0	24.5	16.9	22.1	18.8	19.6	19.7	19.9	20.0
IMD Q3 (%)	14.1	12.4	14.7	16.1	17.1	18.7	18.6	18.6	18.4	18.5
IMD Q4 (%)	17.7	15.5	17.2	18.6	19.3	20.1	19.5	19.2	19	18.9
IMD Q5 (%)	15.7	16.1	12.9	8.5	9.9	23.3	22.0	21.7	21.5	21.0
Part-time										
Population	170	160	170	195	180	93,010	85,020	83,510	73,310	68,465
IMD Q1 (%)	25.7	21.5	13.5	19.4	18.8	19.1	18.9	18.8	18.9	19.1
IMD Q2 (%)	19.9	16.5	17.1	20.9	21.5	21.0	21.4	21.3	21.3	21.3
IMD Q3 (%)	14.6	15.8	21.8	17.9	15.5	21.0	20.7	20.7	20.6	20.7
IMD Q4 (%)	22.8	25.9	25.3	23	23.2	20.1	20.4	20.3	20.4	20.4
IMD Q5 (%)	17	20.3	22.4	18.9	21	18.7	18.6	18.7	18.4	18.3

Success

Continuation

Table 4 shows the OfS dataset of gaps in continuation rates between entrants from different areas of deprivation, least deprived, Q3, 4 and 5 compared to most deprived, Q1 and 2. In the sector and in College (for the most part) the gap has been positive indicating that the least deprived are more likely to have continued on their courses than the most deprived for both full-time and part-time cohorts. There

has been variation in the gaps in College due to small numbers in the cohorts and there are no significant differences observed in the gaps in College, for this reason. When comparing IMD gaps for the least deprived quintiles (3, 4 and 5) with those from the most deprived quintiles (1 and 2) for full-time entrants the gap has fluctuated between 4.9pp in 2012-13 to -0.2pp in 2015-16, rising to 7.0pp in 2017-18. Similarly for part-time entrants the gap has fluctuated between 22.9pp in 2011-12 to 7.9pp in 2016-17. However, the gap has not closed and data from the most recent year for full-time and part-time entrants shows a 7.0pp and 7.9pp gap respectively between IMD Q3, 4 and 5 and IMD 1 and 2. The College has committed to being in a position to report on continuation data by IMD by 2020-21 and will set a target to reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap by 2030-31.

Table 4 – OfS dataset showing the gap in continuation data for the least deprived (IMD Q3, 4 and 5) and the most deprived (IMD Q1 and 2) undergraduate entrants in HE for WLC compared to the sector.

		WLC				Sector				
	12-13	**13-14**	**14-15**	**15-16**	**16-17**	**12-13**	**13-14**	**14-15**	**15-16**	**16-17**
Full-time										
Population	185	190	155	160	100	326080	355720	381385	398285	404905
Gap (pp)	4.9	4.3	0.4	-0.2	7	4.2	4.2	5.1	5.3	5.4
	11-12	**12-13**	**13-14**	**14-15**	**15-16**	**11-12**	**12-13**	**13-14**	**14-15**	**15-16**
Part-time										
Population	170	145	145	150	150	139855	92180	87835	80290	79140
Gap (pp)	22.9	-2.3	5.8	11.6	7.9	3.7	3.9	5.0	4.8	5.1

Shaded boxes indicate that the value is significantly

The data for POLAR4 with regards to continuation is less conclusive because the population is much smaller that the IMD indicator. For full-time entrants in 3 out of 5 years of data the most represented entrants were more likely to continue than the least represented the gap fluctuated and has changed from -5pp in 2015-16 and +10pp in 2016-17. For part-time entrants the data is suppressed because of the size of the cohort. In both full-time and part-time there are no significant differences in the continuation rates. The POLAR4 indicator for full-time continuation supports the IMD indicator, giving a gap in 2016-17 continuation of 10pp. However, the College is setting targets based on the IMD indicator as it includes more of our students.

Attainment

The majority of entrants to college are on sub degree programmes and therefore do not attain first class and upper second class degree awards. The college has been steadily increasing the number of top-up degree courses available since 2016-17. In 2017-18 there were 41 full-time and part-time qualifiers. 35% of those from the most deprived quintiles, Q1 and Q2, obtained first and upper second class degrees. There is no comparison with those from Q3, Q4 and Q5 as this data is suppressed due to low numbers. Based on the findings in the sector this appears low. As this is an area of potential growth, the college will set a target to increase attainment. The College does not currently have data on attainment by IMD and POLAR4 and has committed to being in a position to report on this by 2020-21 and also to monitor attainment on sub degree provision where classification is available.

Progression to employment or further study

The college receives data about progression in the destination of leavers from higher education survey. However this data is not available to analyse for either full-time or part-time entrants in relation to POLAR or IMD. OfS data was available for 2016-17. It showed a gap between IMD Q1&2 and Q3-5 of -14.4pp for full time qualifiers and 11.2pp for part time qualifiers. This has been further examined by using TEF4 data, whilst recognising the limitations of this as evidence of progression in page 2 of this plan. Table 5 shows TEF4 data and in terms of full-time entrants those from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 are doing better than quintiles 3, 4 and 5 in terms of employment and further study as well as the long term the overall core metric (Longitudinal Employment Outcomes (LEO). For part-time, where the data

is available, entrants from Q3, 4 and 5 are doing better than those from Q1 and 2. Whilst we are aware that there may be a progression gap, the lack of DLHE data by IMD is hampering our ability to set a target. Our focus will be on improving the data collection, reporting and evaluation in this area, seeking to strengthen both qualitative and quantitative evidence in this area. We will monitor this closely and explore our hypothesis that the gap is related to the subjects studied rather than the levels of disadvantage. We will use the University Centre Advantage to target interventions in relation to employability at course level, where this may lead to closing any gaps in progression.

The measure for progression is changing from measuring destinations 6 months following course completion to 15 months. We anticipate that as a consequence we will not achieve such positive outcomes because the students who usually progress into further study as a positive destination (such as a Top-up degree) will have finished this qualification and will be potentially seeking employment, rather than being in a secure post. In addition, it will be harder to keep in touch with these students to determine their destinations. Once the extent of differences between DLHE and Graduate Outcomes become clearer we may need to revisit this and set targets for 2025 onwards.

Table 5 - Teaching Excellence Framework 2018 (TEF4) – progression data comparing groups most likely to and least likely to participate in HE and also those from the most deprived and least deprived areas.

	Core metric	POLAR		National IMD	
		Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5	Q1 or Q2	Q3, Q4 or Q5
Full-time headcount: 260 (45%)					
Employment or further study	R	R	R	R	R
Highly skilled employment or further study	R	R	R	R	R
LEO sustained employment or further study	87.5	92.2	88.4	86.9	DP
LEO above median earnings or further study	34.8	35.5	31.5	35.5	DP
Part-time headcount: 320 (55%)					
Employment or further study	97.5	100	98.4	100	96.3
Highly skilled employment or further study	70.5	70	75.4	72	69.8
LEO sustained employment or further study	89.4	85.5	DP	DP	89.0
LEO above median earnings or further study	70.8	83.7	87.0	62.0	73.1

DP – data suppressed, R – data not reported

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

As discussed in the introductory section three quarters of the college higher education population is drawn from Wigan Borough, 96.8% who were white at the last census. The low numbers means that the OfS Access and Participation Data has no dataset for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) entrants to College. College data from all age groups shows entrants to either full-time courses or to part-time courses fluctuating from 7 in 2013-14 to 18 in 2016-17. In total there were 14 entrants in 2017-18, giving the percentage of BAME entrants of 3.9% in 2017-18 (excluding unknown) and this is broadly in line with the local population of Wigan Borough. With respect to the BAME entrants in the past two years the largest populations have been from mixed, Black African and Indian ethnic groups. Prior to 2016-17 the population was 10 or fewer.

We acknowledge that this is a significantly different position to that of the 18 year old population nationally, where the ethnicities of 18 year old population in 2016-17 are 84% white, 8.2% Asian, 3.6% Black, 3.2% Mixed and 1.1% other. However, the College does not recruit nationally, having no accommodation, and our mission is to serve the local community. For this reason, whilst we are currently not setting a target, we will monitor this area closely to ensure that we remain representative of our local area over the period of this plan. We will monitor access at an individual level to carefully monitor access to our courses.

Success

Continuation

As there is no OfS dataset available, TEF4 data for continuation has been used and it shows a continuation rate of 70.0 % for BAME full-time entrants (against a national benchmark of 77.8 %) compared with 86.5%

for white full-time entrants (against a national benchmark of 86.5%). No TEF4 data is available for part-time students. Whilst this continuation difference is not statistically significant due to the small numbers in the BAME cohort it represents a large gap. At a sector level white students have a higher continuation rate[8] than BAME students. For this reason continuation of BAME students will be monitored at an individual student level, intervening where there are signs that students are at risk of underachieving.

Attainment

To date there have been no BAME entrants on top-up degrees. No data is available for degree attainment; however, we will monitor closely BAME individuals progressing onto top-up degrees. In addition, we have committed to developing our reporting for qualifiers on sub degree qualifications by 2020-21 and we will ensure that individuals are monitored and supported to attain high grades.

Progression

Similarly the only dataset available to evidence progression for BAME qualifiers is the TEF4 data. Only longitudinal employment data is available showing the proportion of qualifiers earning above median earnings or in further study. On full-time courses for white students the value is 34.9% (compared to the national benchmark of 43.9%) compared with 33.3% for BAME (compared to the national benchmark of 46.7%) and for part-time white students the value is 70.7% (compared to a national benchmark of 75.0%) and for BAME the value is 72.7% (compared to a national benchmark of 72.1%). There is a gap for full-time students using the TEF4 data, the small numbers in this cohort mean that it is not significant. However, at an individual level we will monitor progression for BAME qualifiers.

1.3 Mature students

Access

Table 6 shows the OfS dataset by age on full-time and part-time courses. Mature FT entrant numbers show fluctuation, between 55 and 70, over a five year period; in 2017/18 being 60 entrants. Mature PT numbers fluctuate between 125 and 95 in the same period and in 2017/18 are 100 entrants. Compared to the sector the College has a higher proportion (5.5pp higher in 17/18) of mature students on FT and significantly lower proportion (31.8pp lower in 17/18) on PT provision. The latter reflects, as already noted, the type of provision the College offers and the employment status of the typical student on part time provision. This data is anticipated to shift in the future as the engineering part time increasingly moves to full time apprenticeships.

Table 6 – OfS dataset showing proportions of under 21 and 21 in HE for all entrants (all undergraduates) in college and the sector

	WLC					Sector				
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Full-time										
Population	200	160	165	120	180	377,055	400,315	418,475	425,310	428,740
Proportion 21 and over (%)	35.0	37.5	39.4	45.8	33.3	24.7	26.4	26.9	27.4	27.8
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Part-time										
Population	170	160	170	195	180	101765	94275	92585	82215	78190
Proportion 21 and over (%)	70.6	59.4	64.7	64.1	55.6	88.9	88.0	87.7	87.4	87.4

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[8] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/continuation-and-transfer-rates/continuation-rates/

Success

Continuation

Table 7 shows that for full-time students the gap in continuation rates between young and mature has been closing from 2012-13 until 2015-16 and then in 2016-17 a negative gap has arisen, with mature students outperforming young students. However it must be noted that this data is not statistically significant because of the small numbers. The gap in the sector has not been closing and is statistically significant. For part-time students the OfS data, in Table 7, show that the gap between young and mature entrants for continuation has remained, with young students being more likely to continue or complete their courses. Low numbers mean that gaps in continuation fluctuate year on year, which presents a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. However, it is our intention to reduce the gap between age groups for part-time students.

Table 7 – OfS dataset showing continuation rates and gaps in under 21 and 21 and over in HE for all entrants (all undergraduates) at college and in the sector.

	WLC					Sector				
	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
Full-time										
Population	190	195	155	160	115	348,660	373,050	394,877	412,855	419,661
Under 21 (%)	88.1	88.3	86.6	82.8	80.0	92.9	92.7	92.3	92.1	92.2
21 and over (%)	81.2	79.7	70.7	79.3	83.3	86.2	85.8	85.2	85.3	84.8
Gap	7.0	8.6	15.9	3.5	-3.3	6.7	6.8	7.1	6.8	7.4
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Part-time										
Population	175	145	145	145	150	150,455	102,400	96,170	89,180	87,890
Under 21 (%)	90.9	88.9	91.1	88.7	92.7	68.7	69.1	71.3	73.8	74.5
21 and over (%)	73.1	78.7	65.3	78.6	77.7	62.4	61.9	62.0	63.0	61.8
Gap	17.8	10.2	25.8	10.1	15.1	6.2	7.2	9.3	10.8	12.7

Attainment

The OfS dataset has no data for College in terms of attainment of first and upper second class degree awards due to small numbers in the cohort. College has small numbers (41 qualifiers in 2017-18) and we will monitor attainment by age as we increase our monitoring capabilities.

Progression to employment or further study

The OfS data is available for all years for part-time students and indicates that there is no gap in progression outcomes, gaps fluctuating between -8.2pp in 2012-13 and 24.5pp in 2015-16, the gap in 2016-17 now reduced to -1.6pp. However, for full-time students due to a low response rate the data is not reportable. To enable a more comprehensive comparison between full-time and part-time qualifiers TEF4 data has been used. This shows that progression outcomes for our mature students are comparable to the sector benchmarks in terms of progressing into sustained employment and further study 82.8% compared to a benchmark of 83.3 %. Our young students (under 21) are doing significantly better than the sector 90.5% compared to 86.1% for full-time students. There is a gap between the young and mature student outcomes of 7.7 pp. For part-time, outcomes into highly skilled employment or further study for young qualifiers, is 70.5% compared to a benchmark of 74.0%; and for mature qualifiers is 70.5% compared to a benchmark of 75.5%. This is surprising given that the majority of students are in skilled engineering and construction roles and we shall monitor this closely to try to understand this pattern. Whilst for part-time qualifiers there is no difference between the progression outcomes between young and mature students, for full-time qualifiers there is a gap. One possible explanation maybe that young students are more likely to progress into further study. Top-up routes are available for all level 5 courses. However, previously students have needed to travel to local universities

to top-up. This was less attractive to mature students who found it harder to balance work and family commitments. More top-up courses are now available in college and there may be a change in these outcomes. We are committed to ensuring that any suggested gaps are reduced and closed and will be monitoring this area very closely and ensuring our strategic measures address this area. This will be explored once the extent of differences between DLHE and Graduate Outcomes become clearer and we may need to revisit this and set targets as necessary.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

Overall the College is performing well compared to the comparable sector benchmarks in terms of disabled students accessing our HE, as can be seen in Table 8. For the full-time entrants the proportion of disabled students has risen from 9% in 2013-14 to 25% in 2017-18, compared with a rise of 2.7% in the sector. Increases have been seen across all disability groups. With respect to part-time students there has been an increase in the number of students declaring a disability over the same time period by 4.2 pp. However this is a lower proportion than in the sector. The lower proportion of part-time students with a disability is reflective of the students studying specialised engineering and construction courses and being mainly in skilled employment in this area. Locally in this area we are providing part-time one day delivery which is meeting employer demand in this area and the students are directed to college via their employer, giving college less influence over recruitment. For a number of students we have noted some underreporting of disability and we will work with students to address this.

Table 8 – OfS dataset showing participation by disability group in HE for all undergraduate entrants. N – none reportable

	WLC					Sector				
	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Full-time										
Population	200	160	165	120	180	377,130	400,325	418,475	425,310	428,745
Cognitive or learning difficulty	1.5	1.2	5.5	6.8	6.1	6.2	6	5.9	5.7	5.5
Mental health conditions	N	0.6	3.1	4.2	5.5	1.4	1.8	2.3	2.9	3.5
No disability	91	90.7	81	80.5	75.1	88.2	87.6	87.2	86.4	85.5
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	1.5	0.6	7.4	6.8	8.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3
Social or communication impairment	N	N	N	1.7	2.2	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8
Part-time										
Population	170	160	170	195	180	101,780	94,300	92,605	82,235	78,210
Cognitive or learning difficulty	N	0.6	2.9	4.6	4.4	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.9
Mental health conditions	N	0.6	0.6	0.5	N	1.5	1.6	2.1	2.6	3.6
No disability	95.9	94.3	94.1	91.4	91.7	89.8	88.7	87.9	87.0	85.4
Sensory, medical or physical impairment	1.2	1.3	1.2	3.6	3.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.7
Social or communication impairment	N	N	N	N	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5

Success

Continuation

The OfS dataset, in Table 9, shows that for full-time students the gap in continuation rate, in those years when data is available, indicates that students with no disability are more likely to continue than those with a disability. In 2017-18 this gap was 7 pp. The gap has fluctuated between 19pp in 2012-13 to -13.4pp in 2014-15, when those with a disability were more likely to continue than those without. For part-time students there is no data available in the OfS dataset and very small numbers in college data at college. The College will set a target to close the gap for full-time students and undertake further work with the part-time cohort, students and employers, to increase the disclosure of disability.

Table 9 – OfS dataset showing gaps in continuation in HE for all entrants (all undergraduates) with no disability and with a disability

.

	WLC					Sector				
	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
Full-time										
Number with no disability	160	175	140	125	90	303,410	329,160	346,490	359,660	362,020
Number with a disability	25	15	15	35	25	37,830	43,970	48,460	53,230	57,340
Continuation rate with no disability	88.2	84.7	79.4	82.3	83.0	91.5	91.1	90.6	90.4	90.3
Continuation rate with a disability	69.2	93.8	92.9	78.8	76.0	90.0	89.9	89.7	89.4	89.4
Gap	19	-9.1	-13.4	3.5	7.0	1.5	0.2	0.9	1.0	0.9
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Part-time										
Number with no disability	170	135	140	140	140	137,550	92,000	86,330	79,140	77,200
Number with a disability	N	N	N	N	N	12,990	10,430	9,860	10,070	10,710
Continuation rate with no disability	78.0	80.1	74.5	83.3	82.9	63.2	63.0	63.6	65.0	64.1
Continuation rate with a disability	N	N	N	N	N	60.6	59.1	58.1	58.7	58.3
Gap	N	N	N	N	N	2.6	3.9	5.5	6.3	5.8

N – none reportable

Attainment

The OfS dataset has no data for College in terms of attainment of first and upper second class degree awards due to small numbers in the cohort. Similarly little is available at college level. However, given the differences seen at sector level this is an area we will monitor closely at an individual student level.

Progression to employment or further study

Similarly the only dataset available to evidence progression for qualifiers by disability is the TEF4 data. TEF4 data shows that our disabled students are comparable to the sector benchmarks in terms of progressing into sustained employment and further study. This was 87.2% for full-time qualifiers with a disability compared to 87.6% with no disability and for part-time qualifiers 78.6% compared to 90.0%. Although this seems a large gap there are small numbers of disabled students in this cohort. We are committed to ensuring that any suggested gaps are reduced and closed and will be monitoring this area very closely and ensuring our strategic measures address this area. This will be explored once the extent of differences between DLHE and Graduate Outcomes become clearer and we may need to revisit this and set targets as required.

1.5 Care leavers

We do not currently collect data for care leavers and we cannot provide an analysis of access, success or progression of Care Leavers. This is an area where we need to improve the information collected and subsequent reporting. We do this at further education level and have engaged in some partnership work through the local NCOP, GM Higher, in the Wigan Borough. The Wigan Outreach of GM Higher has already targeted 2 outreach courses for pupils in care working with Wigan Council. In 2017-18, 9 pupils took part and in 2018-19, 8 pupils took part. The participants were in years 9, 10 and 11 and were from various schools in the Borough. We will develop this work in the future and continue to work with these groups throughout the student lifecycle. Whilst not being in a position to set a meaningful target at this early stage in this project we are aware of some of the barriers facing care leavers when making the transition to HE, in particular around low aspirations, concern about being able to afford higher education, lack of information and advice before and when applying to higher education, difficulty accessing the financial support they need and low levels of confidence to self-identify and pro-actively ask for support. The new post of HE Learning Mentor will provide at least one designated member of staff[9] to support care leavers as they transition from FE to HE. The individual will understand the barriers and challenges that care leavers face, including mental health; be able to direct care leavers to appropriate support, and to be an advocate for them throughout their time in HE. They will act as the first point of contact; provide pre-application help; provide pastoral and emotional support to care leaver students as needed, particularly in the period when they're settling in; signposting students to financial, academic support and further health services, as appropriate; and build and maintain relationships with local authority care leaving teams.

We will change the data that we collect at enrolment and application for HE courses to enable us to collect information on care leavers. This will be done for the recruitment cycle for students starting in the academic year 2020-21 and we will gather this data in-year for 2019-20 care leavers.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage and

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

From our work with students at an individual level we recognise that some students are struggling with multiple barriers to success. However, there are challenges relating to small numbers, availability of some data and the complexity of the methodology required to enable us to understand the impacts and

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[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/principles-to-guide-he-providers-on-improving-care-leavers-access-and-participation-in-he/principles-to-guide-higher-education-providers-on-improving-care-leavers-access-and-participation-in-he

draw firm conclusions on which to base future plans. We are committed to working with and monitoring the success of each individual and we will develop this area of analysis further over the period of this plan. Diagram 1 shows are commitment to developing or capabilities in this area of work by September 2022.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

We are an inclusive College with a vision:

'To be a centre of educational excellence which transforms the lives of the individuals and the communities we serve.'

As an inclusive College, working with students from all backgrounds, we aim to improve the outcomes for all of our HE students. However, we are aware that some face greater challenges than others in accessing and succeeding in higher education and consequently we will be working to monitor more closely and to close the gaps, in areas of disadvantage, where these have been identified.

We are working to develop our theories of change approach which is set out in this plan. This approach is based on:

- An assessment of performance to provide a rationale for change (section 1)

- The strategic aim or intended impact of the change (section 2.2)

- The objectives or intended outcomes of the intervention (section 2.2)

- The strategic measures or interventions/actions we will take to deliver this change (section3.1)

- The resources and inputs to achieve the strategic measures (section 3.1).

The evaluation strategy in section 3.3 is based around the development of logic models to measure the impact of the change for access, success and progression. These are at an initial stage and will be developed over the course of 2019-20, with a wider team and in line with our completion of the OfS self-assessment of evaluation tool[10].

2.1 Target groups

Based on our assessment of performance the college is targeting the following groups across the student lifecycle with either specific measures/activities and/or enhanced monitoring and evaluation.

Access	Success	Progression
Care leavers	Full-time disabled students	Disabled qualifiers
Pupils in areas of low participation	Part-time mature students	Mature qualifiers
BAME	Low socio-economic groups	BAME qualifiers
		Qualifiers from low socio-economic groups

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[10]

2.2 Aims and objectives

Access

Aim: to provide the best opportunities for HE in Wigan Borough and our objective is to collaborate effectively with local influencers to raise aspirations for those from areas of low participation in HE and care leavers to access HE across Greater Manchester.

Objectives:

A1. To work strategically with our HEI Partners in Greater Manchester, as a member of the GM Higher Network to raise the HE participation rate for learners from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2 in Greater Manchester; developing a baseline and numerical targets during 19/20 to be finalised ahead of 20/21.

A2. To work strategically with our HEI Partners in Greater Manchester, as a member of the GM Higher Network, to increase the proportion of Care Leavers from the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities who progress to HE; developing a baseline and numerical targets during 19/20 to be finalised ahead of 20/21.

A3. To maintain or further increase the College's current positive access profile from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2.

A4. To work strategically across Wigan Borough through the Wigan Association of School and College Leaders (WASCL) and Greater Manchester Higher (GMHigher) Uni Connect Partnership to improve outcomes for pupils

A5. To improve data collection, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data in relation to POLAR4, IMD, BAME, disability (disclosure part-time) and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise.

Success

Aim: to provide successful outcomes for all of our HE students and eliminate the gaps between students in disadvantaged groups by 2030-31.

Objectives:

S1. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for full-time disabled entrants by 2030-31.

S2. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for part-time mature entrants by 2030-31.

S3. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for full-time and part-time IMD Q1 and Q2 entrants by 2030-31

S4. To increase attainment rate from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 20pp in 2024-25 and by 35pp in 2030-31 for full-time and part-time qualifiers.

S5. To monitor closely and individually support our entrants to improve continuation and attainment for BAME and disabled part time, setting targets if gaps are evident.

S6. To improve data collection, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data in relation to POLAR4, IMD, disability, BAME and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise.

Low numbers mean that gaps in this area fluctuate, presenting a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. These milestones should be taken as indicators of our intention to reduce the gaps over this period.

Progression, Aim and Objectives

Aim: is to continue to facilitate successful progression routes for all of our HE students, in particular the target groups part time IMD Q1 and Q2, mature full time, BAME and disabled part time of and respond to analysis of new data sets (graduate outcomes) when available

Objectives:

P1. To monitor closely and individually support our qualifiers in particular part time IMD Q1 and Q2, mature full time, BAME and disabled part time, progressing into highly skilled employment or further study setting targets if gaps are evident.

P2. To secure high quality higher and degree apprenticeship provision with key employers to deliver sustained employment opportunities in graduate jobs.

P3. To monitor recruitment onto the higher and degree apprenticeship programmes to ensure they attract underrepresented groups and lead to positive job outcomes.

P4. To improve response rates, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data on progression in relation to POLAR4, IMD, disability, BAME and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise.

P5. Offer Higher Technical Qualifications from 2022-23, in digital and from 2024-25 extend HTQ provision to other curriculum areas, monitoring recruitment to ensure they attract underrepresented groups and lead to positive job outcomes

3.0 Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Widening participation and ensuring successful outcomes for all of our students is part of the College's strategic ambitions. Consequently our APP is a holistic strategy with access and participation embedded through our College Strategic Plan and our HE Curriculum and Student Experience Strategy.

Our College Strategic Ambitions 2018-2021 are:

1. Quality: to become an outstanding College by 2021 with:
   • Inspirational and innovative teaching, learning and training which raises attainment and the ambitions and aspirations of all our students
   • Exceptional levels of learner care, with an emphasis on good citizenship and personal development, ensuring that all students are equipped for life
   • Individual and impartial career guidance and advice programmes which inspire students to make informed choices and lead to positive, sustained outcomes for their future

2. Place: to meet the needs of Wigan Borough, Greater Manchester and surrounding areas by:
   • Maximising participation rates in education and training creating a line of sight to work and independent living
   • Working in partnership with the business community and employers to deliver a coherent curriculum offer that supports ambition, social mobility and impacts positively on productivity
   • Creating a stronger, safer and healthier local community through partnership working with Wigan Council, partner schools, employers and the voluntary sector so engagement and attainment gaps are eliminated

3. Sustainability: to safeguard the future of the College through prudent financial management enabling investment in the creation of state of the art learning environments and resources by:
   - Realising growth through the promotion of technical, academic and vocational education pathways, raising awareness of their credibility and placing the College as the regional first choice provider of technical qualification
   - Providing value for money with high levels of efficiency and effectiveness maintaining good financial health
   - Creating learning environments which respond to the latest technical and digital advances, equipping our students for a seamless transition to the world of work anddeveloping the talents needed for new opportunities

Our HE Curriculum and Student Experience Strategy is aligned with the College's overall strategic ambitions and reflecting the student cohort is closely aligned with the access and participation plan. It has a clear aim to provide an accessible curriculum to support our students in gaining and establishing successful careers.

Delivered through 3 objectives:

1. Develop and deliver a technical and professional HE curriculum in the Greater Manchester priority sectors designed to:
   a) be accessible and clearly signposted
   b) develop graduate attributes in knowledge, skills and behaviours to support employment and progression to higher study (degree, PGCE and Masters); step-off points in qualifications eg. HNC, HND, top-up degrees and professional body accreditation
   c) offer flexible delivery (full-time, part-time, day-release, on-line and blended learning) with curriculum in technical higher education and higher level and degree apprenticeships

2. Deliver inclusive teaching, learning and assessment underpinned by:
   a) Transition strategies into and through HE focused on academic development and opportunities for formative and holistic assessment to build knowledge, skills and behaviours.
   b) Scholarship
   c) Employer engagement

3. Support students to succeed and progress underpinned by:
   a) Establishing the HE Learning Community
   b) Providing high quality pastoral support and guidance;
   c) High quality careers support;
   d) Developing our University Centre Advantage offer to enhance the students' experience providing course level opportunities to facilitate successful outcomes for students.

Alignment with other strategies

Our Access & Participation Plan is closely linked to our equality and diversity work and both are intended to fulfil our key commitment of providing equality of opportunity to all, supporting the rights and freedoms of our diverse community and fostering good relations and understanding between groups. We are meeting the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) and publish a breadth of student and staff equality and diversity information[11]. Our Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) is founded upon the principle that students need to develop progressively from **dependent** to **independent** learners throughout the duration of their programme. This reflects the value placed by the College on being student-centred, on widening participation, on work-based learning and on the development of employability skills. The Strategy reflects the need to support a higher education student population which is diverse in terms of background and patterns of study and where the great majority are drawn from Wigan Borough. Programme teams can 'tailor' their specific strategy according to various module learning outcomes, designing appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods to support transition into and progression through HE levels. We are increasingly focusing on the use of technology to improve access and inclusivity, reflecting our whole institution approach and commitment to equality of opportunity. The college has nominated e-learning champions to work with the teaching teams and in close collaboration with other colleagues across the College.

[11] https://www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/about/equality-and-diversity.

Strategic measures

Our assessment of performance has identified the areas that require a change of approach to meet our strategic aims and objectives. Our strategic measures set out the main activities to achieve the required change underpinned by resources and finance to support the plan.

Whilst recognising that we have gaps to address to support disadvantaged groups across the lifecycle we are also successful in supporting widening participation enabling students to access, succeed and progress in HE because of our local HE curriculum offer and small class sizes facilitating students to gain extra support to stay on courses. The University Centre WLC was established in May 2017 providing a hub for the provision of technical higher education and professional programmes and supporting higher level skills development and education opportunities in the Borough. It supports a wide range of employer engagement activities which enhance the higher education student experience through higher level and degree apprenticeships, employability skills and work-based learning opportunities. The College is the only provider of higher education in Wigan Borough and provides local access to HE opportunities.

The curriculum offer is aligned to the Greater Manchester priority sectors of Science and Technology; Health, Social Care and Education; Business and Professional; and Creative Industries and New Media. It has a focus on technical and professional knowledge, skills and behaviours to support individuals gaining employment opportunities. In order to maintain and improve access to HE locally we are: ensuring local progression routes for our internal FE students who are typically from more disadvantaged backgrounds; delivering flexible curriculum options part-time, full-time, one day per week attendance; and designing a qualification ladder (for success and progression). To enable this we will continue to work collaboratively with UCLan to develop and expanded the number of progression routes available locally through to level 6. The priority is to enhance collaboration with UCLan and employers; and sustain and develop the recently gained Professional Body Accreditation with the Institute of Engineering and Technology for engineering degrees. This will support the growth in higher and degree apprenticeship opportunities locally. The College has invested in a Head of HE Engineering to support these developments. There is evidence to suggest that having a flexible offer and condensed timetables supports mature students in accessing and continuing in HE; in addition to recognising and supporting their need to commute to HE[12].

Access measures:

M1. Collaborate with GM Higher Wigan Hub and Outreach activity:

WLC works in partnership to raise aspirations to HE as part of Greater Manchester Higher (GMH), a OfS -funded National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). Through GMH we are committed to working collaboratively with other HEIs, Colleges delivering HE, third sector organisations and employers to raise awareness of, and encourage progression to, the full range of HE opportunities. We aim through our collaborative work to: raise the HE participation rate for learners from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2 in Greater Manchester and to Increase the proportion of Care Leavers from the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities who progress to HE and maintain or further increase the College's positive access profile from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2.

The College will sustain collaboration with GM Higher (although not at the levels provided by the NCOP funding) throughout the 5 year timescale. We have increased our investment in access activity spend from 2022-23 to continue to provide paid HE Student Ambassadors and a HE Outreach post to work with 16-18 and 19+ FE learners. This will enable a range of Outreach Activities to continue to be offered in Wigan Borough including industrial tasters and outreach events. As we expand our higher and degree apprenticeship places we will develop a 'talent' programme to support entry to these from the Wigan Borough. Specifically WLC will seek to expand the remit of our Employer apprentice recruitment and matching service to include higher level apprentices . Care leavers will have a dedicated point of contact – the HE Learning Mentor – to support them in applying for as well as remaining engaged in their HE programme.

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[12] https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/HEPI-Homeward-Bound-Defining-understanding-and-aiding-%E2%80%98commuter-students%E2%80%99-Report-11429_11_18Web.pdf

We will continue to improve our post-16 work with FE students. The college has recently introduced a careers strategy that provides a coherent two year development plan for level 3 learners, aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks. There are dedicated careers coaches who support students and their influencers to understand the choices available and encourage them to engage in activities to support their choices. Our FE students are drawn locally from Wigan Borough with high numbers of NCOP learners from lower areas of participation in HE.

Collaborating with schools, employers and third sector organisations has been identified by OfS as an effective approach within the access stage of the student lifecycle[13].
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M2. Collaborate with Schools through College Master class activity and parent workshops:

We continue to collaborate with local schools to raise attainment through WASCL. There is evidence to suggest from OfS research that Higher education providers can support schools and colleges to work towards the Gatsby benchmarks[14]– a framework of eight guidelines that define the best careers provision in schools and colleges and that this can be an effective access measure. WLC principal is Chair of the FE Careers hub, which is part of the GM Careers Hub, and is the lead for the GM College's group for all matters pertaining to Careers which reflects the College's commitment to ensuring positive destinations and outcomes for all students.

We have developed our School Taster Activities and expanded our Master class programme 'Go Beyond' to support raising attainment and aspiration in local Schools. At pre-16 this supports providing clear information, advice and guidance, course and subject taster sessions, aspiration and awareness raising sessions, transition activities to develop academic skills and pre-induction events to promote early engagement in further studies. In 2018-19 22 schools and 326 students have taken part in the college master class programme 'Go Beyond'. Master classes have taken place in: Science, Maths, Social Science, Health Professional, Media & Fine Art, Musical Theatre, Sport and the Wigan and Leigh Challenge. In 2019-20 the College is launching a more vocational version of the Master Class programme, Go Beyond – Industry, to raise aspirations in a wider range of technical skills based sectors. To develop all of this work further we have appointed a Head of Schools Partnerships.

The College will continue to work in partnership with the GMHigher Uni Connect Partnership. GM Higher has committed to the following approach with regards to attainment raising:

"Our approach to raising attainment will begin with an audit of attainment raising activity delivered by partner institutions, to ensure that GMH attainment raising work is complementary to existing work, and does not duplicate efforts. Once the audit to complete, the steering group and governance board will review the gaps in provision and consult with partners and schools on the approach to developing plans for GMH. These reviews will be written into a plan, as requested, by May 2023. In the meantime, we expect to pilot some small scale attainment raising activities using the expertise of our partner organisations who will bid into a central pot to secure funding for projects." (Peter Riley, GMHigher Uni Connect)

The College will continue to work within this overall framework. To date the GMHigher Wigan Outreach team has delivered the following attainment raising activities for schools in Wigan:

2019/20
Maths on your Doorstep – W&L College – 8 students
Maths on your Doorstep – W&L College – 8 students

These workshops are highly interactive and are targeted at learners with an identified need for additional support in Mathematics. Prior to and after the events teaching staff from the learners' institution are provided with support materials to promote sustainability of the activity.

2020/2021
English Literature Festival – W&L College – 11 students x 7 separate sessions
English Literature Festival – Deanery high School – 4 students

These workshops were developed and delivered as a result of consultation with schools and colleges who identified the specific needs of their learners with regard to enhanced attainment in English literature. They focused on 'bringing to life' the texts that learners were studying.

2021/22
Virtual Maths Club – Shevington High School – 28 students
Virtual Maths Club – Shevington High School – 32 students x 5 sessions

Similar the 'Maths on your doorstep' workshops, these on line sessions were developed as a consequence of school closure/remote learning arising from the Covid 19 pandemic. They were delivered remotely into schools and colleges and with the facilitation by school/college staff, they could be delivered simultaneously to multiple class cohorts.

Wigan schools and colleges have also accessed numerous attainment raising activities through the other GMHigher Outreach Teams facilitated by the GMHigher Wigan Hub, which is hosted by the College.

We will work with GMHigher to identify the specific attainment raising needs of GMHigher 'target' schools and colleges in the Wigan Borough and anticipate that the activities listed above will be augmented in line with the overall approach of GMHigher.

Moreover, the College in 2021-22 has started to work with schools within the Wigan Borough to offer parents with children in local high schools 6 week short courses at the College to support parents in areas such as:

- Gaining confidence to help your child with the digital world.
- Getting Started: Supporting your child with English (Key stage 4).
- Getting Started: Supporting your child with Maths (Key stage 4)

We see parental involvement as vitally important in helping children learn. The session's aid parents to help with their child's learning by being equipped to become actively involved, boost confidence, build self-esteem and raise aspirations. We remain committed to continue this work in 2023-24 and will enhance the extent of evaluation to inform further developments.

M3. Improve data collection and reporting:

The GM Higher partnership does not currently have the regional data that will enable us to set appropriate targets in these areas but are committed to developing and delivering these targets during the period of this plan. A baseline and numerical targets will be developed during 2019-20 to be finalised ahead of academic year 2020-21. The GMH network provides an opportunity to share best practice, grow the evidence base for what works and identify and reduce cold spots within our region.

Success measures:

M4. Enhanced HE Transition Activities

Teaching, learning and assessment, the curriculum, finance and part-time employment, student services, guidance and support all influence student continuation and attainment. It is the College's policy to monitor and track student achievement and progress throughout the student lifecycle so that timely interventions can result in improved success. Tutorial support and small class sizes are essential in retaining students from disadvantaged groups. Interventions can include additional learning support, intensive mentoring and the development of key academic and transferable skills.

The transition into higher education is of key importance. We aim to provide an engaging HE Learning Community and induct students effectively into this community, providing opportunities for them to learn as part of their course and to participate as part of the wider HE Learning Community. The transition

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[13] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/strategic-relationships-with-schools-and-raising-attainment/
[14] https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/understand-gatsby-benchmarks

can be more challenging for some students for example, those with additional needs or with more limited family support. Induction arrangements are central to achieving this transition successfully – providing information about academic expectations and cultures, institutional systems, welfare support, and facilitating the development of social networks, particularly for students who are not able to participate in traditional student activities. Effective transition can help to improve rates of initial retention and on-going success. The College has a planned and scheduled induction programme which involves both academic and support teams and which links to a personal tutorial curriculum. Pre-induction activities have also been delivered.

Each course team has developed a HE transition strategy providing teaching, learning and assessment plans that support students as they transition from level 3 to level 4, level 4 to level 5 and level 5 to level 6+. These have been implemented in 2017-18 to improve continuation and completion rates for all student groups. In 2018-19 these transition strategies are embedded and are being used successfully by teams to improve outcomes for students. Whilst there is some early evidence of the success of these strategies for example, attainment on top-up degrees has risen in 2018-19, as has high grades in Foundation Degrees, as yet we are unable to disaggregate the data to evaluate gaps between groups of qualifiers. This will be evaluated by September 2020, enabling us to better inform our measures going forward. We want to develop this key measure during the lifetime of this plan. We will continue to engage teaching staff in continuous professional development and mentoring to develop effective approaches to HE teaching, learning and assessment and to support differentiated approaches to learning for individual students. Having reviewed the effective practice on the OfS website two key areas to be redesigned will be transition strategies for internally progressing BTEC level 3 students[15], mature students and disabled students to support continuation on courses. Sessions will be focussed on building academic skills and mathematics. The mathematics support is in line with student feedback through the consultation process. We have also been reviewing and changing our approach to formative assessment and we will use the effective practice on collaborative learning practices to include more opportunities for students to share their work in small groups, discuss and debate[16].

M5. Tailored Personal Tutorial activities

The College is committed to delivering effective pastoral support with clear signposting to support services in College. There are personal tutorials for all HE students enabling tailored support to be provided at an individual level. We operate a student support process where students at risk of withdrawal or who are making poor academic progress are identified and appropriate support packages put in place, including identifying the most appropriate staff to deal with the issues the students are facing. This will include personal and academic support and in other cases, will include support for personal tutors in dealing with the issues. The availability of these support mechanisms has proven to enhance retention and reduce barriers to achievement. The College has an increased number of students declaring a disability and of mature students. We introduced a workshop to support the development of resilience and strong mental well-being and have well-being mentors in College to support students. The effectiveness of this will be evaluated over the course of 2019-20 and will be developed further to ensure continuous improvement, alongside the introduction of fitness to study and student engagement policies. A new post of Head of Studies is reviewing and redeveloping the personal tutorials and will take account of the effective practice on raising awareness, raising aspiration[17] before any changes are introduced to our programme design. In addition, a new HE learning mentor post will provide tailored support to disadvantaged students including BAME, part-time disabled and care leavers.

For higher and degree apprentices the College has employed HE Professional Mentors. These mentors work at the interface between the workplace mentor in employment and the academic teams, supporting apprentices and their employers throughout all stages of their learning journey. They are producing new resources to support apprentices and their mentors in the workplace.

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[15] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/addressing-barriers-to-student-success-programme/university-of-exeter/
[16] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/addressing-barriers-to-student-success-programme/nottingham-trent-university/
[17] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/addressing-barriers-to-student-success-programme/university-of-sheffield/

M6. Engagement

Engaging students in their learning is a key element of improving the outcomes for students. Creating for students a sense of 'belonging' has been identified by OfS as improving success outcomes for students[18]. The College implemented the University Centre Advantage in 2018-19 to provide activities at course and college level which aims to engage students in wider learning opportunities to support successful outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment and employment). A generic offer of HE seminars and a research symposium is open to all, and is complimented by a bespoke course offer. To support continuation and attainment of specific groups it may include specific access to resources to aid learning in and out of the classroom; enrichment activity to compliment course study eg field trips or practical activities and national and international course related trips.

The College does not provide bursaries or scholarships to disadvantaged students based on means testing. Previous evaluation of bursary support showed that it did not increase student engagement and success. We have established a small hardship fund which is prioritised to students experiencing unexpected financial hardship and supporting continuation on programme. Any student can apply for this support, however, it is prioritised to students experiencing disadvantage.

M7. Data collection and reporting:

The College does not currently have the full data that will enable us to fully monitor progress in continuation and attainment rates by underrepresented groups but are committed to developing and delivering this data during 2019-20.

Progression measures

M8 Work Placement and Careers activity

Since 2017-18, the College has invested in a FAB Futures team with the aim of securing excellent outcomes for all students and all HE students have access to impartial, Matrix accredited provision. The College provides careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) through this team and finance advisors within the College provide guidance on welfare and financial support. The college will undertake a review of the HE Careers programme and will design an Alumni programme.

The College is continuing to prepare and support the progression of all HE students but particularly the targeted groups of students by: the incorporation of work-based learning opportunities, for example live briefs and employer projects, within the course to prepare students for the world of work; the offer of employment / work placement opportunities; and the development of the higher skills necessary for post graduate progression. In line with student feedback we will introduce 'mock interviews'. Currently there are clear progression routes and employer links in place across all curriculum areas. Courses provide guest speakers and industry insights. The College has implemented the University Centre Advantage in 2018-19. This is a programme of opportunities at course and college level which aims to engage students in wider learning opportunities to support successful outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment and employment). A generic offer of HE seminars and a research symposium is open to all, and is complimented by a bespoke course offer which may include: additional vocational qualifications; personal and professional development; student professional body membership; additional course equipment; community projects, visits and guest speakers; and the opportunity for national and international course related trips. This offer can be tailored to meet the needs of a particular group, for example, part-time mature students. The University Centre Advantage programme is designed to enhance progression into employment at course level and we will be evaluating the impact of this support.

By embedding most of these course and College enhancement activities into the HE programme we ensure that financial and prior experience barriers typically faced by students from disadvantaged groups are eliminated. Exposure to a wider range of external activities and networking opportunities with employers further reduces their barriers to progression. Actively engaging students in their learning and future opportunities is a key element of improving the outcomes for students.

[18] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/continuation-and-attainment-gaps/

M9 Employer Engagement

The College has aligned our curriculum closely to technical and professional occupations, embedding professional standards where possible and developing progression routes from level 3, including from 2021 entry new T-levels. It has designed the HE Curriculum offer working with employers and our partner university to provide increased opportunities for higher and degree apprenticeships and top-up degree routes over the five years of the plan.

In the short term we will work with employers to increase the number of places on higher and degree apprenticeships. Our experience of working with engineering and construction employers on these developments so far is that they are committed to recruiting and training individuals in higher and degree levels to become professionals in the workforce, for example engineering technicians, incorporated engineers and chartered engineers. Working with employers to secure high quality apprenticeships leading to sustainable employment will lead to local people accessing high quality sustainable jobs with higher qualifications. Our targets from 2025-26 to 2030-31 will be more specifically targeted at progression of underrepresented groups made possible through the provision of these apprenticeship opportunities and the extension of our Apprentices vacancy, recruitment and matching service to include higher apprenticeships. The College has invested in both HE Professional Mentors and a new Head of HE Engineering to strengthen this programme of work.

M10 Targeted support for minority groups

The newly appointed learning mentor will be specifically targeted to support minority BAME, disabled and mature FT learners to be successful in their studies and secure positive destinations. They will coach and guide students to raise their aspirations and support them in exploring and preparing to work in identified industries or step into higher levels of education. The Learning mentor will ensure that these students participate fully in optional activities available to them and encourage participation in particularly valuable activities such as work-placements.

M11. Data collection and reporting

To improve response rates to data collection such as the Graduate Outcomes survey the College is planning to introduce an alumni programme and through activities such as inviting past students back to speak to new undergraduates and open seminar events, encourage them to remain in contact with the College. This will enable the College to raise awareness of participating in the survey through the alumni network. Internally the College will work to implement the data improvement plan set out in Diagram 1in section 1 of this report.

M12. Develop HTQs

The College is committed to deliver Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) in the form of Higher National Diplomas and Higher National Certificates from 2022-2023, within digital sector in the first instance and from 2024-2025 extend the provision to other sectors when these are available through the awarding body. As HTQs are based on the same employer developed occupational standards as apprenticeships but do not require employment as an apprentice, the specialist technical skills, knowledge and behaviours will enable students to step straight into employment or prepare for further study onto our Top Up degrees at the College. We will offer two taster sessions to be delivered internally to L3 students for each HTQ area, then monitor recruitment of underrepresented groups and once completed the qualification the destinations.

3.2 Student consultation

In devising the plan we have engaged students and further detail is given of the methodology used later in this section. Whilst we have used student views collected from across the academic year a group of students from courses across the College joined us at our HE Student Forum on 6 June 2019 to consider our APP. The student group included full-time, part-time, apprentices, young, mature, disabled, IMD Q1, male and female students drawn from different subjects across the College and covering our 4 main sector areas. A group of higher apprentices continued to feed into the plan throughout the development phase and provided feedback on the draft submission.

In summary students' feedback was that in relation to:

- Access - the College was performing well and current strategies were giving opportunities to students from a variety of disadvantaged groups to access higher education;
- Success - students valued the opportunities provided from the University Centre Advantage newly introduced this year and felt that providing a greater focus on supporting students to be retained and achieve should be a key area of focus for College. They gave examples of where part-time and mature students sometimes struggled with their maths skills and this may contribute to them leaving College;
- Progress - they responded that whilst tutors were helpful in supporting with job opportunities and progression to further study, more could be done at a College level to provide careers advice and mock interviews for graduate positions.

As a College we encourage our students to get involved in engagement activities throughout the academic year as a student representative and as an HE Student Ambassador taking part in access and participation activities such as outreach projects with schools. This has been facilitated through GM Higher and students have been trained and paid to promote HE across the region and in local NCOP schools. Our students have also been Mentors and have been involved in a specific programme for care leavers. They provide role models to level 3 students aspiring to progress to HE. We are also fortunate in having the support of a group of higher level apprentices. As part of their apprenticeship they fulfil ambassador roles representing apprenticeships, their employer and the College in promoting the benefits of higher and degree apprenticeships.

Our students are encouraged to help make a positive difference to the experience they and others have of higher education in College. We try to enable as many student groups as possible (full-time, part-time, apprentices) to share their perspective, helping us to build up a more diverse and inclusive picture of different student experiences. Our HE Student Voice Strategy encourages engagement across the academic year. In 2018-19, more students have engaged in feeding back through a variety of means than ever before. Our NSS 2019 survey had an 86% response rate compared with the national average of 76.7%, and our internal student survey had a 79% response rate.

We gather student feedback throughout the year to inform our evaluations of course, HE operations and our plans for improvement. We use a variety of tools including:

- Student representatives who are part of Staff Student Liaison Committees taking place twice per year
- HE Student Forums held twice per academic year
- Module Evaluation Questionnaires completed by students on conclusion of each module
- Annual induction and internal surveys (or the National Student Survey)
- Responses to Student Feedback summarised and fed back to students at the HE Student Forum
- Training for our Student Representatives and HE Student Ambassadors, building on GM Higher and UCLan Student Union best practice
- Student representative places on our Governing Body which is the College's key decision making body

At the final HE Student Forum on 6 June 2019 a review of key elements of APP draft submission was carried out and 8 students reviewed and contributed to the first submission on 18 June 2019. They broadly agreed with the evaluations of the data given in the Plan, whilst noting the effect on data of the small group sizes. They agreed that a key focus of the Plan should be on supporting students to stay on programme and achieve. Consequently College will prioritise measures to support retention and to enhance courses especially where this supports employability.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

The College has in place a number of tools that facilitate the collection of evidence and the evaluation of the initiatives and programmes that it undertakes in relation to access and participation. These include: regular monitoring of Key Performance Indicators by the Executive Team; course review and enhancement mechanisms including through our partnership with UCLan. In addition to data on

retention, completion and attainment a variety of information is evaluated including induction and on-programme internal surveys; external surveys – NSS and postgraduate survey and Student Voice through focus groups, staff student liaison committees and HE Student Forum.

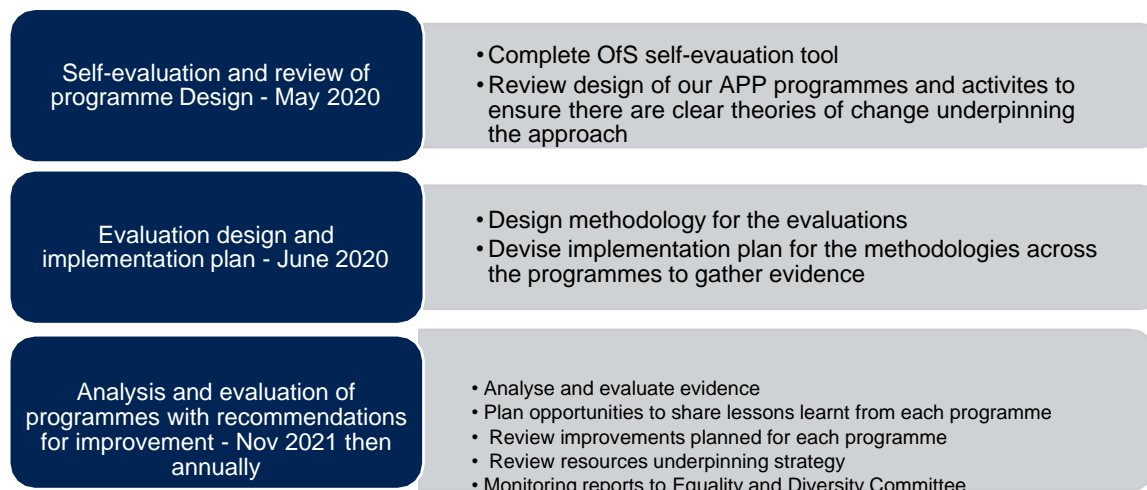All NCOP activities through the GM Wigan Hub utilise HEAT as part of the evaluation of this initiative.

In developing our APP we have identified a number of key areas to improve in terms of data collection, analysis and evaluation and these have been included in our strategic aims and objectives in relation toaccess, success and progression. Additionally, we plan to undertake a robust self-assessment of the research methodology and evaluation tools in use for our strategic measures with the intention of focusing more closely on the standards of evidence we are using to evaluate the impact of our APP. Our VP Curriculum will be responsible for this self-assessment. We will use the additional guidance provided by OfS in relation to monitoring and evaluation[19] and this will be conducted prior to the introduction of the APP from 2020-21. This will cover: the design of our access and participation programmes/activities to ensure there are clear theories of change underpinning the approach we aretaking; the design of the evaluations we are undertaking; the implementation plan of the evaluations; the analysis and evaluation of the evidence; the opportunities to share the lessons learnt from each programme and to ensure that learning is used to shape improvements; and the resources that underpin our evidence and evaluation strategy.

This will enable us to complete our annual monitoring impact report, inform our programme design for the future and to evaluate our areas of heavy investment. Sharing of good practice in monitoring and evaluation will be maintained through GM Higher, attendance at relevant workshops and through our engagement in the UCLan Partnership Forum.

We have set out logic chain diagrams below covering access, success and progression to initiate work in this area and illustrate how we intend to achieve our aims.

Diagram 2 sets out our commitment to having a fully realised evaluation strategy as a result of our assessment and how this will be further developed such that we are in a position to be evaluating ourplanned programmes from November 2021 and then annually.

Diagram 2 – Commitments to develop evaluation methodologies for strategic measure and programme activities: programme design, evaluation design and on-going analysis and monitoring

Self-evaluation and review of programme Design - May 2020	• Complete OfS self-evauation tool • Review design of our APP programmes and activites to ensure there are clear theories of change underpinning the approach
Evaluation design and implementation plan - June 2020	• Design methodology for the evaluations • Devise implementation plan for the methodologies across the programmes to gather evidence
Analysis and evaluation of programmes with recommendations for improvement - Nov 2021 then annually	• Analyse and evaluate evidence • Plan opportunities to share lessons learnt from each programme • Review improvements planned for each programme • Review resources underpinning strategy • Monitoring reports to Equality and Diversity Committee

[19] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/standards-of-evidence-and-evaluation-self-assessment-tool/evaluation-self-assessment-tool/

Access Aim: to provide the best opportunities for HE in Wigan Borough and our objective is to collaborate effectively with local influencers to raise aspirations for those from areas of low participation in HE and care leavers to access HE across Greater Manchester.	
Objectives: A1. To work strategically with our HEI Partners in Greater Manchester, as a member of the GM Higher Network to raise the HE participation rate for learners from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2 in Greater Manchester; developing a baseline and numerical targets during 19/20 to be finalised ahead of 20/21. A2. To work strategically with our HEI Partners in Greater Manchester, as a member of the GM Higher Network, to increase the proportion of Care Leavers from the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities who progress to HE; developing a baseline and numerical targets during 19/20 to be finalised ahead of 20/21. A3. To maintain or further increase the College's current positive access profile from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2. A4. To work strategically across Wigan Borough through the Wigan Association of School and College Leaders (WASCL) and Greater Manchester Higher (GMHigher) Uni Connect Partnership to improve outcomes for pupils A5. To improve data collection, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data in relation to POLAR4, IMD, BAME, disability (disclosure part-time) and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise.	**Outcomes and Measures:** **Contribution to GM Higher Wigan Hub and Outreach targets to be set in 2019-20:** Raise the HE participation rate for learners from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2 in Greater Manchester Increase the proportion of Care Leavers from the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities who progress to HE Measured by HEAT and OfS dataset

Rationale	**Inputs**	**Activities and Outputs**
Young people from underrepresented groups do not have as much access to the benefits of taking up Higher Education opportunities as their more advantaged peers.	GM Hub and outreach staff time* GM Hub and outreach non staff budget* Evaluation and research staff time School commitment and staff time for University Centre visits Subject staff time to develop and contribute to activities Staff time for collaborations (eg Council, charities, other HEI partners) School Liaison team and subject teams.	**M1. Collaborate with GM Higher Wigan Hub and Outreach activity:** Engage with 2000 individuals from 90% of target NCOP schools Engage with 1500 individual NCOP learners. Deliver 10 engagements with teachers, advisors and other professionals and 10 engagements with parents, carers and key influencers through outreach related activity, CPD or similar Deliver 6 community activities Care leavers programme delivered to 20 individuals and Learning Mentor to become designated point of contact to aid transition. **M2. Collaborate with Schools through College Master class activity and parent workshops:** Engage 20 schools and 1000 pupils in 'Go Beyond' Master classes. Engage 20 level 3 students in 'talent' programme for higher and degree apprentices. Deliver 3 parent workshops **M3. Improve data collection and reporting:** In-year data collected 2019-20 for care leavers Enrolment data collected from 2020 for care leavers Access reports provided include entrants by POLAR4 and IMD

Assumptions	**External Factors**
Pupils selected from access target groups Students willing to engage in activities *NCOP until 2021 then partial replacement to retain continuity of NCOP College and Schools in Wigan Borough	Parent/carer influence Care leavers personal circumstances Pupils prior attainment and point in education journey

Success Aim: to provide successful outcomes for all of our HE students and eliminate the gaps between students in disadvantaged groups by 2030-31.

Objectives:	Outcomes and Measures:
S1. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for full-time disabled entrants by 2030-31. S2. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for part-time mature entrants by 2030-31. S3. To reduce the gaps by 75% by 2024-25 and eliminate the gap in continuation for full-time and part-time IMD Q1 and Q2 entrants by 2030-31 S4. To increase attainment rate from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 20pp in 2024-25 and by 35pp in 2030-31 for full-time and part-time qualifiers. S5. To monitor closely and individually support our entrants to improve continuation and attainment for BAME and disabled part time, setting targets if gaps are evident. S6. To improve data collection, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data in relation to POLAR4, IMD, disability, BAME and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise.	To reduce the gap in continuation rates for part-time mature entrants by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31. To reduce the gap in continuation rates for full-time disabled entrants by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31. To increase attainment rate for qualifiers from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 20pp in 2024-25 and 35pp in 2030-31 To reduce the gap in continuation rates for full-time entrants from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31 To reduce the gap in continuation rates for part-time entrants from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 75 % in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31

Rationale	Inputs	Activities and Outputs
Students from disadvantaged groups are less likely to succeed (continue on their courses and attain higher grades) in Higher Education as their more advantaged peers. In College that is mature part-time entrants (15.1pp gap in continuation in 2015-16); disabled full time entrants (7.0 pp gap in continuation in 2016-17); IMD Q1 and Q2 qualifiers low attainment 35% in 2017-18; IMD Q1 and Q2 full time and part time entrants (7.0pp and 7.9pp gap in continuation respectively).	HE and 19+ Head of Studies and HE and 19+ Learning Mentor time HE Professional Mentor staff time Head of HE Engineering time Student Support staff time Personal tutor staff time Course Leader staff time Subject staff time Teaching and learning specialist Student support and ALS budget UC Advantage non-pay budget Evaluation and research staff time	**M4. Enhanced HE Transition Activities** 30 staff attend, CPD transition events – focussed on supporting transition into HE for level 3 and mature entrants and developing collaborative teaching and formative assessment methods Development of new subject unit outlines and assessment plans. **M5. Tailored Personal Tutorial activities** Review of Personal tutorials based on 'raising awareness, raising aspiration' model' by Head of Studies Bespoke interventions with disadvantaged students by HE Learning Mentor Training delivered for HE Professional Mentors and employer mentors including additional support awareness raising Resilience workshop delivered to 50 HE students Fitness to study and engagement policy implemented by Head of Studies. **M6. Engagement** UC Advantage used to facilitate a sense of 'belonging' to courses and HE learning community and / or provide equipment that further facilitates and supports learning **M7. Data collection and reporting:** Success reports provided include completion, continuation and attainment by POLAR4 and IMD Increased disability declarations for part-time students

Assumptions	External Factors
The continuation gaps can be explained and drivers addressed	Students personal circumstances prevent engagement

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Progression Aim: is to continue to facilitate successful progression routes for all of our HE students, in particular the target groups part time IMD Q1 and Q2, mature full time, BAME and disabled part time of and respond to analysis of new data sets (graduate outcomes) when available

Objectives:	Outcomes and Measures:
P1. To monitor closely and individually support our qualifiers in particular part time IMD Q1 and Q2, mature full time, BAME and disabled part time, progressing into highly skilled employment or further study setting targets if gaps are evident. P2. To secure high quality higher and degree apprenticeship provision with key employers to deliver sustained employment opportunities in graduate jobs. P3. To monitor recruitment onto the higher and degree apprenticeship programmes to ensure they attract underrepresented groups and lead to positive job outcomes. P4. To improve response rates, reporting and analysis by September 2020, evaluating the data on progression in relation to POLAR4, IMD, disability, BAME and care leavers, and to take action if any gaps arise. P5. Offer Higher Technical Qualifications from 2022-23 in digital and from 2024-25 extend HTQ provision to other curriculum areas, monitoring recruitment to ensure they attract underrepresented groups and lead to positive job outcomes.	**Progression data to be reviewed and targets set if appropriate:** Ensure there is no gap in the HE progression rate for learners from different backgrounds – socio economic, BAME, mature, disabled, care leavers. Measured by OfS dataset

Rationale	Inputs	Activities and Outputs
Qualifiers from disadvantaged groups are less likely to progress form their Higher Education into higher study and graduates jobs as their more advantaged peers. In College monitor closely groups of underrepresented qualifiers to ensure there are no gaps arising in outcomes.	Head of HE Engineering and HE Professional Mentor staff time Course Leaders staff time Fab Futures staff time and non-staff budget Employer staff time for visits Subject staff time to develop and contribute to activities and visits UC Advantage non-pay budget Evaluation and research staff time	**M8. Targeted work placements and careers activities at underrepresented groups:** 10% of HND full-time students engage in work placements 20 HE Student Ambassadors employed Introduce a mentor programme Review HE Careers programme Introduce Alumni support programme targeted towards underrepresented qualifiers 5% of students gain vocational awards that support them gaining employment **M9. Employer Engagement:** Establish Engineering Employer Board and create 40 new higher and degree apprentice places **M10. Targeted Support for minority groups:** Target the newly appointed HE learning mentor to support the minority BAME, disabled, care leavers and mature FT learners in raising aspiration and securing positive progression **M11. Data collection and reporting:** Improve response rates and progression reports provided include reporting by POLAR4 and IMD **M12. Develop HTQs** Develop HTQ provision in key areas 2 x taster sessions to be delivered to L3 students for each HTQ area Monitoring recruitment of underrepresented groups Monitoring destinations once completed the HTQ

Assumptions	External Factors
The progression gaps can be explained and drivers addressed	Students personal circumstances and work commitments prevent engagement

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

At a strategic level the College Executive Team regularly monitor targets in achieving plans through Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports. These feed into Governors' reports. Regular reviewing at Executive level enables immediate action to be undertaken where required. Task and finish groups canbe established to put in place actions to address issues in-year.

The Curriculum & Student Matters Committee of the Governing Body has approved the APP targets and the key measures, which build on the strategic direction set by the Governing Body. This Committee receives regular monitoring reports of progress against the achievement of KPIs.

We monitor progress against delivery through our operational reporting. Targets and milestones identified within this plan are monitored through reports to College committees including the Equality and Diversity Committee, the Teaching and Support meetings and the HE Strategic Board. The HE Student Forum has provided a vehicle for student engagement in the assessment of performance and the development of this plan. Overall responsibility for the APP and the monitoring of the plan resides with the Vice Principal Curriculum.

The detailed work to undertake the data analysis and assessment of performance in the development of our APP and in future to coordinate evaluation of the impact of work through evaluation will be performed by the Equality and Diversity Committee, which is chaired by the Head of Quality. This group includes representatives of College services responsible for the operational delivery of the activities described and Assistant Principals covering academic departments. Through this Committee we will ensure continuous improvement through evaluation and will continue to enhance our ability to monitor impacts at a more detailed level, through arrangements to track the progress of students involved in specific initiatives and overall monitoring of differentials in levels of access, retention, attainment and progression by equality characteristics and other factors known to impact on these aspects of the student lifecycle. For example we use institutional data to identify different aspects of under- representation within the access, success and progression remits to inform our strategy and actions and we report this in our HE Annual Monitoring Report, setting actions to make continuous improvements.

We will continue to engage students in the monitoring of the plan through continuing to monitor the APP through our HE Student Forum.

5   Provision of information to students

We are committed to publishing clear and accessible information to existing and prospective students on all aspects of their course and particularly the financial expectations. The College is compliant with the consumer law requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), having worked with partner awarding bodies to check processes in response to sector-wide advice published by the CMA in March 2015 and as subsequently updated. Prospective students are provided with information with respect to fees and additional costs on the website.

Applicants are provided with the following information as part of their formal offer:
- The cost per year of the programme, as well as the course duration, the total course cost and additional course costs within the offer letter which is sent to students
- The course handbook, which details the implications of continuous unauthorised absence on tuition fees, and links to the Tuition Fee Policy
- Accompanying information and conditions of offer document, which provides details regarding the payment of fees, the total amount of tuition fees payable, tuition fee team contact details and cancellation arrangements
- A model cancellation form.

Our web-pages also provide clear course information and advice to prospective students to help them to make informed decisions about their future study. We are committed to providing timely, accurate information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company so they can populate their course databases in good time to inform applicants. We will publish our approved APP prominently on our website in a way that is easily accessible to both current and prospective students.

6   Appendix

Office for Students | OfS

Provider fee information 2022-23

Provider name: Wigan and Leigh College
Provider UKPRN: 10007500

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	Top-ups	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
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	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
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	£5,000
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
HNC/HND	construction and engineering	Fee applies to continuing students only	£4,333
HNC/HND	construction and engineering	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,750
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,750
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*

| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

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

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	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	*	*	*

Provider fee information 2021-22

Provider name: Wigan and Leigh College
Provider UKPRN: 10007500

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	Top-ups	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£7,500
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
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	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
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	£5,000
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
HNC/HND	construction and engineering	Fee applies to continuing students only	£4,333
HNC/HND	construction and engineering	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£5,000
CertHE/DipHE	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,750
Postgraduate ITT	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£3,750
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*

| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

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

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	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	*	*	*

Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Wigan and Leigh College

Provider UKPRN: 10007500

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:

We do not intend to raise fees annually

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Top-ups	£7,500
Foundation degree	*	£7,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	£7,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	£7,500
Postgraduate ITT	*	£7,500
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
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	*	£5,000
Foundation degree	*	£5,000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	£5,000
HNC/HND	construction and engineering	£4,333
CertHE/DipHE	*	£3,750
Postgraduate ITT	*	£3,750
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: Wigan and Leigh College

Provider UKPRN: 10007500

Investment summary

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

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£157,000.00	£157,000.00	£199,000.00	£199,000.00	£199,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£75,000.00	£75,000.00	£100,000.00	£100,000.00	£100,000.00
Access (post-16)	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£63,000.00	£63,000.00	£63,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Access (other)	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00
Financial support (£)	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£481,292.00	£508,505.00	£526,837.00	£534,000.00	£534,000.00
Access investment	1.0%	1.0%	8.9%	8.8%	8.8%
Financial support	2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Research and evaluation	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Total investment (as %HFI)	4.4%	4.1%	12.1%	11.9%	11.9%

Office for Students

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Wigan and Leigh College

Provider UKPRN: 10007500

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)
	PTA_1												

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 gap in continuation rates for part-time mature entrants by 50% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31.	PTS_1	Mature	Percentage point difference in continuation for young and mature part-time entrants	No	The access and participation dataset	2015-16	15.1pp	15.0pp	14.0pp	11.5pp	9.0pp	7.5pp	Low numbers mean that gaps in this area fluctuate, which presents a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. These milestones should be taken as indicators of our intention to reduce the gap over this period
To reduce the gap in continuation rates for full-time disabled entrants by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31.	PTS_2	Disabled	Percentage point difference in continutation between disabled and none disabled full-time entrants.	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	7.0pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	5.0pp	3.0pp	1.8pp	Low numbers mean that gaps in this area fluctuate, which presents a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. These milestones should be taken as indicators of our intention to ensure the gap remains low.
To increase attainment rate for qualifiers from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 20pp in 2024-25 and 35pp in 2030-31	PTS_3	Socio-economic	Percentage point increase in attainment rate for qualifiers from IMD Q1 and Q2	No	Other data source	2017-18	35%	40%	45%	50%	52%	55%	Base line data taken from transparency statement 2017-18, all qualifiers, full-time and part-time.
To reduce the gap in continuation rates for full-time entrants from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31	PTS_4	Socio-economic	Percentage point difference in continuation for IMD Q3,4 and 5 compared to Q1 and 2 full-time entrants	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	7.0pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	5.0pp	3.0pp	1.8pp	Low numbers mean that gaps in this area fluctuate, which presents a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. These milestones should be taken as indicators of our intention to ensure the gap remains low.
To reduce the gap in continuation rates for part-time entrants from IMD Q1 and Q2 by 75% in 2024-25 and eliminate it by 2030-31	PTS_5	Socio-economic	Percentage point difference in continuation for IMD Q3,4 and 5 compared to Q1 and 2 part-time entrants	No	The access and participation dataset	2015-16	7.9pp	7.9pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	4.0pp	2.0pp	Low numbers mean that gaps in this area fluctuate, which presents a challenge in setting meaningful milestones. These milestones should be taken as indicators of our intention to ensure the gap remains low.

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)