

# Access and Participation Plan

2020-25

## University of Warwick

By 2030, Warwick will be regarded as one of the UK universities with the greatest impact on social mobility, through its ability to recognise, inspire, and enrich talented students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. We wish to be regarded as a beacon of excellence for our approach to social mobility and WP evidence-based research and practice nationally and internationally.

This Plan articulates our strategic ambition to enhance our approach to deliver sustained improvement across all phases of the student lifecycle in 2020 and beyond. We are currently producing a new Widening Participation Strategy, a core strand of the University's Education Strategy. We reflect on our progress and challenges to shape our priorities, approach and strategic measures, including how our investment will be deployed to sustain and develop pioneering evidence-led practice. Our recent developments outline how we have made important strides with our evaluation work and how widening participation is governed across the institution.

### **1. Assessment of current performance**

The University has made sustained and concerted progress towards the commitments and priorities outlined in previous access agreements, demonstrating progress in all annual milestones.

Through ongoing self-assessment, monitoring and evaluation processes, the University will remain cognisant of the challenges affecting current performance outcomes across the whole lifecycle. Our assessment considers groups where national data indicates there are significant sector-wide equality gaps, and takes into account where gaps are widest at an institutional level. Our approach to understanding our performance considered a range of internal and external data sources including the OfS datasets, HESA performance indicators and relevant TEF metrics, and examines trends over a period of time. We have also mapped our progress to the national Key Performance Measures (KPMs) to ensure we contextualise our strategic approach to sector and institutional priorities.

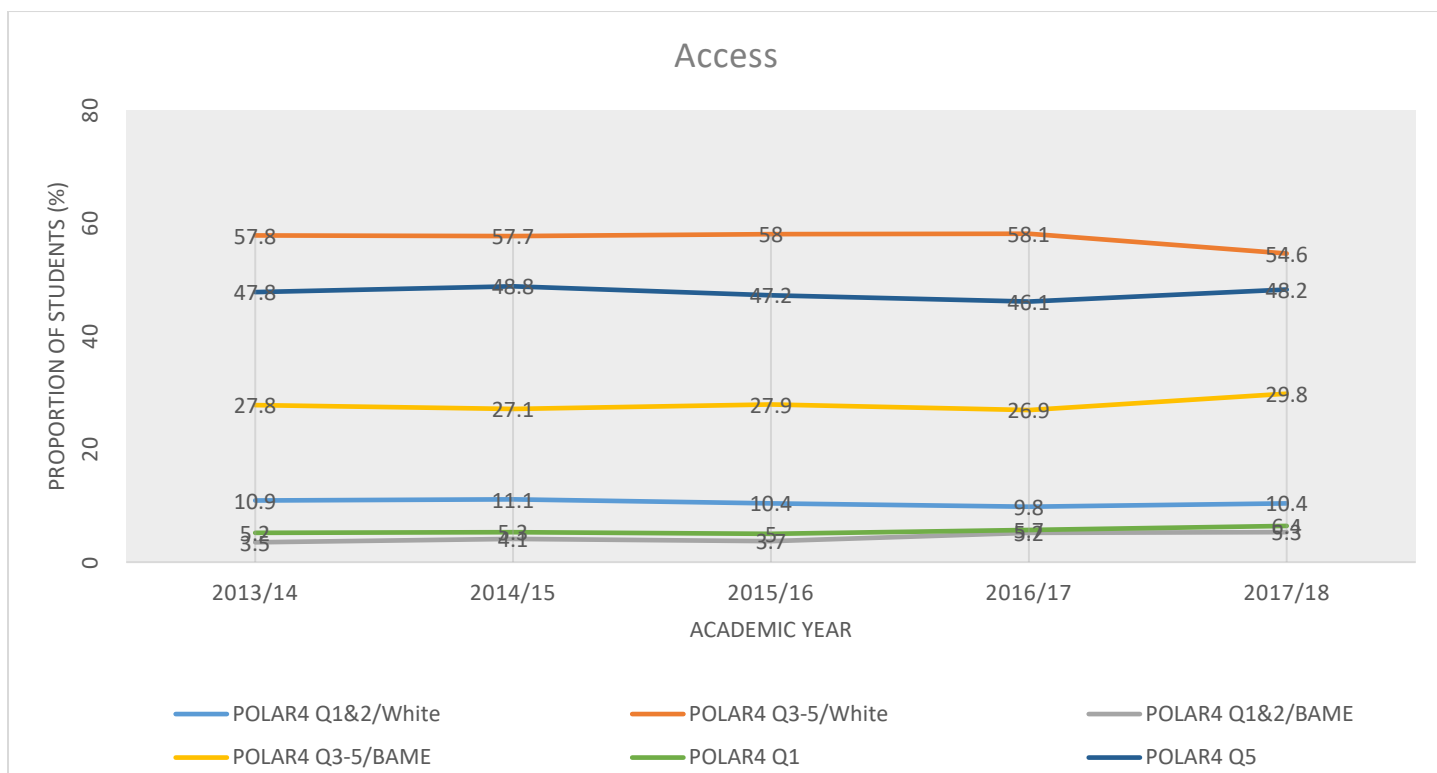
#### **1.1. Low Participation in Higher Education (LPN)**

##### Access

The University has made concerted progress in increasing the number of LPN entrants outperforming our access agreement milestone again for a second consecutive year in 2017/18. HESA data also corroborates that we have achieved our benchmark for this group admitting 6.5% of entrants from a LPN in 2017/18, This trend has increased positively over a five year period where in 2013/14, 4.2% of entrants came from a LPN. These increases are particularly notable given the University's rising annual number of undergraduate entrants.

As shown in Figure 1 below, despite recent improvements in access for LPN students, access to the University is heavily dominated from the most represented group (POLAR4 Quintile 5 (Q5)). Whilst the gap ratio between the most represented and the least represented (POLAR4 Quintile 1 (Q1)) has reduced from 9.5:1 in 2013-14 to 7.5:1 in 2017-18 this gap is greater than the average for other higher tariff providers.

Figure 1: An overview of the proportion of most and least represented full time undergraduate groups entering the University of Warwick from 2013/14 to 2017/18, by LPN and combining LPN and ethnicity.



### Continuation and attainment

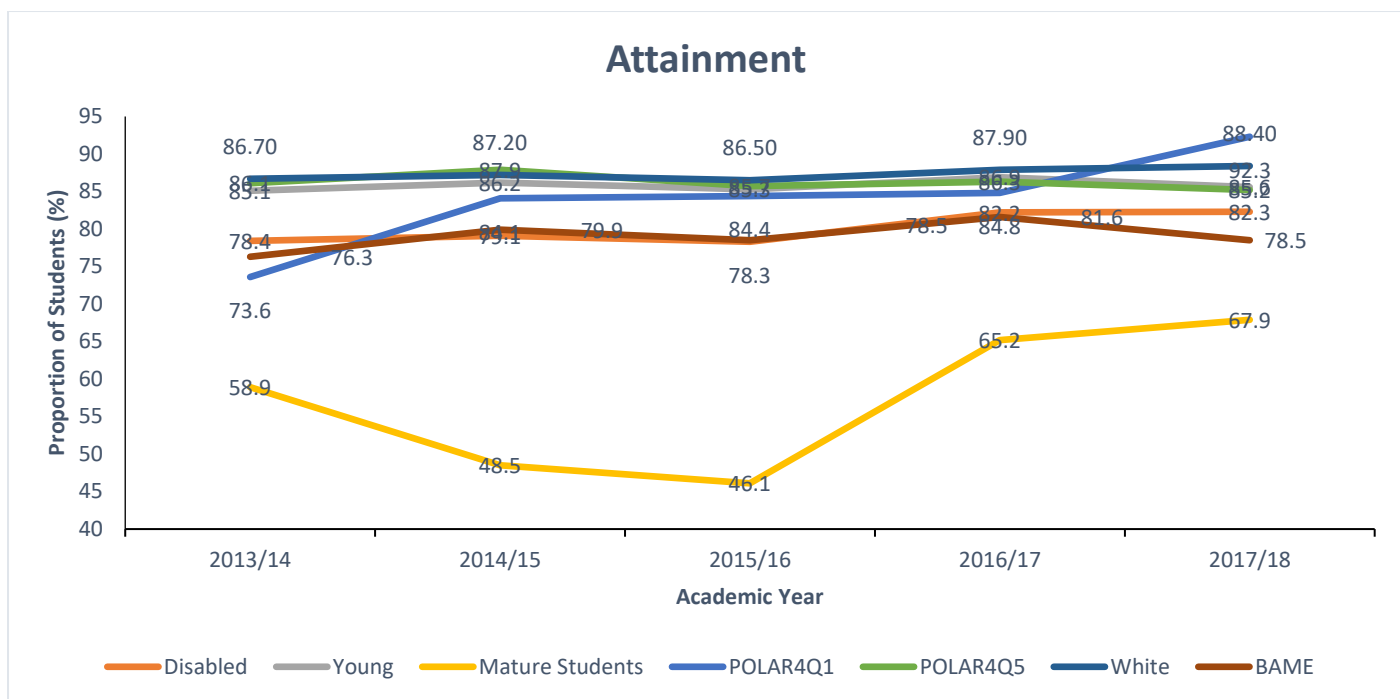
Warwick’s continuation rates between the most and least represented groups appear largely positive, including when compared to sector averages. Continuation rates are high at Warwick and the TEF 3-year indicator of 95.4% is within 0.4% of the threshold for very high absolute values. The University has demonstrated a gradual improvement in its non-continuation rate, reducing this from 4.5% in 2014/15 to 3.7% in 2016/17 (HESA, 2019). More significantly the non-continuation rates for LPN (Q1) have reduced from 7% in 2014/15 to 3.6% in 2016/17, which is closely linked to our benchmark. The number of students reflected in this data is very low which can skew the year on year proportions.

Degree outcomes for LPN students are very strong at Warwick. As shown in Figure 2 degree attainment for POLAR 4 Q1 students has improved significantly since 2013/14 (79.6%) compared to 2017/18 (92.6%). Moreover, the attainment gap that previously existed between Q1 students and with the most represented groups (Q5) has now reversed such that Q1 students outperform Q5 and all other groups at the University.

### Progression to employment or further study

Graduate outcomes at Warwick have historically been strong and our latest TEF data reveals that for ‘disadvantaged’ students (defined as POLAR Q1 or Q2) there is a positive flag for highly skilled employment or further study. This outcome indicator remains equally positive when considering the supplementary LEO metrics with a positive flag indicating (above benchmark) above median earnings threshold or further study.

Figure 2: An overview of degree outcomes (students obtaining a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2:1) for full time first degree undergraduate by different characteristic group.



## 1.2. Low socio-economic status

The University has seen year on year increases in the number and proportion of students entering from NS-SEC 4-7. Analysis shows that there has been an increase from 13.9% in 2014/15 to 17.4% in 2018/19. Although the dataset has been removed as a HESA WP performance indicator, in the absence of an appropriate alternative, the University continues to use this measure as a proxy for socio-economic status.

The University's access performance for students from the most deprived quintiles based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) indicates a positive change over a 5 year period. Specifically, the gap between the most and least deprived quintiles has narrowed from 30% in 2013/14 to 25% in 2017/18.

We also closely monitor outcomes for our Warwick Bursary holders who are from the lowest income categories or other underrepresented groups. The University conducted a full scale survey of first year Warwick Bursary (17/18 entrants) recipients in the summer of 2018. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of financial support and focused on the impact of bursaries on the student experience in the first year, and the extent to which financial support enables students to achieve their goals and aspirations.

71% of students indicated that receiving a bursary had reduced the need to undertake paid work (compared with 69% of students who answered the same question in 2017), although approximately 23% of bursary recipients continue to work part-time in term time.

Just over 90% said that receipt of the bursary had helped them to concentrate on their studies without worrying about finances. The bursary was overwhelmingly seen as helpful in allowing students to participate fully in extracurricular opportunities including social and sporting activities. We found that 75% of those students who agreed to take part in the survey were from the lowest income groups (under £25k).

The University adopted OFFA's statistical model and the financial support survey to evaluate the effectiveness of our financial support packages. The statistical model suggests that our financial support was effective in terms of student retention, completion, and good degree and employment outcomes with no differential outcomes compared to control group. Although the results of the analysis are positive, apart from the usual caveat around the suitability of the statistical model used and the interpretation of the results, the analysis is based on 2010 and 2014 entrants who were on different bursary packages compared to recent entrants. Economic conditions have changed over time therefore continued monitoring and evaluation is required.

### 1.3. Black, Asian and minority ethnic students (BAME)

#### Access

The OfS datasets reveal that although there are gaps in participation between BAME students when compared to White students, the gaps have narrowed significantly over a five year period and we are performing positively compared to sector level averages. The proportional gap between White and Black entrants has narrowed from 66% (a ratio of 13:1) in 2013-14 to 59% (ratio 9:1) in 2017-18. The proportional gap between White and BAME groups decreased by 9% over the same period.

When comparing access outcomes for BAME groups with our peer institutions we know we perform strongly. Warwick has the third highest proportion of home undergraduate BME entrants across Russell Group institutions, the highest outside of London, with a similar statistic for the proportion of black entrants. 2018/19 entrant data reveal further positive inroads in equality of access of specific ethnic groups with a year on year increase in BAME entrants from 29% in 2017/18 to 34% in 2018/19.

#### Continuation

BAME students at Warwick have consistently high continuation rates when compared to sector averages. Moreover, in 2016/17 BAME students had marginally higher continuation rates compared to white students. Continuation rates for Black students have improved significantly from 89% in 2012/13 to 94% in 2016/17, again significantly higher than sector outcomes. The continuation rate gap between white and black students has narrowed over a five-year period.

#### Attainment

Warwick has consistently outperformed sector levels for degree outcomes for BAME students. However despite annual variations, as outlined in Figure 2, progress over the past five years has been negligible, where in 2017/18 the attainment gap between White and Black students was 13.8%, compared to a sector gap of 23.1%. The gap between White and BAME students was 9.4% compared to a sector gap of 13.2%. Whilst the gap between these groups has widened marginally over the past five years this can be largely attributed to degree outcomes for White students improving at a consistent rate, however outcomes for Black and BAME groups have also improved. Attainment outcomes for Asian students has been variable over the last five years and despite an overall improvement, when compared with all other ethnicities the gap appears persistent and become statistically significant in 2017/18. We will closely monitoring these outcomes as part of our overall approach to closing attainment gaps.

Furthermore, closer scrutiny of the data indicates a greater disparity of outcomes between White and Black students attaining a 1<sup>st</sup> class degree. In 2016/17 the gap between White and Black students attaining a 1<sup>st</sup> class degree was 19.5%, however this gap has narrowed significantly over a five year period from 28.8% in 2012/13. We understand that any unexplained gaps in degree attainment are quite localised at discipline level with little evidence of gaps for Science students compared to non-science students. The University will utilise qualitative methods to explore the causes of these attainment gaps in order to differentiate barriers and enablers through which these may best be addressed across varying contexts. This is a core focus of our race equality work and a fully embedded tenet of our social inclusion strategy.

#### Progression to employment or further study

Our analysis indicates that attainment gaps do not appear to have a detrimental impact on progression outcomes for students, where BAME students have equally positive outcomes to White students. Progression outcomes for Black students have improved significantly over a five year period where in 2016/17 76% progressed to further study or employment compared to 52% in 2012/13. This improvement is also apparent when compared to white students, where the gap has narrowed from 21% in 2012/13 to 2.3% in 2016/17. Moreover, progression to further study or employment for BAME students has improved from 69% in 2012/13 to 79% in 2016/17, the same outcome as for white students. Further disaggregation of progression outcomes for Asian and Mixed groups indicate positive improvements over a five-year period and compared to sector averages. These groups had the highest progression outcomes at the University in 2016/17. Data for Other ethnicities is too small for meaningful comparisons.

## 1.4. Mature students

Warwick's mature student population is largely clustered in two academic areas, the Warwick Medical School and the Centre for Lifelong Learning. Whilst some distance away from sector level averages for mature students, our access outcomes between students under 21 compared to those who are aged over 21 have narrowed slightly over the past five years. We have witnessed a steady increase in the number of mature entrants and consistently met our mature student intake target, which largely accounts for a modest increase in full and part-time entrants in Social Sciences.

Our analysis suggests that the greatest priorities for our mature students are around enhancing attainment and continuation. The gap in attainment rates for students over the age of 21 compared with young students has reduced from 26% in 2013/14 to 16.9% in 2017/18, however degree outcomes for mature students remain the lowest compared with any other group at 70.3% achieving a good honours degree. This attainment gap reached a high of 40% in 2015/16 and has been cut by over half in a three year period.

Continuation rates for all undergraduate mature students are the lowest when compared to any other group of students at 86.1% in 2016/17 and represents a gap of 10.2% when compared to young students. This gap has more than tripled since 2014/15 where continuation rates for mature students were more positive. When considering continuation rates for first degree mature students compared to younger entrants, and removing the MBChB students from the data, the gap widens to 19% in 2016/17. The vast majority of our mature students enter via non-traditional pathways, including our 2+2 degrees, where quite often they enrol with a range of access level or vocational level qualifications and some have no level 3 qualifications at all. Therefore when contextualising with prior attainment, outcomes for mature students can be viewed as comparatively positive.

Despite these outcomes, progression to further study or employment remains largely positive for mature students.

## 1.5. Disabled students

### Access

Over the past five years we have seen an increase in the proportion of entrants with a declared disability, with a noticeable increase in students with a mental health disability over that time period. The number and proportion of students in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) increased from 2016/17 to 2017/18. The majority of students that entered the University with a disability in 2016/17 had a cognitive and learning condition, however, the numbers in sub-categories are too small to derive any significant conclusions.

### Continuation

The continuation rate for students with disabilities in 2016/17 was 89.6%, compared with the 96% continuation rate for students with no disabilities. This gap is significant, wider than the sector gap, and it has remained relatively consistent for the past five years. Our TEF4 outcomes also corroborate this, indicating that continuation rates for this group represent some of the lowest across all groups, as evidenced by a negative flag. The University is exploring the use of qualitative data to enhance the understanding of why students do not progress.

### Attainment and progression to employment or further study

Linked to the national KPM 5, degree outcomes for full-time first degree students with a disability (see figure 2) have improved marginally since 2013-14 and the attainment gap between students with and without a disability has halved, from 6% to 3%. Moreover, it should be noted that Warwick's degree outcomes for disabled students vastly outperform sector-wide averages.

Progression into further study or employment for students with a disability has greatly improved from 69.8% in 2012/13 to 77.3% in 2016/17. This may suggest that any slightly lower attainment levels do not have negative consequences on progression outcomes.

## **1.6. Care Leavers**

Access performance for care leavers remains a challenge with only 0.2% of our entrants coming from a care background. Application data from this group appears to have improved from 45 in 2013/14 to 82 in 2017/18, however further analysis is necessary to understand and improve the access trajectory for this under-represented group. We have seen an increase in the number of care leaver enrolling at the university, particularly this academic year, seeing the figure rise by 75% from 13/14. However, our current applicant number from care leavers is inflated due to confusion from applicants about completing the care leaver box on the UCAS form. A number of applicants tick this in error, assuming that it means they are cared for or they may have caring responsibilities. In the 2019-20 applicant cycle Care Leavers will be recognised as a priority group in our Contextual Data Policy where following an application via UCAS the applicant will be asked to verify their status to ensure they received the appropriate advice and support as an offer holder and student.

Whilst outcomes across all stages of the student lifecycle remain a priority for care leavers, due to small numbers we do not presently have data on their attainment, continuation and progression outcomes. We work closely with local authorities to determine the local challenges and priorities for care leavers to access and participate in higher education. Locally we are aware that GCSE outcomes for looked after children are a big priority. We are enhancing our approach to verifying data to ensure we have an accurate picture of Care Leaver applicants received through UCAS to ensure students receive the appropriate support and guidance, this includes a named contact for Care Leavers at the University. Given the relative small population of Care Leavers at the University we recognise that we need to consider student success and progression outcomes in a more holistic way compared to other groups. Our focus here is based on more individualised tracking of student outcomes and experiences rather than broader cohort monitoring and we will look to enhance this further during 2019-20. To enhance our approach and reflect on best practice from across the sector we are considering committing to the Care Leaver Covenant as well as continuing to engage through the West Midlands Care Leavers Network.

## **1.7. Intersections of disadvantage**

We have considered how some background characteristics combine and overlap in ways which differentially influence outcomes. Exploration of these interrelations can in turn help to provide a more in-depth view of access and participation performance. Figure 1, for example, reveals specific differentiation in participation for students when combining low participation neighbourhood and ethnicity. Despite a recent increase in the proportion of BAME entrants, one of the most underrepresented groups at the University are BAME students from POLAR4 Q1&2 backgrounds, specifically when compared with white students from the most represented groups and BAME students from the most represented groups.

While continuation outcomes do not significantly vary for these groups, degree outcomes do, albeit in a different way. Specifically, our analysis of degree outcomes indicates that BAME students from Q1 &2, outperform BAME students from the most represented groups. Furthermore, there has been significant increment in this trend over a five year period from 76% in 2013/14 to 85% in 2017/18.

Moreover, in 2016/17 BAME students from Q1&2 appear to have the highest progression to employment or further study outcomes (83.3%) above any other group and an increase from 54% in 2012/13.

We explored further intersectional differences in students' outcomes, including gender and POLAR4 and found that disparities were not statistically significant. National evidence suggests that these still do require consideration, as for example there are significant gaps in HE participation for White students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds compared with their more affluent peers.

Wider groups of students with protected characteristics will be considered as part of our broader Social Inclusion Strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work.

## **1.8. Local context and outcomes**

Positioned in the West Midlands, the University is located in the city of Coventry, with areas of the campus footprint extending in the county of Warwickshire. The University plays a significant role in the region from an educational, economic, social and cultural perspective and regional leadership is a core priority for our

institutional strategy. Our local context frames much of what we do particularly in the pre-entry stages of the student lifecycle.

Coventry is ranked as the 46th most deprived local authority district out of 326 in England with 13 of Coventry's 18 wards containing Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the 10% most deprived in England. Access to higher education in Coventry has improved over the past five years including the proportion of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) increasing at a similar rate over the same time period with outcomes in 2016/17 broadly in line with national levels. However the proportional gap between those entering HE in receipt of FSM compared to non-FSM entrants has widened slightly over the past 5 years. There has been a slight improvement for Coventry pupils in receipt of FSM entering a more selective institution over the last 5 years, with outcomes in 2016/17 amongst the highest in the West Midlands. There are low levels of young participation in higher education in Coventry with 50% of the city's wards falling into POLAR3 quintiles 1 and 2.

Warwickshire is far more geographically dispersed in terms of scale of deprivation and progression to HE and progression to HE in general is very high in Warwickshire. However university access for students in receipt of FSM is significantly lower than regional and national averages with the gap between FSM students and non-FSM students amongst some of the highest in the country. Moreover, the gap is equally as persistent for students entering the most selective universities. Warwickshire County Council are leading a range of strategic measures to address significant attainment gaps for the most disadvantaged students which are apparent from early years settings through to GCSE outcomes. The University works in partnership to support this agenda.

Understanding our institutional access performance is clearly important, especially how it relates to improving the diversity of our student body. However, beyond improving institutional outcomes, our access drivers will contribute to sector-wide and geographically-orientated challenges. Our widening participation practice supports and promotes access to higher education yet data to underpin the impact of our sector-wide contributions is currently limited, or is at a programme level. We will continue to enhance our evaluation strategy to further evidence our contribution at a local, regional and national level.

## 2. Strategic aims and objectives

### 2.1. Target groups

Our assessment of performance reveals areas where we are certainly providing equality of opportunity for key underrepresented groups and we will continue to ensure our strategic priorities reflect the need to drive continued improvement for all groups. Table 1 summarises our assessment of performance suggesting where outcomes and gaps are the widest and where we need to prioritise our strategic measures to improve outcomes, relative to our institutional context.

Table 1: A summary of our priority underrepresented groups across all stages of the student lifecycle.

Target group	Student Success			
	Access	Continuation	Attainment (good honours)	Progression
Low participation neighbourhoods	Red	Red	Green	Yellow
Low socio-economic backgrounds	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
BAME students	Yellow	Green	Red	Checkered
Black students	Green	Green	Red	Checkered
Mature students	Yellow	Red	Red	Checkered
Disabled students	Green	Red	Red	Yellow
Care Leavers	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
White students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
BAME students from low participation neighbourhood backgrounds	Red	Green	Green	Yellow

KEY	
Core priority	
Core priority area with positive change towards continuous improvement	
Continuous improvement	
Continuous improvement towards meeting expectations	
Reaching or exceeding expectations	

We will continue to use a basket of WP area-based<sup>1</sup>, individual<sup>2</sup> and educational<sup>3</sup> indicators in our pre-entry targeting to reflect different forms of disadvantage and underrepresentation in HE.

## 2.2. Aims and objectives

Our overarching strategic goal is to seek to ensure that individual background has no profound impact on the ability to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education through providing equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students across all stages of the lifecycle.

Our strategic aims are:

1. To remove any systematic and structural barriers to access to, and participation at Warwick, and in higher education (HE) in general;
2. To contribute to reducing gaps in participation in higher education on a sector-wide scale through strong collaborative partnerships;
3. To promote the value and opportunities of higher education amongst underrepresented target groups;
4. To enhance access to undergraduate programmes at Warwick from a range of underrepresented target groups, regionally and nationally;
5. To create an inclusive teaching and learning environment in which all students, regardless of background, are able to achieve their full potential;
6. To provide regional leadership, ensuring access and participation in higher education is championed and collaborative efforts are aligned with regional priorities;
7. To empower Warwick students to be confident in shaping their own future, creating their unique path to a fulfilling working life when they graduate.

Our objectives for this access and participation plan are:

- To continuously enhance the awareness, confidence and resilience of targeted underrepresented groups to consider higher education as a positive choice;
- To improve learner attainment and progression to higher education for underrepresented groups in the region by 2025;
- To narrow the gap in participation between the most represented (POLAR4 Q5) and the least represented (POLAR4 Q1) at Warwick from 7.5:1 to 4:1 by 2025 whilst contributing to the national objective for all higher tariff institutions;
- To increase the proportion of Realising Opportunities students nationally progressing to research intensive universities from 42% to 54% by 2025;
- To improve access to HE, and to Warwick, for care leavers by 2025;
- To increase access to Warwick for BAME students from the least represented groups (POLAR4 Q1 and Q2) from 5.2% to 10% by 2025;
- To eliminate the attainment (degree outcomes) gap between Black and White students from 13.8% to 0% by 2025;
- Eliminate the gap in continuation rates between students from POLAR4 Q5 (most represented) and Q1 (least represented) from 2.4% to 0% by 2025;

<sup>1</sup> From a POLAR 4 Q1 area (least represented in HE)

<sup>2</sup> Be eligible or in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM), no family history of attending HE, is or has been in local authority care

<sup>3</sup> Schools with a high proportions of students in receipt of FSM; schools or colleges where GCSE or A Level attainment is below the national average, schools and colleges with low progression rates to HE.



- To eliminate the gap in continuation rates for students with a disability compared to students with no disability from 6.4% to 0% by 2025;
- To narrow the gap in continuation rates between mature students and young students from 10.2% to 5% by 2025;
- To continuously improve graduate outcome metrics to be consistently above benchmark for 'disadvantage', ethnicity, age, and disability groups by 2025.

### **2.3. Access and Participation Targets**

The University's targets are outlined in the targets tables (2a, b, c) which reflect our ambition to reduce gaps and improve access, student success and progression outcomes at an institutional and sector level. By the end of this plan, we will have contributed towards narrowing the gaps in access to higher education for underrepresented groups, made significant progress in the diversity our entrants groups and achieved parity of student opportunity and outcomes for all targeted groups.

Our new ambitious targets are all evidence-based in the context of our strategic aims and objectives, location, and subject mix. They respond to both national and institutional priorities, including three of the national KPMs and engender a new ambitious chapter of our approach to widening participation and social inclusion.

The University recognises that to embed a whole institutional strategic approach to access and participation we must ensure we strive for continuous improvement for all student groups, regardless of background, across all stages of the student lifecycle. For all strategic priorities we will commit to other forms of KPIs to deliver equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students. In addition, a range of focused transformational milestones will be developed to measure success of our new Widening Participation Strategy, which will align with our overarching University Strategy.

We have not set an access target for care leavers in this plan due the challenges with obtaining robust data as part of the admission cycle; however they will be a key target group and will be embedded in our strategic measures to improve access and participation.

These targets will frame our priorities for the next five years and beyond, and will not detract from our wider ambitions to enhance outcomes for other target groups to access, succeed and progress from HE. We will work with policy makers and the OfS to lobby for better access to data to ensure we can be more robust in enhancing access and participation for the most disadvantaged groups, including students entitled to or in receipt of Free School Meals.

Our target to reduce the access gap between the most and least advantaged groups was modelled considering a variety of variables and conditions including the implications of plans for future institutional growth and demographic dips in the population of young entrants.

We have committed to one collaborative target through the national Realising Opportunities programme to narrow the gaps in entry rates at higher tariff providers between the most and least underrepresented group. Moreover, through our collaborative provision we will commit to further outcome-based KPIs that supports partnership, institutional and national priorities.

## **3. Strategic measures**

### **3.1. Whole provider strategic approach**

The University's new strategy 'Excellence with Purpose' provides a clear vision to what the University will look like and achieve by 2030. Our core Education and Research purposes will be underpinned by four key strategic priorities; Innovation, Inclusion, Regional Leadership and Internationalisation. Our governing body and senior leadership have recognised the need for change and have endorsed and committed to these ambitious plans to enhance access and participation and promote social inclusion.

Through this plan we aspire to remove economic, social and cultural barriers that have prevented people from studying and succeeding at Warwick, and to be recognised as best in class in our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, for staff and students by 2030. Our strategic measures respond to any structural or situational barriers that impinge on the equality of opportunity for any underrepresented group.

Our WP Strategy will empower staff and students to understand the University's commitment and approach towards WP, social mobility and inclusion, ensuring that there is a collective approach taken. We will ensure that our WP strategic priorities are recognised, understood and valued by taking a whole institutional approach to this agenda. All access and participation work should be underpinned by an evidence-informed approach with an expectation that evaluation and impact is at the forefront of efforts.

As part of our whole institutional approach we will:

- Demonstrate clear and explicit leadership and institutional commitment to access, student success and progression for under-represented groups;
- Establish a collegiate approach to widening participation and social inclusion across the University community;
- Promote best practice to harness innovation and enhance departmental approaches;
- Develop a recognition and 'value' model for staff and students involved in leading and championing WP;
- Build more effective approaches to engage with student voices from a diverse range of backgrounds, empowering student-led and co-created provision to enhance student opportunity;
- Promote and celebrate our positive impact within Warwick and with our wider communities and partners.

Our ability to deliver will be supported by embedding WP and social inclusion priorities in all our education and professional service plans.

Our approach will employ a Theory of Change methodology to provide the underlying rationale for our main strategic measures and to depict the causal pathways through which we expect these to enable strategic aims and priorities. We have developed an overarching institutional Widening Participation logic model which defines strategic priorities and objectives by pre-entry (i.e. access) and post-entry to HE (success and progression). The purpose of this is to illustrate how our institutional aims and objectives will be linked to outcomes (intermediary results/proxy measures) and impacts (i.e. our direct measures of success).

By aligning many of our strategic measures, Warwick has launched a bold new approach to enhance access to its own undergraduate programmes for targeted groups, and narrow the gaps in participation between the most and least represented groups. The approach supports many of our strategic aims and objectives by taking a whole institution view across all stages of the lifecycle.

Warwick Scholars, a new, transformational, social mobility programme supports post-16 widening participation students in the region to gain a place at Warwick and be successful once here. This programme represents the first stage of a minimum 5-year investment in programme participants. Through our lifecycle approach, we will work with students from initial interest in Warwick, through application and enrolment onto one of our courses, throughout their studies and into employment or further study. Warwick Scholars will offer tuition fee reductions and bursaries alongside enhancing access to and participation in opportunities such as study abroad, careers and skills development, work experience and internships.

The programme aims to remove any educational, financial and social barriers to a Warwick education. It is not just an access programme; it is a lifecycle approach to guiding and supporting WP students to thrive and succeed throughout their Warwick journey. Students will apply to the programme in year 12 and those who are selected will become part of a community of Warwick students which they will remain connected to throughout their student experience as an applicant, an undergraduate and beyond. Warwick Scholars will offer targeted, enhanced support and opportunities to participants when they become students at Warwick, facilitating positive outcomes during their time at Warwick and beyond.

The University has developed a non-continuation project in response to a need to reduce higher rates of non-continuation where they exist, be that in particular academic departments, with certain student groups (mature, students from low participation neighbourhoods and students with a disability) or at the intersection between multiple demographic factors. TEF metrics provide new insight and show that whilst not universal or widespread, higher rates of non-continuation are pronounced for some departments and groups of

students. However, at present, we do not have internal data that is as comprehensive or granular as we would like to unpack this, and nor do we have a shared understanding across the University of what good practice looks like. This project is being initiated to address these challenges and enable us to better support students to fulfil their potential.

This project's objectives are to:

- equip staff with robust data on continuation rates and evidence of the factors impacting them;
- give students the best chance of success through inclusive curriculum design and fair regulations;
- ensure that timely, evidence-based and effective interventions support students who are identified as at risk of not progressing or completing their studies.

The early stages of this work will be exploratory in nature whilst we fully understand and articulate trends in recent years and the possible causes of non-continuation. We will then be better placed to determine how students can be supported to continue in their studies where appropriate, be that through removing structural barriers or targeted interventions with students identified as in need of support. The initial work-streams focused on data quality and understanding the evidence will start in 2019 which will inform and cohere with other project objectives that will shape practice and contribute to improved outcomes and experiences for target groups.

### **3.1.1. Alignment with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Inclusion is a core strategic priority. At Warwick we want to make a real difference by nurturing the most diverse and inclusive citizens and leaders for today and tomorrow, and we believe that through inclusive practice we can leverage the benefits of difference to help us achieve our vision. We will continue our work in identifying talent that has found itself excluded and under-represented in Higher Education. By removing barriers and changing the way we do things we can provide an inclusive experience of outstanding academic and professional growth at Warwick for both our students and staff. Our Social Inclusion and People strategies will transform our approach to recruiting, retaining and investing in our staff community, with diversity being a key pillar of this work.

We have ensured that the mainstreaming of diversity, through for example including 'Widening Participation' as a standing item on the agenda of our Equality and Diversity Committee, will meet the needs of diverse groups of students and hence ensure we deliver an optimum student experience.

One of Warwick's Equality Objectives 2016-2020, as agreed by our Council, is to further embed the principles of gender equality and Athena Swan beyond the STEM disciplines. Furthermore the general principles of Athena Swan will be extended to other protected characteristics, being mindful of intersectionality when exploring issues and developing solutions. As part of our commitment to equality and diversity the University is preparing a submission for the Race Equality Charter Mark and the reaccreditation of our Athena Swan institutional silver award. Many of our academic departments hold Athena Swan awards, including notable successes in many of our social science departments. Significant work has been invested examining institutional data on gender and ethnicity across the student lifecycle to underpin any performance gaps and inform institutional action plans.

### **3.1.2. Inclusive Practice - curriculum and student support**

To ensure the student success objectives within this plan are achievements will require a holistic approach to student support whereby institutional practices reflect the needs of specific groups whilst ensuring departmental plans recognise the makeup of their student cohorts. Continuation and attainment outcomes for specific groups will be considered at an institutional and discipline level, with appropriate plans developed to promote inclusive practice. The use of data and evidence will drive our approach to provide an inclusive learning experience for all students regardless of background.

Current reviews of assessment, credit framework and signature pedagogies include targeted efforts to increase inclusive academic approaches. A number of departments have undertaken considerable change

projects already, with History focusing on decolonising the curriculum, Modern Languages revising their assessment to enable a diverse range of students including a range of social and cultural references included in their work, the Warwick Business School diversifying their module choices to engage with non-western business and management models. In the coming years the major curriculum and regulatory change processes affecting all departments enables learning from these departments.

The majority of academic departments have this year appointed Directors of Student Experience and Progression who are introducing enhanced information and practices of an inclusive nature, and are focusing on a better understanding of the needs various targeted and other student groups. It is expected that all students will benefit from the work of academics in this role, whilst the Directors benefit from a supported approach of professional learning on inclusion and relevant academic practice.

Our work is informed by educational research and consequent academic practice development activities. A prime example is the anti-racist pedagogy effort, with three groups of academics and professionals working on research, data and experience interrogation and guidance development for departments respectively. In the coming years a similar approach will be taken with regards to lower social economic groups and intersectional aspects as set out in this plan. Ongoing benchmarking and developmental engagements are taking place with universities across the sector.

### **3.1.3. Wellbeing and student support**

Our Wellbeing Student Support services provide inclusive and proactive support for all students to ensure their student experience is not materially affected by situational factors or barriers. Students are able to access a range of support services that respond to the challenges and opportunities of student life. Students can access our services across all stages of the lifecycle, including specific pre-entry support to manage transition to the University. Moreover, the Students' Union provides an impartial advice service for all students as do many of our academic departments as part of a multifaceted and student-centric approach for support.

Through the Dean of Students' Office our Senior and Personal Tutor system provides an important layer of academic and pastoral student support. Personal tutoring plays an important role across a range of University strategic agendas, including Education, Employability and Widening Participation. It is also a key component of student induction and transition, experience, academic support, student safeguarding and wellbeing. Personal tutors, working in conjunction with a broader range of professional services available to students, to provide such support, advice and guidance to students as may be necessary or appropriate to enable them to gain the most from their studies at the University.

Our approach to inclusive student support is designed to ensure all students regardless of background are able to achieve their academic and personal potential. Where evidence suggests that there are differential outcomes in student success for specific groups, the University is committed to providing proactive support. Over and above our statutory responsibilities, the University is committed to developing inclusive provision for students with disabilities and has been investing resources in this area to both minimise barriers to study and enhance the overall student experience. In response to evidence, some of the support includes:

1. An early arrival induction programme for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to facilitate a smooth transition and access to University life and study.
2. A Wellbeing Walk open to staff and students to promote wellbeing, productivity and enhance performance.

### **3.1.4. Employability and skills development**

Employability and progression to further study outcomes at Warwick are very positive, however we will strive to continuously improve opportunities and experiences for all underrepresented groups. Throughout their time at Warwick, students will combine the acquisition of exceptional academic knowledge with the development of skills, personal insights and work experience in order to be fully equipped to make informed career choices. Warwick graduates are already known as leaders who have made significant contributions internationally to business, public service and the third sector and this strategy aims to further enhance this.

We will enhance opportunities and remove barriers for targeted groups to gain access to transformational opportunities for example around student mobility, internships and work experience.

Students are fully supported in making informed career decisions and we will continue to provide diverse, engaging and relevant opportunities for all our students to develop the skills and personal insights that make them well placed to secure the type of employment, business start-up or the further study they want. We will support all students and engage with identified cohorts and groups to raise aspiration where appropriate, and to enable success in employability as with all other aspects of a Warwick education.

Our employability approach will be delivered through the following strategic directions:

- Support all our students in **engaging with employability early** and throughout their time at Warwick so they feel empowered to create their own future.
- **Embed employability in all degree courses** in styles most relevant to each discipline and as an integral part of a Warwick education.
- Enhance the development of and access for all students to **placement-based learning** within the curriculum as distinguishing characteristic of a Warwick Education.
- Actively promote and encourage the extensive take up of **work experience and internships** by maximising the availability and accessibility of opportunities and learning.
- Promote the development of **innovation and entrepreneurship**, integrated where appropriate within the curriculum, and offered via co-curricular opportunities.
- Enhance the **extensive range of co-curricular experiences** available at the University.

Warwick offers a distinct range of opportunities for underrepresented groups to enhance their employability skills and encourage progression to further study and will continue to ensure future provision is inclusive and evaluated appropriately.

Underpinned by national evidence from Universities UK International, Warwick has found that many of its underrepresented groups do not access study abroad or student mobility opportunities compared to students from a more advantaged background. Through our strategic alliance with Monash University we have developed a Global Leadership Experience in partnership with Common Purpose. The aim is to provide immersive short-term mobility experiences for targeted groups that are designed to overcome structural, financial and perceived barriers WP students face in participating in traditional mobility experiences.

The Warwick Scholars Programme (WSP) supports students that enrol at Warwick via one of our outreach schemes, all of which use of a basket of indicators to recognised talented individuals from the most underrepresented groups. The scheme support students for the duration of their degree providing a financial scholarship, additional employability opportunities including internships and overseas volunteering placements and networking support for developing social capital.

The Undergraduate Research Scholarship Scheme (URSS) provides a highly supportive environment for students to develop research skills. They receive mentoring, skills training and funding for summer research projects, many of which are undertaken abroad, thereby also enabling students to stretch their learning and broaden their intercultural skills.

The University continues to build on the evidence developed through the Postgraduate Support Schemes in prioritising resource to support the progression to postgraduate study for underrepresented groups. In recognition of some of the barriers to PG study the University has committed up to £500k per year in continuing the Warwick Taught Masters Scholarship Scheme (WTMSS) which provides targeted students with a £5k scholarship, in addition to any financial support they are eligible for. The University has also been involved in a collaborative project focused on addressing barriers to student success, specifically progression to and success in taught postgraduate study by students who are BAME and from areas with low participation in higher education.

### **3.1.5. Access measures**

To ensure we meet our ambitious strategic aims and objectives the University continues to develop its approach to enhancing access to higher education and diversify its student intake. We recognise this will require a step-change in approach involving a range of transformational efforts linked to our targeted outreach, collaboration partnerships, admissions practices and alternative pathways to Warwick.

#### **Pre-entry support and targeted outreach**

The University delivers a range of targeted outreach and widening participation activities engaging all pre-entry phases with a broad geographical coverage. Building on national evidence, our pre-entry provision is underpinned by principles of sustained activity and effective targeting where we continually evaluate our work to inform process change and impact. We recognise that working in the earliest phases of the student lifecycle will enhance opportunities for young people from the most underrepresented groups to fulfil their academic potential and have greater awareness of the multiple pathways to higher education.

Our pre-16 outreach work starts early in primary schools where we aim to raise awareness of higher education, build confidence and motivation to succeed, for underrepresented groups. These aims are maintained to GCSE level, by providing information, advice and guidance, student role model intervention and a range of programmes that respond to enhancing attainment and skills. Collaboration forms an important aspect of our pre-16 work on a local and regional scale.

The University delivers a range of sustained and evidence-based post-16 activities designed to support underrepresented groups to progress to higher education, more selective universities and to Warwick.

Our targeting approach uses a basket of indicators which reflect national and institutional drivers, including individual, area-based and prior educational context. Students from a LPN, Looked after Children and Care Leavers, mature students, and students with no parental history of HE are specifically targeted. Schools that perform below the national average and that have higher than average deprivation values are prioritised.

#### **Strategic Relationships with schools and colleges**

The University has a range of partnerships and relationships with schools and colleges, both formal and informal and has a firm commitment to strengthen these through a variety of means. These include through widening participation partnerships and provision, student recruitment links, through initial teacher training (ITT) routes, collaborations with local FE colleges for 2+2 programmes and ITT, as well as a range of relationships with schools through academic departments.

The University invests significant resource in activities to enhance progression to HE from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, particularly from the local area in Coventry and Warwickshire. Relationships exist between the University and the majority of secondary schools in the sub-region, including Initial Teacher Training, WP partnerships, volunteering and departmental outreach and there is great appetite to strengthen these further.

The University sponsors two University Technical Colleges (UTC), WMG Academy for Young Engineers based in Coventry and Solihull, building on its expertise in this area providing education for 14-19 year olds through an applied, problem based curriculum. The academies are overseen by the WMG Academy Trust which was established in 2015 and in which the University is a partner.

The University is a partner in the University Schools Trust (UST) focused on schools in East London. The UST comprises a unique partnership of like-minded universities, companies, and community organisations, which work with the member schools to ensure the highest possible educational outcomes for students. Queen Mary, University of London are the lead sponsor of the UTS, and the current vision is that the MAT will look to expand as it builds its strategic plan over the next five years. The underpinning mission of the University Schools Trust is to provide a culture for young people from some of the most deprived communities in the UK to consider and progress to higher education.

Our school and college relationships are integral to create long-term positive outcomes for underrepresented groups to reach their academic potential and providing opportunity to make informed choices about their future. This includes ensuring our teacher education provision plays a pivotal role in supporting excellent

teacher recruitment and enhancement, and enabling our students to be role models through mentoring and tutoring.

### **3.1.6. Admissions stage**

The University already uses contextual data in its admissions process to give alternative, lower offers, to students who have particular characteristics. However greater progress needs to be made in relation to accepting students offering a wider range of qualifications. We already accept a wide range of qualifications for entry, but these tend to be in specific subject areas, and we will improve the visibility of this information on our webpages and printed materials. As stated in the University's Student Recruitment Strategy we have committed to undertaking a broader review of entry requirements to ascertain whether recently revised qualifications such as BTEC now provide adequate academic preparation to promote success to a wider range of our courses.

#### **Contextual admissions**

The University has committed to using contextual admissions as part of its holistic approach to enhance access for the most underrepresented groups in HE. Our contextual data policy recognises individual, area based and educational circumstances when assessing applications. Applicants who meet specific criteria would be eligible for a lower offer of up to two A Level (or equivalent) grades below the standard University offer (to a minimum of BBB).

Contextual offers are also provided to students on our longitudinal widening participation programmes; where those programmes include an element of academic input and attainment raising, the grade requirements are lowered further.

The objective of using this strategic measure is to promote and support fair access to the University by recognising the diverse contexts in which applicants have achieved any prior attainment. This therefore has a focus on our key underrepresented groups, including students from the least represented areas of the country and care leavers.

Robust evaluation studies have been designed to explore the usage and impacts of contextual admissions at Warwick focused on access, continuation and degree outcomes. The first study followed a process evaluation approach to examine the implementation, usage and impacts of contextual data across different stages of the admissions process. Analysis centres on two years of admissions data (2017 and 2018) that included UK domiciled UG students who applied to three or four-year classified degree programmes<sup>4</sup>.

The second study (outcome evaluation) explored contextual differences in first year outcomes for students who were admitted to Warwick in 2017, including: average attainment (based on agreed year one module averages), and progression to year 2.

#### **Key findings**

Since the contextual data policy was implemented in 2017, a total of 378 students have enrolled at Warwick with a contextual offer. Findings from the process evaluation (study 1) suggest that 233 of these students relied on the contextual offer to gain a place, having either met the contextual data offer, or narrowly missed the contextual offer. Various limitations and potential changes were identified to enhance the impacts of contextual data through in-depth analysis of the system as part of the process evaluation. These include changes to the school and individual level indicators that we use and how we use them so that we are able to better identify disadvantage. In turn, outcome evaluation findings indicate that i) the average UCAS tariff points for contextual offer students were 16 tariff points lower than non-contextual offer students ii) average first year attainment marks were slightly, but not significantly, lower for contextual offer students (approximately 2%) compared to non-contextual offer students and varied depending on entry grades and by department; and iii) average first year retention rates for contextual offer students were lower than non-contextual offer students but varied substantially across departments.

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<sup>4</sup> Students on courses such as Medicine, Dentistry and Counselling excluded

We will continue to research and evaluate our approach with the aim to refine our admissions policy for future recruitment cycles where process or outcome evidence suggest this will improve our institutional approach. We will also keep abreast of and contribute to the evolving national evidence-base related to the use of contextual admissions.

### **3.1.7. Alternative Pathways**

The University has a range of pathways to access a Warwick education and we will continue to evaluate and measure the impact these programmes have on enhancing access for our targeted underrepresented groups. We will commit to enhancing alternative inclusive pathways to a Warwick education by continuing to develop and invest in proven successes like Degree Apprenticeships, 2+2 degrees, Gateway to HE and the WBS Foundation Year Programme.

#### **Foundation Years**

Warwick Business School (WBS) offers a BSc (with Foundation Year) in Accounting and Finance, and a BSc (with Foundation Year) in Management. The Foundation Year is common to both degrees and aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge they will need for successful progression to Year 1 of the existing 3-year BSc degrees in these subjects. The Foundation Year is targeted at students from underrepresented groups who have the potential to succeed on the WBS UG Programme, but who, for reasons beyond their control, have no realistic prospect of meeting the standard requirements for direct entry. The first cohort will graduate in 2019 so we will have a good understanding of degree outcomes and progression outcomes after that point.

#### **Degree Apprenticeships**

Through Degree Apprenticeships, we are looking to diversify our educational offer, align ourselves with key national government policy changes and respond to a changing external landscape to ensure that we contribute to regional and national employment needs. The University has developed a range of degree apprenticeship routes that aim to enhance access to higher education through more flexible and industry orientated study. As these programmes become more established we expect that they will contribute to our strategic aims and priorities, where we will work in collaboration with our partner employers to align our expectations around our social inclusion drivers. We expect that our Degree Apprenticeship programmes will contribute towards meeting our access objectives for underrepresented groups, including students applying direct from school or college and entrants looking to upskill in their current or new career.

#### **2+2 Degrees**

The 2+2 programme enables adults with few or no traditional qualifications to study at the University of Warwick. Learners spend two years studying at a local further education college before transferring to the University for Honours level study for the remaining two years of their BA (Hons) degrees in Social Studies or Health and Social Policy. Around 200 students currently participate in the programme, from which over 2000 learners have already graduated and transformed their career development prospects. These programmes provide pathways for entrants to access higher education and contribute towards meeting our access objectives for underrepresented groups, specifically mature students.

### **3.1.6. Partnerships and Collaboration**

The University recognises the value of effective collaboration as a contributor to its own institutional priorities, and also to the national widening participation agenda to support sector-wide challenges. Our approach to collaboration provides an opportunity for deeper-dive evaluation and research to build the evidence base and share best practice. Measuring this wider collective impact is a key priority as the University intends to include these sector level benefits as part of its evidence-based expenditure. This element of our strategy is founded on high-quality effective partnerships with other HE institutions, schools and colleges, local authorities, third sector and charitable organisations and sector bodies and industry.

We see effective partnerships as positive vehicles to enhance access and participation in higher education. Our partnerships span all aspects of the student lifecycle from raising the aspirations of KS3 Looked after



Children, to improving access to research intensive institutions, and to support the progression to and success in postgraduate taught study for BAME and POLAR4 quintile 1 groups. Some examples of our collaborative activity are outlined below.

### **ThinkHigher Partnership**

The University leads and hosts, ThinkHigher, an outreach partnership for Coventry and Warwickshire in collaboration with Coventry University, North Warwickshire and Leicestershire College, Warwickshire College Group and the respective local authorities. The partnerships engages directly with the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to build a sustainable approach to the higher skills and progression agenda. This partnership manages the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) and leads on work to support educational and progress outcomes for Looked after Children and Care Leavers.

There is a shared commitment from the ThinkHigher partners to raise participation in Higher Education for young people in NCOP wards in Warwickshire and Hinckley. It also includes commitment to working at a strategic level with school leadership in the schools which educate POLAR4 Quintile 1 and 2 pupils in Coventry and Warwickshire. This is part of a collective long-term commitment to reducing gaps in participation in the locality. A key goal of the ThinkHigher partnership, through NCOP, the Outreach Hub and other project activity, is to provide a coherent and joined up approach to addressing these participation gaps.

### **IntoUniversity Partnership**

The University of Warwick co-sponsors an IntoUniversity centre in Coventry. The centre is a higher education presence in the local community which provides a range of programmes working over the long-term with young people aged 7-18. Since the partnership began in 2018, 893 students have received support through the centre. IntoUniversity centres are based in areas of disadvantage and students are carefully targeted to ensure they are from groups underrepresented in higher education.

The University of Warwick partnership with IntoUniversity includes collaboration with 6 local primary and secondary schools. This collaboration includes the charity and the University (e.g. volunteers, academics and/or WP staff) working with whole classes from target primary schools and with secondary schools to identify students for specific interventions in school, at the IntoUniversity centre and at the University. In addition, the University and IntoUniversity collaborate with local businesses, corporates and other local partners to deliver the programme. The partnership contributes to our strategic aim of reducing gaps in participation in higher education for the most underrepresented groups through promoting the value of higher education and enhancing learner attainment.

### **Realising Opportunities Programme**

Warwick is part of Realising Opportunities (RO), a collaboration of research intensive universities working with shared objectives to support the OfS in eliminating the national gap in entry rates at higher-tariff providers between the most and least under-represented groups. RO also contributes to our own strategic aim to improve access to Warwick from other underrepresented groups. The programme is underpinned by robust evaluation, undertaken by independent evaluators, which is a theory of change model using narrative, empirical research and causality evaluation types to evidence impact.

### **Advancing Access**

The University of Warwick is a partner in Advancing Access, a national collaboration of 24 selective universities to deliver continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers and advisors that supports student progression to selective universities and courses. Advancing Access has a particular focus on schools with low levels of progression to such universities. We are delivering the majority of CPD events and resources online to allow easy access for all schools, regardless of their location.

Advancing Access complements the excellent work already carried out at the University and other partner institutions by engaging those areas that have historically been hard to reach and may be in geographic 'cold spots'. It is a cost-effective approach to equipping teachers and advisors with the information they need to advise students with confidence.

## upReach

We have developed a partnership with the charity upReach to enhance support for targeted underrepresented groups to increase their prospects of moving in to graduate employment. UpReach provide a three year targeted programme of support for eligible undergraduate students from less advantageous backgrounds, focussing on professional development of students. Interventions include tailored 1-1 support through professional mentoring from partner employers, providing a psychometric reasoning test training programme and career courses, and providing professional insight events and work experience for Associates with partner employers. This work provides enhanced opportunities for our targeted underrepresented groups to gain access to specific, industry-relevant experiences with the aim to support career planning.

### 3.1.7. Financial support

The University continues to develop a longitudinal understanding of the value of the financial support we offer our students and will continue to take an 'evidence-based' approach to providing targeted support to students who need it most. Financial support is an integral measure to ensure that there are no economic barriers for students to succeed in their studies, including reducing the need to undertake paid work. Any forecast increases in financial support over the next five years pertain to the investment in the new Warwick Scholars scheme. Our core institutional financial support package remains the same. We will continue to take a measured approach to evaluating our financial support, including deploying elements of the OfS toolkit annually to underpin our core offer. However, for some of our new strategic measures we will take a more holistic approach to evaluation as we recognise that there will be additional factors that contribute to the impact of, for example Warwick Scholars, beyond financial support. Given the investment commitments made through this measure and the longitudinal nature of the scheme, evaluation will commence in 2019/20 with findings not expected to emerge until 2021/22 onwards.

The University will offer a broad package of financial support for students entering the University in 2020/21. The support will encompass a bursary package for students targeted at those on the lowest incomes and students from our most vulnerable groups. We aim to target in excess of 80% of the support offered by the University to new entrants in the 2020/21 academic year to students with a residual family income of less than £25,001. The package will be guaranteed to all students who meet the relevant criteria and will be offered for each year of their course.

Students who are already studying at the University are entitled to the support package in place during their year of entry for the remainder of their course and are subject to the entitlement criteria relevant to that support package. Full details of our existing support packages for full-time undergraduate students are available on our website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/funding/undergraduate/>

Fee waivers will be offered to part-time students who are in receipt of means-tested benefits. In addition the University will provide a hardship fund to ensure that students in receipt of financial support from the University are able to succeed at their studies. This support will be provided in line with NASMA guidance for the Access to Learning Fund and will augment any support via OfS funding for 2020/21.

### Warwick Bursaries

A bursary will be available for each year of a student's course in which the student meets the eligibility criteria. Warwick Bursaries will be paid in full for intercalated years or mandatory periods of study away from the University where a student meets the eligibility criteria in that period.

The criteria for receiving a Warwick Bursary from the University for 2020/21 entry are as follows:

- You must be a full-time Home/EU student for fee purposes
- You must be studying for your first undergraduate degree
- You must be starting at the University for the first time in the 2020/21 academic year
- You must be in receipt of a Tuition Fee Loan and Maintenance Loan support from the UK Government for the relevant academic year
- You must have a family income below £35,001 (as determined by the Student Loans Company (SLC) for student support)

- You must have completed sixth form education in England within the state school sector or at a Further Education College in England (or on a full fee paying means-tested bursary at an independent school or college in England)

The Warwick Bursary programme will offer support up to a maximum of £3,000pa for each year of a student's course on a sliding scale determined by family income as follows:

- £2,000pa for family incomes less than or equal to £16,000
- £1,500pa for family incomes greater than £16,000 and less than or equal to £25,000
- £1,000pa to family incomes greater than £25,000 and less than or equal to £35,000

To ensure that the maximum bursaries are targeted at those most in need, the University will pay additional support of £1,000pa to students who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Students who are Care Leavers or who are from a Foyer background
- Mature students aged 21 or over at the start of their undergraduate course in 2020/21
- Students in receipt of the Special Support Element of the Maintenance Loan, Childcare Grant, Parents Learning Allowance or Adult Dependants' Grant from the UK Government as part of their student support package
- Students classed as independent students for student support purposes
- Students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowances, Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance

Additional support will be offered to Warwick Bursary students going abroad under the Erasmus Programme (whose family incomes are less than or equal to £25,000) to cover the amount of fees charged for that Erasmus year (£1,385 for 2019-20). For Warwick Bursary students whose family incomes are between £25,001 and £35,000, a reduced fee waiver of £650 will be awarded.

Students whose family income is reassessed during the 2020-21 academic year and who no longer meet the criteria of the award will not receive any further payments during that academic year. Amounts already paid to the student prior to the date of the reassessment will not be reclaimed. Students who become eligible for the Warwick Bursary during the 2020-21 academic year will be entitled to the full award.

Bursary support will be paid directly to students on a termly basis by the Student Loans Company (SLC) on behalf of the University. Students will not need to apply for the Bursary. Entitlement for the Bursary will be determined as part of the student's application to the SLC for a Tuition Fee Loan and student Maintenance Loan from the UK Government.

Students who have taken part in widening participation and access programmes at the University of Warwick prior to starting their undergraduate course at Warwick will be eligible to apply for additional support through our Warwick Scholars Programme. These awards offer an additional £2,000 per annum for each year of a student's course and would be in addition to the standard Warwick Bursary. These awards are limited in number and are supported by charitable donations, primarily from Warwick graduates. The awards will prioritise support towards students from low-income backgrounds or areas of low participation in HE.

The University plans to continue to offer support in the form of fee waivers to part-time Home/EU undergraduate students who meet the criteria set out below for each year of their course of study. A maximum fee waiver of 1/3 of the full-time home student tuition fee, pro rata to the number of modules and the relevant CATS points for the individual student's course of study, per annum will be due to part-time Home/EU students starting their course in the 2020/21 academic year who:

- Are studying for their first undergraduate degree;
- Are in receipt of a Tuition Fee Loan from the UK Government for the relevant academic year;
- Are in receipt, or whose partner, spouse or civil partner, is in receipt of means-tested benefits from the UK Government (a full list of the relevant benefits will be available on the University's website and will be updated each year in line with changes in UK Government benefit arrangements);

The University will continue to review the support for part-time students in light of the impact of maintenance loans on part-time student numbers from 2018-19.

### **3.2 Student consultation**

Students will play a pivotal role in the shaping and development of widening participation policy and practice at the University. A new Student Advisory group will act as a forum where students from a range of backgrounds can support the University in enhancing its practice to support specific groups across the student lifecycle. We have also developed a WP Student Network for any student to engage with topics that relate to access and participation. Our evaluation strategy aims to facilitate student engagement at all levels, including using our PGR community to research and explore specific issues, and using current student's feedback to enhance understanding of the challenges and to develop supportive practice. Our student ambassadors and volunteers are integral to our access work as they support and lead activity where appropriate, including in our primary school programme, creating subject specific modules and materials for delivery in schools.

The Students' Union President is a member of the University's Steering Committee, Senate and Council which receives progress reports on widening participation and access and participation plan monitoring. There are two students' union representatives as members of the Widening Participation Committee which oversees the development of strategic WP work. The group, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) meets twice a term to develop and steer a Widening Participation Strategy that is robust, effective and takes into account the views of all stakeholders including the student body. Our Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee has also prioritised focused towards student success work for underrepresented groups.

The Students' Union have been consulted specifically on the changes to the broader development and changes in this Access and Participation Plan and are supportive of the University's offering for 2020/21 entrants. Previous changes made reflect the preferred choice of support for our student population. We will continue to work with the Students' Union to ensure that the mechanisms for delivering the support on offer are in the best interests of students.

### **3.3 Evaluation strategy**

#### **Approach**

Core to our approach will be how we understand the effectiveness of our work and respond to institutional and sector-wide priorities on access and participation. Research, evidence and evaluation will underpin our priorities, evaluate our practice and provide a platform to champion our positive impact and promote best practice. The University continues to strengthen its approach to delivering an evidence-led strategy through effective governance, building a supportive culture to optimise the vast expertise across the institution by linking research and practice together.

Our Evaluation strategy has been informed by the OfS's self-assessment of evaluation tool following an appraisal of our approach. The University scored highly in its strategic context linked to recent investment in its evaluation capability. This includes the evaluation of pre-entry activity, contextual admissions, the effectiveness of financial support, and evaluation of measures to enhance student success and progression outcomes. Our score was emerging in all other evaluation categories. A core evaluation unit has been established which facilitates expertise between practitioner orientated evaluation and research with academic research streams.

The methodological approaches we will follow are designed to align with OfS standards, and will use their three types of impact evaluation to explore '*what works best*', to improve the quality of, and usefulness, of the evidence generated, and to understand what claims can be made from different types of evidence. However, while measuring impacts and establishing causality is undeniably important, we believe that it is also important to understand how interventions/programmes are implemented, and perceived by participants. As such, we have expanded on the OfS standards, by incorporating recommendations around the usage of process evaluation in addition to impact evaluation approaches. Moreover, we have included additional recommendations around monitoring and data collection. In particular, our multi-method process and impact evaluation approach will be used to explore factors that are influential to the development and success of

selected, sustained interventions. This will enable us to gain a more complete insight into how interventions are received and what might make them effective while also identifying areas for continuous improvement along the way.

We will enhance research and evaluative processes by facilitating engagement with diverse groups, as we build evidence, critiques and subsequently develop 'action for change' strategies. Thus, different stakeholders (i.e. pupils, parents, school staff and practitioners) will be involved as active participants in evaluation processes as opposed to passive recipients; and data on how needs and expectations of all stakeholders have been met (or otherwise), together with an exploration of the barriers and facilitators to success, will also be included in our ongoing analysis.

Our approach focuses on:

- Developing and implementing an evaluation framework to underpin practice across the student lifecycle, providing a methodology that incorporates different approaches, and methods that can be used in a flexible manner to explore the impacts, implementation and delivery of interventions in a way that is relevant to their objectives and proportionate to intensity level.
- Developing robust evidence to inform best practice across the HE sector, and enabling an assessment of our strategic measures make at an institutional and societal level.
- Building more effective approaches to engage with student voices from a diverse range of backgrounds
- Ensuring departments have access to relevant datasets which are aligned to institutional priorities to enable effective decision making, collaboration and resource allocation.

### **Expertise and resources**

We have established a Widening Participation Evaluation and Research working group, co-chaired by an academic and practitioner which feeds into our Widening Participation Committee. The group has undertaken analysis to explore differences in student outcomes (participation and attainment) based on their background characteristics at Warwick. This group is guided by the Widening Participation Committee on strategic priorities. The evidence and findings generated are being used to develop our evaluation framework, which will underpin institutional work and further evolve our understanding of performance through deeper-dive research.

The University of Warwick is a member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) service which supports providers to target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activity. By working collaboratively, we can critically reflect on our approach to outreach data management which in turn helps us to continuously improve the way we monitor, evaluate and build evidence of impact. HEIs who subscribe to HEAT have developed a student data tracking system and a set of reports which allow annual tracking of outreach participants longitudinally from Key Stage 2 data through to entry to HE, postgraduate study and employment. Using these reports the University can assess the relationship between outreach programmes, disadvantage, attainment and patterns of progression into HE.

WP data dashboards have been developed providing data on outcomes across the student lifecycle, including admissions, continuation, degree outcomes and graduate employability. The datasets are used to inform university and departmental strategy monitoring and development and provide an overview of some of our key target groups. New dashboards will be developed to underpin our strategic monitoring outcomes for students with disabilities, ethnicity groups and mature students, including the ability to consider intersections of characteristics across priority groups, where numbers permit.

The University has a very active academic research community with a national and international reputation in the field of widening participation, inclusion and evaluation. The Centre for Educational Development Appraisal and Review (CEDAR), the Centre for Education Studies (CES) and colleagues from the Economics department have provided their expertise to strengthen the institutional evidence base through qualitative and quantitative methods applied to bespoke evaluation work. Many of the University's collaborative outreach activities are evaluated by external partners which provides wider and deeper impact insights.

We will continue to use the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit to assess the impact and value of financial support for students across the student lifecycle, using a range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to evaluate and disseminate its findings.

### **Institutional learning, dissemination and practice enhancement**

A core priority is to foster an evaluation and research exchange which facilitates practitioner and academic expertise across the University to deliver evidence on 'what works' and build an internal knowledge bank of data to inform strategic priorities and performance. This includes work to inform and shape internal and external policy and practice- through championing and highlighting internal and external impact and CPD events and peer-review publications.

We will commit to creating a new Centre for Social Mobility, where our research excellence will contribute to the understanding of sector and societal issues that impact on inequality and inequity in higher education and will inform practice to respond positively.

This work will also include the dissemination of effective research and practice, internally and externally, contributing to strengthening the national evidence base. We look forward to working with the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) to enhance this agenda further.

Results from our evaluations and research will be shared with stakeholders across the University and externally to maximise our impacts and promote best practice in the field of Widening Participation.

### **3.4. Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan**

We recognise that delivering transformational change requires a strategic vision with a range of complementary approaches, endorsed by university leadership through effective governance and embedded at all levels across the institution. Our governing body are deeply committed to our ambitious approach to access and participation and will support and monitor progress on an annual basis, including deep-dive monitoring through the Audit and Risk Committee. The University Council will have oversight of the vision and ensure the commitments in this plan are met, with the Senate and the Education Committee empowered to ensure alignment with other institutional strategies.

The Widening Participation Committee will have responsibility for the implementation and evaluation of this plan working closely with other committees and groups across the University to promote engagement, led by our Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) as part of their strategic portfolio. Regular monitoring of our strategic objectives will be considered by this Committee, including evaluating the impact our strategic measures. Where there is evidence of a decline in progress the Committee will conduct specific reviews to inform further measures to enhance outcomes.

Departments will be supported to work to institutional priorities and KPIs with some local approaches to enhance outcomes and opportunities for students. The new Teaching Excellence Group (TEG) process will support departmental TEF preparations and provide a supportive lens on WP performance indicators related to TEF outcomes. Greater co-ordination and support will be provided at a faculty level to co-ordinate the implementation of the strategy through fostering collaborative and joined up approaches.

A range of WP Working Groups<sup>5</sup> have been created to support implementation and will inform and deliver the strategic priorities. These groups have cross-institutional representation and report in to the Widening Participation Committee.

Faculty Education Committees will also take a strategic approach to implement the widening participation strategy including considering faculty and departmental outcomes and working to ensure WP work is joined up and aligned to institutional priorities whilst commending discipline-specific provision.

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<sup>5</sup> Outreach and Access, Student Success and Progression and Research and Evaluation, Student Advisory Group

We will:

- Develop and enhance cross-institutional approaches that respond to strategic priorities;
- Ensure that the WP strategy is considered and monitored regularly across all nodes of institutional governance;
- Ensure that students are engaged in formulating, supporting and evaluating access and participation work across the University;
- Develop further local and institutional staff and student WP fora to promote a two-way communications dialogue for WP strategy and practice;
- Demonstrate alignment with external regulatory processes including TEF Strategy.

#### **4. Provision of information to students**

The provision of clear and accessible information, advice and guidance (IAG) is a key component of the University's approach to widening participation and student recruitment. The University will ensure that information regarding fee levels and funding support is available to applicants at the earliest stage possible. Fee levels are printed in our prospectus, on our website and in offer letters. Additionally, course fee information will be available via UCAS course search and this information will be highlighted in workshops and at open days. All of this will be compliant with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requirements.

IAG on student funding provision, including statutory support and support offered directly by the University, will be available on the University website, at University open days, departmental open days and other recruitment events, including those intended for students from under-represented groups such as part-time and mature students. IAG on a one to one basis will be offered by telephone, email and an online enquiry service.

Two dedicated posts within our Student Funding team provide a source of IAG and financial outreach to local schools, colleges and interested groups. In order to do this in an interactive and engaging way, a range of workshops and activities have been developed and delivered to students at local state secondary schools in line with our schools targeting model. Our aim is to ensure that prospective students can make informed choices when accessing Higher Education.

The University has further developed student funding outreach support in order to provide individual assistance to prospective and current students and their families. We have a resources section on our website for teachers to use and download IAG materials creating ongoing relationships and support for schools and colleges. We have developed our existing online budgeting calculator extending its use to a budgeting App. Prospective and existing students can use the App to help them develop good money management and budgeting skills. The Student Funding outreach team use both the calculator and budget App as teaching resources in schools outreach work to help students think about money management as a lifelong skill.

To ensure that all prospective students understand the funding system and see the benefits rather than the headline figures, leaflets and web pages have been designed with mature students in mind. One of the main anxieties for these students in the first few months is finance. To address this concern the Student Funding outreach team work with partner colleges at induction events to provide IAG around the costs of university and help encourage students apply for student finance early.

We have developed specific parent/carer IAG factsheets around student finance and applying to university to be used at schools parent/carer evenings. Significant resource has been targeted at providing IAG on maintenance loans to prospective part-time students.

The University is committed to providing timely information to UCAS and the SLC to facilitate fully informed applications from students.

Our previous access agreements and this access and participation plan will be published in an accessible form on our website for prospective and current students.





**Access and participation plan  
Fee information 2020-21**

Provider name: The University of Warwick

Provider UKPRN: 10007163

**Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees**

\*course type not listed

**Inflationary statement:**

The University may increase fees in line with any inflationary uplift as determined by the UK Government, if permitted by law or government policy, in subsequent years of eligible courses. It is anticipated that such increases would be linked to RPI (the Retail Price Index excluding mortgage interest payments). For more information see the link below:  
<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/finance/fees/ugtuitionfees2017/>

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	2+2	£6,750
First degree	UG full time excl Foundation and 2+2	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	WBS foundation year	£6,750
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	PGCE	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year		£1,385
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,385
Other	*	*

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

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	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Provider name: The University of Warwick

Provider UKPRN: 10007163

## 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 investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£3,114,949.52	£3,552,870.01	£3,647,829.97	£3,647,829.97	£3,647,829.97
Access (pre-16)	£934,484.86	£1,065,861.00	£1,094,348.99	£1,094,348.99	£1,094,348.99
Access (post-16)	£2,024,717.18	£2,309,365.51	£2,371,089.48	£2,371,089.48	£2,371,089.48
Access (adults and the community)	£155,747.48	£177,643.50	£182,391.50	£182,391.50	£182,391.50
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£6,308,767.62	£7,365,794.40	£8,227,047.42	£8,227,047.42	£8,227,047.42
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£150,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00	£250,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£40,090,125.00	£40,722,370.00	£41,725,490.00	£41,725,490.00	£41,725,490.00
<b>Access investment</b>	7.8%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%
<b>Financial support</b>	14.7%	17.0%	18.7%	18.7%	18.7%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	22.8%	26.4%	28.0%	28.0%	28.0%

