# London Metropolitan University

# Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

London Metropolitan University is built on a strong history of widening participation, and today a total of 96% of our student population is from at least one underrepresented group. 64% of our students are BAME compared to a sector average of 24.7%; mature students make up 69% of our student body, which is significantly higher than the national average of 43%; and 97.2% of our UK-domiciled young full-time undergraduate entrants in 2017/18 were from state schools or colleges, which is 2.2% above benchmark.

Our new University Strategy 2019-2025 has a strong focus on ensuring that the University is built for student success. We are working hard to improve our continuation rates, which, looking at TEF 4 data, stand at 79.9% and are 5.3% below our benchmark of 85.2%. 58.0% of our first-degree students are awarded good honours degrees, and when we consider this in comparison with tariff points on entry this demonstrates good added-value. Significant work to ensure the employability of our graduates has resulted in an increase to 70% of E1a graduates in highly-skilled employment or further study against a benchmark of 62.0% (a double positive flag in TEF terms).

## Assessment of performance

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

In this section we consider our position in relation to IMD and POLAR. IMD and POLAR use different population sets, with IMD a much larger and therefore more reliable data-set than POLAR. Additionally, there is a known disparity between POLAR’s effectiveness as a measure of disadvantage in London compared to other areas of the country. Both of these factors feed through into the significant differences between the data around these two measures.

##### Access

Tables 1 and 2 show that our recruitment from areas with the highest levels of socio-economic deprivation (IMD quintiles 1 and 2) is high and well ahead of the sector average. Additionally, 27.3% of our FT students and 37.6% of our PT students are from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2.

*Table 1: Percentage of full-time students by IMD quintiles with POLAR gap (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 68.9 | 68.7 | 70.4 | 72.1 | 70.0 |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 31.1 | 31.3 | 29.6 | 27.9 | 30.0 |
| **LMet IMD difference** | 37.8 | 37.4 | 40.8 | 44.2 | 40.0 |
| Sector IMD 1, 2 | 37.7 | 39.0 | 39.7 | 40.3 | 40.8 |
| Sector IMD 3, 4, 5 | 62.3 | 61.0 | 60.3 | 59.7 | 59.2 |
| **Sector IMD difference** | -24.6 | -22.0 | -20.6 | -19.4 | -18.4 |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 26.3 | 27 | 27.1 | 27.2 | 27.3 |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 73.7 | 73 | 72.9 | 72.8 | 72.7 |
| **LMet POLAR difference** | **-47.4** | **-46** | **-45.8** | **-45.6** | **-45.3** |

*Table 2: Percentage of part-time students by IMD quintiles (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 69.0 | 64.5 | 63.8 | 69.7 | 72.4 |
| IMD 3, 4 ,5 | 31.0 | 35.5 | 36.2 | 30.3 | 27.6 |
| **LMet IMD difference** | 38.0 | 29.0 | 27.6 | 39.4 | 44.8 |
| Sector IMD 1, 2 | 41.9 | 41.2 | 41.9 | 41.9 | 41.9 |
| Sector IMD 3, 4, 5 | 58.1 | 58.8 | 58.1 | 58.1 | 58.1 |
| **Sector IMD difference** | -16.2 | -17.6 | -16.2 | -16.2 | -16.2 |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 37.1 | 35 | 36 | 36.8 | 37.6 |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 62.9 | 65 | 64 | 63.2 | 62.4 |
| **LMet POLAR difference** | **-25.7** | **-30** | **-28** | **-26.3** | **-24.7** |

##### Success – Continuation

Tables 3 and 4 shows that our continuation rates for students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 are broadly similar to those from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5, with part-time students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 performing better than students from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5. Additionally, POLAR data shows students from quintiles 1 and 2 have a better continuation rate than those from POLAR quintiles 3, 4 and 5 with a most recent gap of 2.6% (we do not have part-time data for POLAR as the numbers are so small). We recognise the need to address continuation levels which are below benchmarks for all groups.

*Table 3: Percentage of full-time students continuing by IMD quintiles 1 and 2 with POLAR gap (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| IMD 1,2 | 80.7 | 77.8 | 81.7 | 80.7 | 77.1 |
| IMD 3,4,5 | 83.8 | 78.8 | 82.4 | 82.4 | 81.2 |
| **LMet IMD gap** | -3.1 | -1.0 | -0.7 | -1.7 | -4.1 |
| Sector IMD 1,2 | 89.6 | 89.5 | 89.0 | 88.1 | 88 |
| Sector IMD 3,4,5 | 93.5 | 93.3 | 93.0 | 92.9 | 92.8 |
| Sector IMD gap | -3.9 | -3.8 | -4.0 | -4.8 | -4.8 |
| POLAR 1,2 | 90 | 84.1 | 83.9 | 77.6 | 83.1 |
| POLAR 3,4,5 | 85.1 | 79.9 | 81.7 | 81.2 | 80,5 |
| **LMet POLAR difference** | **4.9** | **4.2** | **2.2** | **-3.6** | **2.6** |
| Sector POLAR 1,2 | 92.2 | 91.6 | 91.1 | 90.8 | 91 |
| Sector POLAR 3,4,5 | 94 | 93.9 | 93.4 | 93.2 | 93.2 |
| **Sector POLAR difference** | **-1.8** | **-2.3** | **-2.3** | **-2.4** | **-2.2** |

*Table 4: Percentage of part-time students continuing by IMD quintiles 1 and 2 (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| IMD 1,2 | 70.3 | 76.8 | 67.0 | 73.8 | 68.7 |
| IMD 3,4,5 | 68.6 | 74.5 | 69.2 | 61.4 | 63.2 |
| **LMet IMD gap** | 1.7 | 2.3 | -2.2 | 12.4 | 5.5 |
| Sector IMD 1,2 | 58.7 | 59.1 | 58.1 | 61.0 | 59.3 |
| Sector IMD 3,4,5 | 63.0 | 63.8 | 64.4 | 65.8 | 65.7 |
| **Sector IMD gap** | -4.3 | -4.7 | -6.3 | -4.8 | -6.4 |

##### Success – Attainment

Tables 5 and 6 shows that our students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 are not performing as well as students from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5 in terms of good degrees, with the gap hovering around 10% over the last five years. Although they show that the degree-awarding gaps are better than the sector average, it is still a cause for concern. Conversely, POLAR data shows that full-time students from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 (the most disadvantaged group) are outperforming students from POLAR quintiles 3, 4 and 5 with a gap of 2.8%. We do not have part-time data for POLAR as the numbers are so small. (*see Section 2.2 Aim A*).

*Table 5: Percentage of full-time students achieving good degrees by IMD quintile with POLAR gap (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | |
| IMD 1, 2 | 52.8 | 48.0 | 47.8 | 50.3 | 60.4 | |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 60.6 | 60.7 | 57.7 | 61.5 | 70.7 | |
| **LMet gap** | -7.8 | -12.7 | -9.9 | -11.2 | -10.3 | |
| Sector IMD 1, 2 | 64.8 | 65.4 | 66.6 | 68.2 | 69.6 | |
| Sector IMD 3, 4, 5 | 76.9 | 78.3 | 79.3 | 80.7 | 81.7 | |
| **Sector IMD gap** | -12.1 | -12.9 | -12.7 | -12.5 | -12.1 | |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 60.3 | 57.1 | 58.2 | 57.7 | 71.3 | |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 56.1 | 52 | 51.3 | 53.7 | 68.5 | |
| **LMet difference** | **4.2** | **5.1** | **6.9** | **4** | **2.8** | |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 70.8 | 71.5 | 72.9 | 74.3 | 75.5 |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 75.8 | 77.3 | 78.2 | 79.9 | 80.7 |
| **Sector difference** | **-5.0** | **-5.8** | **-5.3** | **-5.6** | **-5.2** |

*Table 6: Percentage of part-time students achieving good degrees by IMD quintile (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 29.2 | 33.3 | 23.4 | 20.5 | 26.0 |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 40.0 | 31.6 | 33.6 | 33.3 | 29.3 |
| **LMet gap** | -10.8 | 1.7 | -10.2 | -12.8 | -3.3 |
| Sector IMD 1, 2 | 47.0 | 47.4 | 46.3 | 47.1 | 45.9 |
| Sector IMD 3, 4, 5 | 60.6 | 60.7 | 60.2 | 60.3 | 60.5 |
| **Sector IMD gap** | -13.6 | -13.3 | -13.9 | -13.2 | -14.6 |

##### Progression to highly-skilled employment or further study

Tables 7 and 8 show that, while there has been significant improvement for both groups, our students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 are not progressing into highly-skilled employment or further study at the same rate as students from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5. We have introduced a number of employability initiatives in recent years, which have resulted in the gap narrowing in our 2016/17 data for full-time students, but the gap has worsened for part-time students. The table also shows that both gaps are now broadly similar to overall sector performance. Conversely, POLAR data shows that students from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 (the most disadvantaged group) are regularly out performing students from quartiles 3, 4 and 5, although the gap has reversed in the most recent data. This area remains a continuing priority (*see Section 2.2 Aim B and C*).

*Table 7: Percentage of full-time students progressing to highly-skilled employment/further study by IMD with POLAR gap (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 42.6 | 43.1 | 52.4 | 58.8 | 64.8 |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 42.5 | 47.4 | 62.0 | 68.4 | 69.5 |
| **LMet gap** | 0.1 | -4.3 | -9.6 | -9.6 | -4.7 |
| Sector IMD 1, 2 | 54.5 | 58.1 | 62.6 | 65.3 | 68.8 |
| Sector IMD 3, 4, 5 | 62.9 | 65.7 | 69.0 | 71.1 | 73.6 |
| **Sector IMD gap** | -8.4 | -7.6 | -6.4 | -5.8 | -4.8 |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 34.4 | 44.1 | 61.3 | 68.1 | 59.4 |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 39 | 40.7 | 51.2 | 56.5 | 61.1 |
| **LMet difference** | **-4.6** | **3.4** | **10.1** | **11.6** | **-1.7** |
| POLAR 1, 2 | 56.2 | 59.1 | 63 | 66.3 | 69.2 |
| POLAR 3, 4, 5 | 60.4 | 63.3 | 66.8 | 68.8 | 71.6 |
| **Sector POLAR gap** | **-4.2** | **-4.2** | **-3.8** | **-2.5** | **-2.4** |

*Table 8: Percentage of part-time students progressing to highly-skilled employment/further study by IMD (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 38.5 | 45.6 | 59.6 | 66.7 | 62.4 |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 54.2 | 54.0 | 66.3 | 65.1 | 68.4 |
| **LMet gap** | -15.7 | -8.4 | -6.7 | 1.6 | -6.0 |
| IMD 1, 2 | 64.8 | 66.0 | 66.0 | 68.8 | 72.0 |
| IMD 3, 4, 5 | 72.5 | 73.6 | 72.6 | 75.6 | 76.5 |
| **Sector IMD gap** | -7.7 | -7.6 | -6.6 | -6.8 | -4.5 |

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

##### Access

Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12 show that our recruitment of BAME students is high and well ahead of the sector average. There was a slight drop in the percentage of BAME students in 2017/18 and we are monitoring this closely. Additionally, we have worked hard to ensure that we have good BAME representation amongst our trainee teachers and in 2018/19 63% were from BAME groups.

*Table 9: Percentage of full-time BAME students (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| BAME | 71.1 | 70.5 | 70.6 | 72.8 | 68.6 |
| White | 28.9 | 29.5 | 29.4 | 27.2 | 31.4 |
| **LMet difference** | 42.2 | 41.0 | 41.2 | 45.6 | 37.2 |
| Sector BAME | 26.5 | 27.9 | 29.3 | 30.4 | 31.0 |
| Sector white | 73.5 | 72.1 | 70.7 | 69.6 | 69.0 |
| **Sector difference** | -47.0 | -44.2 | -41.4 | -39.2 | -38.0 |

*Table 10: Percentage of part-time BAME students (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| BAME | 56.3 | 49.2 | 48.0 | 56.9 | 54.7 |
| White | 43.7 | 50.8 | 52.0 | 43.1 | 45.3 |
| **LMet difference** | 12.6 | -1.6 | -4.0 | 13.8 | 9.4 |
| Sector BAME | 13.8 | 14.3 | 14.8 | 14.4 | 13.9 |
| Sector white | 86.2 | 85.7 | 85.2 | 85.6 | 86.1 |
| Sector difference | -72.4 | -71.4 | -70.4 | -71.2 | -72.2 |

*Table 11: Percentage of full-time BAME students disaggregated (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Black | 39.8 | 39.6 | 38.6 | 38.7 | 38.0 |
| Sector Black | 9.0 | 9.7 | 10.1 | 10.6 | 10.5 |
| Asian | 18.4 | 17.7 | 17.1 | 21.1 | 15.8 |
| Sector Asian | 11.8 | 12 | 12.6 | 13.1 | 13.5 |
| Mixed/Other | 6.5 | 6.6 | 7.4 | 6.5 | 7.4 |
| Sector mixed/Other | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.5 |

*Table 12: Percentage of part-time BAME students disaggregated (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Black PT | 28.6 | 25.4 | 31.4 | 27.5 | 31.4 |
| Sector Black PT | 5.9 | 5.8 | 6.1 | 5.5 | 5.4 |
| Asian PT | 12.7 | 10.7 | 5.9 | 11.9 | 11.6 |
| Sector Asian PT | 4.4 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.6 |
| Mixed/Other PT | 8.0 | 6.3 | 5.0 | 6.8 | 5.9 |
| Sector mixed/Other PT | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.9 |

##### Success – Continuation

Tables 13, 14 and 15, shows that the continuation rate is worse for our BAME students than for our white students. We can also see that Asian students are continuing in the lowest proportions. The data sample is too small to disaggregate part-time by specific ethnic groups. Overall, we fully recognise the need to address continuation levels (which are below benchmark) for all groups.

*Table 13: Percentage of full-time BAME students continuing (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| BAME | 80.4 | 77.4 | 80.8 | 80.6 | 77.1 |
| White | 84.2 | 80.7 | 84.9 | 83.3 | 81.3 |
| LMet gap | -3.8 | -3.3 | -4.1 | -2.7 | -4.2 |
| Sector BAME | 90.5 | 90.6 | 90.1 | 89.2 | 89.0 |
| Sector white | 92.7 | 92.5 | 92.1 | 91.9 | 91.9 |
| Sector gap | -2.2 | -1.9 | -2.0 | -2.7 | -2.9 |

*Table 14: Percentage of full-time BAME students continuing disaggregated (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Asian | 83.0 | 79.1 | 83.9 | 80.4 | 73.2 |
| Black | 78.5 | 77.4 | 79.1 | 78.9 | 78.2 |
| Mixed/Other | 82.4 | 75.0 | 80.7 | 84.9 | 80.8 |
| White | 84.2 | 80.7 | 84.9 | 83.3 | 81.3 |

*Table 15: Percentage of part-time BAME students continuing (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| BAME | 70.1 | 75.9 | 64.3 | 70.0 | 61.2 |
| White | 68.8 | 75.8 | 72.2 | 67.7 | 73.6 |
| LMet gap | 1.3 | 0.1 | -7.9 | 2.3 | -12.4 |
| Sector BAME | 61.7 | 60.7 | 60.4 | 61.2 | 60.6 |
| Sector white | 60.1 | 61.0 | 60.8 | 62.3 | 62.2 |
| Sector gap | 1.6 | -0.3 | -0.4 | -1.1 | -1.6 |

##### Success – Attainment

Tables 16 and 17 shows that the degree-awarding gap (for those obtaining good degrees - firsts and 2.1s) for BAME students compared to white students is unacceptably high, and that we do not compare favourably with sector averages. Our latest data shows a BAME/white degree awarding gap of 25.3% compared to an average of 13.7% across the sector for full-time students, and 30.2% compared to a sector average of 28.1% for part-time students. Table 18 shows that there is a much higher degree-awarding gap for BAME women than BAME men across all ethnicities in comparison to white students. By contrast, white women consistently outperform white men (*see Section 2.2 Aim D and E*).

*Table 16: Percentage of full-time BAME students achieving good degrees, disaggregated by ethnicity (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| BAME | 49.7 | 44.6 | 40.3 | 45.1 | 56.1 |
| Black | 42.7 | 37.8 | 31.4 | 39.5 | 54.0 |
| Asian | 56.7 | 51.4 | 47.0 | 50.6 | 55.4 |
| Mixed/Other | 53.0 | 52.0 | 57.9 | 55.3 | 61.5 |
| White | 67.8 | 70.0 | 72.4 | 73.4 | 81.4 |
| LMet gap white BAME | -18.1 | -25.4 | -32.1 | -28.3 | -25.3 |
| LMet gap white Black | -25.1 | -32.2 | -41 | -33.9 | -27.4 |
| LMet gap white Asian | 3.7 | -0.6 | -10.9 | -4.7 | -6.1 |
| LMet gap white Mixed/Other | -14.8 | -18 | -14.5 | -18.1 | -19.9 |
| Sector gap white BAME | -15.2 | -15.2 | -15.6 | -14.4 | -13.7 |
| Sector gap white Black | -24.6 | -24.6 | -24.6 | -23.7 | -23.2 |
| Sector gap white Asian | -13.0 | -12.6 | -12.8 | -11.2 | -10.8 |
| Sector gap white Mixed/Other | -7.4 | -7.6 | -8.5 | -7.8 | -6.7 |

*Table 17: Percentage of part-time BAME students achieving good degrees, disaggregated by ethnicity (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| BAME | 21.3 | 25.1 | 16.7 | 18.0 | 22.6 |
| Black | 20.4 | 22.0 | 9.7 | 15.3 | 17.0 |
| Asian | 20.5 | 27.7 | 16.7 | 21.4 | 27.3 |
| Mixed/Other | 25.0 | 28.6 | 37.5 | 25.0 | 33.3 |
| White PT | 55.8 | 49.5 | 53.3 | 59.4 | 52.8 |
| LMet gap white BAME | -34.5 | -24.4 | -36.6 | -41.4 | -30.2 |
| LMet gap white Black | -35.4 | -27.5 | -43.6 | -44.1 | -35.8 |
| LMet gap white Asian | -35.3 | -21.8 | -36.6 | -38.0 | -25.5 |
| LMet gap white mixed/Other | -30.8 | -20.9 | -15.8 | -34.4 | -19.5 |
| Sector gap white BAME | -30.5 | -29.4 | -28.9 | -29.0 | -28.1 |
| Sector gap white Black | -36.8 | -36.3 | -35.0 | -35.4 | -35.0 |
| Sector gap white Asian | -29.7 | -26.7 | -27.1 | -27.9 | -25.4 |
| Sector gap white mixed/Other | -16.2 | -18.3 | -19.2 | -16.8 | -18.5 |

*Table 18: Percentage of full-time BAME students achieving good degrees, disaggregated by gender (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| BAME men | 50.6 | 46.5 | 42.9 | 50.6 | 58.9 |
| BAME women | 48.7 | 45.0 | 39.7 | 43.2 | 55.8 |
| Black men | 41.4 | 42.3 | 33.8 | 46.1 | 56.8 |
| Black women | 42.6 | 37.4 | 31.3 | 37.6 | 53.9 |
| Asian men | 57.7 | 49.5 | 46.5 | 57.6 | 55.9 |
| Asian women | 57.1 | 55.1 | 47.0 | 47.1 | 56.4 |
| Mixed/Other men | 57.5 | 51.4 | 61.5 | 50.6 | 70.0 |
| Mixed/Other women | 52.2 | 50.5 | 56.4 | 56.6 | 60.1 |
| White men | 68.6 | 69.4 | 69.7 | 69.6 | 79.8 |
| White women | 69.0 | 70.1 | 73.2 | 75.1 | 82.5 |
| Gap BAME white men | -18.0 | -22.9 | -26.7 | -19.0 | -20.9 |
| Gap BAME white women | -20.3 | -25.1 | -33.5 | -31.8 | -26.6 |
| Gap white Black men | -27.2 | -27.1 | -35.9 | -23.5 | -23.0 |
| Gap white Black women | -26.4 | -32.7 | -41.8 | -37.4 | -28.6 |
| Gap white Asian men | -10.9 | -19.8 | -23.2 | -12.0 | -23.9 |
| Gap white Asian women | -11.9 | -15.0 | -26.2 | -27.9 | -26.1 |
| Gap white mixed/Other men | -11.2 | -18.0 | -8.1 | -19.0 | -9.8 |
| Gap white mixed other women | -16.8 | -19.6 | -16.8 | -18.4 | -22.3 |

##### Progression to highly-skilled employment or further study:

Tables 19 and 20 show our BAME students are less likely to progress into highly-skilled employment or further study than white students, with a gap of 14.4 percentage points compared to white students. That said, there has been improvements across all of the metrics for BAME students and we are hitting our TEF benchmark. Much of this is attributed to work undertaken since 2015/16 by the Careers and Employability Service which has had an impact on addressing the employment gap for BAME students, but there is still a clear need to develop further robust measures (*see Section 2.2 Aim F and G*).

*Table 19: Percentage of full-time BAME students progressing to highly-skilled employment/further study, disaggregated by ethnicity (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| BAME | 38.8 | 40.9 | 51.4 | 58.7 | 61.3 |
| Black | 39.0 | 41.5 | 49.4 | 59.9 | 61.4 |
| Asian | 37.5 | 36.6 | 53.5 | 56.3 | 62.6 |
| Mixed/Other | 41.4 | 49.0 | 55.9 | 60.0 | 62.5 |
| White | 47.8 | 52.0 | 64.5 | 67.9 | 75.7 |
| LMet gap white BAME | -9.0 | -11.1 | -13.1 | -9.2 | -14.4 |
| LMet gap white Black | -8.8 | -10.5 | -15.1 | -8.0 | -14.3 |
| LMet gap white Asian | -10.3 | -15.4 | -11.0 | -11.6 | -13.1 |
| LMet gap white mixed/Other | -6.4 | -3.0 | -8.6 | -7.9 | -13.2 |
| Sector gap white BAME | -19.3 | -15.3 | -8.9 | -10.2 | -8.1 |
| Sector gap white Black | -20.7 | -15.6 | -10.2 | -11 | -8.6 |
| Sector gap white Asian | -20.3 | -16.7 | -8.9 | -10.1 | -8.1 |
| Sector gap white mixed/Other | 13.9 | 12.8 | 18.5 | 11.1 | 16.9 |

*Table 20: Percentage of part-time students progressing to highly-skilled employment/further study, disaggregated by ethnicity (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| BAME | 38.3 | 35.4 | 56.9 | 59.1 | 57.9 |
| Black | 37.3 | 42.4 | 62.7 | 63.2 | 57.4 |
| Asian | 31.8 | 30.8 | 48.8 | 45.7 | 58.6 |
| Mixed/Other | 50.0 | - | 66.7 | 50.0 | - |
| White | 51.8 | 63.5 | 70.2 | 80.0 | 82.1 |
| LMet gap white BAME | -13.5 | -28.1 | -13.3 | -20.9 | -24.2 |
| LMet gap white Black | -14.5 | -21.1 | -7.5 | -16.8 | -24.7 |
| LMet gap white Asian | -20.0 | -32.7 | -21.4 | -34.3 | -23.5 |
| LMet gap white mixed/Other | -1.8 | ---- | -3.5 | -30 | - |
| Sector gap white BAME | -15.5 | -13.6 | -11 | -11.2 | -9.2 |
| Sector gap white Black | -14.6 | -11 | -10.3 | -7.1 | -8.8 |
| Sector gap white Asian | -17.1 | -16.6 | -12.1 | -15.7 | -9.7 |
| Sector gap white mixed/Other | -14.3 | -13.4 | -10.1 | -10.5 | -8.5 |

### Mature students

In this section the population size is too small in some cases to disaggregate the data for part-time students.

##### Access

Tables 21 and 22 show that our recruitment of mature students (aged 21 and over) is high and well ahead of the sector average.

*Table 21: Percentage of full-time mature students (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Young | 43.3 | 42.5 | 39.9 | 34.2 | 38.6 |
| Mature | 56.7 | 57.5 | 60.1 | 65.8 | 61.4 |
| LMet difference | 13.4 | 15.0 | 20.2 | 31.6 | 22.8 |
| Sector young | 77.5 | 77.4 | 77.2 | 76.8 | 76.5 |
| Sector mature | 22.5 | 22.6 | 22.8 | 23.2 | 23.5 |
| Sector difference | -55.0 | -54.8 | -54.4 | -53.6 | -53.0 |

*Table 22: Percentage of part-time mature students (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Young PT | 8.5 | 5.6 | 10.5 | 10.1 | 8.9 |
| Mature PT | 91.5 | 94.4 | 89.5 | 89.9 | 91.1 |
| LMet difference | 83.0 | 88.8 | 79 | 79.8 | 82.2 |
| Sector young PT | 9.6 | 9.7 | 10.6 | 11.6 | 12.0 |
| Sector mature PT | 90.4 | 90.3 | 89.4 | 88.4 | 88.0 |
| Sector difference | 80.8 | 80.6 | 78.8 | 76.8 | 76.0 |

##### Success – Continuation

Table 23 shows that the gap in terms of continuation between young full-time students and mature full-time students is small. It also shows that it is better than the sector average. However, we recognise the need to address continuation levels, which are below benchmark for both groups.

*Table 23: Percentage of full-time mature students continuing (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Young | 85.8 | 80.5 | 82.1 | 80.6 | 81.0 |
| Mature | 77.3 | 76.6 | 81.9 | 81.8 | 77.0 |
| **LMet gap** | -8.5 | -3.9 | -0.2 | 1.2 | -4.0 |
| Sector | 93.5 | 93.1 | 92.8 | 92.5 | 92.6 |
| Sector | 86.8 | 86.3 | 86.7 | 86.0 | 85.5 |
| **Sector gap** | -6.7 | -6.8 | -6.1 | -6.5 | -7.1 |

##### Success – Attainment

Table 24 shows that there is a degree-awarding gap between mature students and young full-time students. Although this is in line with sector trends it remains below benchmark and has been identified as a priority (see Section 2.2 Aim H).

*Table 24: Percentage of full-time mature students achieving good degrees (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Young | 56.8 | 52.7 | 52.2 | 54.4 | 69.0 |
| Mature | 54.5 | 52.1 | 50.6 | 54.1 | 61.0 |
| **LMet gap** | -2.3 | -0.6 | -1.6 | -0.3 | -8.0 |
| Sector young | 74.6 | 75.8 | 76.9 | 78.5 | 79.3 |
| Sector mature | 66.2 | 66.3 | 67.5 | 68.5 | 69.8 |
| **Sector gap** | -8.4 | -9.5 | -9.4 | -10.0 | -9.5 |

##### Progression to highly-skilled employment or further study

Tables 25 and 26 show that the performance of our young and mature students has increased significantly over five years, and that our mature students are out-performing our young students

*Table 25: Percentage of full-time mature students progressing to highly-skilled employment or further study (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Young | 38.5 | 41.3 | 52.7 | 58.8 | 60.8 |
| Mature | 46.7 | 49.9 | 59.5 | 64.3 | 69.4 |
| **LMet gap** | 8.2 | 8.6 | 6.8 | 5.5 | 8.6 |
| Sector young | 59.5 | 62.3 | 65.9 | 68.2 | 71.0 |
| Sector mature | 64.7 | 68.2 | 71.6 | 73.2 | 75.8 |
| **Sector gap** | 5.2 | 5.9 | 5.7 | 5.0 | 4.8 |

*Table 26: Percentage of part-time mature students progressing to highly-skilled employment or further study (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Young PT | 37.0 | 36.4 | 49.3 | 63.2 | 62.3 |
| Mature PT | 45.9 | 52.5 | 68.4 | 67.4 | 64.1 |
| **LMet gap** | 8.9 | 16.1 | 19.1 | 4.2 | 1.8 |
| Sector young PT | 55.8 | 54.9 | 58.3 | 63.0 | 65.1 |
| Sector mature PT | 72.3 | 73.6 | 72.3 | 75.3 | 76.6 |
| **Sector gap** | 16.5 | 18.7 | 14.0 | 12.3 | 11.5 |

### Disabled students

In this section the population size is too small to disaggregate the data for part-time students. We have disaggregated it for different types of disability but the numbers are very small in each group and as a result there are wide fluctuations over time.

##### Access

Table 27 shows that we recruit levels of disabled students in line with sector averages.

*Table 27: Percentage of disabled full-time students (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Disabled FT | 11.2 | 12.4 | 13.1 | 11.9 | 14.7 |
| No known disability FT | 88.8 | 87.6 | 86.9 | 88.1 | 85.3 |
| LMet difference | -77.6 | -75.2 | -73.8 | -76.2 | -70.6 |
| Sector disabled | 11.7 | 12.5 | 13.2 | 13.9 | 14.8 |
| Sector no known disability | 88.3 | 87.5 | 86.8 | 86.1 | 85.2 |
| Sector difference | -76.6 | -75.0 | -73.6 | -72.2 | -70.4 |

##### Success – Continuation

Table 28 shows that the continuation rates of disabled students are broadly similar to the rest of our student population and that the gap is in line with sector averages. Students with mental health issues are experiencing the largest gap in continuation, currently standing at 6.8% when compared to students with no known disability. However, we recognise the need to address continuation levels (which are below benchmark) of all groups.

*Table 28: Percentage of full-time disabled students continuing (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Disabled FT | 84.2 | 82.0 | 81.9 | 82.6 | 79.5 |
| No known disability FT | 81.2 | 77.8 | 82.0 | 81.1 | 78.2 |
| LMet gap | 3.0 | 4.2 | -0.1 | 1.5 | 1.3 |
| Sector disabled | 90.9 | 90.8 | 90.7 | 90.2 | 90.3 |
| Sector no known disability | 92.1 | 91.7 | 91.6 | 91.2 | 91.1 |
| Sector gap | -1.2 | -0.9 | -0.9 | -1.0 | -0.8 |
| Mental health | 72.7 | 82.7 | 69.5 | 80 | 71.4 |
| Physical impairment | 88.5 | 75.4 | 84.6 | 88.3 | 81.3 |
| Multiple impairment | 81.3 | 95.2 | 90.7 | 79.4 | 78.3 |

##### Success – Attainment

Table 29 shows that attainment of our disabled students has improved over the last five years and are now more likely to achieve a good degree than the rest of the student population. Students with multiple impairments are experiencing the largest gap in attainment, currently standing at 11.1% when compared to students with no known disability (see Section 2.2 Aim I).

*Table 29: Percentage of full-time disabled students achieving good degrees (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Disabled | 50.9 | 48.7 | 50.0 | 51.2 | 67.9 |
| No known disability | 56.2 | 52.9 | 51.5 | 54.7 | 63.3 |
| LMet gap | -5.3 | -4.2 | -1.5 | -3.5 | 4.6 |
| Sector disabled | 70.1 | 71.5 | 72.7 | 74.0 | 75.2 |
| Sector no known disability | 73.4 | 74.4 | 75.4 | 76.8 | 77.8 |
| Sector gap | -3.3 | -2.9 | -2.7 | -2.8 | -2.6 |
| Mental health | 54.3 | 52.8 | 65.5 | 55.0 | 89.7 |
| Physical impairment | 51.5 | 62.1 | 61.1 | 56.0 | 68.8 |
| Multiple impairment | 46.3 | 51.6 | 42.3 | 46.4 | 52.2 |

##### Progression to highly-skilled employment or further study

Table 30 shows that our disabled students have also increased their likelihood of progressing into highly-skilled employment or further study and they are more likely than the rest of the population to do so. This is an area where the problems around small datasets are resulting in particularly significant variations between years and different groups of disabled students. Taking the data for the five years as one data set, 53.8% of students with no known disability, 52.4% with mental health issues, 55.3% with physical impairments, and 61.6% with multiple impairments are progressing to highly-skilled employment or further study during the period. There is therefore no discernible gap.

*Table 30: Percentage of full-time disabled students progressing to highly-skilled employment or further study (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Disabled | 48.0 | 51.1 | 60.4 | 63.7 | 68.7 |
| No known disability | 42.0 | 44.3 | 55.3 | 61.8 | 65.8 |
| LMet gap | 6.0 | 6.8 | 5.1 | 1.9 | 2.9 |
| Sector disabled | 59.9 | 62.5 | 65.9 | 67.9 | 70.9 |
| Sector no known disability | 60.5 | 63.5 | 67.1 | 69.4 | 72.1 |
| Sector gap | -0.6 | -1.0 | -1.2 | -1.5 | -1.2 |
| Mental health | 35.7 | 33.3 | 62.5 | 41.2 | 89.7 |
| Physical impairment | 55.0 | 29.2 | 55.6 | 76.9 | 60.0 |
| Multiple impairment | 60.7 | 59.1 | 76.9 | 73.3 | 38.1 |

### Care leavers

The University has a commitment to supporting care leavers. The cohort size is very small which makes detailed year-by-year analysis difficult, however there are trends using the average over the five-year period which are worth exploring.

##### Access

The University is currently supporting 108 known care-experienced students, including 48 undergraduates in 2018-19.

##### Success – Continuation

Table 31 shows that continuation levels compare well with the wider student population with an average continuation rate of 89.6% over the five-year period

##### Success – Attainment

Table 31 shows that 50% of care leavers graduating in 2017/18 were awarded good degrees which is below the institutional average of 58.0% for first-year undergraduates. The average figure over five years is 28.3%. Although the small cohort size increases the possibility of statistical distortion, this has been identified as a priority (see Section 2.2 Target J).

##### Progression to highly-skilled employment or further study

Table 31 shows that although there are wide variations from year to year because of the population size, average progression into highly-skilled employment or further study is 73.3% over the five-year period.

*Table 31: Percentage of all care-leaver students continuing, achieving good degrees, and progressing into highly-skilled employment or further study (internal data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Continuation*** | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
| Care-leaver continuation | 98.4 | 88.2 | 92.6 | 82.4 | 86.2 |
| All-student continuation | 82.7 | 79.9 | 81.9 | 81.8 | 78.8 |
| LMet gap | 15.7 | 8.3 | 10.7 | 0.6 | 7.4 |
| ***Attainment*** | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Care-leaver good degrees | 40.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 |
| All-student good degrees | 53.5 | 50.8 | 50.7 | 52.9 | 65.6 |
| LMet gap | -13.5 | -25.8 | -50.7 | -27.9 | -15.6 |
| ***Progression into highly-skilled employment or further study*** | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Care-leaver progression | 40.2 | 100.0 | 42.8 | 85.7 | 100.0 |
| All-student progression | 45 | 47.7 | 57.8 | 62.7 | 67.2 |
| LMet gap | -4.8 | 52.3 | -15 | 23 | 32.8 |

### Intersections of disadvantage

##### Access

The A&PP data shows that 96% of our student body belong to at least one underrepresented group on entry, with 77% belonging to more than one underrepresented group. This is significantly higher than our competitor group and the sector nationally, and is consistent over time.

##### Success – Continuation

Internal data shows that the biggest gaps in continuation are in the intersection between white and BAME students with mental health conditions. Disaggregating this data further, we have identified that Asian students and those from mixed ethnicities have significantly lower continuation rates than either black or white students with mental health conditions. We recognise the need to ensure that we develop culturally appropriate and specialist mental health provision that meets their needs.

The other intersection relating to continuation is between ethnicity and age on entry. Although there is not a statistically significant gap between the continuation rate of mature and young students, when this is combined with ethnicity there are some clear gaps. In particular, there are lower continuation rates for young Black students (63%) and young students from mixed ethnicities (58%) compared to their mature counterparts within these groups. The actual number of young students from mixed ethnicities is low, explaining the large percentage swings year-on-year. Our internal disaggregated ethnicity data shows that Asian students of all ages have some of the lowest continuation rates, at 62% for both young and mature; this represents a significant gap between Asian and white students in each age range.

##### Success – Attainment

Table 32 shows that one of the most significant gaps in degree awarding is in the intersection between socioeconomic disadvantage and ethnicity. It shows that BAME students from IMD quintiles 1, and 2 are less likely to achieve good degrees than their counterparts, with Black students performing at the lower end of the scale.

*Table 32: Percentage attainment for intersections between socioeconomic disadvantage and ethnicity (A&PP data)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Asian / IMD Q1, 2 | 57.0% | 51.5% | 48.5% | 51.6% | 56.3% |
| Asian / IMD Q3, 4, 5 | 57.9% | 54.4% | 44.0% | 52.2% | 55.3% |
| Black / IMD Q1, 2 | 41.0% | 38.7% | 31.3% | 39.8% | 55.7% |
| Black / IMD Q3, 4, 5 | 47.2% | 42.1% | 35.9% | 43.1% | 51.0% |
| Mixed/Other / IMD Q1, 2 | 52.8% | 46.6% | 59.7% | 56.6% | 59.5% |
| Mixed/Other / IMD Q3, 4, 5 | 56.6% | 59.0% | 56.3% | 50.0% | 72.0% |
| BAME / IMD Q1, 2 | 47.5% | 46.6% | 59.7% | 56.6% | 59.5% |
| BAME / IMD Q3, 4, 5 | 54.0% | 59.0% | 56.3% | 50.0% | 72.0% |
| White / IMD Q1, 2 | 67.5% | 65.5% | 72.4% | 68.8% | 76.4% |

### Other groups that experience barriers in higher education

We currently have limited data for the other identified groups who experience barriers in higher education. Where this does exist, it is for small numbers of students, and subject to significant distortion.

**Estranged students:** The most recent research by Standalone on estranged students in HE shows that we had 194 estranged students (the second-largest population of estranged students nationally) in 2014/15. Since creating a ‘Designated Named Contact’ for estranged students within Student Services we have been proactively advertising the support available. We are currently updating our enrolment process to engage with estranged students as soon as they arrive. We have signed the Standalone pledge and run events for estranged students through the AccessHE Care Experienced and Estranged Students forum, and are a UNITE Foundation Scholarship partner.

**Carers:** We know that a significant proportion of our students are carers. We promote the Adult Dependents’ Grant and Childcare Grant on our website, and carers are a priority group for our Student Hardship Fund. The Students’ Union also run a Parents and Carers Society to support students in this group.

## Strategic aims and objectives

We believe that the higher education sector is duty bound to further equality of opportunity and social inclusion, that there is a link between equality and excellence in higher education, and that it is our role to give all students (and particularly those from underrepresented groups) the skills and opportunities to transform their lives and the lives of others through higher education. We are committed to supporting national agendas relating to equality of opportunity in the sector, and 96% of our students come from at least one under-represented group. As a civic institution, recruiting significantly from Islington, Tower Hamlets and Hackney, we are also committed to supporting the strategic priorities of our local councils. Many residents in these communities face complex and multiple challenges. Skills and employment (linked particularly to higher education) for unrepresented groups are seen by the councils as one the primary factors in tackling poverty and inequality.

##### 2.1 Target groups

We are very proud to have one of the most diverse student populations in the sector. Our activity to promote access is very effective and we intend to maintain and enhance our work in this area. Our focus over the period of the access and participation plan is to eradicate our degree-awarding gap, and gaps in attainment, employment outcomes, and continuation for our students. We will develop an even more inclusive curriculum and inclusive support services for all our students, to support their continuation and achievement. We will also take further actions to support the overall student journey and to target five student groups in particular. Although we saw gaps in performance against POLAR data we are not addressing these directly due to the limitations of the dataset, the known disparity of this dataset as a measure of disadvantage in London compared to the rest of the country, and the contradictory results in relation to IMD. Our target groups are as follows:

1. Overall student journey: supporting continuation for all of our students

As we have highlighted, our continuation rate for all underrepresented students is 79.9%. Given that 96% of our students are from at least one underrepresented group, a whole-institution approach to supporting continuation will be adopted. Our curriculum and support services will be developed to ensure that all of our students are enabled and supported to progress.

1. Target student group 1: students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2

Our IMD 1 and 2 students are 10.3% less likely than other students to be awarded a good honours degree, and they are 4.7% (for full-time; 6% for part-time) less likely to go into highly-skilled employment or further study when they graduate. We will adopt new inclusive approaches to be sector-leading in this area.

1. Target student group 2: BAME students

Our BAME students are 25.3% less likely to be awarded a good honours degree than their white peers, 4.2% less likely to continue with their studies than their white peers, and 14.4% (for full-time students; the figure is considerably higher at 24.2% for part-time students) less likely to progress into highly-skilled employment or further study than their white peers. We acknowledge challenges with continuation for Asian students (who have the worst rate at 73.2%); with the degree-awarding gap for Black students (who experience the worst gap of 27.4%); and in particular, with the degree-awarding gap experienced by Black women (a degree-awarding gap of 28.6% when compared to white women).

The challenge of delivering fair outcomes for BAME students has been identified as a sector-wide challenge and we recognise our current results are unacceptable. We will reject deficit thinking from our provision and instead move to replace it with a whole-institution approach built-upon best practice, to ensure that our curriculum, pedagogy and support services meet the needs of all students, regardless of ethnic background. Furthermore, we will be driving new work across the institution to create an inclusive University community that delivers for our students and we aspire to lead the sector for our work in this area over coming years.

1. Target student group 3: mature students

Mature students are 8% less likely to be awarded a good degree than their younger counterparts and their performance against the sector is poor. Mature students are also 4% less likely to continue than younger students. To improve outcomes and support for these students, we will learn about and adopt best practice from others in the sector.

1. Target student group 4: students with multiple impairments

Although our disabled students have improved their attainment over the last five years, students with multiple impairments are experiencing the largest gap in attainment, currently standing at 11.1% when compared to students with no known disability. To improve outcomes and support for these students we will ensure that assessment, teaching and learning, and student support are all appropriate to these students’ needs. However, we will also ensure that we embed inclusive practice into our curriculum design in order to transcend reasonable adjustments for individual students and think about accessibility for all.

1. Target student group 5: care leavers

According to a recent report from the Centre for Social Justice we have the seventh-highest proportion of care-leavers in the sector. We continue to be committed to supporting care leavers and care-experienced students. We are one of only six London universities accepted into the Unite Scholarship Scheme and we are committed to signing up to the Care Leaver Covenant and the NNECL quality mark (when the latter is available). We are focusing our attention on decreasing the degree-awarding gap for these students.

##### 2.2 Aims and objectives

All objectives consider full-time and part-time students. Where there is a significant difference between the two, objectives have been split out to identify specific milestones; where the data is similar across both modes of study the larger gap has been used as the baseline. Our core targets and objectives, where we have the most work to do and which inform the main KPIs in our new Strategy, have been shaded.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | | | **Milestones** | | | | |
| **Aim** | **Objective** | **Target group** | **Baseline** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| A) Close the degree-awarding gap between students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2, and those from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5.  Table 5 | Improve the percentage difference in the degree-awarding gap for students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2, compared to quintiles 3, 4 and 5 over the next five years, with parity in attainment between students from all IMD quintiles by 2030/31. | Socio-economic status | 10.3% | 10.0% | 9.5% | 8.5% | 7.5% | 6.5% |
| B) Close the gap in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2, and those from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5.  Tables 7 and 8 | Focusing on full time students, improve the percentage difference in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study for students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 over the next five years. | Socio-economic status | 4.7% | 4% | 2.5% | 1.5% | 0.5% | 0% |
| C) Close the gap in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2, and those from IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5.  Tables 7 and 8 | Focusing on part time students, improve the percentage difference in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study for students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 over the next five years. | Socio-economic status | 6%  (PT) | 5.5% | 5.0% | 3.5% | 1.5% | 0% |
| D) Close the degree-awarding gap between BAME and white students.  Tables 16 and 17 | Focusing on full time students, improve the percentage difference in attainment for BAME students over the next five years, with parity in attainment between students of all ethnicities by 2030/31. | Ethnicity | 25.3%  (FT) | 23.0% | 20.0% | 17.0% | 14.0% | 10.0% |
| E) Close the degree-awarding gap between BAME and white students.  Tables 16 and 17 | Focusing on part time students, improve the percentage difference in attainment for BAME students over the next five years, with parity in attainment between students of all ethnicities by 2030/31. | Ethnicity | 30.2  (PT) | 27.0% | 25.0% | 22.0% | 18.0% | 15.0% |
| F) Close the gap in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between BAME and white students.  Tables 19 and 20 | Focusing on full time students, improve the percentage difference in progression for BAME students over the next five years, with parity in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between students of all ethnicities by 2030/31. | Ethnicity | 14.4%  (FT) | 12.5% | 9.0% | 7.5% | 5.0% | 3.0% |
| G) Close the gap in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between BAME and white students.  Tables 19 and 20 | Focusing on part time students, improve the percentage difference in progression for BAME students over the next five years, with parity in progression to highly-skilled employment or further study between students of all ethnicities by 2030/31. | Ethnicity | 24.2%  (PT) | 22.9% | 19.0% | 16.5% | 13.0% | 10.5% |
| H) Close the degree-awarding gap between mature and young students.  Table 24 | Improve the percentage difference in attainment for mature students over the next five years, with parity in attainment between students of all ages by 2030/31. | Age | 8.0% | 7.0% | 6.0% | 5.0% | 4.0% | 3.0% |
| I) Close the degree-awarding gap for students with multiple impairments.  Table 29 | Half the percentage difference in degree-awarding between students with multiple impairments and their non-disabled peers by 2024/25 | Disability | 11.1% | 10.5% | 9.5% | 8.5% | 7.0% | 5.5% |
| J) Close the degree-awarding gap for care leavers.  Table 31 | Improve the percentage difference in attainment for care leavers over the next five years, narrowing the degree-awarding gap between these students and their non-care-experienced peers by 2024/25. | Care leavers | 15.6% | 14.0% | 12.0% | 10.0% | 8.0% | 6.0% |

## Strategic measures

##### 3.1 Whole-provider strategic approach

**Overview:** In November 2019 London Met launched a new five-year strategy reaffirming our commitment to advancing social justice and social mobility. We are an institution with a deep social purpose, and we are proud of the diversity of our students and of the positive contribution we make to London. Our new University Strategy frames the strategic aims and priorities of our A&PP around five key student groups: IMD quintiles 1 and 2, BAME, mature students, and care leavers. It is driven by an agenda which retains our strong commitment to social inclusion. Our core values (ambitious, inclusive, collaborative and creative) define us and provide an overarching framework for the way that we will deliver our strategic ambition, and the priorities of our A&PP across the student lifecycle. Our approach is driven by our new Centre for Equity & Inclusion which sits at the heart of London Met as the ideological driving force behind our pedagogy, the student experience and workplace culture. The Centre is the catalyst through which we actualise our commitment to social justice by creating conditions that give students and staff the opportunity to unlock their full potential whilst building a community united by the pursuit of excellence in social justice.

Our Learning and Teaching strategies are centred on an ethos of delivering fair outcomes for all students and ensuring they have rich opportunities to develop the skills that will see them succeed in their chosen graduate pathway. Our flagship strategy to deliver the ambitions set out in the Vice-Chancellor’s corporate plan is the Education for Social Justice Framework (ESJF) through which we will seek to displace hegemonic traditions from our curriculum and ensure all of our students see themselves and their experiences reflected in what they learn. Designed and developed by students, staff and the Students’ Union, the ESJF is a reimagining of education as a vehicle for social change and the means through which we can accelerate the achievement of our obligations under the A&PP.

Alongside the Education for Social Justice Framework, our new Transitions and Careers Education Frameworks provide a holistic and interconnected approach to improving success and progression indicators in the student lifecycle. These are areas of additional institutional focus under the auspices of the A&PP.

**Strategic measures:** In line with our new University strategy, we have identified eight programmes of activity containing strategic measures to support achievement of our A&PP aims and targets.

1. **Learning and teaching: improving student outcomes**

From 2019/20 a targeted approach that focuses on our five target groups will be adopted in our learning and teaching practices. Key activities will include:

* 1. Establishing a Centre for Equity and Inclusion in 2019/20 which will lead on, monitor and evaluate initiatives and developments related to attainment, quality and inclusion at a cross-institutional level. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle, but with a focus on BAME, mature, IMD1 and 2 students, students with multiple impairments, and care leavers.*
  2. Embedding the Education for Social Justice Framework by addressing the key principles of an inclusive curriculum, as defined by Advance HE and to be implemented by 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle.*
  3. Delivering an ambitious programme of professional development under the auspices of Inclusive Behaviours, to be delivered to all staff at the university by 2023. Through our Inclusive Behaviours staff development programme, professional practice at London Met will become synonymous for inclusive practice. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle.*
  4. Embedding the Transitions Framework, which is the product of a collaboration between our professional and academic teams with support from the Students’ Union to ensure that key operational processes and start of the year academic events are presented as a cohesive picture and experience for new students. Events within the Transitions Framework, both at pre-enrolment and induction, focus on issues identified by students from underrepresented groups, for example sessions on being a student parent, confidence building and money, to be implemented by 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation).*
  5. Developing and delivering the Careers Education Framework, an approach to employability based upon an ethos of social justice to improve graduate outcomes for all students. It is a flexible, inclusive model of work-based learning (WBL) that has been developed in collaboration with students, employers, and academic and professional service staff across the University and provides a fully embedded careers education model that is adaptable and can be used across any discipline. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on progression.*
  6. Introduction of a Course Enhancement Process (CEP) for internal annual monitoring and quality review of course performance and curriculum design, informed by enhanced data sets, best practice and student feedback. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and completion).*
  7. Creating and implementing a new communication and support plan for at-risk students to ensure early interventions for students at risk of non-continuation or low attainment. This will be led by the School Offices and be fully implemented by 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*
  8. Reviewing our attendance monitoring system from 2020/21 with a view to providing more accurate data to inform the at-risk work. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation).*

1. **Establish, enhance and embed flexible modes of learning delivery**

London Met’s focus is on greater accountability through an evaluative culture that is intrinsically connected to its commitment to inclusivity. We recognise that our students, who come from our local community, require flexible, progressive high quality provision. It ensures our students collaborate with employers and develop work-ready skills, so they can enter their chosen graduate career ready to make a positive contribution to their industries and wider society.

Our revised thinking and renewed focus on the delivery of flexible and diverse provision, contributes to the overall strategic aims of our APP and seeks to further expand opportunities, specifically in the following areas:

* 1. Maintenance of existing provision - The University has committed to maintaining degree apprenticeships in disciplines where there is consensus within the sector of a need to provide students with clear ability to develop work-based knowledge alongside academic specialist knowledge. These include Architecture and Education where the apprenticeships provide a key route into these professions and workspaces. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment) and progression.*
  2. New Nursing provision - The University has developed apprenticeships in new and strategically important disciplines of Nursing and Built Environment. There is a growing need to ensure our students are prepared for new ways of working in these fields and with professionals, who are working in integrated and interprofessional ways. We will provide degree apprenticeships in response to this need from 2023/4 onwards. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment) and progression.*
  3. Flexible provision - From 2024/25, the University is committed to exploring how it can develop flexible approaches to delivery in response to the needs of a diverse student body, largely recruited from our local London areas. This includes the development of micro credentials, specifically at postgraduate level and fully digital modes of delivery. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment) and progression.*
  4. Undertaking a curriculum and delivery review, commencing in 2019/20, which aims to develop a more inclusive approach to delivery and timetabling. *Targets carers, mature, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with multiple impairments, and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*
  5. Timetabling of modules will be developed to include more block teaching, supporting students who have caring responsibilities or PT work commitments. We will implement a pilot in 2020/21 which updates our learning delivery model for year zero and year one to accommodate these groups. *Targets carers, mature, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*
  6. Increasing staff knowledge of the use of digital pedagogy and blended learning. This continues the development of our repository of good practice for digital pedagogy which provides tools and resources for staff across subject areas. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*

1. **Enhance support for study throughout the institution**

The following interventions have mostly been developed from internal pilots where successful outcomes have been identified, with the aim being to extend, develop and embed the interventions within everyday practice. The key activities will include:

* 1. Reviewing our institution-wide support for students’ study across each stage of the lifecycle in order to develop a more coherent and transparent approach which is easily accessible to all our students. This process will begin in 2019/20 in order to develop and pilot interventions which can be fully implemented by 2022/23. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*
  2. Building on our current success in the use of Peer Mentoring and expand across all other areas:
     1. PASS Scheme – evaluations show that in the 2017/18 pilot of our peer-assisted student success scheme, where the success coaches broadly reflected the demographic of our students, students who attended at least 50% of available sessions obtained average grades 23% higher than low or non-attenders.
     2. Academic Mentoring – the creation of academic mentor roles across the university in 2017/18 was a result of a successful two-yearpilot which identified a higher pass rate for those students who had accessed an academic mentor. Those who engaged with an academic mentor were twice as likely to engage with reassessment opportunities allowing them to progress.
     3. Disability mentoring – set up a disabled peer-to-peer support network. Research evidence, including from Student Minds, identifies peer support as a key strategy to support students with their mental health.
     4. Employability mentoring – as part of our successful approach to work-related learning and employability our Careers Mentoring Scheme will be expanded to include university staff as mentors. It will also develop a pilot where students in their final year of study are trained to act as digital ambassadors to other students in order to enhance their digital literacy, a high-demand skill from employers.

These processes will begin in 2019/20 in order to develop and pilot interventions which can be fully implemented by 2021/2022. *Targets all underrepresented groups at success (continuation, attainment) and progression stages.*

1. **Engage external partners in success**

Raising attainment in our locality to empower young people is at the heart of our WP strategy. Islington is the 6th most deprived borough in London, young people in Islington as a group are more likely to live in deprivation than the rest of the population. The University has a close strategic partnership with Islington Borough Council. We are an Anchor Institution in the borough and as a key civic institution are united with other organisations in our localities and the wider capital in driving opportunity and prosperity, focusing on impact and tangible change, with measurable outcomes and targets. Strategic partnership activities include:

* 1. Working in partnership with LBI and the Dame Alice Owen Foundation to deliver Upward Bound, a programme proven to raise attainment and support future aspirations for young people at KS3-4 in participating Islington secondary schools. Upward Bound provides an alternative learning environment within a university setting, addressing the academic, social and cultural needs of the cohort. Since 2006, Upward Bound has supported more than 1000 young people, primarily from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds and in particular, young people considered borderline to achieve level 4 in GCSE Maths or English. It has been extensively evaluated over the past 10 years and data shows the programme successfully raises its pupils’ attainment and continues to surpass national and borough results, as well as successful outcomes in soft skills needed for university and good progression onto FE and HE. Students in year groups 9 &10 participate in the programme for two years, allowing them to feel a sense of community and, importantly, stability. On completion of the programme participants can potentially progress to peer mentor and Student ambassador roles, providing valuable employment and training pathways to the cohort.

Upward Bound is closely aligned with the equalities strategies of both our organisations. ‘Islington Together: for a more equal future,’ sets out Islington’s mission to create a more equal borough, where everyone has a more equal chance to thrive. In addition to the university’s commitment to widening participation it is also a core part of our wider university strategy to work in the local community (‘Giving back to the City) and our civic commitment to working with Islington residents.

Our shared values are to be ambitious, collaborative, empowering, inclusive, resourceful and creative in our approaches. The University and Islington have both committed to supporting the expansion of the programme to actively include supporting other sustainable funding streams and potentially develop partnership programmes in other boroughs and HEIs.

* 1. The University is a long-running member of the National Saturday Club network, running Saturday schools in Writing & Talking and Art & Design and also sitting on their tutors advisory board. The programme gives 13-16 year olds the opportunity to study subjects they love for up to 30 weeks at their local university including workshops with academics, visits to cultural institutions, an industry masterclass and a professionally curated national exhibition of work. The model works to significantly develop young people’s knowledge and practical skills in a chosen area, but the impacts go beyond that subject. Evaluation of the programme nationally and at London Met consistently shows participants grow in confidence, improve communication skills, teamwork and social development as well as self-reporting of improvements in school and an increased knowledge of pathways into further and higher education and careers. The university is keen to increase provision in this area, expanding the number of young people and range of programmes offered.
  2. Developing strategic partnerships within the local community (charities, Islington Council, NHS etc.) to support mental health, in particular addressing the quality of culturally appropriate and relevant mental health provision for BAME students. This is in the early stages of development, and further research and evidence will be gathered prior to a campaign to ensure appropriate targeting. Development will take place throughout 2020/21 for implementation from the following year. *Targets students with multiple impairments and BAME students, and focuses on success (continuation and attainment).*
  3. Improving access to medical evidence for students seeking DSA and reasonable adjustments through an on-site service and/or online delivered by an external partner, with the goal of 100% DSA acceptances. To be embedded by 2021/22. *Targets students with multiple impairments and focuses on access and success (continuation and attainment).*
  4. Rolling out a new attainment-raising activity at school level (currently in pilot stage) to support students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, raising attainment pre-enrolment to enhance outcomes on entry. We plan to work in partnership with schools in areas of relative deprivation, using the English IMD and specifically IDACI criteria to offer mentoring. Mentoring will be delivered weekly over a period of 12 weeks by trained students, focusing on personalised attainment raising. *Targets socioeconomically disadvantaged students and focuses on success (attainment), as well as wider access opportunities.*

1. **Engage students at all levels in their own development**

We have identified an institutional need for increased levels of student engagement and partnership from student feedback (internal surveys, and NSS, particularly ‘student voice’ and satisfaction). Our university Strategy also identifies partnership as a core value. The following interventions aim to address this issue:

* 1. Reviewing current student feedback mechanisms to support higher student engagement. This work will begin in 2019/20 and be ready for full implementation from 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on all stages of the student lifecycle.*
  2. Developing a Student Engagement Panel to ensure that student engagement processes in relation to student voice are fit for purpose. It will consider mechanisms and feedback from students and promote student engagement in the development of learning, teaching, assessment and related academic issues, including A&PP activities. It will feed into the work of the Learning and Teaching Working Group, contribute to the development of the ‘student partnership strategy’, and will be fully operational by 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on all stages of the student lifecycle.*
  3. Developing the ‘student partnership strategy’. We will work in partnership with all students, including those from under-represented groups, to devise the principles and model for participation. During 2019/20 we will complete a comprehensive review of student voice processes in preparation for subsequent years when the evaluation of pilots will occur ready for full implementation by 2023/24. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on all stages of the student lifecycle.*
  4. Establishing a Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Group to work in an interdisciplinary way across all the Student Services. It will monitor all university non-academic services related to the student experience, including advising relevant university committees on student mental health and wellbeing. It will also actively champion the University’s equality, diversity and inclusion strategy. The work of this group will be fully operational by 2020/21. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on all stages of the student lifecycle.*

1. **Build employability into the proposition from the start**

Employability has long been an integral part of the degree offer at London Met, and based on data from previous successful projects we now plan to expand activity to ensure greater progression outcomes for all groups of students. Key activities will include:

* 1. Implementing realignment of the curriculum with 14 identified professional pathways, determined by the corporate sector (during a project in 2018/19), and engage with employers to further develop the course portfolio in a way which adds value for students. We will ensure this is highlighted in all marketing materials so students understand their potential pathway post-degree. This will be implemented by 2020/21 with more development over the coming years. *Targets all underrepresented groups and focuses on progression.*
  2. Piloting employability initiatives targeted at BAME students. Previous experience of running Careers in Public Sector events with employers has illustrated that many of our BAME students have an interest in these types of organisations but are not successful in securing places on their graduate schemes. Evidence suggests that many of our students who apply are not successful at the initial testing stage. In 2020/21 we will pilot a new Employability Skills for Graduate Success programme, to support BAME students to prepare for a public sector graduate scheme application, focusing specifically on the NHS. This will be evaluated and adapted before being rolled out to other employers. There will be particular attention given to engaging with part time BAME students. *Targets BAME students and focuses on progression.*

1. **Staff diversity and training**

We have identified a need for increased staff leadership, engagement and development with access and participation, to ensure that we achieve our aims and targets. We have appointed a Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning who is also the Director of the new Centre for Equity and Inclusion to help us to achieve these. Key activities will include:

* 1. As highlighted in [1] above, we will be establishing a Centre for Equity and Inclusion during 2019/20 which will lead on, monitor and evaluate initiatives and developments related to outcomes, quality and inclusion at a cross-institutional level. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle.*
  2. Providing a programme of enhanced Inclusive Behaviours training to all staff, to ensure fair access and participation for all students, with implementation from 2019/20. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle.*
  3. Rolling out training on the Education for Social Justice framework to all academic staff by the start of the 2022/23 academic year. *Targets all underrepresented groups at all stages of the lifecycle.*
  4. We recognise that students cannot be who they cannot see. As part of our ongoing work to obtain Bronze in the Race Equality Charter we are reviewing our staff recruitment practices and policies, to ensure that we recruit and promote a diverse staff population, with implementation from 2019/20. *Targets BAME students.*

1. **Financial support**

The following financial support is offered:

1. Our financial plan currently includes payments of bursaries for continuing students that have been involved in previous University financial support schemes (£390,000 in 2020-21 and £300,000 in 2021-22). The award of new bursaries will cease from 2020/21 because there was no evidence that these awards were having a positive impact on our target groups. The funds have been diverted into more focused support work to improve continuation for all students.
2. We offer support to students making funding applications to Student Finance England or its non-UK team, and advise and help with resolving any difficulties students might encounter in the process. Following consultation with staff and students, and further work to assess our students’ access to student loans, we have identified that our continuation rates are affected by students being unable to access student loans. Many of them do not find out that they are being turned down until well into the Autumn term and are then forced to drop out. In 2018/19 we worked with students who did not have funding in place. In 2019/20 we have introduced measures to ensure that students are supported to access their student loans as soon as possible. The pre-enrolment and re-enrolment online tasks for new and continuing students have been re-designed, to take students through a series of questions to ascertain their SLC funding eligibility, and give them advice about self-funding and affordability if they are not eligible.
3. From 2020-21 to 2024-25, we are awarding approximately 100 bursaries for care leavers each academic year (£150,000). This is intended as a tool to encourage these students to enter higher education and to improve their attainment, following work with these students to determine their needs. It is administered to new fee-paying students who have been looked after by a local authority for a three-month period on or after the date when they reached the age of 16, and before the first day of the start of their course. The Care Leaver Bursary is £1,500 dispersed in three equal instalments with the second and third payments based on a 75%+ attendance rate. Progressing Care Leaver Bursary recipients will receive £1,500 for each year of their study. In terms of eligibility criteria, a care leaver declaration is registered when completing the SLC funding portal and provision of the confirmation letter from the local authority.
4. Hardship funding of £387,000 in 2020-21, £399,000 in 2021-22, £410,000 in 2022-23, £420,000 in 2023-24 and £430,000 per annum in 2024-25 is budgeted to support students who find themselves in financial difficulties during their time at University. This funding can be accessed by all students but it is clear that it is particularly valuable for those students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 where family incomes tend to be lower. The Hardship Support Fund provides financial support to help students access and remain in higher education. It is designed to alleviate unexpected financial hardship and can be used to help with course-related costs such as childcare, books, learning materials, travel, and general living costs such as rent, food, and utilities.

##### 3.2 Student consultation

In early 2019 we established an Access and Participation Plan Working Group, comprising student representatives and staff. All were from at least one of the target groups covered by this plan, representing BAME, disabled, low socioeconomic status, and care leavers. We also held a focus group in June with students and officers from the Students’ Union to gather feedback on the plan’s content and targets, and further views on the strategic measures. The students were particularly interested in BAME success and although we are at benchmark for these students’ progression to highly-skilled employment or study, student input was instrumental in making this a key target with the goal of eradicating the within-benchmark gap. They were also very keen on ensuring that the curriculum should take account of students’ lives and this features heavily in our current and future planning. Our collective discussions also led to the creation of new student-focused university committees.

We are committed to further student engagement, including in the implementation of measures, the development of additional targets in the future, and providing qualitative feedback on measures identified. Our evaluation strategy places student experience at the heart of the plan, and empowers students to give honest feedback on the best methods to support them in access, success and progression. This will be addressed through the Student Engagement Panel and the Access and Participation Plan Working Group which will continue to meet at least quarterly over the lifecycle of the plan to ensure implementation and robust evaluation of measures, and address any shortfalls in progress against our targets. Students will be offered data training to ensure their input is informed and they are fully able to participate in discussions. Students also sit on a number of committees linked to approval of both the Access and Participation Plan and its constituent activities, for example, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, the Wellbeing and Inclusivity Sub-Committee, Academic Board, and the Board of Governors who have overall oversight of the Access and Participation Plan in accordance with the monitoring outlined in section 3.4.

##### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

**Strategic context**:

The institution’s strategy is designed to enable a robust and whole provider approach to evaluation of activities across all stages of the student lifecycle. The approach is informed by a theory of change methodology to ensure that evaluation outcomes shape, influence and enable continuous improvement in practice and the improvement of student outcomes overall with a particular focus on our identified target groups.

The analysis of available student performance data enabled us to identify key gaps in performance for our target groups which supported the development of key aims and priorities for addressing the identified disparities within the student body. The implementation of strategic measures are evaluated to learn from, enhance practice and determine the impact on student outcomes.

The Access and Participation Operational Group (APOG) is responsible under delegated authority from the Learning Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQC) for oversight and development of the Access & Participation Plan (APP), its operational delivery and the enhancement of associated practice within all London Metropolitan University activities. The APOG’s aim is to ensure improved performance against targets identified in the APP in undergraduate provision and relevant student services; to ensure effective implementation of programmes and best practice in order to meet KPIs and targets identified in the APP; and to ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of all APP activity

**Access**: All access and transition interventions are mapped onto the NERUPI Framework which provides a rigorous theoretically-informed methodology for linking WP aims and objectives to impact evidence. This also adheres to a coherent theory of change to inform our selection of outreach activities, allowing us to apply lessons learned. Skills enhancement is essential to our provision of excellent evaluation, and staff regularly attend training by industry experts, such as NERUPI and the Open University. In order to share best practice, staff also participate in the AccessHE evaluation forum and other relevant events. Evaluation reports on measures for this area of the A&PP will be presented to the APOG, which will determine additional resource needs for evaluation training or support.

Success and progression: For all core initiatives within the success and progression lifecycle stage a coherent and standardised evaluation strategy has been co-developed with relevant staff members informed by a Theory of Change methodology. The main aim is to continuously enhance and promote a strong culture of evaluation across the Schools and professional service teams to build on their existing evaluation skills and to disseminate effective practice across the university.

**Programme design:** During programme design stage, a­­ll access initiatives are mapped to the NERUPI aims and objectives, specific evaluation methods, the Gatsby career benchmarks, and the relevant key stage. Evaluation comprises quantitative analysis of participation by sub-groups, and comparison of outcomes against our own targets and national benchmarks, as well as qualitative feedback from participants (including teachers and parents where relevant). Measures are designed and selected using evidence and best practice from research literature as well as internal activity, where those receiving an intervention demonstrate better outcomes. We build a detailed evaluation specification for each activity and map this to objectives to ensure effective measurement of outcomes. We also use the HEAT tool to measure impact; working collaboratively across the sector we can critically reflect on our approach and build evidence of what works locally and nationally.

For success and progression initiatives, all main initiatives are co-designed and informed by a theory of change (ToC) methodology to reduce gaps in continuation, success and employment for our target groups and use several identified indicators of positive outcomes per initiative. However, given the potential interaction effect and differential mechanisms of the range of activities, a number of intermediate indicators (engagement and outputs) will also be tracked and monitored. These indicators can also act as explanatory factors for outcomes and how to improve efficacy (e.g. lack of student engagement may be a factor in poor outcomes for a specific initiative, and improving student engagement rather than abandoning the initiative would be the key to improving efficacy). Evaluation will be based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. While absolute outcomes are measurable and quantifiable, qualitative data (i.e. surfacing “lived experience”) will also be important in understanding why something may/may not be working as intended, and how it can be improved. Lessons from these evaluation outcomes will feed into institutional practice.

**Evaluation design:** Standardised monitoring and evaluation templates have been co-developed for all access & participation activity with input from all stakeholders of the institution. This approach aims to ensure that outputs and outcomes are systematically captured and presented in a format allowing impact comparison across target groups within different lifecycle stage. Reports and updates will be disseminated and communicated to LTQC and other relevant committees and stakeholders to enable strategic oversight and coherence in evaluation practice institution-wide.

For access programmes evaluation design is already sophisticated, with initiatives and activities subject to impact evaluation measured against intended objectives. The type of evaluation used most often in this area is narrative evaluation, which is in place for activities such as our Saturday Clubs and Summer School. It is also being developed for our primary activities, Big Challenges, and one-off target group visit days. For all these programmes there is clear evidence of impact from previous evaluations, and from national data (available through NERUPI and HEAT). We also have programmes which use empirical and causal evaluation methods; these include Mentoring and AccessHE Online (empirical and narrative), and Upward Bound which deploys a combination of all three evaluation methods.

For success & progression programmes monitoring and evaluation is embedded within the newly developed and downsized portfolio of key initiatives. Each stream of activity is underpinned by a theory of change methodology identifying the most effective and feasible evaluation methods. For each activity key outputs and engagement of target groups are monitored and evaluated against objectives allowing targeted collection of evidence (i.e. changes in behaviour/benefits experienced) of impact on targets. The PASS Scheme (peer mentoring for students to support positive student outcomes) is an established activity deploying mixed method approach to evaluation combining narrative and empirical methods to evaluate its effectiveness. Over time, the initiative has been streamlined by utilising evaluation findings from quantitative and qualitative sources to enhance delivery in future and impact on student outcomes. Students have been actively involved in this process generating reflective insights incorporated in the feedback loop.

**Evaluation implementation:** This will be carried out at three levels: (i) programme design level, (ii) impact on overall strategic measures, and (iii) impact on aims and objectives over time. The function of the APOG is to monitor, discuss, and report to ensure effective implementation and device any actions, particularly in relation to making progress against yearly milestones, objectives addressed in this plan.

In order to effectively implement our evaluation strategy, we have developed data insights (via dashboards compliant with GDPR regulations) on performance measures and data footprints of our student body. This will enable us to derive with and formulate more accurate recommendations about additional interventions based on a clear understanding of students’ experiences.

We also commit to continuing resources for membership of NERUPI and HEAT, to allow continued success in access. We align all our activities in the access and participation area with the University’s Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, and Code of Good Research Practice. For longer term projects such as the Upward Bound programme, new research is approved through the University's Ethics Committee. For many of our activities, particularly in access and progression, there is already some methodology in place to track participants over time, but as part of this plan we aim to enhance this and demonstrate longer-term impact of interventions.

**Learning to shape improvement:** Some of the initiatives still have to gain traction and are implemented in stages across the institution where we use a reflective evaluation cycle to monitor, evaluate and improve implementation. Evaluation concentrates on evidence of outcomes, assessing the impact of the activity on its participants, measured against its intended aims and objectives. This approach is applied to all activity and allows us further to identify barriers and challenges experienced by students who participated and develop strategic approaches to mediate these in future iterations of delivery by incorporating student voices as proactively as possible. Outcomes are captured by using mixed methods of evaluation utilising both quantitative and qualitative data points. Students will be able and encouraged to provide feedback in a variety of creative ways in order to surface and foreground a diverse set of student views from our student body. The long term impact will be reflected in institutional KPIs and key strategic measures.

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

The Access and Participation Operational Group (APOG), which will meet six times a year, will have responsibility for monitoring progress against the delivery of the plan. The group will provide reports to LTQC and directly to Senior Leadership Team meetings, chaired by the Vice Chancellor. Reports on progress of activities will be made following each meeting of the APOG along with any associated risks or barriers to the success of the plan. Colleagues from the Centre for Equity and Inclusion (CEI) have key responsibility over and will inform evaluation of measures and provision of recommendations. The University’s Academic Board and the Board of Governors will receive a report on the implementation of the Access and Participation Plan on a bi-annual basis. There will also be a strong focus on ensuring that progress is communicated to the entire University community.

Within this approach, there will be particular attention on monitoring progress against strategic measures designed to facilitate improvement and against the targets themselves. Each one of the measures will be individually tracked and monitored against key milestones on an ongoing basis, with target implementation dates closely monitored by the Centre for Equity and Inclusion, and with analysis of progress feeding up regularly to the Senior Leadership Team, Academic Board, and Board of Governors. Internal data will be used to track progress against targets on an ongoing basis with TEF and HESA data providing final verification. If there is any evidence that progress is worsening, staff in our Centre for Equity and Inclusion will undertake detailed work to determine cause and effect, and to design new measures to get progress back on track.

## Provision of information to students

We are committed to providing timely information on fees and financial support to all prospective and current students in an accessible and durable format. To ensure information remains up to date, we use the University website as the primary information source. We are committed to providing all information in plain English and all information we provide is checked for compliance with CMA legislation and the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010 prior to publication. We are also committed to timely provision of information to relevant third parties.

We regularly review all digital and printed information to ensure it is compliant with current equality and diversity information. We are committed to making all printed information available in alternative accessible formats. Information on fees and financial support is further provided to prospective students at a series of in-person events throughout the application and enrolment journey, including but not limited to: Open Days (including dedicated student finance sessions), offer holder events, and student finance and money workshops in partner schools and colleges. Prospective students also receive a series of email communications in the lead up to enrolment, one of which focuses exclusively on fees and financial support. For care leavers we regularly update our information on the Propel website, the leading external platform for provision of information specific to care leavers. We will make this Access and Participation Plan available in an accessible way to prospective and current students on our website.

For current students, dissemination of information about the fees and financial support available takes place via our student portal, internal communications campaigns, and internal emails. This is currently being redesigned to reflect changes in the institutional structure and ensure students are aware of the services available to them. Face-to-face guidance and information are also provided through the Student Money and Accommodation Advice team, who offer workshops and 1-2-1 sessions with students on budgeting and money matters. There is a Student Hardship Fund within the institution for current students whose circumstances have unexpectedly changed. This is publicised via the Student Portal, and all academic tutors are made aware of its existence in order to direct students to the fund if needed. Information on the Disabled Students’ Allowance and other support for students with specific needs is provided by the Disability and Dyslexia Service, both pre-enrolment and throughout students’ time at London Met. Recent internal data shows that 35% of students with disabilities do not disclose this until after enrolment, so all information on financial support for disabilities at this stage in the lifecycle is channelled through the Disability and Dyslexia Service.

## Appendix

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