

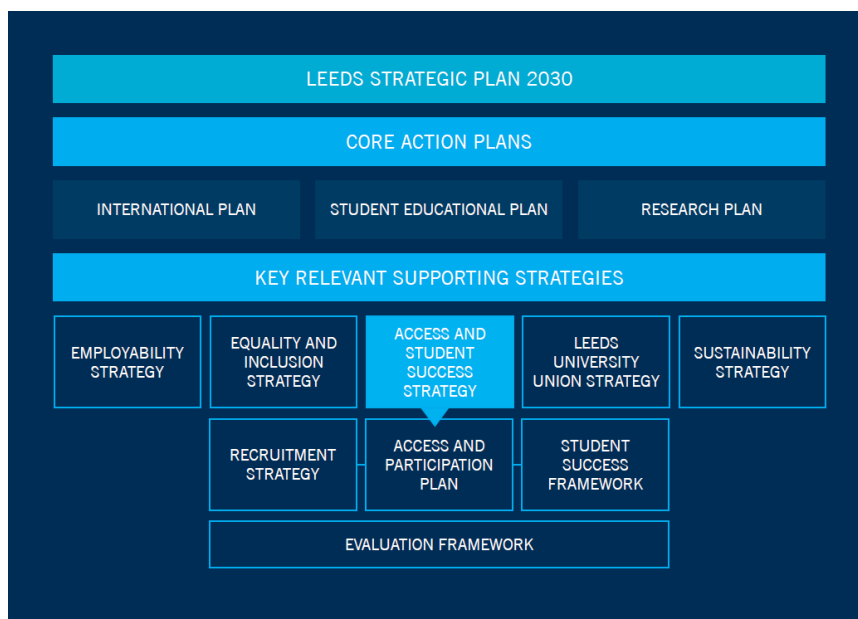
University of Leeds

Access and participation plan 2024-25 to 2027-28

Introduction and strategic aim

1. The University of Leeds is one of the largest higher education institutions in the country, hosting (physically and virtually) almost 40,000 students.
2. Promoting and supporting equality of opportunity and collaboration is fundamental to us, as evidenced through our University of Leeds Strategy 2020-2030: Universal Values, Global Change, which articulates our vision: **“To provide a transformative, research-based educational experience for students from diverse backgrounds, who develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and make a positive impact in the world.”**
3. As illustrated in figure 1 below, key to our institutional mission is the Access and Student Success Strategy which articulates how we will work to ensure that **“The University of Leeds will be a place where students from diverse backgrounds feel they belong, can thrive, and are valued for their unique contribution”**.

Figure 1: Location of Access and Student Success Strategy



4. With a cross-institutional remit, this strategy drives the development of targeted fair access and success interventions. It also requires that we understand and seek to enhance the ways in which our policies, processes, teaching, and support have a positive impact on our students' experience of Leeds.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Access

Risk 1 There is a lower percentage of mature students at Leeds than there was in 2016/17, with a consistent decline in recent years. Evidence suggests that this could be a function of a low application rate, a low offer rate, strong distribution of applications on competitive programmes and qualification type among mature students.

Risk 2 There is a lower percentage of students of IMD Q1 students at Leeds than in the sector and the national population. Evidence suggests that this could be a function of a low application rate, low offer rate, and strong distribution of applications on competitive programmes.

Continuation

Risk 3: There is a continuation gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students at Leeds. When IMD and ethnicity are considered together, we find that 50 percent of the black student cohort at Leeds are IMD Quintile 1 students. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support and reinforces our commitment to continue our work improving systemic structures and overarching culture creating barriers to belonging and success.

Risk 4: There is a continuation gap between black and white students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support and reinforces our commitment to continue our work improving less-developed cultures of inclusivity and meaningful support/success mechanisms for this group.

Risk 5: There is a continuation gap between mature and young students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support and cost pressures and reinforces our commitment to continue our work revising less flexible academic and non-academic support mechanisms, especially in response to the complexity of the lived experiences of studying as mature learners and additional costs on course.

Completion

Risk 6: There is a completion gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support and cost pressures that reinforce our commitment to the continued delivery of work to accelerate the development of systems for the early identification of, and support for, students at risk of leaving or performing below their potential.

Risk 7: There is a completion gap between black and white students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support, this reinforces our commitment to the continued delivery of work improving less-developed cultures of inclusivity, the provision of role models and accelerating the development of meaningful support/success mechanisms and systems for the early identification of, and support for, students at risk of leaving or performing below their potential.

Degree Awarding

Risk 8: There is a degree awarding gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support. Examples include the under-development of inclusive pedagogies, less embedded priorities for addressing gaps at local levels, and the hidden curriculum.

Risk 9: There is a degree awarding gap between black and white students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support; reinforcing our commitment to the continued delivery of work to address underdevelopment of inclusive pedagogies and decolonised curricula, less embedded priorities for addressing gaps at local levels, and a less developed culture of inclusivity.

Risk 10: There is a degree awarding gap between mature and young students at Leeds. Evidence suggests this gap could be a function of insufficient personal and academic support; reinforcing our commitment to the continued delivery of work to underdevelopment of inclusive pedagogies, assessment, and curricula.

5. We have adopted an approach that recognises the interconnectedness of the risks and objectives outlined within this APP. Intersectional data analysis suggests significant overlaps between several of the groups we have highlighted in our objectives e.g., black and IMD Q1 students at Leeds. This does not mean that we take a *one size fits all* approach, but rather build a solid base of good practice within our systems and processes and our pedagogy. This is complemented by specific interventions that target groups we have identified as likely to experience (or have experienced) key risks to their equality of opportunity. Therefore, our intervention strategies commonly feature cross-interventions.

Objectives

Access

Objective PTA_1: Leeds will increase the percentage of mature students attending the University to 7.1% by 2027/28 through developing our mature student outreach, our flexible course provision, Information, advice, and guidance strategy (IAG) use of our alternative entry scheme, and our mature student marketing strategy.

Objective PTA_2: Leeds will increase the percentage of students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 attending the University to 16.1% by 2027/28 through attainment raising in schools, targeted outreach activity, and associated admissions strategy.

Continuation

Objective PTS_1: Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students reducing to 4 percentage points (pp) by 2027/28 through the delivery of schemes such as the Plus Programme (which works with under-represented groups) which will include enhanced welcome, induction and transition work, supporting direct interventions from staff; identification of more 'early warning' systems, including use of learning analytics, flagging students at risk of leaving and triggering interventions; financial support; increased cross institutional emphasis on success related objectives through governance and budgetary structures, student voice and pedagogical enhancement.

Objective PTS_2: Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between black and white students reducing to 3.3 pp by 2027/28 through the delivery of schemes such as the Plus Programme (which works with under-represented groups) which will include enhanced welcome, induction and transition work, supporting direct interventions from staff; identification of more 'early warning' systems, including use of learning analytics, flagging students at risk of leaving and triggering interventions; financial support (including some positive action scholarships); increased cross institutional emphasis on success related objectives through governance and budgetary structures, student voice and pedagogical enhancement.

Objective PTS_3: Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between mature and young students, reducing to 4.3 pp by 2027/28 through the delivery of schemes such as the Plus Programme (which works with under-represented groups) which will include enhanced welcome, induction and transition work, implementation and development of learner analytics system and supporting direct interventions from staff; identification of more 'early warning' systems, including use of learning analytics, flagging students at risk of leaving and triggering interventions; financial support; increased cross institutional emphasis on success related objectives through governance and budgetary structures, student voice, pedagogical enhancement, creation of cross institutional group with a specific mandate to help direct and coordinate best practice for promoting mature student success.

Completion

Objective PTS_4: Leeds will eliminate the completion gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students reducing to 4.4 pp by 2027/28. through the delivery of schemes such as the Plus Programme (which works with under-represented groups), implementation and development of learner analytics

system and supporting direct interventions from staff; identification of more 'early warning' systems flagging students at risk of leaving and triggering interventions; financial support; increased cross institutional emphasis on success related objectives through governance and budgetary structures, student voice and pedagogical enhancement. 12

Objective PTS_5: Leeds will eliminate the completion gap between black and white students, reducing to 3.4 pp by 2027/28 through the delivery of schemes such as the Plus Programme (which works with under-represented groups), implementation and development of learner analytics system and supporting direct interventions from staff; identification of more 'early warning' systems flagging students at risk of leaving and triggering interventions; financial support (including some positive action scholarships); increased cross institutional emphasis on success related objectives through governance and budgetary structures, student voice and pedagogical enhancement.

Degree Awarding

Objective PTS_6: Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students to 11.9 pp by 2027/28 through implementation of more inclusive pedagogies including implementation of our Curriculum Redefined¹ project and assessment strategy, implementation and development of learner analytics system and supporting direct interventions from staff; undertaking further research into inclusive teaching and learning, addressing the hidden curriculum of embedded expectations with staff and through student engagement prior to registration and on-course

Objective PTS_7: Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between black and white students, reducing to 11.6 pp by 2027/28 through implementation of more inclusive pedagogies including implementation of our Curriculum Redefined programme and assessment strategy, and specifically work on decolonising the curriculum, implementation and development of learner analytics system and supporting direct interventions from staff; undertaking further research into inclusive teaching and learning, addressing the hidden curriculum of embedded expectations with staff and through student engagement prior to registration and on-course.

Objective PTS_8: Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between mature and young students, reducing to 8 pp by 2027/28 through implementation of more inclusive pedagogies including implementation of our Curriculum Redefined programme and assessment strategy, implementation and development of learner analytics system and supporting direct interventions from staff undertaking further research into inclusive teaching and learning, addressing the hidden curriculum of embedded expectations through staff and student engagement prior to registration and on-course, student voice, closer engagement between faculties (particularly academic personal tutors) and the Lifelong Learning Centre.

Planned Objectives

6. The Index of Multiple Deprivation dataset has been incorporated into our array of metrics. We are conscious that it is geographical based indicator and, as such, is susceptible to the weaknesses of these indicators when identifying individuals. However, we feel that it is a strong supporting metric with good intersectional representation of groups we wish to target at Leeds.
7. Objectives relating to the access, continuation, completion, and degree awarding for students in receipt of Free School Meals will be reviewed once we have a robust body of data that we can link to individual students. Currently we have two-years of this information and want to build a four/five-year picture of the application trends, degree awards, continuation and completion of intersections of this grouping (e.g., subjects studied, Key Stage 5 attainment, ethnicity). Once we have trends and the ability to more forensically target interventions to benefit these students, we anticipate setting additional targets through a variation request.

¹ Details of Curriculum redefined can be found within this document: paragraphs 40-42 of the Whole Provider Approach section.

8. Anticipating the adoption of FSM into our planned objectives, we will increase our engagement with the students we are able to identify at Leeds, folding them into outreach work, the Plus Programme and our range of institutional priority groups as well as the imminent refresh of our Access and Student Success strategy which drives and guides our fair access and success work at all levels of study. They are already prioritised in our Access to Leeds criteria.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

9. Our intervention strategies include only areas of work that are new or have been altered to better enable us to meet the objectives detailed on pages 3 to 5); therefore, this represents only a proportion of our access and success work and investment. Given the high overlap of interventions we have divided projected spend equally between each of the success intervention strategies. It is worth noting that our approaches are underpinned by principles around equity-based leadership and working with students as individuals to foster belonging and mattering; whilst the interventions may be the same, the way in which these are enacted will likely differ.

Intervention strategy 1

Principle objective: **PTA_1 Leeds will increase the percentage of mature students attending the University**

Secondary objective: PTA_2

Risks to equality of opportunity: Knowledge and skills, Information and guidance, Perception of Higher Education, Application success rates, Limited choice of course type and delivery mode.

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£515k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Targeted Outreach and Marketing</p> <p>We know that mature students who engage more than once with our outreach and IAG work are more likely to apply to one of our courses.</p> <p>Building on this, we will target adults more widely to include more of those who are hard to reach and those more likely to apply to Higher Education, for example, we will work with specific community groups and adult learner outreach including foster carers and males from target groups.</p> <p>This will be supported by Marketing and wider campaigns of awareness raising of LLC and University programmes across the city. In developing this, we will map engagement and monitor patterns of access.</p> <p>We will develop our marketing strategy to more specifically target mature learners using joint expertise of marketing colleagues and those experienced in working with mature learners.</p>	<p>Increased mature student engagement with our outreach and IAG services</p> <p>Improved mapping and monitoring of mature student engagement with our outreach and IAG services</p> <p>Increase in full time and part time student recruitment.</p>	<p>IS 2</p>

<p>Review and enhancement of routes into full-time degree provision for Access to HE applicants or those out of study for some time.</p> <p>We will ensure that entry routes such as Access to HE are better understood internally and create dialogue with external providers to ensure there is a mutual understanding of requirements.</p> <p>We know, for example, from our internal data that 51.9% of our mature full-time applications were to our faculty of medicine and health where rejection rates vary from 71% in the School of Healthcare to 93% in School of Medicine. We will develop our understanding of the reasons for rejection and where there is a link to qualification, create the dialogue internally and externally to address this.</p>	<p>Increased understanding of link between qualification and offer rate</p> <p>Enhanced routes for mature students to entry</p> <p>Increased full time mature student recruitment</p>	<p>IS 2</p>
<p>Identifying markets, market insight analysis and networking for flexible provision.</p> <p>We have completed two insight analyses. One, the consulting firm EAB (they already work with the University) completed a broad analysis for us looking into labour market trends, skills shortages, demand for different employability skills. We will be working with them on the next phase of this, which is a deep-dive into the Business Management and Leadership degree market and how we can tap into this more effectively and boost our recruitment. The course is aimed at mature learners who are in work and want to study in the evening. Two, the University's marketing team have completed insight analysis for us as part of Curriculum Redefined to check the viability of our portfolio and also identified scope for growth of our flexible programmes aimed at mature students.</p> <p>We will also further develop our partnership work with Digital Education Service (DES) to develop online taster modules for part time courses.</p> <p>We will appoint fixed term development Networking post to link into relevant networks for flexible provision. For example, this could target those who in work in SMEs with level 3 qualifications. The post will set up professional advisory boards to ensure that our curriculum is responding to skills and training needs in the region.</p>	<p>Increase in mature student recruitment, through flexible provision, including part time, and improved insight into mature student market</p>	<p>IS 2</p>
<p>Information, advice and guidance (IAG) to increase use of alternative entry scheme</p> <p>Focused work with faculties where mature students are not well represented to implement referral process for mature student enquiries to Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC), particularly for the use of our Alternative Entry Scheme.</p>	<p>Increase in referrals to the Lifelong Learning Centre Alternative Entry scheme.</p> <p>Increased use of the alternative entry scheme</p>	<p>IS 2</p>

This will involve staff training for front line staff and admissions staff and partnership working between Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC)/ Education Engagement (EE) to expand impartial advice and guidance (IAG) provision and develop tailored support to prepare applicants for alternative entry. The training will help to enable growth and partnership working with faculties to tailor the scheme to subject provision.	Increased representation of mature students across faculties. Increase in mature student recruitment.	
--	--	--

Information on evaluation of and research informing some of the activities in this intervention strategy can be found in paragraphs 10-12, Table 1 and Annexes A and B.

Intervention Strategy 2

Principle objective: **PTA_2 Leeds will increase the percentage of students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 attending the University**

Secondary objective: PTA_1

Risks to equality of opportunity: Knowledge and skills, Information and guidance, Perception of higher education, Application success rates

Estimation of the resources (human and financial) that will be needed to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£2.09M	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Targeted Outreach activity</p> <p><i>Targeting of schools</i> – A comprehensive review of the schools and colleges we work with on Access activity has been undertaken. A new overall priority list was created based on metrics and schools were placed into one of five categories which determine the level of intervention they will receive from us.</p> <p>School / colleges in the highest priority categories, and who will therefore receive the highest level of outreach from us, were selected based on average attainment, proportions of students from IMD Q1, FSM, and ethnic background.</p> <p>Leeds is the lead institution and host for the Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) partnership, which supports young people to make informed choices by presenting the whole range of local HE options. The partnership collaborates on activities such as the Collaborative Taster Days.</p> <p>This relationship building with schools and clear targeting allowed us to review our outreach activity and develop the following:</p>	<p>Young people better prepared and able to make informed choices about progression to higher education</p> <p>Schools and Colleges are better able to support and advise young people because of a sustained and productive outreach relationship with the University of Leeds</p> <p>Increased recruitment of local students from target demographics, particularly</p>	<p>IS 1</p>

<p><i>Leeds to Success</i> – our pre-16 programme, new for 22/23, targeted at school level</p> <p><i>Step into Leeds</i> – our post-16 programme, new for 22/23, targeted at school level</p> <p><i>Futures programme</i>: a model of sustained engagement with a specific subject focus for students in the first year of post-16 study. Students apply and are selected to participate based on subject interest and eligibility criteria. Students from our target groups are prioritised and then targeted for contextual/guaranteed offers when applying to Leeds.</p> <p>Our outreach programmes have a pipeline to our Access to Leeds contextual admissions scheme which in turn leads into our Plus Programme.</p> <p><i>Research and Study Skills – EPQ support programme</i>. Series of workshops and talks to support schools and students with completion of the EPQ. Workshops available include Critical Thinking, Choosing a topic and writing research questions, and Academic Writing. This programme is offered to our widening access priority school.</p> <p>Development of this work and dissemination of outcomes has been done collaboratively with colleagues from the University of Southampton.</p>	<p>FSM eligible students and IMD Q1</p>	
<p>Attainment raising activity</p> <p><i>School Sponsorship</i> - Leeds Mathematics School (LMaS) Specialist mathematics school delivering post-16 education. Developed in partnership with the GORSE Academies Trust. Due to open September 2023</p> <p>Partnering with third sector organisations who have a proven track record in raising pupil attainment and supporting progression of young people from underrepresented background to higher education –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IntoUniversity (Developing existing relationship) • Brilliant Club – Scholars Programme (Developing existing relationship) • Tutor Trust • With Insight Education <p>Through GHWY’s Uni Connect programme, we are involved in an attainment-raising programme focused on developing Y8, Y9, and Y10 learners’ metacognition skills and awareness.</p>	<p>Increased student attainment</p> <p>Increased academic confidence and skills / abilities</p> <p>Increased levels of progression to selective universities</p>	<p>IS 1</p>
<p>Capabilities Framework and Experiential Learning</p>	<p>Increased student awareness of skills and attributes gained</p>	<p>IS 1 & 3 to 10</p>

<p>The Capabilities Framework project aims to enable programmes to demonstrate an explicit coherence between discipline level knowledge and skills, which in turn will support students to articulate both the knowledge and skills value of their degree.</p>	<p>from University study in broad curriculum</p>	
<p>The ambition to embed skills and literacies within the curriculum means that all students have equal opportunity to understand, develop, and reflect on their skills, attributes and behaviours in ways that will support their studies and their lives beyond university.</p>	<p>Increased understanding of diverse experiential learning activities available at Leeds</p>	
<p>We will also be looking at ways to diversify the spectrum of experiential learning opportunities available within the curriculum.</p>	<p>Increased IMD Q1 applications to a broad range of subjects</p>	
<p>This will be embedded into our outreach work so skills articulation will be part of our message, with the objective of creating more understanding of the value of a broader range of subjects.</p>		

Evaluation, Intervention Strategies 1-2: Access

10. We have included a selection of the Access related evaluation we are undertaking in Table 1 below.
11. We have been committed to raising attainment in schools in partnership with external agencies for over a decade. We have consulted with the literature and engaged with briefings from the OFS and other sector bodies such as Transforming Access and Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) and the Brilliant Club to commission our own research to produce an Attainment Raising Toolkit. We are committed to continuing the evaluation in this area of our work. Please see Annex B for more information.
12. We have developed Theories of Change for each of our new sustained programmes of engagement and also for our more established EPQ and Research Skills project and for our outreach work in the LLC. We monitor progress against our targets via our Schools Engagement and Data, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (DMERG) groups. We will elicit type 2 evidence to share our findings with the sector. This will include conducting focus groups with participants, teachers and delivery staff and measuring engagement with our target groups. We will deliver our findings using intersectional data during 2024, provided we have enough participants to ethically share analysis of data at this level. We will also endeavour to use HEAT's resources to make use of comparator groups.

Table 1 Evaluation - Access Intervention Strategies

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
<p>Sustained programmes of engagement with young people -</p> <p>Step into Leeds Leeds to Success Futures Programmes</p> <p>In addition, further analysis of existing projects:</p> <p>Thomas Transition Project Reach for Excellence Access to Leeds</p> <p>Collaborative HE outreach activity through GHWY</p>	<p>Data analysis (correlation between outreach participants and entry profile of students to Leeds in relevant year of entry. E.g. Year 10 participants in 2023 v entry profile of entry to HE in 27/28)</p> <p>Tracking participants into HE via HEAT</p> <p>Focus groups and pre and post activity evaluation with students and teachers</p> <p>Trial of HEAT comparator group resources</p>	<p>An interim report for our three new programmes December 2024</p> <p>We will publish progress reports on an annual basis Commencing September 2025</p> <p>Findings from all evaluation will be shared at conferences and networks such as Network for Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions (NERUPI), NEON and TASO Ongoing</p> <p>5-year report on impact of all programmes of sustained engagement to be delivered Available 2028/2029</p> <p>Case studies to be published on our website and shared with the sector From December 2024</p> <p>GHWY evaluation findings at: https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/about-us/key-information/</p>
<p>EPQ and research skills support</p>	<p>Theory of Change and qualitative data collection</p> <p>Tracking participants into HE via HEAT</p>	<p>Progress reports to be published annually From December 2025</p>
<p>Leeds Maths School</p>	<p>To be agreed in partnership with the Gorse Academies Trust</p>	<p>Leeds Maths School Impact Report – date TBC</p>
<p>Brilliant Club Into University Tutor Trust</p>	<p>Theory of Change and reports annually on progression to HE</p> <p>Qualitative data collection and tracking progression to HE</p> <p>Tutor assessment, teacher feedback and attainment data</p>	<p>We will co-publish reports with our partners on an annual basis.</p>

More detailed information on evaluation can also be provided in the Evaluation section or at Annex B

Intervention Strategy 3: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_1 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5,

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Hidden curriculum – Continuation Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student guides • Staff guides • workshops <p>To help clarify what the ‘hidden curriculum’ is and therefore how it can be addressed (students and staff).</p>	<p>Students feel heard, seen and supported, with a view to helping them to overcome hurdles on course.</p> <p>Staff develop a greater awareness of what students want to know/don’t know and can plan for this in future.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4 to 10</p>
<p><i>Student Success Hubs</i> have been rolled out in multiple locations across campus (libraries, Halls of Residence, cafes and the Students Union space), providing students with the opportunity to seek support for academic related issues and receiving individualised, proactive support.</p>	<p>Students feel heard, seen and supported, with a view to helping them to overcome hurdles on course.</p> <p>Staff develop a greater awareness of what students want to know/don’t know and can plan for this in future.</p>	<p>IS 4 to 10</p>
<p>Enhanced and coordinated <i>Peer Mentoring</i></p> <p>Development of a team for devising agreed principles of Peer Mentoring delivered across the University and ensuring the evaluation of the schemes.</p> <p>Investment in Peer Mentoring management system</p>	<p>Evaluation and possible revision of existing programmes.</p> <p>Improved social and support networks for students.</p> <p>Better understanding of hidden curriculum amongst participants</p> <p>Increased continuation and completion of participants</p>	<p>IS 4-10</p>

<p><i>Wellbeing and Lifestyle Programme</i> referrals: the Plus Programme fund a number of places on the Wellbeing and Lifestyle Programme each year for students in need. Students who are referred to the scheme benefit from individual support from a Wellbeing Adviser at The Edge to use a combination of lifestyle management and physical activity to improve their overall wellbeing (including 12 weeks of free access to the facilities).</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to receive advice, support and assistance to improve their wellbeing and mental health.</p>	<p>The fully funded places relieve possible cost pressures on students, to allow them to focus their resource elsewhere and to maximise their potential on course.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4 to 10</p>
<p><i>Welcome Induction Transition</i> support: the Plus Programme (which incorporates all identified IMD Q1 students) has introduced a bespoke package of pre-entry transition support to students who are eligible the Plus Programme.</p> <p>This includes a month-long series of workshops/sessions preparing applicants for different elements of life in Higher Education (personal, social and academic), an online social community space to create connections with peers, pre-entry on campus welcome events and enhanced communications.</p>	<p>The comprehensive transition activity and offer meets the needs of the students, addresses any concerns or questions they may have and orchestrates a relationship with the University over a sustained period, contributing to a sense of belonging and identify pre-entry.</p> <p>Students show increased sense of belonging and identity at Leeds prior to starting their course.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for IMD Q1, Black and other students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4 to 6</p>
<p><i>School Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies</i> (SALIPS) are in place in 28 Schools and services, covering all Faculties, to help support and raise awareness of inclusive approaches which benefit all student groups.</p> <p>The knowledge and leadership capability of this network continues to be supported and developed, having been initially established in 2019.</p> <p>Principles of inclusive pedagogies have been developed to help those involved in curriculum design and refresh to understand hidden curriculum as an element of accessibility. Aligning with and supporting the implementation of transformational change via our Curriculum Redefined programme</p> <p>Key groups of staff including Academic Development Consultants and Learning Advisers from the Library are being supported to develop expertise in this area, with a range of staff facing resources. These principles are also being embedded through student education development initiatives provided through OD&PL.</p>	<p>The implementation of inclusive pedagogies will be iterative across several years, depending on local priorities.</p> <p>This should lead to greater equity in access to the curriculum for all students, shown through reduced gaps in continuation and attainment and enhanced sense of belonging.</p>	<p>IS 5 to 10</p>

<p>Wellbeing and Lifestyle Programme referrals: the Plus Programme fund a number of places on the Wellbeing and Lifestyle Programme each year for students in need.</p> <p>Students who are referred to the scheme benefit from individual support from a Wellbeing Adviser at The Edge to use a combination of lifestyle management and physical activity to improve their overall wellbeing (including 12 weeks of free access to the facilities).</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to receive advice, support and assistance to improve their wellbeing and mental health. The fully funded places relieve possible cost pressures on students, to allow them to focus their resource elsewhere and to maximise their potential on course.</p> <p>Mature students will receive preferential weighting for participation.</p>	<p>Improved continuation rates for Black, mature, and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4-7</p>
---	---	----------------------

Information on evaluation of and research informing some of the activities in intervention strategies 3 to 7 can be found in paragraphs 13-15, Table 2 and Annexes A and B.

Intervention Strategy 4: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_2 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between black and white students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5,

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support;

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p><i>Positive Action Scholarships:</i> development of bespoke scholarship(s) (within the Means-Tested UG Scholarships portfolio) targeted at students using protected characteristics where data and evidence shows that there is a need for positive action (e.g. Black Caribbean and/or female applicants from minoritised groups).</p>	<p>Financial support reduces cost pressures on students once on course, helping to maximise their potential and success.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4, & 6 to 9</p>
<p><i>Mentoring/coaching:</i> undergraduate students from Asian and Black backgrounds have the opportunity to receive mentoring and one to one coaching by professionals working in partnership with the University, to help them plan for their futures and reach their potential.</p>	<p>Students feel that they can realise their potential and are equipped with the skills to do so.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS 4, & 6 to 9</p>
<p><i>A Minoritised Groups Plus Programme Strategy</i> will be implemented for 23/24, targeting specific groups where data tells us there are gaps and will include signposting to key initiatives across the University and will introduce bespoke initiatives for Plus Programme students from minoritised groups (linked closely with Black Women’s Project (see Intervention Strategy 7), the Students Union and relevant Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) projects).</p> <p>It is anticipated that upcoming collaborative work with University of Birmingham and the University of Southampton (who operate similar schemes), which is intended to explore sharing best practice and opportunities for these schemes to link and collaborate, will inform future developments such as the Minoritised Groups strategy.</p>	<p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others) participating in the Plus Programme.</p>	<p>IS 5, 8</p>

Intervention Strategy 5: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_3 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between mature and young students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_8

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support; Cost Pressures

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<i>Appoint transition lead in the Lifelong Learning centre</i>	Develop co-ordinated transition and progression work with faculties for students moving between years and those progressing from Foundation Years, to build on existing progress such as allowing re-sits for FY students.	IS 11
Expand <i>reverse mentoring scheme</i>	Increased take up of reverse mentoring scheme for staff and students. Raise staff awareness of challenges facing mature learners through reverse mentoring.	IS 11
Belonging - Mature continuation. <i>Expand on the 'middle ground network' pilot: A collaborative initiative between the Lifelong Learning Centre, Student Success Unit and the Leeds University Union.</i>	Co-creating spaces (virtual, physical) for mature and 'younger mature' students to help develop a greater sense of belonging at Leeds.	IS 11
<i>Mature Student advisory board</i>	Student voice helping the University improved its understanding of the challenges and barriers that mature students face. Continued delivery of piloted 'Open House' online session to gather direct feedback from mature students and what they want from different schools and services.	IS 1 & 11
<i>Creation of mature student working group.</i> The mature student population is broader than solely students enrolled at the Lifelong Learning Centre. The working group brings together staff and student expertise across the institution	Planned outcomes include: Improve co-ordination of support for targeted groups of mature students (including the intersection of mature and disabled groups). • Improve joined up working between the Lifelong Learning Centre, Services and faculties, with clearly communicated areas of responsibility • Improve understanding of the challenges and barriers that mature students face amongst university staff • Help direct and coordinate best practice for promoting mature student success	IS 1 & 11I

Intervention Strategy 6: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_4 Leeds will eliminate the completion gap IMD between Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_5

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support; cost pressures

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p><i>Progression Between the Years:</i> A strategic focus on measures to address 'Progression Between the Years'; to develop an iterative, cross institutional continuum of support (building on existing data sources, indicators and mechanisms/processes) to help staff to identify students who may be struggling on their course as early as possible in each academic year with a view to addressing non-continuation rates.</p>	<p>Delivery of a cross-institutional, proactive continuum of support and mechanisms for identifying students as early on as possible in the academic year.</p> <p>Greater understanding of the needs of our students and a greater appreciation for the triggers which highlight a student may be struggling.</p>	IS 3 to 5 & 8
<p><i>Learning Analytics/StREAM:</i> The implementation of Learning Analytics (via the StREAM platform) to allow students and staff to understand a student's engagement with their digital resources on course and to proactively identify and provide pastoral support to those with low/no engagement (providing a foundation for the above strategy on Progression Between the Years).</p>	<p>An established and embedded system for understanding our students' engagement with their course, and a mechanism for providing them with real time proactive support.</p> <p>Improved completion rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	IS 3 to 5 & 8 to 10
<p><i>Student Contact and Engagement Support Caller:</i></p> <p>To utilise new Student Contact and Engagement Support Caller roles, to deliver appropriate and timely interventions when contacting students by phone or email who are flagged through StREAM Engagement Monitoring or the above continuum of support.</p>	<p>An established and embedded model for reaching students at scale in real time.</p> <p>Improved completion rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	IS 3 to 5 & 8 to 10
<p>Leeds Bursary uplift. Introduction of a £2k premium for students from Care Experienced/Estranged backgrounds, introduction of additional award at £36k - £42.6k income threshold to help mitigate cost of living crisis.</p>	<p>Some alleviation of financial pressures on students who are the most significantly disadvantaged financially as per OfS key performance measure 5.</p> <p>Improved completion rates of students from Care Experienced/Estranged (CE/E) backgrounds.</p>	IS: 3 to 5 & 8 to 10

<p>Belonging – Completion Upskilling and social opportunities available through the Plus Programme.</p>	<p>The IMD Q1 students benefit from communications before their course begins, to help them create a sense of belonging at the University. They are also able to select training, opportunities and support available to students via the Plus Programme throughout their time at Leeds.</p> <p>IMD Q1 students have opportunities to meet and identify with other students from similar backgrounds via tailored and consistent support pre-entry and once on course. Improved completion rates for IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS: 3 to 5 & 8 to 10</p>
<p><i>Student Involvement Project (SIP)</i>: the SIP will embed student voice in decision-making at the highest level at Leeds, and ensure students are involved in informing the development of the APP.</p> <p>The SIP will be based on a Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Strategy approach, ensuring that students are involved at every stage from conception through to considerations for further development.</p>	<p>Students from under-represented groups will be visible, heard and more actively involved in fair Access and Success decision-making process.</p>	<p>IS 1 to 6 & 8 to 10</p>

Intervention Strategy 7: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_5 Leeds will eliminate the completion gap between black and white students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support; cost pressures

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p><i>Black Women's Project:</i> The University has partnered with the BWP to address the concern (highlighted by research) that there is a lack of institutional support for the development of Black women and facilitation of post-18 success, which manifests in the wellbeing, educational and professional experiences of Black female students.</p> <p>Black female students at Leeds have the opportunity to engage with BWP where they will work to deliver a mechanism for community building amongst students (via the creation of a Black Women's Society), and offer tailored development for holistic training and research programmes to document the factors that influence the experiences of Black females in Higher Education and its links to the degree awarding gap.</p>	<p>Black female students at Leeds have the chance to contribute to research in this area.</p> <p>Black female students experience an increased sense of belonging at the institution and can meet and engage with students from a similar background.</p> <p>Staff develop a greater awareness of the needs of students from these backgrounds, to ensure that University systems, support services and the curriculum is designed to suit their needs.</p> <p>Improved continuation rates for Black and IMD Q1 students (amongst others).</p>	<p>IS: 3, 4, 6, 8, 9</p>
<p><i>Recruitment of diverse staff body</i></p> <p>Our Access and Student Success Strategy identified the recruitment of a more diverse staff as a key enabler for the delivery of the strategy's fair access and success KPIs.</p> <p>We have already (in 2023) exceeded the 2026/27 target for the recruitment of black female professors.</p> <p>We will continue to work towards staff diversity and will maintain KPIs for this as part of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy's success measures.</p>	<p>Meet or exceed existing and new staff diversity targets.</p>	<p>IS: 3, 4, 6, 8, 9</p>

Evaluation, Intervention strategies 3 – 7: Continuation and Completion

13. We continually review our own internal data and compare our progress with the sector in tandem with consultation with the latest literature and publications. Our own internal data shows that financial support alone is not sufficient to keep students on course, so on consultation with students and published literature, we have identified what we believe to be the main barriers to continuation and completion. Our student success initiatives have been developed to tackle these barriers with the aim of students feeling that they belong and are supported regardless of background.
14. We recognise that risks to non-continuation and non-completion in our target groups are complex and multi-faceted and to be able to extricate the impact of any individual risk from another is unlikely. Therefore, each individual intervention strategy will have its own theory of change and we will use qualitative data to investigate what works for who and in what circumstance. We will evaluate the impact of our strategies against our high-level targets and against any KPIs set as part of the intervention.
15. Where changes relate to the existing culture and practice of the University we are exploring methods of self-assessment to understand the progress of change allied to progress against success metrics for different characteristics (including intersections) such as continuation rates, awarding gaps, etc. More detail is available on this work in the Evaluation section (paragraph 97). Table 2 below pulls out a selection of interventions and the evaluation methods we will be/are already implementing as well as the publication summary.

Table 2 Evaluation – Continuation and Completion Intervention Strategies

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
<p>Welcome, Induction and Transition Programme (WIT)</p> <p>Sense of Belonging</p> <p>Student Involvement</p> <p>Middle Ground Network</p> <p>Learner Analytics</p> <p>Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies</p> <p>Targeted scholarships, targeted uplift of Leeds bursary and raising awareness of hardship fund</p> <p>Minoritised Group Plus Programme Strategy</p> <p>Black Women’s project</p> <p>Wellbeing and Lifestyle Referral programme</p>	<p>Theory of Change underpinning each intervention strategy – type 2</p> <p>Data analysis using internal and external – type 2</p> <p>Focus groups, interviews and consultation with students – type 2</p> <p>Case Studies – type 1</p>	<p>Our multi-layered Theory of Change will be shared across our partners and with TASO in order to share with the Sector Pilot version by August 2024</p> <p>Monitoring of progress against high level milestones. Progress will be reported in our annual reports from 2025 onwards. Annually from Dec 2025</p> <p>Qualitative findings will be shared at national conferences, with national networks and online via our Student Success website Bi-annually from December 2024</p> <p>Case Studies and areas of best practice to be published on our Student Success website and via sector networks Regular publications from March 2025</p>
<p>Sense of Belonging</p>	<p>Realist evaluation (Type 2)</p>	<p>Date to be confirmed</p>

Intervention Strategy 8: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_6 Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_7, PTS_8

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support;

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.

£279k

Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p><i>School Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies:</i> (SALIPs) work to promote and embed inclusive approaches.</p> <p>New areas of inclusive practices within Schools include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing self-assessment as inclusive practice (Design); 2. Designing module assignment to be inclusive, accessible and authentic (Education); 3. Capstone Assessments (Faculty Biological Sciences); 4. Fostering Inclusive Assessment through AI-Driven Technologies (Leeds University Business School) ; 5. Embedding formative assessment opportunities tailored to the needs of the student (Arts, Humanities and Cultures) ; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. students benefit from more inclusive practices 2. students feel more confident in approaching assignments and have a better understanding of expectations 3. Students gain an enhanced learning experience, reduction in assessment load 4. students actively encouraged to explore different questions using these technologies and apply their updated understanding to analyse issues from different perspectives in coursework and essays. Foster a culture of awareness and empathy, and empower students to develop more inclusive mindsets 5. students understand that what they do in classes constitutes formative assessment and feedback opportunities. Students practise the skills involved in assessment on the module, while still covering the content 6. Reduction of degree awarding gaps 	<p>IS 9,10</p>
<p>Enhancements of Data-led approach</p> <p>School and Faculty reflection through Annual School Reviews, Integrated Planning Exercise and other governance. Creation of priorities and Student Success action plans to address gaps in outcomes.</p>	<p>Colleagues in schools able to access more translated data to be better informed of areas for development and supported to make assessment more inclusive</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between IMD Q1 - Q5 and White - Black</p>	<p>IS 3 to 7 & 9 to 10</p>

<p>Success targets (which relate to closing identified awarding gaps) newly built into Integrated Planning Exercise</p> <p>Delivery of a suite of inclusive assessment information, advice and guidance meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current focus has been on UG • Action also to focus on PGT <p>Delivery of workshops with Schools, identifying specific activity contextualised to the individual school and/or group of programmes.</p> <p>Provision of ongoing support and partnership, ensuring the satisfactory delivery of an agreed set of curriculum-based outcomes. Readiness check and competency standards being developed (linked to Curriculum Redefined)</p>		
<p>Hidden Curriculum – Awarding gaps</p> <p>Work to address the hidden curriculum for underrepresented groups. Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student guide to the Hidden Curriculum; students feel confident in their understanding of the different expressions they are likely to encounter • MOOC (Skills to Succeed at University); students feel confident in their understanding of the different expressions they are likely to encounter, develop/improve awareness of the diverse student body and the range of resources available • Flying Start online module; provides the opportunity for students to improve academic skills and explore new ways of learning before arriving at university • Second Year Success online module; students build on skills learnt in first year • Final Chapter online module; students develop skills and confidence to help complete final year research project 	<p>Reduction in awarding gaps between IMD Q1 vs Q5 and White and Black students</p>	<p>IS 9, 10</p>

<p>Workshops will be delivered strategically throughout the academic calendar in relation to assessment periods;</p> <p>Exploring expansion of student workshop series held in the Faculty Biological Sciences designed to ensure that students feel confident in their understanding and awareness of Learning & Teaching, Assessment and Student Life. <i>This workshop series is based on a student survey undertaken by the faculty.</i></p>		
<p><i>Student Interns,</i> 7 x Student Engagement Interns (Faculty Biological Science): Mature, Student Success, International, EDI, employability, community and communications 1 x Employability and Opportunity Intern (Leeds University Business School) 1x PG intern (Faculty Social; Sciences)</p>	<p>Students are empowered to effect change through paid roles</p> <p>Fellow students benefit from a representative 'voice'</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between IMD Q1 vs Q5 and White and Black students</p>	<p>IS 3 to 7 & 9 to 10</p>
<p>Research – Pedagogical Funding of/Commitment to delivery of <i>Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) Fellowships:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding digital literacy in the curriculum • Pedagogical wellbeing & the Leeds Curriculum • Community-led pedagogies to diversify the curriculum • Exploring academic personal tutoring with under-represented students • Assessing the impact of online rubrics for feedback and assessment • Pedagogies of Digital Assessment • Sense of belonging and interactive pedagogies • A representative medical curriculum • Inclusive digital libraries - eBook accessibility (Disability focus) 	<p>More information on challenges faced by underrepresented groups as well as ways to address these challenges.</p>	<p>IS 3 to 7 & 9 to 10</p>

Information on evaluation of and research informing some of the activities in intervention strategies 8 to 10 can be found in paragraphs 16-19, Table 3 and Annexes A and B.

Intervention Strategy 9: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_7 Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between black and white students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_8

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support;

Estimation of spend required to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<p>Belonging – awarding gaps for minoritised groups</p> <p>Work delivered through a ‘belonging’ lens designed to help address awarding gaps.</p> <p>A team of academics have been/will be recruited for delivering workshops & support to schools on assessment change.</p> <p>A SharePoint will be developed to act as a depository for information and advice on assessment change.</p>	<p>Production of Decolonising the Curriculum: <i>How to</i> Guides so that staff feel empowered to, and have the resources to, decolonise teaching</p> <p>Colleagues in these schools / staff across the university feel more empowered and are more aware of how to make assessment more inclusive and understand what’s needed to do this.</p>	<p>IS 3 to 8 & 10</p>
<p><i>Academic assessment leads:</i> share good practice, lead on innovation, minimise inconsistencies in process, and contribute to institutional discussions related to assessment within their school</p>	<p>Assessment re-design</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between black and white students</p>	<p>IS 3 to 8 & 10</p>
<p><i>Decolonising the Curriculum:</i> How to Guides 5 x guides produced and uploaded to university web pages.</p>	<p>Assessment re-design</p> <p>Staff feel empowered to, and have the resources to, decolonise teaching</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between black and white students</p>	<p>IS 4 & 7</p>
<p>Production of resources on <i>Academic Personal Tutor Inclusivity.</i> (Guidance and Workshops)</p>	<p>APT staff feel confident in developing strong partnership with students helping maximise their success</p> <p>Students feel included and that they belong</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between black and white students</p>	<p>IS 3 to 8 & 10</p>
<p><i>Research – Pedagogical</i></p>	<p>More information on challenges faced by underrepresented groups as well as ways to address these challenges.</p>	<p>IS 4 & 7</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race, class and me: Exploring student authentic self and belonging (Ethnicity) • What is the role of assessment type in awarding gaps? (Ethnicity) • Decolonising • Artificial Intelligence for Decolonising 		
---	--	--

Intervention Strategy 10: Objectives and targets

Principal Objective: **PTS_8 Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between mature and young students.** Secondary Objectives: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4, PTS_5, PTS_6, PTS_7

Risks to equality of opportunity

Insufficient personal support; Insufficient academic support;

Estimation of the resources (human and financial) that will be needed to deliver the intervention strategy over the 4 years of the APP.	£279k	
Activity	Outcomes	Cross intervention?
<i>Enhancements of Data-led approach</i> Development of a methodology measuring and enhanced reporting on distance travelled for mature learners.	Intersectionality in reporting, to ensure more robust understanding of mature student attainment.	
Belonging - awarding gaps for mature students Work delivered through a 'belonging' lens designed to help address awarding gaps.	Partnership working between our Lifelong Learning Centre and faculties to develop Academic Personal Tutoring that responds to mature student experiences. Work involves Team meetings and service level agreements to enable effective partnership working.	IS 5
Delivery of a suite of <i>inclusive assessment information, advice and guidance</i> meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current focus has been on UG • Action also to focus on PGT 	Assessment re-design Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students	IS 5,8,9

<p><i>Embedding inclusive pedagogies</i> (as noted in intervention strategy 3) linking with Curriculum Redefined</p>	<p>Mature students have a higher likelihood of also being disabled and therefore an increased focus on inclusive pedagogical approaches, including digital accessibility and exploring the parameters of our flexibility in delivery will lead to improved outcomes for this group.</p> <p>Enhanced academic performance</p>	<p>IS 5,8,9</p>
<p><i>Workshops with Schools</i>, identifying specific activity that is personalised to the individual school and/or group of programmes.</p> <p>Providing ongoing support and partnership, ensuring the satisfactory delivery of an agreed set of curriculum-based outcomes.</p> <p>Readiness check and competency standards being developed</p> <p>A team of academics have been/will be recruited to deliver workshops & support to schools on assessment change.</p> <p>A SharePoint will be developed to act as a depository for information and advice on assessment change.</p>	<p>Curriculum enhancement</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students</p> <p>Assessment re-design</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students</p>	<p>IS 5,8,9</p>
<p>School Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies: (SALIPs) work to promote and embed inclusive approaches.</p>	<p>Assessment re-design</p> <p>Work delivered within the Lifelong Learning Centre on Authentic Assessment: using assessment to produce resources for professional lives; positive impact on students' professional lives</p> <p>Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students</p>	<p>IS 5,8,9</p>
<p>Hidden Curriculum;</p> <p><i>guides and workshops</i>; surfacing the assumptions and providing the necessary support and resources</p>	<p>Awareness of the curriculum and student experience/Inclusive Curriculum Design/Academic Skills</p>	<p>IS 5,8,9</p>
<p><i>Staff Forums and Networks</i></p> <p>Staff Leadership workshops</p> <p>Faculty Staff information Sessions - Supporting Mature Students</p>	<p>Informing decision making and practice across the University.</p> <p>Inclusive policy design and practice / Informing decision making and practice across the University.</p>	<p>IS 5</p>

	Inclusive curriculum design/tailored student support	
Lifelong Learning centre <i>Academic, Personal and Professional Support for Mature Students</i>	Academic Skills development (mature students)/tailored student support Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students	IS 5
<i>Mature student specialist Academic Personal Tutor</i> (to be piloted in school of Languages Cultures and Societies). Post to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be alert to higher risks to academic success to which mature students are exposed, • have a good understanding of the types of challenges and issues encountered by mature students, • able to offer advice, guidance, support and signposting that is well-tailored to this student group, • be better able to support these learners in their transition to, and during their time at, Leeds 	Increased Sense of Belonging Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students	IS 5
<i>Additional Course Costs:</i> 1. Research into and collation of costs identified as 'additional' to tuition fee. 2. Identification and implementation of mitigations for these costs	Reduction in awarding gaps between mature and young students	IS 3 to 9

Evaluation Intervention strategies 8 to 10: Degree Awarding Gaps

16. We have analysed our own internal data and consulted with our students via our established student engagement networks such as the Plus Programme Steering Group and the Mature Students Advisory Board. We have also conducted a thorough literature review and engaged with reports into awarding gaps by other HEIs and national bodies such as TASO, HEPI and AdvanceHE. (Please see Annex B)
17. The national picture reflects our own conclusion that while Leeds has seen a narrowing or static gap in some of our target groups, there are persistent awarding gaps between student groups, the most pressing identified for targeting at Leeds are the gaps between young and mature students, black heritage and white students and students from IMD Q1 and Q5. The literature and our own internal investigations suggest that providing a more inclusive curriculum, addressing the barriers to students feeling that they belong and that they matter and conducting research into more inclusive pedagogies will address issues to improve the attainment of all those at risk of disadvantage as identified by the OFS.

18. We will take a mixed methods approach to the evaluation of these interventions, recognising that the impacts of each intervention will be intrinsically linked. We will develop multi-layered Theories of Change, from a high-level overarching Access and Student Success approach, as stated above, to interlinking plans across the broad areas of work. In addition, we will create more granular theories of change to ensure that colleagues, students and partners across the institution can successfully engage with our evaluation plans and understand their role in the process of continuous improvement.
19. We have identified 13 research projects to be conducted from 2024 onwards, nine to be conducted by our LITE fellows and four pieces of research to be delivered in-house. This will be in addition to ongoing data analysis, qualitative approaches, and triangulation with findings of sector colleagues.

Table 3 Evaluation – Degree Awarding Gaps Intervention Strategies

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation Include type of evidence you intend to generate e.g. Type 2.	Summary of publication plan When evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take
Inclusive pedagogies Curriculum redefined Enhancement of our data led-approach Addressing the hidden curriculum Decolonising the curriculum – production of resources, guidance and communities of best practice Collaboration with students Tailored student support Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies	Robust multi-layered Theory of Change to be developed to investigate the impact of our multi-intervention approach to decreasing awarding gaps (Type 1) Data analysis (Type 2)	Our multi-layered Theory of Change will be shared across our partners and with TASO in order to share with the Sector Pilot version by August 2024 Monitoring of progress against high level milestones. Progress will be reported in our annual reports from 2025 onwards. Annually from Dec 2025 Qualitative findings will be shared at national conferences, with national networks and online via our Student Success website Bi-annually from December 2024 Case Studies and areas of best practice to be published on our Student Success website and via sector networks Regular publications from March 2025
LITE fellowship <u>Race, class and me: Exploring student authentic self and belonging (Ethnicity)</u>	Research project focussing on the student voice to gather qualitative data (Type 2)	Report Findings and recommendations from research into pedagogies to be published in journals and/or disseminated via sector networks.
LITE fellowship	Research project investigating the role of individual assessment marks	Report

<u>What is the role of assessment type in awarding gaps? (Ethnicity)</u>	and personal characteristics on awarding gaps (Type 3)	Findings and recommendations from research into pedagogies to be published in journals and/or disseminated via sector networks.
LITE fellowship <u>Decolonising</u>	Research project into the role of race, socio-economical background, gender and age on sense of belonging (Type 2 and Type 3)	Report Decolonising <u>Resources & Principles</u>
LITE fellowship <u>Artificial Intelligence for Decolonising</u>	Research project using artificial intelligence and learner analytics to identify and measure colonial bias in our curriculum (Type 2 and Type 3)	Report Artificial Intelligence for Decolonising Findings and recommendations from research into pedagogies to be published in journals and/or disseminated via sector networks.
LITE Fellowship <u>Embedding digital literacy in the curriculum</u>	Qualitative and participatory research with students, academic staff and professional service staff (Type 2)	Toolkit to support embedding digital literacies across a range of disciplines and levels of study
LITE Fellowship - <u>Pedagogical wellbeing & the Leeds Curriculum</u>	Ongoing qualitative research into the development of an effective compassionate curriculum (Type 2)	Ongoing reports, podcasts and articles on effective practices for embedding wellbeing into the curriculum
LITE Fellowship - <u>Community-led pedagogies to diversify the curriculum</u>	Qualitative research with staff and students including the use of Listening Rooms (Type 2)	Report into expanding sense of belonging, and community led change to pedagogies. Report available December 2024
LITE Fellowship - <u>Exploring academic personal tutoring with under-represented students</u>	Qualitative research (Type 2)	Research report Findings and recommendations from research into pedagogies to be published in journals and/or disseminated via sector networks.
LITE Fellowship - <u>Pedagogies of Digital Assessment</u>	Review of pedagogical literature on digital assessment and qualitative research (Type 2)	Support materials on the implementation of digital assessment from a learning-focused and pedagogical perspective

		Evaluation framework for digital assessment
LITE Fellowship - <u>Sense of belonging and interactive pedagogies</u>	Literature review, qualitative research and subsequent thematic analysis (Type 2)	Research report Findings and recommendations from research into pedagogies to be published in journals and/or disseminated via sector networks.
<u>LITE Fellowship - A representative medical curriculum</u>	Qualitative data collection using surveys, focus groups and Listening Rooms. Thematic analysis to identify key themes (Type 2)	Findings and recommendations to be published on LITE webpages
LITE Fellowship - <u>Inclusive digital libraries - eBook accessibility (Disability focus)</u>	Qualitative research (Type 2)	Research report Resources for users of e-Book accessibility

Whole provider approach

20. As demonstrated within our intervention strategies, our approach has shifted over recent years to place far more emphasis on driving institutional culture change as well as change to our practices, and curricula. We believe that this work delivered in tandem with direct and targeted interventions (such as summer schools or the Plus Programme) strengthens our provision providing the best opportunity for delivering lasting positive change for underrepresented students.
21. Our approach not only brings together work on process, practice, policy and culture we also work to ensure that a student's journey is as seamless as possible, for example our contextual access provision (Access to Leeds and our continued membership of the Realising Opportunities partnership) links to student success provision (Plus Programme). This is not just enacted at the operational level but also strategically. Our Access and Student Success strategy is intended to bring all our access and success work into a coherent connected construct, understanding that access and success are highly intersected as is progression; running through all these stages is equity, diversity and inclusion.
22. The vision of the Access and Student Success Strategy outlined in paragraph 3 highlights concepts such as belonging and diversity: language reflected in both our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and our Student Opportunities and Futures strategy. The section below outlines in more detail how these strategies interlink.

Access and Participation Plans

23. Our APP sits within our broader Access and Student Success Strategy (ASSS). This strategy articulates our approach to recruiting and ensuring the success and progression of students from diverse backgrounds at every level, from undergraduate through to research postgraduate study and/or into employment. The ASSS demonstrates many of the requirements outlined within the Access and Participation Plan guidance and, as such is referred to within this section to help demonstrate how our approach adheres to Ofcs expectations.
24. The University adheres to the principles of equality and diversity as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 in both the ASSS and the APP; equality considerations are embedded throughout both. Equality and Inclusion Unit (EIU) staff serve on committees and working groups responsible for inputting into the creation, reporting and monitoring of our APP and our ASSS. In addition, there is clear senior leadership for fair access and student success which is aligned to the institutional vision.
25. The development of our APP includes collaboration with the Leeds University Union and the student body (as outlined in the Student Consultation section of this plan).

Strategies & Institutional Change

26. Our commitment to fair access and success is embedded within our **University of Leeds Strategy 2020-2030**, which is informed by and empowers all other strategies, pulling in KPIs from supporting strategies to help measure progress and identify areas of focus.
27. The process for the development of the Access and Student Success Strategy (ASSS) as well as other strategies routinely includes collaborative development, and co-creation, with students, faculties and services across the University, as well as alignment with existing strategies. Figure 1, Page 1 illustrates how the ASSS is aligned with other strategies, including those covering equality, and inclusion, learning and teaching and employability, among others.
28. The ASSS has clearly defined target groups integrating existing APP targets but going beyond our regulatory requirements to include targets across the student lifecycle for postgraduate students at Leeds. In addition, there is the inclusion of enabling targets relating to staff diversity, data maturity and student voice. Our ongoing work as part of the Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education (YCEDE) and Generation Delta (which is led by Leeds), which seek to test how we can

create more equity in the recruitment and success of diverse PGR students, has helped us to define additional PGR level targets as part of the ASSS.

29. The ASSS also highlights that we will work to deliver sustained, and evidence-based fair access and student success activities, particularly at undergraduate level, linking with businesses and local communities.
30. As a demonstration of the interconnectedness of our institutional approach we can pull out two of the five themes from **our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-25)**¹ as examples:

Theme 1 *Changing the culture and behaviours:* *embedding equality and inclusion into all aspects of University business and strategy, thus promoting an inclusive University-wide culture in which students and staff from all backgrounds have a strong sense of belonging and can work creatively and innovatively to achieve their own and the organisation's ambitions.*

This theme is one of the enabling elements necessary for the successful delivery of our ASSS. The Equality and Inclusion Unit, Human Resources, Educational Engagement (who lead the Access and Student Success Strategy) and senior leadership all work closely to develop a culture that prioritises access, success and belonging in the staff and (prospective and existing) student community.²

Theme 3, *Supporting students and student education:* *attracting, supporting, developing and retaining students from both home and international communities, providing an inclusive research-led curriculum and enabling all our students to achieve their future study and career aspirations.*

This theme is closely aligned to our ASSS and APP and we have KPIs in both which record our progress at attracting and retaining students at Leeds.

31. University leadership have approved an EDI Implementation Plan that summarises the work and delivery approach for the EDI Strategy. There are six work-streams in the plan which link to institutional EDI KPIs and strategic objectives.
32. The six work-streams are EDI Governance, Positive Action, Learning and Development, Data and Insight, Recognising and Rewarding EDI work and Culture, Behaviour and Systems Change. These six work-streams complement the work and objectives carried out across other University areas. A collaborative approach is taking place to increase the success in outcomes and impact and to avoid duplication of work.
33. There are strong synergies between the objectives set out in the APP and the EDI Implementation Plan. The APP includes work on outreach/recruitment and reducing continuation, completion and awarding gaps. Mirroring this, but with regard to Leeds' staff, the Positive Action workstream under the EDI Implementation Plan includes outreach work as we look to diversify our staff population so that it is more reflective of our diverse student community. This will contribute to a greater sense of belonging for students from under-represented backgrounds.
34. The University is commencing participation in Advance HE's Race Equality Charter. It will further help the University identify and address the barriers facing Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and students, while also providing a framework for action and improvement. The University aims to achieve a Bronze-level REC by December 2025. The REC work will be led by the Dean of EDI but will be a holistic programme of work, very closely aligned to the APP.
35. The University currently holds a Bronze-level Athena Swan institutional award, due for renewal in 2025. Within the institutional award there are priorities that link with the APP, for example **5.11: Increase partnership working between staff and students on gender equality/intersectional work.**

36. There is complementarity between the new **Student Opportunities and Futures Strategy** (SOFS) and other institutional strategies including the ASSS and The EDI strategy as well as the work of Curriculum Redefined (outlined in paragraphs 40-42 below).
37. The five strategic principles of the SOFS relate to:
- Student Autonomy, supporting students to define for themselves what a successful and healthy future looks like and to provide them with the tools and resources to achieve their potential;
 - Delivery in Partnership, a cross institutional approach to student employability pulling in academic and non-academic contributors such as the Student union, student careers placements, our business start up centre (SPARK);
 - Equitable Access and Opportunity ensuring that all students can benefit and under-represented groups are a key priority;
 - Sense of Belonging, giving students the opportunity to be a part of both our decision-making and creation of opportunities, explore possible futures with like-minded others from within and outside Leeds developing a supportive lifelong community;
 - Being Industry and Data Informed, our work across Leeds strives to be evidence-led.
38. A key part of the SOFS is the Leeds Capabilities Framework² (LCF), which seeks to ensure that students are fully prepared to enter the world of work or further education. As indicated above, there is strong overlap with the Curriculum Redefined Programme, and the capabilities framework has been integrated into this work, elements of the LCF to highlight include:
- a. Surfacing Skills: all taught programmes should identify and consistently signpost core skills to their students whilst enabling those skills to be practised, assessed, and reflected upon
 - b. Work Related Learning: all students should be supported, if they wish, to undertake a substantial placement Year in Industry opportunity. The curriculum should also seek to integrate a range of experiential learning opportunities through the inclusion of short placements within modules, authentic assessments, and access to external partners. These opportunities should be available for all students, regardless of discipline, so that they can develop and surface skills in preparation for the post-University environment.
 - c. External Insight and Support: Programmes of study should engage with external organisations and partners (e.g. via Advisory Boards, Professional Bodies and through our alumni) to review, shape and enhance their curriculum on an ongoing basis of review and adaptation.
39. Future work on the LCF will be the inclusion of Equity Literacy alongside the existing: professional, digital, and academic literacies. As highlighted in Intervention Strategy 2, the Leeds Capabilities framework will form part of our outreach approach, helping prospective students better understand the skills they will develop on course and understand the value of a broader range of subject areas.
40. Our ten-year Curriculum Redefined (CR) programme helps to demonstrate how ensuring student success for all groups is integrated into our institutional approach to teaching and learning. A part of the Education Strategy, CR has led to the addition of nearly 100 new permanent lecturers with a focus on active and inclusive approaches to learning, creative and effective uses of digital technologies and authentic and evidence-based approaches to assessment.
41. CR is focused on partnering with students to ensure a range of student voices and perspectives are included to shape their own educational experience. Our approach is characterised by active and inclusive learning opportunities that are embedded within the discipline and utilise the most relevant digital technologies.
42. We are not delivering a curriculum to students. Students are participants. We engage them to ask questions as to why they choose their course at Leeds, how they imagine their future and how their education can help them better understand and engage with the world around us. Our approach to

² https://www.leeds.ac.uk/download/downloads/id/3128/capabilities_framework.pdf

curriculum has centred students in the design process (they have been deeply involved in design) and in how they experience it.

43. Our approach to academic personal tutoring is key in fostering a sense of belonging at Leeds and in supporting our student success. To support this work we implemented an institution-wide platform (Pebble pad). It includes an institutional workbook, developed by subject matter experts, which provides consistency of approach across Leeds, supporting student-led conversations and enabling tutors to see information about their tutees and encourage reflective practice.
44. Tutors and students also have access to StREAM@Leeds, a learning analytics platform providing individual student dashboards with up-to-date learning engagement information. Tutors use the dashboard to inform their engagement with students and open conversations about how they can shape and structure their own approaches to learning alongside their own personal goals.
45. Finally, our annual Integrated Planning Exercise (IPE) requires that University faculties and services set their annual priorities and budgetary requests; this exercise pulls KPIs from our institutional strategy, including those relating to equality and inclusion, fair access and students success, learning and teaching and other areas. When undertaking the IPE it is necessary for faculty and service leads to have a good understanding of how equality, student success, access, research and pedagogy interact; how these are integrated into our practice as well as how we are performing against the relevant KPIs. This is necessary to enable the strategic identification of investment priorities.
46. Draft IPEs are interrogated by a broad range of senior stakeholders, including those from fair access and success and equality areas. This ensures that we maintain a coordinated and institution-wide approach to ensuring there is equality of opportunity at every level.
47. The continued evolution of inclusive curricula is a many stranded area of work. Our network of 26 School Academic Leads for Inclusive Pedagogies are working across a broad range of faculties, teams and services to understand and address systemic barriers for participation, attainment and student experience, these include: disability and staff training on the social model of disability; improving staff awareness of disabled students through improving information flow; academic staff development time; digital accessibility; embedding inclusive pedagogy; student voice and others.

Governance

48. The APP is taken through institutional governance structures ensuring that there is the opportunity for review from relevant stakeholders. It is also directly drafted by a team of academic and professional staff as well as student contributors from across the institution.
49. University Council is fully engaged in the monitoring and performance of our APP through receiving reports, in-year, on Recruitment Performance; Graduate Outcomes; Non-Continuation; Gaps in Attainment and Degree Classifications and underpinning this work, the Audit and Risk Committee (with members and Chair appointed directly from Council) provide an assurance mechanism supporting the APP. Our progress towards implementing intervention strategies to meet targets is also integrated into the Student Education Governance.

Student consultation

Students as partners

50. At Leeds our students are our partners. The Leeds University Union worked with the University to co-create the [Leeds Partnership](#). The Partnership is a recognition of the need for all members of the Leeds community – both students and staff – to work together to contribute to students' sense of belonging, and enable them to make the most of the opportunities available their time with us. To ensure it is meaningful commitments within the partnership include:

- Regular programme meetings between students and teaching staff;
- Student Staff Forums for each school, including involvement of student society representatives;
- Student-run module surveys;
- Programme review sessions built into personal tutorials;
- Inclusion of students in recruitment of academic staff and prospective students;
- Student participants on all major committees, enabling them to shape the future of the University.

51. Building additional opportunities for collaboration, particularly around our access and success provision, is simply one other way in which we demonstrate our commitment to the principles articulated within the Leeds Partnership. Another is through one of our flagship success interventions, the Plus Programme. The Plus Programme has a Student Steering Group which helps direct the Plus Programme's activities and informs our approach to working with students.

APP development

52. This year we utilised three main routes through which students were heard and could collaborate with us on the development of the Access and Participation Plan:

1. LUU membership on the University's major committees (through which the APP must progress).
2. An existing group of students who have been trained to regularly review and support our access and success provision (ultimately to be absorbed into the Student Involvement Project). These students are not representatives from the LUU but are students from underrepresented groups and backgrounds. They were tasked with reviewing and contributing to the development of the APP.
3. Our existing cross faculty Mature Student Advisory Board also had the opportunity to review and contribute to the APP in line with the approach articulated in point 2 above.

53. In total we spoke to 20 students across three focus groups, we had representation from: postgraduate taught and undergraduate students, mature students, disabled students, students who are seeking asylum and Plus Programme students.

54. Broadly, and positively for the approach we are taking, the feedback concentrated on a) the desire for a more inclusive curriculum, teaching/assessment methodologies and b) changing the culture in general to be more flexible and responsive to student needs. There was agreement as to the groups highlighted both as targets and as priority groups within the APP.

55. More granular feedback/questions included:

- *Disability not mentioned in opening targets – why?*
- *Can the APP address the gaps by faculty?*
- *What do you mean by insufficient when talking about personal academic support?*
- *How does the FSM metric translate to encompass mature students?*
- *Are the IMD Q1 and FSM separate groups of students or is there a crossover?*
- *Importance of mature student advisory board*
- *What is the provision for Asylum Seekers/forced migrants?*
- *How will you address the progression of foundation year students into their undergraduate degree when they are often made to feel as if they are having to apply to the again?*

56. We answered these points, where possible, in the focus groups themselves – highlighting the availability of University-funded Sanctuary Scholarships available to students seeking asylum in the UK and the fact that refugee students are given preferential consideration for our means-tested scholarships. But we have also addressed some of the points in the APP itself. For example, we

have the progression from foundation year in intervention strategy 5; we have discussed disabled students at more length in our assessment of performance; we have discussed our intersectional data in our assessment of performance.

57. The final APP will be shared with student contributors so they can see how we used their feedback.

Regular Engagement

58. As highlighted in point 2 above, we have also created and have begun to use the Student Involvement Project (SIP). Adopting a model used in Patient and Public Involvement (to further research in healthcare), the principle is “nothing about us, without us”. Students from under-represented groups and backgrounds will help to review access and success practice; support the development and potentially delivery of interventions; receive and advise on the evaluation of our access and success work and propose new approaches/ activities.
59. Annual business is jointly set through priorities identified by staff and through student Listening Rooms. The business is progressed through four student-chaired theme groups (Access, Retention, Degree Outcomes, Progression). Actions and outcomes will be integrated directly into our Access and Student Success Strategy work or escalated through University Governance structures.
60. In summary, the *students as partners* ethos at Leeds aligns well with the expectation that students should play a significant role not only in the development of our APP (and Access and Student Success Strategy) but also its continued evaluation and evolution.

Evaluation of the plan

Our Evaluation Strategy

61. A culture of evaluation and evidence-based practice is embedded at Leeds. Our evaluation framework underpins our strategies including the Access and Student Success Strategy 2020-2025 (ASSS) and our Access and Participation Plan (APP), which are intrinsically linked. Our overarching University Strategy for 2020-2030 demonstrates our commitment to Access and Student Success with 5 of our 9 KPIs linked to this area of work. Similarly, our ASSS states that ‘*Our Culture and Systems support an embedded and evidence-based inclusive approach.*’
62. Evaluation and research resource is directed with strategic oversight in line with both our APP and ASSS strategies, by our dedicated Evaluation team in close collaboration with our Lifelong Learning Centre.
63. Our ASSS and APP work is centrally co-ordinated by Educational Engagement (EE) and the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC), with input and feedback from academic staff, research leads, practitioners and co-ordinators who deliver on our strategies across the institution reporting into EE, which subsequently feeds into our high-level committees.
64. Our approach to evaluation is collaborative and we foster a culture of learning, reflection and shared best practice. Our Data, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Group (DMERG), is well established and has a membership of practitioners with experience across the student lifecycle, evaluation specialists and a communications advisor. The remit of this group is to:
1. Improved evaluation, data monitoring and reporting practices
 2. Collaborative approach to identifying gaps in our evaluation and evidence base and identifying research projects to be delivered to address these gaps
 3. Understand relevant internal and external data sets, limitations of use and collective decisions made to agree on data processing

4. Ensure that data is processed in line with data protection legislation and other relevant legislation and regulation, producing guidelines and templates where appropriate

65. The University creates a collaborative approach to evaluation and research with colleagues connected via various networks and forums. Staff across the institution are encouraged to reflect and learn via these platforms which are open to researchers, students, practitioners, data analysts amongst others, to allow a space and place for joined up thinking when developing new programmes or activities.

Continuous Improvement

66. Our most recent self-assessment of our evaluation strategy has highlighted a much-improved approach, from largely 'emerging' at the time of our previous APP to 'good' and 'advanced', demonstrating that we remain committed to continuously improving an evidence-based approach to our work.

67. In summer 2022, we conducted an audit of our approach to evaluation, including planning, monitoring, reporting and our annual review process with actions agreed in winter 2022 for improved processes for evaluation planning for the 23/24 session onwards.

68. We identified several areas for improvement including:

- Reporting of findings and sharing across the institution and the sector
- Annual planning process strengthened to include 'evaluation facilitation sessions' delivered across all teams to give allocated time, place and space to allow for a reflective and collaborative approach to evaluation
- Theory of Change training and refresher sessions delivered for all colleagues with a practical workshop to apply theory to practice
- Revising evaluation handbook to include annual planning and review process dates/timelines

69. The focus of our evaluation and research programme across the institution for the period 24/25 to 27/28 will be to build on our existing evidence and best practice while also supporting the demand for empirical evidence for our new and innovative programmes, as outlines in the evaluation of our intervention strategies.

70. We recently undertook a significant review of all our outreach activity to create a more sustained and cohesive programme, with evaluability of the programme being the key driver. This piece of work has led to the development of three new outreach programmes:

- Leeds to Success – our pre-16 programme, new for 22/23, targeted at school level
- Step into Leeds – our post-16 programme, new for 22/23, targeted at school level
- Futures Programme – our subject specific sustained programme, targeted at individuals

Theories of change

71. We are currently implementing the Change Busters model of training, developed by evaluation experts at Sheffield Hallam University, to further embed the Theory of Change (ToC) approach at all levels, including senior leadership level. We want to ensure that the commitment to an evidence-based approach is grounded in theory and sector learning to create a culture of whole institutional approach of making evidence-based decisions.

72. Our evaluation framework has ToCs at its core and our approach has been independently audited by CFE Research. Programmes are designed with evidence at the forefront and colleagues are encouraged to consult with resources from TASO, Better Evaluation, The Evaluation Collective, NERUPI and the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT), and other advisory and networking communities for additional advice and support.

Data and ethics

73. We undertook an audit and subsequent overhaul of our data protection processes during 2018 and have continued to build data protection into the development and reviews of our evaluation plans. We recently allocated resource to deliver a further in-depth review into our data protection process and policy in relation to our APP and ASSS activity, and as a result of the findings, have committed to an ongoing role in the Evaluation team to ensure that the interests of students are at the heart of our work while remaining compliant with data protection legislation.
74. In addition, we have implemented a Blanket Ethical Approval (BEA) process for interventions that are considered 'light touch' in line with the University's Ethics Policy. We have overarching ethical approval for interventions such as focus groups, Listening Rooms, Student Success activity, with such interventions requiring a shorter sign off process than a full ethics application.
75. Applications for higher risk interventions are submitted for approval such as the evaluation of our financial support package, our partnership with TASO to deliver a randomised control trial (RCT) into the impact of summer schools on access to Higher Education.
76. Data Protection by Design and Default processes mean staff build compliance requirements into evaluation planning, these areas complement one another. Defining evaluation outcomes require: understanding of the data needed to evidence impact; how to legally access and use these data; potential risks and appropriate mitigations that support data quality and robust evaluation.

Partnership

77. We work in partnership with external organisations to deliver collaborative research. We have collaborated with TASO and several Higher Education Providers to deliver a two-year, mixed methods robust, research project investigating the impact of summer schools on access to HE, and a small n evaluation, delivered between TASO and our LLC.
78. We are a member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) Service, which provides higher education providers with data and intelligence to effectively target, monitor and evaluate our outreach activities. Through the HEAT national community, we collaborate on the development of knowledge, skills, tools, resources and methodologies required for robust evaluation. The HEAT membership supports the production of evidence of what works and what does not work within our local context. Being part of the HEAT evaluation collective is more efficient than working in isolation, minimising duplication of effort and sharing evaluation resources across the sector. Through its links with national organisations such as HESA and the DfE, HEAT provides us with data outcomes which are essential for our impact research. Accessing data centrally through HEAT enables us to avoid burdening schools and colleges with requests for data. The HEAT collaboration also provides opportunities for us to share our evaluation plans with other higher education providers for feedback. This peer evaluation facilitates knowledge transfer between providers, increases transparency and rigour and helps us to improve our evaluation going forward. The HEAT collaboration therefore drives up evaluation literacy across the sector through providing access to the data, tools and systems required to build robust evidence of impact.
79. We have a rigorous evaluation plan review process in place internally to ensure that evaluation plans are proportionate, robust and deliverable. Following an audit of our processes in November 2022, we have made a commitment to improve our implementation and review process.
80. We work closely with our Faculty of Social Science, making use of our world-leading realist researchers to explore what belonging means at Leeds through the Diverse and Averaged Student Experience project. The resultant research paper has been submitted for publication and has informed the basis of our follow up work: The Everyday Belonging Project, which sources qualitative accounts of the lived experiences of our students. This will enable us to better understand what it means to belong and not belong at Leeds and is intended to provide evidence to impact on policies and practices to increase belonging for all students.

81. Our Student Research Experience Placements (SREPs) offer students at Leeds the opportunity to work as professional colleagues in partnership with staff, through carrying out independent research. Projects support the delivery of the ASSS with an emphasis on exploring aspects of the student experience through the lens of under-represented groups including, but not limited to those who experience racism, mature, care leaver, Access to Leeds and Plus Programme students. Details and papers from current and completed placements can be found on our [LITE website](#).

Sharing Learning

82. We aim to actively both learn from and share our findings both internally and across the sector. Our Access and Success Insight Sessions are informal, internal sessions, delivered bi-monthly with the aim of sharing best practice linked with each of the priorities of our ASSS.

83. We also host bi-monthly Student Success Forums for both internal colleagues, students and external colleagues across the sector. Set up in 2019 and widely attended, these sessions give colleagues a space to discuss changes to their current working practices or programmes to make positive changes based on evidence generated by colleagues.

84. In addition, we recently hosted 'Student Success in Taught Education 2022. Bringing together academics, professionals and students to explore, reflect on and celebrate the important and innovative Student Success work across sector with themes including:

- Curriculum Redefined
- How to build authentic belonging amongst our students
- Design thinking and curriculum change
- Using data to action change
- Co-creation and student voice

85. We have committed to delivering an annual Student Success Conference, with our next event to be delivered in 2023. We will also host the Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement (RAISE) annual event in 2023. RAISE is a global network of staff and students in Higher Education with an interest in the research and promotion of effective student engagement.

86. LITE promotes and supports innovation and excellence in teaching and disseminates outcomes and evidence for impact on student learning. LITE fellowships are inclusive and open to students, practitioners, and academic staff to learn from the experience of colleagues across the entire staff and student body. In collaboration with LITE, we have identified nine new research projects which will investigate the impact of new pedagogies under the broad themes of belonging, inclusive and co-creative teaching, support and assessment and digital literacy.

87. We have improved our online presence to share findings and best practice more widely with a suite of case studies. Our Student Success website has content available for both internal and external staff and students and we regular attend national conferences such as the NEON summer symposium, NERUPI annual conference and AdvanceHE events to share our work with sector colleagues. We will continue contribute to sector evidence base in the future.

88. We have engaged with TASO to support calls for evidence, most recently submitting internal data to support identifying risks for the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register.

89. We also support our staff with a dedicated repository of internal evaluation reports, support and information regarding ethical approval and links to external networks.

Vision for 2024/2025 onwards

90. As referenced in paragraph 67-69, we currently have structures in place for formal monitoring and reporting of the delivery of our evaluation plans, including a more robust approach following our review in 2022. We want to build on our current ambition in this area and transition to an increased

collaborative approach to planning and reporting on our evaluation by creating a formal, cross institutional evaluation working group. This group will be dedicated to evaluation and research into our APP/ASSS/Equality of Opportunity initiatives, and we will investigate the possibility of a pilot of a dedicated research and pedagogy unit in this area through this group.

91. In the meantime, during 2023/2024, the evaluation team will be given more prominence in Student Success forums and other cross institutional collaborative meetings. This will include a regular, structured agenda item where evaluation is reviewed, monitored, and given space and resource to improve; and progress will be formally logged in line with EE's Continuous Improvement process. We are committed to increased cross-institutional training and sharing best practice, building on our current model of informal internal training via DMERG and ad-hoc training sessions in evaluation.
92. We also want to build on our collaborative approach to evaluation during the end phase of our current plan to identify, train and develop Evaluation Champions who will work across the institution to inform and embed best evaluation practice going forward. We will use our experience of creating communities of practice to build a consensus approach where colleagues from all backgrounds; whether academic, practitioner or student; learn from each other to build a cohesive and thorough Theory of Change and evaluation plan for each of our broad strategies that encompasses the lived experiences and viewpoints from all backgrounds. We will interrogate both qualitative and quantitative data through this forum. This approach empowers all stakeholders to have a voice and influence practice based on their experience and encourages listening, learning and collaboration from all stakeholders.
93. We will also strengthen our Continuous Improvement process. We have been mapping our evaluation and research activity across APP activity since 2016 and we now have a formal process to ensure findings are written up and reviewed, including the development of an evidence bank. Our ambition is to create an evidence bank that can both be housed on our website and shared with external audiences, including TASO and the new OFS evidence repository.
94. Building on our BEA approach to ethics, all APP Intervention Strategies will be submitted and approved by either full University of Leeds ethical approval or EE's BEA ethics to ensure that we can publish and share best practice for our key APP and ASSS initiatives.
95. We also commit to ensuring that our evaluation work has data protection embedded at the point of programme and evaluation design so that we can elicit robust empirical evidence whilst also putting student interests at the heart of our evaluation. As mentioned in paragraph 73, we have created an ongoing Information Governance role in the Evaluation Team to oversee and continuously monitor all data protection policies and processes across our APP and ASSS work.
96. We have made great strides in embedding the student voice and student experience into the development of our many of our initiatives, such as Reverse Mentoring, Hidden Curriculum and Curriculum Redefined. We recognise we need to continue to engage with our students to build on our understanding of the mechanisms for barriers to success should be understood across our entire leadership team. We recognise that our approach should be evidence based, using both qualitative and quantitative data.
97. As highlighted in paragraph 20 of the Whole Provider Approach section, we are committed to enacting culture change as part of our approach to addressing our fair access and success gaps. Measuring progress of culture change can be challenging. Our Equality and Inclusion unit will link in with Educational Engagement (who lead our fair access and success work) and our Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) who are developing our inclusive Learning and Teaching to investigate the use of self-assessment tools as part of our approach for assessing our progress at changing our day-to-day culture with regard to equality, equity, inclusion and fair access and

success. We will be reviewing several possible approaches and extant tools³ to identify any feasible and effective methodology we can implement.

98. We will be developing enhanced theories of change across all of our intervention strategy initiatives. Beginning in 2023/24 we will adopt a a multi-layered approach to our programmes across our access, and success strategies, ready for the 2024/25 cycle. We will build on our existing evaluation review and monitoring processes to assess our progress in addition to setting out clear plans for dissemination (please see evaluation of intervention strategies for further detail.)
99. We are currently investigating TASO’s new Mapping Outcomes and Activities Tool (MOAT) and we will endeavour to use this methodology for our sustained programmes of engagement – Step into Leeds, Leeds to Success and Futures. We are also directing resource in the Evaluation team to investigate how we can strengthen our use of the HEAT system, for example using comparator groups to create more robust type 2 evidence. By focussing our efforts on improving our evaluation implementation and learning, we are confident that our self-assessment scores will continue to increase over the duration of the next plan.
100. We are the lead institution and host of the Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) partnership, bringing together staff from across the member institutions at both strategic and operational level. The GHWY Board, brings together senior and strategic staff for sector-level sharing of learning. Similarly the Access and Participation Strategy Group and Go Higher Skills Group, have an expectation that members share good practice and learning, and connect with stakeholders locally to support a more joined-up approach. GHWY’s Uni Connect has a strong focus on evaluation of its own activity and dissemination of this across member institutions with regular CPD events.’

Provision of information to students

101. We recognise that fee levels and the financial support system available in universities and nationally might be difficult to understand so we are committed to making our information as accessible as possible as outlined below:

Information provided to students	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fees a prospective student will be charged for the duration of their course (this information will be made available prior to students committing to the course). Government financial support arrangements. Details (for prospective, new, and continuing students) of available financial support package (including annual value, eligibility criteria and the arrangements surrounding any means-testing based on students sharing financial data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our finance webpages. Webpages linked to our coursefinder pages for prospective applicants. Dedicated parent and advisor information via the web and through conferences and sessions at Open Days. Integrated messages within our WP and non-WP outreach Appropriate hard-copy publications (e.g. the University Prospectus). Individual financial literacy and budgeting support for students on our sustained outreach programmes.

102. Our approved Access and Participation Plan will be available on our student finance webpages, approved and reviewed through committees which have student representation.
103. All of our information regarding financial support adheres to the Competition and Markets Authority’s advice to ensure that we comply with consumer law.

³ Including: *Embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum Self-evaluation framework* by Dr Helen May and Professor Liz Thomas (https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/hea/private/resources/embedding_eandd_selfevaluation_framework_1568037053.pdf) & *The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Self-Assessment Tool* developed by the University of British Columbia (<https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/activating-inclusion-toolkit/isat-download/>)

Annex A: Assessment of performance

Introduction

1. The purpose of this annex is to highlight major areas of concern in the student journey for underrepresented students. The indications of risk highlighted within **table A** will inform the main objectives for the 2023 Access and Participation Plan (APP). The rest of this Assessment of Performance relates to areas where we will continue to monitor and target/deliver activity.

Table A - Assessment of Performance (Access)

<u>Student lifecycle stage - Access</u>		
Group	Indication of risk	Conclusions
Mature students	<p>Mature students made up 6.3% of total UK applications for 2022-23 entry. [Source: Banner Jan23]</p> <p>They comprised 5.3% of the registered cohort in the previous year of entry.</p> <p>This is a large decline from 2016/17 when mature students made up 7.7% of the registered cohort, and the decline in percentage became more pronounced during the Covid-19 pandemic. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>The Offer Rate for UK Mature students for 2022-23 entry was 25.7% compared to 53.4% for Young students. Mature students are more likely to accept a place when they are made an offer. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jan23]</p>	<p>Although the proportion of matures students at the University is generally higher than its co-applicant group, there is a declining trajectory (source OfS dataset).</p> <p>Mature student access is affected by entry qualification and subject distribution and a non-conventional path to their degree studies.</p> <p>Improving mature student access becomes a key objective for the University (Objective PTA_1).</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>

Group	Indication of risk	Conclusions
IMD Q1	<p>IMD Q1 students made up 17.0% of total UK applications for 2022-23 entry. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jan23] They made up 13.6% of the registered cohort in the previous year of entry. There has been little change in this percentage since 2016/17 when it was 12.3%. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>This compares to 22.8% of students in the HE sector [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>The Offer Rate for IMD Q1 students for 2022-23 entry was 39.8% compared to 53.1% for IMD Q5 students. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jan23]</p>	<p>Although we have a higher proportion of students from IMD Q1 than many of its peers in the Russell Group there has been a flat trajectory over five years of data.</p> <p>Improving access from IMD Q1 becomes a key objective for the University (Objective PTA_2).</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p> <p>We recognise that area-based measures are imperfect measures but IMD provides information on different types of deprivation, including income but also education outcomes, health and living environment. It is also transparent in what it measure and provides us with information about where to target our outreach work.</p>

Table B - Assessment of Performance (Continuation)

Student lifecycle stage – Continuation		
Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
IMD Q1	<p>The Continuation rate for IMD Q1 entrants was 91.4%, and the IMD Q5-Q1 Continuation gap was 6.2 pp for 2020-21 entrants, the highest since 2016-17 entry, above the Sector at 9.1 pp, but sixth among our comparators. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>The trajectory has been quite flat with any improvement in one year followed by a decline in another year.</p> <p>On average over the last four years, however, the IMD Q5Q1 gap has improved to 4.2 pp, compared to 7.0 pp in 2016/17.[Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>Using Ethnicity/IMD intersectional data (UK FT FD Continuation Rates (2018-19 to 2022-23) [Source: internal WP Dataset Dec22], we see these Continuation rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White students: 89.5% for IMDQ1 and 96.0% for IMDQ5 • Black students: 86.0% for IMDQ1 and 92.2% for IMDQ5 • BAME students: 88.7% for IMDQ1 and 96.0% for IMDQ5 <p>The gap has been uneven, with significant improvements followed by years where gap has widened again.</p>	<p>The gap between continuation of IMD Q1 and Q5 has remained consistently higher than some of our Russell Group comparator peer group, despite some improvement over five-year period.</p> <p>There are large IMDQ5-Q1 Continuation gaps within each Ethnicity, so Ethnicity alone does not explain the IMD gaps.</p> <p>Improving continuation of mature students becomes a key objective for the University (Objective PTS_3)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>
Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
Black students	<p>The Continuation rate for Black students was 90.0% in 2020-21, which was the lowest in the six-year period. The Black Continuation gap was 6.1 pp, also the highest in the period.[Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p>	<p>The continuation gap between black and white students is higher than at our comparator Russell Group universities and is particularly high between black and white students.</p>

		<p>Improving continuation of black students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_2)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>
Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
Mature entrants	<p>On 1 February 2023, 95.6% of the Mature entrants in 2022-23 who had registered from September onwards remained at the University, compared to 97.0% of Young students, a gap of 1.5 pp. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jan23]</p> <p>The Mature Continuation rate was 89.5% for 2020-21 entrants, third highest among our comparators, and 7.5 pp higher than the sector. The gap with Young students was 6.5 pp, a decrease of 1.9 pp since 2018-19. This gap was third lowest among our comparators⁴ and below the Sector. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p>	<p>Continuation rates of mature students have declined since 2016/17 and the gap between young and mature has increased.</p> <p>Although our continuation rates are significantly better than the sector as a whole, our four-year average is worse compared to our Russell Group comparator group.</p> <p>Improving continuation of mature students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_3)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>

⁴ The comparator group used featured six other Russell Group institutions.

Table C - Assessment of Performance (Completion)

Student Lifecycle Stage – Completion		
Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
IMD Q1	<p>The Completion rate for IMD Q1 entrants was 90.2% for 2017-18 entrants, sixth highest among our comparators, but above the Sector average. The IMD Q5-Q1 Completion gap was 6.4 pp in 17-18, the lowest since 12-13 entry. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>Using Ethnicity/IMD intersectional data (UK FT FD Completion Rates (2017-18 to 2021-22) [Source: internal WP Dataset Dec22], we see these Completion rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White students: 81.8% for IMDQ1 and 92.5% for IMDQ5 • Black students: 74.3% for IMDQ1 and 93.8% for IMDQ5 • BAME students: 81.7% for IMDQ1 and 92.1% for IMDQ5 	<p>There has been a consistent gap between the completion rates of IMD Q1 students and IMD Q5 students.</p> <p>There are large IMDQ5-Q1 Completion gaps within each Ethnicity, so Ethnicity alone does not explain the IMD gaps.</p> <p>Please note: Black IMDQ5 students have better outcomes than for White IMDQ5 students, however numbers are small.</p> <p>Improving continuation of IMD Q1 students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_4)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>
Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
Black students	<p>The White-Black Completion gap was 5.1 pp in 2017-18, a decrease of 5.0 pp since 2014-15. This gap, however, has remained consistently higher than others over the last six years. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p>	<p>There are existing gaps in completion rates between minoritized ethnic groups and white students.</p> <p>The gap which has remained the highest has been between white and black students. Although this gap has narrowed in some years it has widened in others.</p> <p>Improving completion of black students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_5)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy</p>

Table D – Assessment of Performance (Degree Awarding)

Student Lifecycle Stage – Degree awarding		
Group	Indication of risk	Conclusions
IMD Q1	<p>IMD Q1 students in 2021-22 had a 2:1 or above degree awarding rate of 80.9%, third highest among our comparators, and above the Sector average of 68.5%. The IMD Q5-Q1 degree awarding gap was 14.5 pp in 21-22, with a four-year aggregate of 14.1 pp. The four-year aggregate is the highest among our comparators but just below the Sector average.</p> <p>The gap narrowed between 2016/17 and 2021-22. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p>	<p>The gap between Q1 and Q5 has narrowed over the last six years but has remained high. Our four-year average is the highest among our Russell Group comparators.</p> <p>Improving 2:1 or above degree awarding rates of IMD students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_6)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>
Group	Indication of risk	Conclusions
Black students	<p>The White-Black degree awarding gap in 2021/22 was 16.2%, a 4-year decrease of 12.4 pp. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>Internal analysis of awarding gaps by School and Faculty for Ethnicity respectively found a White-BAME gap for nearly every School.</p>	<p>There has been a decrease in the degree awarding gap between white and black students.</p> <p>The gaps, however, do remain, with an average of 16.9% over last four years.</p> <p>Improving 2:1 or above degree awarding rates of black students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_7)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>

Group	Indications of risk	Conclusions
<p>Mature students</p>	<p>81.7% of Mature qualifiers attained a 2:1 or above degree classification in 2021/22 which is slightly above average within our comparator group.</p> <p>Our four-year average of 80.2% was, however, one of the lowest in our comparator group.</p> <p>The Young-Mature degree awarding gap was 11.1 pp in 2021/22, a 1-year decrease of 1.5 pp. This gap was, however, the second highest among our comparators and is higher than the Sector overall. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]</p> <p>Internal analysis of awarding gaps by School and Faculty for age group, most Schools have a gap, but some, e.g., Medicine and Healthcare, do not.</p>	<p>There is a consistently high gap between young and mature 2:1 or above degree awarding rate which is higher than the sector and one of the highest in our comparator group.</p> <p>Improving 2:1 or above degree awarding rates of black students becomes a key objective for the University. (Objective PTS_8)</p> <p>Supported by target with annual milestones and an intervention strategy.</p>

Access

Free School Meal (FSM) eligible students

2. The population of FSM Eligible students was **10.2%** in 2021-22, which was equal to our 4-year aggregate.
3. This proportion was third highest among our comparator universities in the Russell Group but below the Sector average of **18.4%**. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
4. It is also below the percentage of young people in England eligible for FSM in January 2023, which was **23.8%**, and in wider Yorkshire and Humber region 26% [Source: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics> June 2023].
5. Using an individually targeted metric like FSM eligibility, especially in tandem with other metrics, is desirable and will feed into our approach immediately. We do not propose to set a target for this group to commence in 2024/25. We will continue to use FSM as part of our contextual admissions criteria and will begin to shift our outreach targeting to increase our engagement with this group.
6. However, at present we are still developing our data maturity for FSM; with the data we have, we can see there is some limited intersection with our IMD Q1 students, **28.5%** of whom are FSM eligible. In addition, we know that **34.8%** of our black students are FSM eligible. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jun23]
7. This data is taken from limited entry years, however, and we would like to gather data over a longer period. We know the number, nationally, of young people eligible for FSM was still growing in 2022, we will monitor our FSM eligible access data and increase our understanding of the behaviour of this group. Once we have a more robust picture we will have a better sense of how we can realistically affect change in the recruitment picture for this group and what any target should look like.

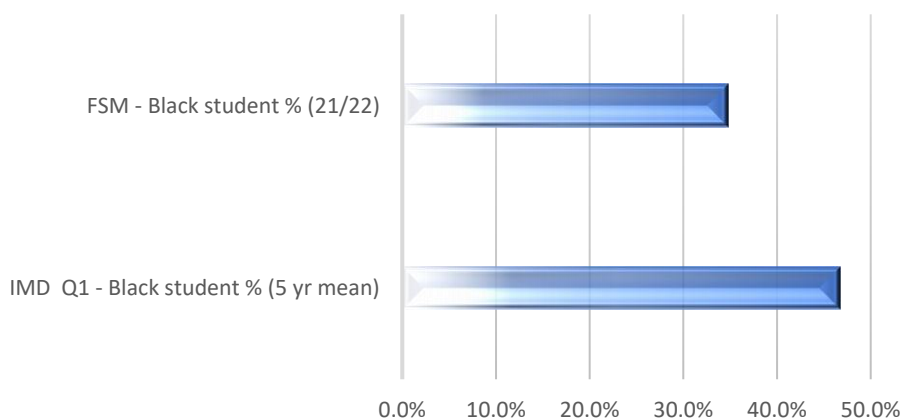
Ethnicity

8. Ethnically Minoritised students made up **28.8%** of total UK applications for 2022-23 entry. They made up **22.4%** of the registered cohort in the previous year of entry.
9. Asian students made up **15.4%** of applications and **12.1%** of the registered cohort.
10. Black students made up **5.4%** of total applications that year, and **3.3%** of the registered cohort the previous year. [Source: Internal Data: Banner Jan23]
11. When comparing to national statistics, Asian students are more represented compared to UK population (**9.6%**). Black students are under-represented compared to UK population (**4.2%**).
12. When comparing to West Yorkshire population these positions are reversed and black students are more represented compared to West Yorkshire population (**3.1%**) and Asian students underrepresented (**15.9%**).
13. Our internal data shows there is a strong intersection among both black (**46.7%**) and Asian students (**40.3%**) with IMD Q1, so the targets and intervention strategies we have written for IMD Q1 are very relevant to both groups. We also have outreach activity targeted at black students through our partnership via With Insight Education partnership, as outlined in intervention strategy 2.1. We also see large intersections in FSM data although to a lesser extent (see Chart 1). The aggregated percentage of black students in quintile 1 is 46.7% and for 2021/22 it was 50%, far

outstripping the 34.8% intersection of black and FSM students. [Source: Internal Data: Banner/WP Dataset Dec22] This supports our aim of using IMD as part of our array of access and success metrics.

Chart 1

Comparison of % black students at Leeds who are within IMD Q1 or in receipt of FSM



14. For 2022/23 entry, offer rates for both Black (**31.3%**) and Asian (**35%**) students were lower than for White students (**51.8%**). Our internal data suggests that high proportions of Asian and Black applicants apply for our most competitive subjects, for example **13.3%** of Asian and **11.5%** of Black students applied to Medicine, compared to **2.1%** of White Students, which is a strong contributor to the lower offer rate than White students.
15. A similar pattern is found by Age Group where **7.3%** of Mature students applied to Medicine compared to **4.8%** of Young students, and **7.4%** of IMDQ1 students applied compared to **3.2%** of IMDQ5. Dentistry had the lowest offer rates for 2022/23 entry, 7.0% of Asian students applied, 3.4% of Black and 0.9% of White; 4.2% of IMDQ1 and 1.1% of IMDQ5 applied; 9.4% of Mature and 1.9% of Young applied.
16. There is a strong intersection with qualification types which have low offer rates at the University. For applications for 2021-22 entry, **11.2%** of Asia applicants had only a BTEC qualification, compared to **10.4%** of Black applicants and **4.8%** of White applicants. **14.0%** of IMDQ1 applicants had only a BTEC qualification compared to **2.7** of IMDQ5. [Source: Internal Data: Banner]

Disability

17. Our percentage of disabled students increased from **11.8%** in 2016/17 to **15.4%** in 2021/22. This is still lower than the sector average of **17.4%** and is at the lower end of percentages compared to our comparator group. [Source: OfS APP Dataset] Our latest internal data suggest that our disability disclosures for undergraduate students at Leeds has increased to **19%**.
18. Our data also shows there isn't a strong intersection between disability and other underrepresented groups among young students, for example, **13.9%** of our IMD Q1 students have a registered disability compared to **14.1%** of our IMD Q5 students. Mature students are, however, more likely to have a disability (**25.2%**) than our young students (**13%**). [Source: Internal Data: WP Dataset Dec22]

Subject trends

19. Internal data for UK FT students entering over the last six years up to 2022-23 shows that while overall **13.1%** were IMDQ1, the Faculty of Environment had the lowest rate at **5.3%** with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities had the second lowest at **8.2%**. The Faculty of Medicine & Health had the second highest rate at **21.4%** and the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) a rate of **38.9%**.
20. The LLC had the highest rate of Mature students at **40.8%** (compared to 7.7% overall), Medicine & Health had the second highest at **15.1%**, while the Business School had the lowest intake of Mature students at **2.3%** and the Faculty of Biological Sciences had the second lowest at **3.4%**. [Source: Internal Data: WP Dataset Dec22] The outreach and IAG strategy outlined in Intervention strategy 1, including increased use of our alternative entry scheme, is designed to address this.

Continuation

Free School Meal eligible students

21. FSM Eligible students had a Continuation rate of **89.6%** for students entering in 2020-21, a Non Eligible-FSM Continuation gap of **6.8 pp**, the highest gap over the six-year period, and the highest gap among our comparators and above the Sector average of 5.2 pp.
22. Our average gap over the last four years is in the mid-range among our Russell Group comparators and lower than the sector average. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
23. We will continue to monitor our performance with continuation of FSM eligible students with a view to using FSM as a key performance measure for continuation. In the meantime, we are adding FSM to our scholarships and Plus Programme criteria to ensure that we are able to reach and monitor an increased proportion of this group.

Ethnicity

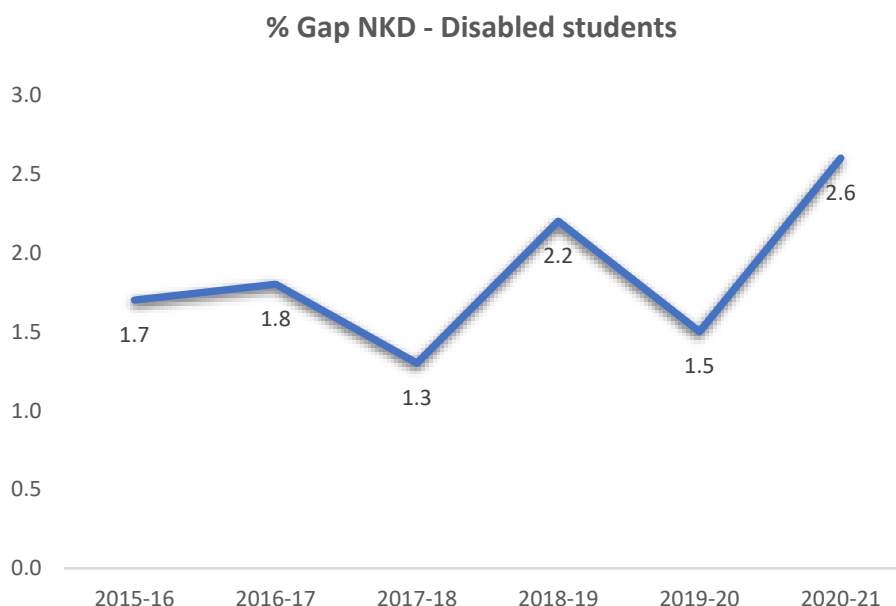
24. In addition to the continuation gap between black (**93.0% continuation**) and white students (**96.7%**) there are smaller gaps in continuation between white students, compared to Asian students (**95.9%**), mixed heritage students (**95.9%**), and 'other' ethnicities (**93.6%**). These are aggregated figures from 2017/18 to 2020/21. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
25. We will continue to and work with the range of minoritised groups at Leeds to eliminate continuation gaps as rapidly as possible. The gaps for other minoritised groups are currently narrower than the gap between white and black students, which is why we have chosen to disaggregate our continuation objective to focus on black students specifically.

Disability

26. Over four years, our continuation rate for disabled students (**94.8%**) was lower than for students with no known disability (**96.7%**), a gap of **1.9 pp**. However, the continuation rate for disabled students is higher than the sector (**88.8%**) and in the middle range of our Russell Group comparators.
27. The continuation rate for students with a registered mental health condition is lower at **92.7%**. There is also over-representation of mature students within this group (see paragraph 33). [Source: OfS APP Dataset]

28. We have observed an increasing gap between the continuation of disabled students and those with no known disability (NKD) (1.7 pp in 2015/16 to 2.6 pp in 2020/21) however 2019/20 saw a gap of only 1.5 pp. The increase to 2.6 pp is not unusual as Chart 2 demonstrates. [[Source: OfS APP Dataset](#)]

Chart 2



29. Our Disability Service has identified several areas for focus here, there is a lack of understanding regarding what is available and how support works for disabled students transitioning to Leeds. As such the service has and will continue to engage with prospective students to ensure there is a clarity of understanding regarding support, availability of reasonable adjustments, as well as providing a supportive transition experience; for many the difference in approaches to delivery of support can present as a barrier.

30. Our continued work with Go Higher West Yorkshire and our own schools and faculties to improve the transition and on-course experience for our students is a vital part of our approach and latest data shows that we have had a 2% increase in student disclosure rates (UG disclosures move to 19% and International and PG disclosures increase to 17%).

31. This year we will begin to enhance this transition approach through the provision of direct contact methods such as phone calls rather than a reliance on email to help facilitate early support setting discussion and have put into place plans to improve the systems relating to information sharing, to ensure that support developed through early engagement is effectively communicated and actioned within Schools and Faculties.

Completion

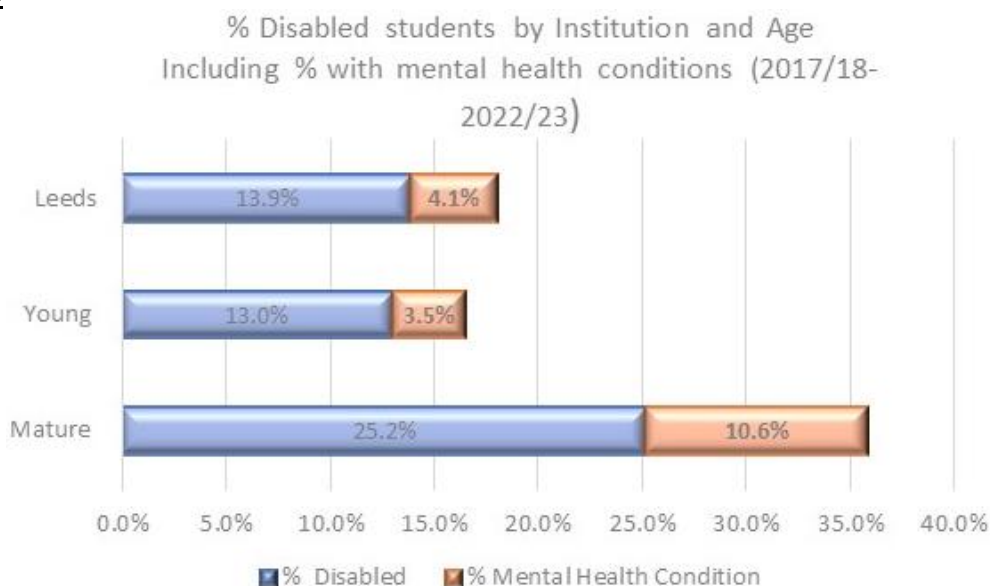
Age Group

32. There has been fluctuation in the gap between young and mature completion, with the four-year aggregated total from 2014/15 to 2017/18 being **10.6%**, and the gap in 2017/18 being **9.1 pp**. [[Source: OfS APP Dataset](#)]

33. We have also noted the overrepresentation of mature students with a disability and particularly with mental health conditions within our cohort at Leeds (see chart 3 below). Work is underway to

specifically support these groups through the Wellbeing and Lifestyle programme (as outlined in Intervention Strategy 3) and the mature student board who will be looking at this group in particular (Intervention Strategy 5) as part of its work.

Chart 3



34. The mature-young completion gap is one we are actively trying to eliminate. Our work on mature student continuation and completion is mature at Leeds and new interventions have been put into place to address the continuation gap but these have been designed to also address the completion gap for this group.
35. We have not set a new target here partially because we do not want to create too many targets (we have committed to 10 targets with the potential addition of three more during the lifecycle of this APP) and risk fragmenting institutional focus; also the work with mature students is well known across the institution but this is not the case for black students where we have introduced new continuation and completion targets, partially to emphasise the change in targeting from students who are “BAME” to students who are “black.”

Free School Meal eligible

36. The Completion rate for FSM Eligible students entering in 2017-18 was **90.5%**, a Non Eligible-FSM Completion gap of **5.1 pp**, an increase of **1.7 pp** since 2012-13. The gap is the third highest among our comparators but below the Sector average of **8.2 pp**.
37. The aggregate gap between completion of FSM and non-FSM students over a four-year period is **4.8 pp**. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
38. This is an area we are currently intending to set a target for addressing. In the meantime, work will be undertaken to a) support this group as part of our Plus Programme and scholarships provision; b) better understand the full characteristics of this group including subject choice, ethnicity, qualifications, etc. to better tailor future success related interventions and have a better chance of effecting change.

Ethnicity

39. In addition to the completion gap between black (89.6% Completion) and white (94.8%) students there are smaller gaps in continuation between white students, compared to Asian students (93.7%), mixed heritage students (92.2%), and 'other' ethnicities (92.2%). These are aggregated figures from 2012/13 entry to 2020/21 entry. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
40. We will continue to monitor these gaps, though they are currently narrower than the gap between white and black students, which is why we have chosen to disaggregate our completion objective to focus on black students specifically.

Disability

41. Over four years, our completion rate for disabled students (**91.1%**) was lower than for students with no known disability (**94.8%**), a gap of **3.7 pp**. The completion rate for disabled students is higher than the sector (**85.7%**) and in the lower range of our Russell Group comparators.
42. The continuation rate for students with a registered mental health condition is lower at **85%**. We will continue to monitor this as the gap between these students and students with no known disability is **9.8 pp**. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]
43. As highlighted in paragraph 29, a key part of addressing these gaps is ensuring support is set up prior to the start of a course, and as such will continue to engage with students as early as possible, and then collaborate with academic colleagues to ensure the support is in place and understood as rapidly as possible, supporting transition into higher education. We are also actively developing an increased array of non-academic support, empowering students to be the leaders in their support strategies.

Degree Awarding Gaps

44. This section, when identifying "degree awarding gaps" is referring to gaps in the achievement of a 2:1 or above degree classification between different groups (e.g. black and white students, disabled students and students with no known disability).

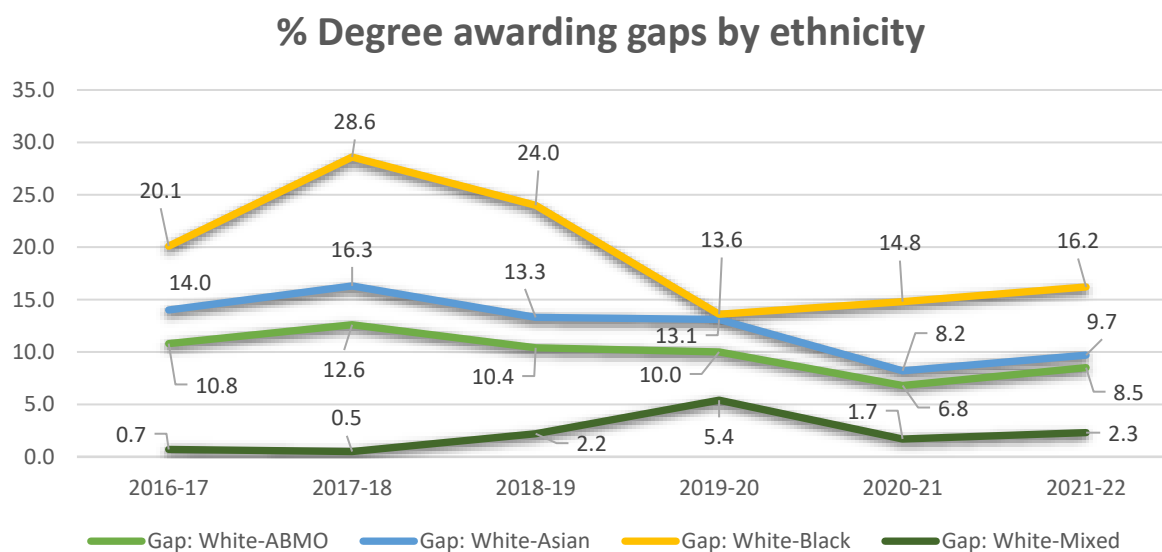
Free School Meal eligible

45. The rate at which FSM Eligible students are awarded a 2:1 or above was **85.4%** for 2021-22 graduates, a Non Eligible-FSM degree awarding gap of **7.6 pp**, a drop of 4.1 pp since 2017-18. The gap is the lowest among our comparators and is below the Sector average. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]. This pattern is repeated using a four-year average.

Ethnicity

46. The aggregated four-year 2:1 or above degree award rate of white students was 93.4% in the years up to 2021/22, compared to 82.6% among Asian students, 90.7% among mixed heritage students and 88.2% among 'other' ethnicities. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]

Chart 4



47. We have seen the degree awarding gap drop for most groups under our previous APP’s aggregated ethnicity target and whilst we will still work with all minoritised groups we have set a target highlighting the black and white degree awarding gap which remains the widest and has started to increase over the last two years unlike other minoritised groups [see Chart 4 above].

Disability

48. With a 2:1 or above degree awarding rate of **88.4%** for graduates in 2021-22, the NKD-Disabled degree awarding gap was **4.6 pp**, the highest gap over the six-year period. The gap was highest among our comparators and above the Sector average of -0.5 pp. Graduates with Mental Health issues fared the least well of all the Disability types with a 2:1 or above degree awarding rate of **86.7%**, a gap of **6.3pp**.

49. The four-year aggregated gap from 2018/19 to 2021/22 was lower at **2.5 pp** for all disabled students and **5.4 pp** for graduates with mental health conditions. We will continue to monitor this gap. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]

Progression

IMD

50. The IMD Q5-Q1 Progression gap was **5.7 pp** in 19-20, which was the first time there has been a gap in the three-year period. It is the third highest gap among our comparators but below the Sector average of 10.6 pp.

51. Our 2-year aggregated gap is **2.2 pp**, substantially lower than the sector average of 10.1 pp. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]

Age group

52. **85.3%** of Mature graduates in 2019-20 progressed, a greater rate than for Young students (also true for our comparators and the Sector overall) with a gap of **-5.5 pp**. Mature graduates have outperformed young every year in this measure. [Source: OfS APP Dataset]

Free School Meal eligible

53. FSM Eligible students graduating in 2019-20 had a Progression rate of **76.1%**, a Non Eligible-FSM Progression gap of **3.6 pp**, which was a 1-year decrease of 2.9 pp. The gap was lower than the sector (6.7 pp) but higher than most of our comparator group [[Source: OfS APP Dataset](#)]. This is an area we will be keeping under review; adding FSM students to our Plus Programme automatically flags students for targeted careers related interventions/opportunities (as an example, in previous years these have been delivered by our Careers Service or external providers such as UpReach).

Ethnicity

54. In previous years the Progression gap has been negative for all ethnicities compared to White students, but minoritised students graduating in 2019-20 were the first to see a positive gap, of **1.3 pp**. This is lower than the Sector average of 3.4 pp, but high among our comparators, only Newcastle also had a positive gap. It was still a negative gap in 2019-20 for Asian and Black students. The White-Mixed Progression gap was 2.9 pp in 2019-20, and the White-Other Progression gap was 10.6 pp. [[Source: OfS APP Dataset](#)]

55. Over a three-year aggregated period from 2017/18 to 2019/20 all gaps are very small, and more positive for black and Asian students compared to white students.

Disability

56. There is a small gap of **1.3 pp** between the progression of all graduates with a registered disability and those with no known disability for graduates in 2019-20, and the progression of our disabled graduates is the highest among our comparator group over the last two years.

57. There was, however, a gap of **4.3 pp** between graduates with a mental health condition and those with no known disability.

58. As there are no consistent gaps between different groups, we have not set any objectives for progression. Our Careers Service will continue to analyse our Graduate Outcomes data, cross referenced with career readiness, to visualise if there are statistically significant progression gaps emerging in relation to IMD, disability and ethnicity. Internal targets can be set with institutional reporting.

59. Reviewing our progression data as a whole, many of the margins of error are too wide on the emerging gaps identified; for example, the IMD gap of 5.7 pp has a confidence interval as wide as 2.8 pp-8.6 pp. This is one of the smaller confidence intervals. We are, therefore, in a position where we do not have enough statistical confidence in the data to set a target.

60. As detailed in the Whole Provider Approach section relating to the Student Opportunities and Futures Strategy (paragraphs 36-39), it is important to us that student futures related work is embedded within curriculum, to ensure that all students are being given spaces to identify, practice, reflect on their skills, values, behaviours etc. and to have broadening experiences, or gain academic credit for their other activities - which would potentially enhance outcomes for all, but perhaps more significantly impact these groups.

61. Ongoing analyses of our Graduate Outcomes data, cross referenced with our Career Readiness work, will help us to identify statistically significant progression gaps emerging in relation to IMD, disability and ethnicity etc. If we identify robust trends suggest widening progression gaps.

Annex B: Evidence base and rationale for intervention strategies (further detail)

Intervention strategy 1

Principle Objectives

PTA_1 Leeds will increase the percentage of mature students attending the University

Evidence base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- [Forgotten learners: building a system that works for mature students](#) (Million Plus, 2018)

Continue to provide flexible routes into higher education, flexible delivery of programme that allows mature students to tailor their study to their pace of life

- Supporting access and student success for mature learners (TASO, 2021)

Information, advice, and guidance interventions are helpful in giving mature students in navigating the unfamiliar world of higher education, focus on enhancing a sense of belonging in these learners

- Mature students – Examples (OfS):

University of West London: access for mature students highlighted inclusive programmes such as degree apprenticeships

Intervention strategy 2

Principal Objectives

PTA_2 Leeds will increase the percentage of students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 attending the University

Evidence base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- Multi-intervention outreach - <https://taso.org.uk/intervention/multi-intervention-outreach/>

Evidence suggest that multi-intervention outreach programmes are likely to have a bigger impact than other approaches in isolation.

- Evaluating multi-intervention outreach and mentoring programmes - <https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/TASO-Summary-Report-%E2%80%93-Multi-intervention-outreach-and-mentoring.pdf>

The true value of the multi-intervention programmes may lie in informing student choice about where and what to study, rather than whether to attend.

- Sustained outreach makes the difference - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/blog/sustained-outreach-makes-the-difference/>

It needs sustained engagement, to open opportunities and provide a clear route into higher education. Sustained and progressive outreach with multiple activities has a more positive impact on learners' knowledge and attitude toward higher education than single or ad-hoc outreach activity.

Raising attainment - <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/77266/>

'What works' and 'what makes sense' in Widening Participation: an investigation into the potential of university-led outreach to raise attainment in schools. University of Kent (United Kingdom)

Raising attainment - <https://rss.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-985X.2012.01043.x>

Widening participation in higher education: analysis using linked administrative data. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society) 176, 431–457.

Intervention Strategy 3

Principal Objectives

PTS_1 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students

Evidence Base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- Advance HE report: '[What Works? Student retention and success change programme](#)'. 2017 – highlighting the importance of delivering ongoing, sustained interventions with academic intent and purpose for all students, helping to create collaboration between staff and students.

- QAA Blog: [What even is a seminar? \(Pownall, 2022\)](#)

Reflections on the hidden curriculum.

- Advance HE report [The hidden Curriculum of Higher Education](#) (Hinchcliffe, 2020)

"A collection of thought-leadership pieces and evidence-informed case studies touch on important aspects of the hidden curriculum that are pervasive in higher education from a variety of contexts" Supporting our welcome and transition work;

- [QAA Guides to Unpacking the hidden curriculum](#)

Best practice guides clarifying the hidden curriculum, complementary to the workshops we deliver to staff and the student guides we have created.

- Internal data analysis indicates that the percentage of students from IMD Q1 with a mental health condition is higher than that of IMD Q5 and of the University average. The percentage of mature

students with a mental health condition is significantly higher, and work to ensure this provision is expanded to support more IMD Q1 and Mature students is underway within the Plus Programme team.

Intervention Strategy 4

Principal Objectives

PTS_2 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between black and white students

Evidence Base

Much of the evidence base that influenced this work can be found under intervention strategies 8,9 and 10

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- OfS article: 'New OfS analysis examines differences in higher education access and continuation between different groups of students'. 2020.

Highlighting the sector gaps for minoritised groups. Analysis of both internal and sector wide data provides the basis for implementing Protected Characteristic Scholarships, to take positive action where there is evidence to suggest this is required and target demographic groups will benefit from the financial resource.

Intervention Strategy 5

Principal Objectives

PTS_3 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between mature and young students

Evidence Base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- Supporting access and student success for mature learners (TASO, 2021) - highlights several important findings from a sector-wide evidence review

In 2022 we set up a Mature Student Advisory Board (MSAB) with representatives from each faculty to draw on faculty wide experiences. The work of the MSAB and the findings from the longitudinal study, along with research across the sector, suggests that:

1. Support needs to be provided in ways that are not experienced as deficit.
2. Age differentials and the experiences of integrating with younger peers can inhibit feelings of belonging and capacities to engage.

3. Experiences of failure can be linked to external pressures (including costs) which are complex and require additional support to navigate.
4. There are significant barriers for mature students which could be better supported if systems are flexible and responsive.
5. Specific support and activities for mature students of different ages
6. Study support which recognises the specific experiences of mature students.

Intervention Strategy 6

Principal Objectives

PTS_4 Leeds will eliminate the completion gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students.

Evidence Base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- **HEPI Blog:** 'Delivering the right support to the right student at the right time: The power of student analytics'. Maxwell, 2023

Articulating how much there is to learn from analysing student engagement data, relevant for our learning analytic platform and our progression between years work and our engagement support caller roles.

- Our latest Impact of Undergraduate Bursaries/Scholarships evaluation using the OfS toolkit at Leeds showed increased retention (and degree award) for students receiving £2k a year or above. This influenced our decision to offer a premium to our bursary for those students with the least support (Care Experienced and Estranged) who are identified as significantly financially disadvantaged in OfS's Key Performance Measure 5. We also reintroduced smaller awards at a higher income level (£36k-£42.8k) recognising that whilst these students may be assessed in KPM 5's 'Other' category, the cost-of-living crisis has likely negatively impacted them. We are particularly concerned about the low inflationary increases to the loan value and the continued freeze of income thresholds. The lower parental earnings threshold has been frozen at £25,000 since 2008. Had it been indexed to average earnings, would now be around £35k⁵.
- In 2007, internal analysis suggested that financial support did not materially impact recruitment but did have some impact on our retention of students. The Plus Programme ultimately grew out of this work and was developed in order to offer both financial and personal, on course opportunities for students to upskill, build social networks, receive support or just use as an information source. It is reviewed and revised annually (see Intervention Strategy 7 which highlights the plan to develop a specific strategy to engage minoritised groups more closely) and outcomes are strong for Plus Programme students:

Analysis of the University's annual completion rate data found that 94% of Plus Programme students completed their degrees within that time, compared to 89% of comparable students who were not on the scheme. Between 2017/18 and 2020/21 the average good honours awarding gap was:

- 3% between those on the Plus Programme and other UK first degree students,

⁵ <https://ifs.org.uk/news/student-living-cost-support-cut-lowest-level-seven-years>

- 8% in favour of IMD Q1 students on the Plus Programme compared to those who weren't on the programme.
- **HEPI Blog:** 'The Heart of the Matter: Student Loneliness and belonging'. L Banahene and J Down, 2023.

Articulating how the creation of sense of belonging can help to tackle feelings of loneliness for students (especially in a post COVID world of HE).

- **Advance HE** article: 'Building student 'Belonging''. Webster, 2022

Helping to explain the different definitions of belonging to HE students and the difficulties in operationalising these ideas.

Intervention Strategy 7

Principal Objectives

PTS_5 Leeds will eliminate the completion gap between black and white students.

Evidence Base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

This intervention strategy overlaps strongly with intervention strategies 5, 9 and 10. Much of the research and analysis as well as interventions overlap.

- Our Access and Student Success Strategy anticipated findings of recent work such as the Pearson and WonkHE *Building Belong in Higher education* and includes targets for driving diversity of staff as a key student success enabler.

Intervention Strategies 8 & 9

Principal Objectives

PTS_6 Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1 students.

PTS_7 Leeds will eliminate the degree awarding gap between black and white students

Evidence Base

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds.

- *'An integral part of the work to address the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) attainment gap is the development of an inclusive curriculum. An inclusive curriculum is universal and intended to improve the experience, skills and attainment of all students including those in protected characteristic groups. It aims to ensure that the principles of inclusivity are embedded within all*

aspects of the academic cycle.’ ([Advance HE](#))

The above webpage brings together some institutional approaches for reducing the awarding gap for minoritised groups. However, as stated by Advance HE: ‘An inclusive curriculum is universal and intended to improve the experience, skills, and attainment of **all** students’, so can be applied to IMD Quintile 1 students as well as mature learners.

- **Kingston University:** If our curricula appear inaccessible, alien, or irrelevant to a student, we could be limiting their achievement. In pursuit of excellence, we need to ensure our practices do not unintentionally disadvantage any of our students or staff.
- **Advance HE** also highlights ‘improved student attainment’ as a reason for developing an inclusive curriculum and offers several ‘Practical Applications’, including:
 - ‘Student-centred collaborative approaches... allow students to draw on their own experiences and perspectives, enabling peer-led learning’.
 - ‘Encouraging students to work with different peers increases their knowledge acquisition and diversity skills’.
 - ‘We should be exposing our students to a variety of mediums of delivery... practical and authentic resources encourage participation as everyone can discuss concrete visual examples with interest’.
 - ‘Inviting speakers from different cultural and social backgrounds, may reflect the current diversity of higher education (HE) students. These speakers can cover additional aspects of the curriculum or provide different perspectives on existing content.’
- **TASO** recently launched a report (*Changes to teaching and assessment are reducing awarding gaps*) on the impact of curriculum reform on the ethnicity degree awarding gap, highlighting that findings from two studies do not decisively indicate whether curriculum reform interventions address the degree awarding gap. We will embed the recommendations made in the report to fully understand the impact of curriculum reform at Leeds.

Although the TASO report suggests that the ‘curriculum reform interventions as they were implemented do not affect the ethnicity degree awarding gap’, it does make several recommendations, including:

- Developing a clear Theory of Change
- Investment in training and support
- A shared and distributed approach to leadership
- The importance of leadership, communication, clear planning, motivation and inspiring of those involved and the understanding of specific contexts.

These recommendations would be applicable to **all** students, including IMD Q1 and minoritised groups.

- **Internal survey (2023, FBS)** suggests concerns around the ‘hidden curriculum’ in HE based on several areas related to Learning & Teaching, Assessment and Student Life.

This survey was not aimed at IMD Q1 students specifically, but further analysis of the student cohort could be undertaken if required. Of the 165 respondents, 23 were international students and 142 were UK students. Of the UK students, 62 reported fitting into at least one Widening Participation group:

- Mature student 15
- Commuter 17
- First in family to attend university 31
- Plus Programme Eligible 24
- Access to Leeds 22

- Parent or carer 1
 - Student with a disability 19
 - BTEC holder 3
- Student engagement through partnership in higher education (**Advance HE**) – provides key projects, resources on student engagement offering ‘many examples of partnership in practice, to both model and inspire further work’. (Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education, 2014).

The report suggests that ‘*Student engagement correlates with positive learning experiences and outcomes for students.*’ and ‘*that engaged student learning is positively linked with learning gain and achievement*’. However, there is also an admission that ‘*understandings of the impact of partnership work – for students, staff, institutions, society more broadly – remain relatively poor and there is a need for a greater evidence base around the benefits of partnership, particularly in under-explored areas such as curriculum design.*’

- [Active learning narrows achievement gaps for underrepresented students in undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and math](#) (Theobald, EJ, et al, 2020)

This report was chosen as it suggests that, based on the data analyses conducted, ‘*active learning reduced achievement gaps in exam scores and passing rates. Active learning benefits all students but offers disproportionate benefits for individuals from underrepresented groups. Widespread implementation of high-quality active learning can help reduce or eliminate achievement gaps in STEM courses and promote equity in higher education.*’ The Leeds Capabilities Framework (LCF) highlighted in Intervention Strategy 1 makes use of this work and the LCF is a cross-intervention with Intervention Strategies 8 and 9 (amongst others).

- *Alternative strategies for closing the award gap between white and minority ethnic students - differences in performance at exams contribute significantly more to the award gap than differences in performance in coursework* (Cramer, L, 2021)

This report was suggested that ‘*based on an analysis of students studying cell biology at University College London... differences in performance at exams contribute significantly more to the award gap than differences in performance in coursework.*’ and offers ‘*alternative policies... to speed up the closure of the award gap.*’, which we have adopted including reviewing how the curriculum is delivered and working to address belonging.

- [The white elephant in the room: ideas for reducing racial inequalities in higher education](#) – *the need for strong leadership, creating a culture in which it is possible to have open and honest conversations about race and racism, developing racially diverse and inclusive environments.*

This report focuses on the award gap between white and minority ethnic students and makes several policy recommendations, including:

- All Higher Education Institutions should participate in the Race Equality Charter
- Do groundwork to facilitate conversations about race within institutions.
- Make sure that work done by BME staff and students to tackle racial inequalities is recognised and rewarded.
- Academic faculties should look to their curricula and to other ways of addressing inequalities in their subject.

At Leeds we have adopted a number of the report’s recommendations (including the Race Equality Charter, and reviewing curricula).

- Internal data suggests that there are certain modules with high failure rates and gaps in performance between specific cohorts of students.

- Awarding data suggests gaps in awarding rates at 1st and 2:1 level for most minority ethnic groups, including Black students and IMD Q1 students (UG)

Internal analysis as described above has influenced or supported the prioritisation/implementation of work described in intervention strategies 9 and 10 relating to module design and inclusive approaches to learning and teaching.

Intervention Strategy 10

Principal Objectives

PTS_8 Leeds will eliminate the continuation gap between mature and young students.

Evidence Base

This intervention strategy, overlaps strongly with Intervention Strategy 5. Much of the research and analysis as well as interventions overlap with this work.

The below details some of the work that has influenced or supported our approach at Leeds

- Forgotten learners: building a system that works for mature students (Million Plus, 2018) The research carried out for this report offers several key recommendations for universities, including:
 - Further improve engagement with mature students to acknowledge their diversity and establish places/opportunities on campus for mature students to meet each other, particularly those in similar age brackets.
 - Be bold in targets and ambitions outlined in Access and Participation Plans relating to mature students.
 - Promote the range of support (financial or otherwise) that is available to mature students.

Many of the recommendations in this report have been implemented at Leeds.

- *Hidden Costs, What's the real university price tag?* (University of Nottingham Students' Union, 2019)

This piece of research suggests that students that experience hidden and additional costs are being impacted on both in terms of their student experience and their personal wellbeing. It influenced the development of the below piece of analysis.

- *University of Leeds: Additional Course Costs; Summary of findings from a yearlong investigatory project* (University of Leeds, 2022)

This report highlights that there are additional courses costs that students face at the Leeds; some that are clear and some that are not. As highlighted in the EORR (risk 10) mature students are particularly vulnerable to cost pressures. A more detailed analysis is underway and expected to report in 2023/24 with recommendations for how to mitigate negative impacts.

Fees, investments and targets 2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: The University of Leeds

Provider UKPRN: 10007795

Summary of 2024-25 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

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

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	9250
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year		N/A	1385
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	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	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	6935
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	6935
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year		N/A	1385
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	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	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Fees, investments and targets
2024-25 to 2027-28**

Provider name: The University of Leeds

Provider UKPRN: 10007795

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

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.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OFS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£3,488,000	£3,601,000	£3,712,000	£3,823,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£11,461,000	£11,449,000	£11,498,000	£11,549,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£393,000	£409,000	£424,000	£437,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£861,000	£888,000	£915,000	£942,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£2,627,000	£2,713,000	£2,797,000	£2,881,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£3,488,000	£3,601,000	£3,712,000	£3,823,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	6.4%	6.7%	6.9%	7.2%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£3,102,000	£3,202,000	£3,301,000	£3,400,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£386,000	£399,000	£411,000	£423,000
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£10,349,000	£10,304,000	£10,350,000	£10,394,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£712,000	£745,000	£748,000	£755,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000	£400,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£11,461,000	£11,449,000	£11,498,000	£11,549,000
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	20.9%	21.3%	21.5%	21.6%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£393,000	£409,000	£424,000	£437,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%

