



University of East Anglia

Access and Participation Plan

2020/21 to 2024/25

May 2019

1. Assessment of performance

UEA carries out an ongoing assessment of our performance on widening access and participation measures for home undergraduate and teacher training students. We utilise a broad range of quantitative and qualitative insight including the OfS access and participation dataset, HESA KPIs, TEF data and additional internal data for all stages to ensure we have rigorous analysis of full cohort information that considers UEA's specific context, our own student population and our role in the national picture. This includes examining the intersections of different student characteristics.

This section provides a summary of the current outcomes that have underpinned the development and focus of this strategic plan (based on undergraduate, home students). Key priorities are given below in purple and for those areas not identified as key priorities we commit to monitoring and taking action at subject level and/or if performance changes.

In order to ensure our ability to achieve the aims and targets of this Plan, our action planning processes will: consider a broad range of contributory measures, including from targeted qualitative research and sector survey results (e.g. NSS, UKES, Graduate Outcomes, LEO); utilise data science approaches, including understanding of explained and unexplained gaps; and analyse granularity of data, including subject and course level. This will include ensuring we look at "hidden gaps" that occur for certain students but are not reflected in institutional data and that we are able to best design and target our interventions. We have also developed internal reporting allowing us to consider the numbers of applicants/students required to meet our aims and plan to carry out predictive modelling to understand impact of changing intake demographics.

1.1 Higher education participation – POLAR4

East Anglia, particularly Norfolk, is an area with an above average concentration of POLAR4 Q1 areas, with markedly lower than average participation rates for our local region; 31% and 36% progression rates respectively with the England average being 40%. UEA notes its responsibility to support Q1 progression to HE in its primary catchment area.

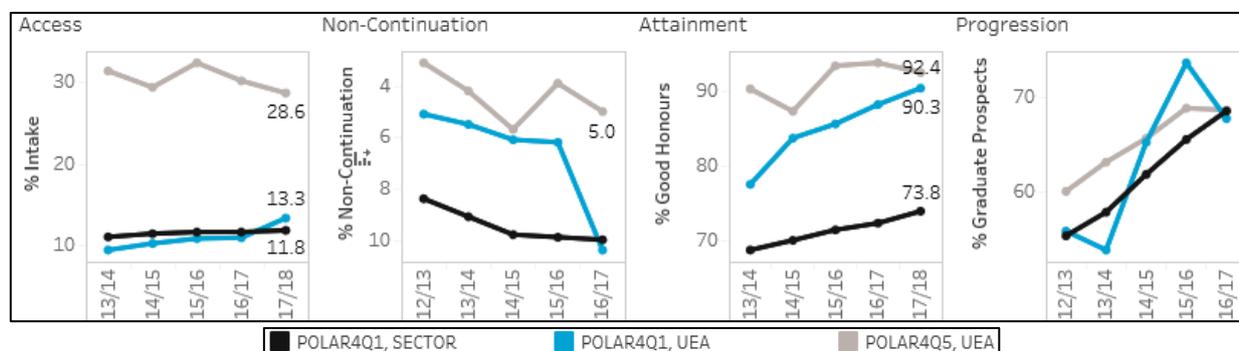


Figure 1 Gaps in access, non-continuation, attainment & progression for POLAR4 categories (OfS data)

Access – UEA priority to continue improvement in performance to further our contribution to the national aim to eliminate the gap in entry rates between the most and least represented groups.

- OfS data show that our proportion of Q1 students is relatively in line with the sector average, with year on year improvements seeing UEA perform ahead of the sector in 2017/18. Comparison to our location adjusted HESA KPI benchmark is positive with UEA having recruited a higher percentage of Q1 students.
- We note that our internal data shows a slight decrease in Q1 intake for 2018/19.
- With more to do, we have seen the gap between Q1 and Q5 recruitment closing over this time due to an increasing proportion of Q1 students (particularly between 2016/17 and 2017/18).

Success

a) **Non-continuation** - UEA priority to maintain improvement in performance and contribute to the national aim to eliminate the gap between most and least represented groups.

- In recent years, UEA has experienced a sizeable retention rate gap between Q1 and Q5, including a considerable widening in 2016/17 that saw UEA drop below the sector average for Q1 retention based on the OfS and HESA KPI data sets.
- Review against our TEF4 3 benchmark for Q1&2 highlights no significant difference.

- UEA internal data show considerable improvement in the retention of Q1 students in 2017/18, resulting in a complete closing of the gap at UEA that we will be working to maintain.

b) Attainment

- Since 2013/14, Q1 attainment at UEA has improved year on year, resulting in a gradual closing of the gap. Over this time, UEA has consistently performed ahead of the sector average.

Progression to employment or further study

- In terms of progression to graduate level employment or study, Q1 students at UEA have generally outperformed Q5 students in recent years relating to the common subjects of study for these students. Comparison to the sector average and TEF4 benchmark shows a positive picture. Looking at progression to *any level* of employment or study, there is no significant difference in the rates for Q1 and Q5 students with almost all graduates positively progressing.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

The ethnic make-up of East Anglia, particularly Norfolk, is predominantly white British (approx. 95%). Proportions of our local population from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds (approx. 10%) are significantly lower than for other parts of the UK and for England overall.

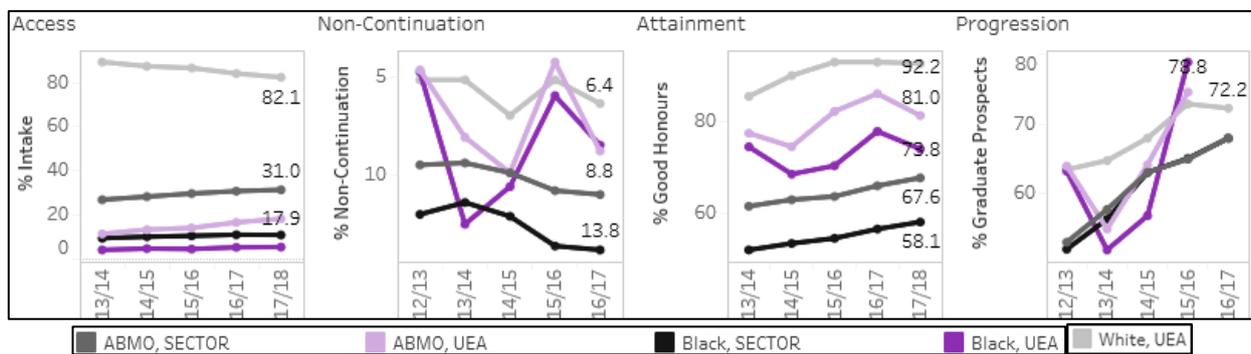


Figure 2 Gaps in access, non-continuation, attainment & progression for ethnicity categories (OfS data)

Access - UEA priority to continue to increase the ethnic diversity of its student intake.

- UEA has achieved a steady increase in its BAME student population over time. Our proportion of black students specifically has, however, remained stable.
- Our internal UEA data shows a 24% increase in the number of BAME students between 2017/18 and 2018/19, resulting in a population proportion of 21%. This was partly driven by increased intake of black-African students (from 4.3% to 6.1%) relating to intake from London.
- BAME intake at UEA has, however, consistently been below sector average. This is true across almost all ethnicity sub groups.
- The ethnic diversity of our local area is a limiting factor here but we will continue to work to ensure our Outreach strategy considers this a key priority and to be alive to the impact of changes in the geographic targeting of our recruitment.

Success

a) Non-continuation – Noting relationship to the attainment gap, UEA priority to ensure consistent equality in retention for students from different ethnic backgrounds including focus on continuing to improve retention for black and mixed ethnicity students.

- OfS data show UEA outperforming the sector average for retention of BAME students.
- Fluctuating over time, retention of BAME students has generally been lower than that of white students. Comparing retention for black and white students shows a consistently larger gap. TEF4 data highlight UEA retention of black students as significantly below adjusted benchmark.
- Positively, our internal UEA data shows an improvement in retention of BAME students in 2017/18 and narrowing of gap to less than 1 percentage point. This also shows improvement in retention for black students specifically, but that gap remains larger at 4 percentage points.
- UEA data shows retention of Asian students as higher than for white students; an historic exception had been Asian-Pakistani students, however, dropout for this group has reduced in the two most recent years closing the gap to only 1pp.
- Our numbers of mixed ethnicity students are growing year on year. Apart from an anomaly in 2015/16, retention of mixed students has generally been lower than that of white students, with a current gap of approximately 5pp (gap based on OfS data).

b) Attainment – *UEA priority to continue to improve performance and to contribute to the national aim to eliminate the gap in degree outcomes between white students and black students.*

- Good honours rates for students of different ethnicities at UEA are consistently well above the sector average over time and the gap in the good honours rate for BAME and white students has been steadily decreasing for a number of years.
- Most notably, when comparing attainment for black and white students at UEA, the gap has been consistently larger, for example, at 18 percentage points in 2017/18. UEA data indicates shows marginally lower good honours rates for Asian students across all than for white students, however, attainment levels and indeed student numbers have fluctuated annually.
- It is notable that the BAME gap widened in 2017/18 (to 11 percentage points) with more sizeable gaps opening for additional subgroups including some Asian subgroups. It is unclear at this stage whether this is an occurrence in a single year or a trend. Internal analysis indicates that it, at least in part, relates to a specific intake year onto a new foundation course rather than an ongoing issue. We will continue to monitor and if this gap persists for 2018/19 commit to developing relevant subgroup targets and related strategic measures.

Progression to employment or further study

- OfS and UEA internal data both show that the graduate prospects progression rate of UEA BAME and black students is above sector in the two most recent years of available data.
- In terms of positive destinations, progression of BAME and black students at UEA has improved considerably since 2013/14 and both groups have outperformed white students at UEA in recent years. UEA internal data shows that this outcome was maintained for 2016/17.
- Progression to positive destinations increased for students across all Asian subgroups in 2016/17 and was considerably higher than for white students. In fact, across almost all Asian subgroups, students have outperformed white students every year since 2014/15.
- Looking at progression to *any level* of employment or study reveals no significant differences between ethnic subgroups for 2016/17.

1.3 Mature students

Since 2008, the East of England has consistently had one of the lowest entry rates¹ for 21-50 year olds compared to other parts of the UK. Furthermore, UEA is in a region that has below average proportions of those aged 20-49 in its base population. As age increases so too does likelihood of students living at home while they study², which in turn increases the likelihood of students choosing their local institution. This makes recruitment of mature students to UEA more challenging. However, analysis of take up of Access to HE courses at local Further Education Colleges indicates modest scope for growth in our mature intake.

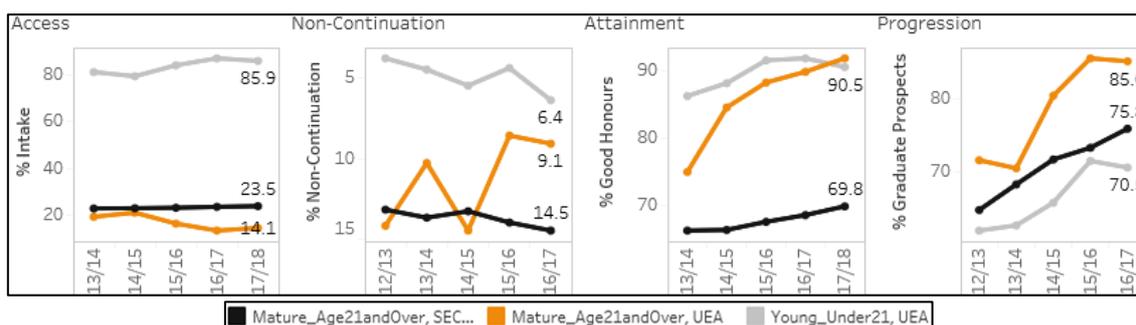


Figure 3 Gaps in access, non-continuation, attainment & progression for age categories (OfS data)

Access - *UEA priority to increase mature student intake focusing on local recruitment from FE.*

- It is important to note that the UEA data supplied by OfS includes mature students at our validated partner institution, Easton & Otley College. (Intake data for E&O show sizeable increases in the number of mature students in very recent years; this is not the case at UEA.)
- Internal UEA data show a gradual year-on-year decline in our proportion of mature accepts since 2014/15 and HESA data excluding partners highlights that UEA’s proportion of mature students has fallen well below the sector average in recent years.

¹ Entry rate is defined as proportion (entering HE) of the estimated base population.

² <https://www.ucas.com/file/175936/download?token=UVSBJLVD>

Success

a) Non-continuation - UEA priority to close mature and young retention gap.

- UEA generally performs above the sector for mature retention, particularly in recent years. Our internal figures (excluding partners) show slightly poorer retention for UEA than national datasets but UEA's retention rate remains above the sector average.
- However, based on the OfS data set we can see that mature students at UEA have been consistently more likely than under-21s to drop out of their first year of study. TEF4 data indicate a relationship to part time study.
- Internal UEA data for 2017/18 shows a slight decline in mature retention and a widening of gap

b) Attainment

- UEA has seen a gradual annual improvement in the good honours rate for mature students since 2013/14. This has resulted in a complete closing of the gap with young students.
- UEA has performed considerably above the sector average on this metric every year for the last five years, contributing positively to mature attainment in the sector.

Progression to employment or further study

- In terms of progression to graduate destinations, mature students at UEA have outperformed under-21s considerably every year since 2012/13. For 2016/17, there is a sizeable positive gap of approx. 14 percentage points. This relates to the fact that a popular subject of study among mature students is nursing, which has extremely high employability rates.
- UEA has performed above the sector average for mature progression every year for five years.
- Considering progression to *any level* of employment or study, there is little difference by age.

1.4 Disabled students

Over the last 10 years, disability prevalence in the UK has increased steadily from 18% to 22% driven by working age adults and children. From the age of 15 upwards, disability is more likely to affect females than males. In addition, since 2014/15 there has been a steady increase in mental health disabilities, learning difficulties and social/ behavioural difficulties. These trends all have implications for increasing HE participation for students with disabilities and related support needs.

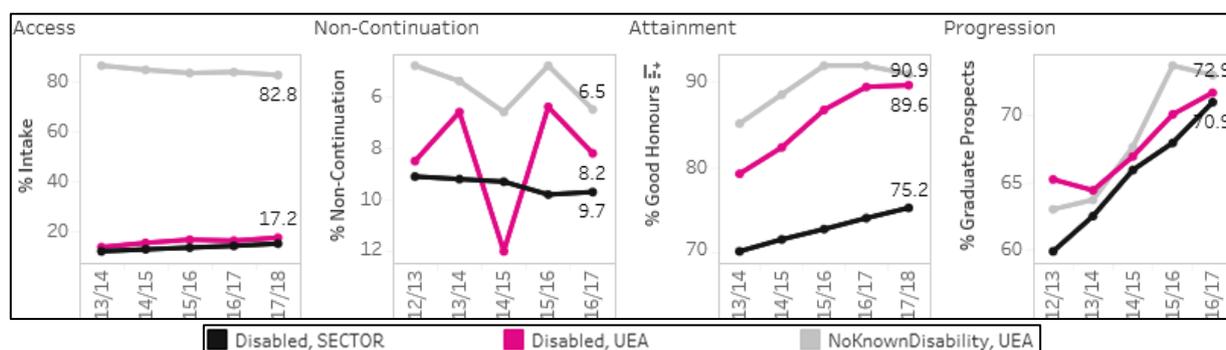


Figure 4 Gaps in access, non-continuation, attainment & progression for disability categories (OfS data)

Access

- The proportion of disabled students in UEA's intake has consistently been slightly above the sector average since 2013/14.
- Internal UEA data shows a gradual decline in our proportional intake of disabled students over time. Looking at the data by sub-group, the greatest decline over the five years has been in those with 'a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia'.
- However, data on the usage of services at UEA indicates that this does not tell the full story. We are aware of issues in how these intake figures are derived regarding lower reporting by applicants and the way our student records are overwritten when students declare a disability and/or are assessed after arriving at UEA. Work is underway to develop accurate management data to inform strategic planning to support potential and current students.

Success

a) **Non-continuation** – *Commitment to monitor closely the experience of disabled students at UEA and ensure action is taken to address barriers to completion, especially considering the close relationship with attainment.*

- Retention rates for disabled students at UEA compare positively with the sector average and TEF4 adjusted benchmarks.
- Methodological differences in capturing disabled status and in how dropout is calculated cause a discrepancy in the outcomes indicated by our internal UEA data and by the OfS dataset.
- Our internal data shows an improvement in retention for disabled students; closing the gap against non-disabled students in both 2016/17 and 2017/18. Almost all subgroups have seen an improvement in retention in recent years, particularly students with Asperger's Syndrome or other Autistic Spectrum Disorder. For 2017/18, students who declared a specific learning difficulty or Asperger's Syndrome or other Autistic Spectrum Disorder were more likely to complete their first year than those not declaring a disability.
- We are not complacent regarding the non-continuation gap highlighted by the OfS data set, especially as this reflects more narrative data from UEA staff in student support roles.

b) **Attainment** – *UEA priority to continue to improving performance and contribute to the national aim to eliminate the gap in degree outcomes between disabled and non-disabled students.*

- Overall, the proportion of UEA students with disabilities achieving good honours degrees has been considerably above the sector average in each of the last five years, contributing positively to this sector-wide priority.
- UEA has seen an overall improvement in the good honours rate achieved by disabled students since 2013/14 – whilst there has consistently been an attainment gap when compared to non-disabled students, this gap has narrowed significantly.
- This upward trend can be seen across most disability subgroups, including those declaring a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, and those declaring a mental health problem.

Progression to employment or further study - *UEA priority to improve performance in terms of progression of disabled students to graduate level destinations.*

- Overall, the rate of progression of UEA students with a disability to graduate destinations has been slightly higher than in the sector every year between 2012/13 and 2016/17.
- However, OfS and internal data indicate a slightly lower rate of progression to graduate destinations for disabled students at UEA in comparison to students without disabilities. Indeed, our internal data shows a slight decline and widening of the gap in 2016/17.
- Recent declines occur across sub-groups, including those with Asperger's Syndrome or other Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and those with a mental health condition, where the gap is widest.
- When looking at progression to *any level* of employment or study, proportions are considerably higher for disabled (all sub-groups) *and* non-disabled, with no significant gap in recent years.
- We will be utilising data from internal systems and surveys to better understand the point of origin and reasons for these gaps in 2019/20.

1.5 Care leavers

The number of care leavers joining UEA has been growing annually. This rose from 11 in 2015/16 to 23 in 2017/18. Despite small numbers, HESA data (a bespoke dataset purchased annually to benchmark our care leaver data against sector and local region) show that retention and good honours rates for care leavers at UEA are strong. We are currently performing above the upper quartile of institutions on these metrics. We commit to developing data to assess progression for care leavers through utilizing historic DLHE data and our careers questions in our registration task in 2019/20 and this will continue as part of our analysis of the Graduate Outcomes survey.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Over the last year, we have been working to better understand the trends caused by intersectionality between demographic, educational and disadvantage indices through developments in our internal data capability. We have also reviewed the OfS dataset for the intersectionality between ethnicity and gender and indicators of disadvantage to ensure we understand the key issues we need to consider in our action planning. We particularly note:

- In light of our priorities to increase diversity of intake, proportional intake of BAME POLAR Q1&2 students has been growing steadily but is still below the sector average.
- Declining retention rates of white Polar Q1&2 students is noted in designing approaches to further improve retention for students from lower participation areas.
- Progression for BAME POLAR Q1&2 students specifically has been considerably lower than progression for BAME POLAR 3-5 students.
- When looking at gender, performance is almost always poorer for males than females; at both institutional and subject level male performance is an intersectional factor in creating performance gaps for other characteristics. Ensuring reach to, and engagement with, potential and current male students forms a significant consideration in our action planning.

The role of prior educational experience and how this intersects with our target groups forms a significant element of our approach to addressing access and participation gaps. Analysis reveals:

- Notable trends for Polar Q1 and BAME students (BTEC) and mature students (Access) to be more likely to enter UEA with non-A level qualifications.
- UEA students with BTEC or Access qualifications are considerably less likely to complete their first year than students with A levels. BTEC students are less likely to achieve a 2.1/1st.
- BTEC and Access students were, however, more likely than those with A levels to progress to positive destinations in both 2015/16 and 2016/17.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Processes are now in place to collect data, including via questions in our annual registration task completed by all students, and from UCAS; and to ensure that existing data is accurate and usable. During 2019/20 we will be further developing our internal data capability in respect of analysis of performance by the following groups and during the lifetime of this plan insight will be used to continue to develop and evaluate appropriate support measures: Those with caring responsibilities (including students with children), who commute to UEA, who are estranged from their parents, are from military families, have English as a second language, and/or refugees.

We have also reflected on the OfS data set findings for students from the IMD Q1 that indicate potential areas for action in terms of access, continuation and attainment. As we have not previously assessed our performance in terms of IMD, we now need to take time to understand this in both our local context and in terms of potential action to ensure that we take a robust and effective approach to addressing any gaps. For example, through reviewing our Outreach target schools in terms of IMD profile and understanding internal trends in IMD performance by subject and other intersections of disadvantage. This work is already underway and we commit to putting in place relevant targets and strategic measures for the start of 2020/21.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Overview

We have drawn on the following to develop an ambitious and credible set of aims, objectives and targets to ensure equality of opportunity for all across the student lifecycle:

- Our assessment of performance - concentrating on where we have the largest gaps in terms of key metrics by characteristic at both institutional and subject level.
- An understanding of UEA's strategic context and the potential impact of this on widening access and participation including, for example, where we are likely to see potential changes in our intake from underrepresented groups and/or there is risk for gaps in success and progression based on policy and process developments.
- Geographical and UEA context including where we can have the largest impact on the national picture, considering our location, market and student profile.
- Reflecting on our long-term aims and making realistic but ambitious progress within five years.
- Understanding of the contributory factors in the cause and closing of these gaps and UEA's performance on these; drawing on sector and UEA evidence base to create a needs analysis of UEA and where we have weaknesses to address.

2.2. Target groups, aims and objectives

We have set the following strategic aims and objectives to address access and participation gaps for students with specific characteristics.

- Increasing access to Higher Education (HE) generally, and UEA specifically, for **students from areas of lower higher education participation** and a whole lifecycle approach to support retention, success and progression for these students at UEA.
- Increasing access to UEA for **specific Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students** and a whole lifecycle approach to close the black attainment gap at UEA.
- Increasing access to UEA for **mature students** and supporting the student experience to level the playing field in terms of retention and success.
- Supporting the whole student lifecycle for **disabled students**, particularly in terms of ensuring success and progression, including particular focus on supporting students with mental health problems, learning difficulties or Asperger's Syndrome or other Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Related to these targets are our commitments to increase understanding and support for students with disrupted journeys to/through HE. We will develop targets, aims and objectives by the end of 2020/21 based on data being gathered and analysed for the first time in 2019/20 (see 1.7).

- Increasing understanding of, and support for, **students who experienced disruption in their education** including having been in local authority care and/or from military families.
- Increasing understanding of, and support for, **students with different educational backgrounds** including non-A level qualifications or significant breaks from education
- Increasing understanding of, and support for, **students facing additional pressures** including estrangement from parents, being parents and/or having other caring responsibilities.

Fully outlined in our Targets and Investment plan, we have redesigned all of our APP targets including replacing all input targets with stretching but credible outcome and impact targets moving towards our longer term aims. These predict differing rates of progress based on a combination of historical rate of progress and the level of development of our related strategic measures.

- With our Outreach approach developed, our milestones reflect steady annual increases in our proportional intake of young POLAR Q1 students working towards eliminating the gap in entry rates between the most (Q5) and least represented (Q1) groups by 2030-31.
- Access to HE agreements with local FECs will be in place by 2020. We predict steady annual increases in intake of mature students from local Access to HE courses aiming for 36% of participants attending UEA by end of this plan halting the downward trend in our mature intake.
- Building on existing activity and progress, we predict annual improvements to close the retention gaps between mature and young students by 2025/26 and between black and white and mixed ethnicity and white students by 2024/25.
- We predict slow initial but accelerating movement on closing attainment gaps. This allows for both new inclusive and exclusive measures to be put in place and for these to have impact on good honours rates. For example, this includes consideration of the time lag inherent in approaches put in place from the first year of study having impact on the good honours metric. This also reflects the implementation of our new Inclusive Education Policy which starts in summer 2019 with developments occurring across the next two academic years. Overall, we aim to close attainment gaps between black and white students by 2027/28, between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students by 2024/25 and between disabled and non-disabled students by 2022/23.
- Noting the need for us to develop a better understanding of the reasons for the gaps and implement appropriate measures along with the time lag on this metric, we predict slow initial but accelerating progress on closing the gap in progression to graduate level employment or further study for disabled students generally and those with mental health problems specifically by 2026/27. (Based on DLHE data so indicative of the progress we want to make; adjustments will be made using Graduate Outcomes data). In support of these targets, we will build on existing activity and progress to close the disabled good honours attainment gap by 2021/22.

We have focused on ultimate outcomes to measure the high-level impact of our APP strategy. To address the inherent time lag in moving these metrics, reflect on different needs and speeds of progress for intersectional characteristics and evaluate the impact of our strategy and activity, this will be supported by a larger number of intermediate outcome and contributory measures identified

through an action planning process centred on the development of full evidence based theories of change for each target; baselines will be set by the start of this plan (by end 2019/20). These will include impact targets for our attainment/skills development and progressive Outreach strategic measures using pre and post methodologies, an access to HE target for UEA Outreach participants using HE Access Tracker (HEAT), attendance and engagement targets using internal student data and careers and student satisfaction targets based on student surveys.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overarching principles

UEA's whole provider approach is built on a set of preconditions necessary to achieve our goals

- **Institutional commitment to social diversity enriching learning for all.**
- **Avoidance of a deficit model** - commitment to an inclusive institutional culture and focused on institutional adaptations to ensure equality of outcomes.
- Understanding what needs to change and what works through a **robust evidence and evaluation** strategy that underpins all strategy and activity.
- **Collective action and collaboration** across departments at UEA and between UEA and other HEIs, FECs and other organisations.
- A **focus on a bedrock of inclusive education policy and practice** that is then supported by exclusive approaches when necessary and effective.
- **Targeting of activity to be needs-based drawing on evidence and understanding of shared journeys to and through Higher Education** (i.e. based on shared information and support needs not simply demographic characteristics).
- A **strategic focus on understanding and addressing contributory factors** and how these build into a full Theory of Change to achieve longer term aims in closing gaps.
- A **cohesive focus on the whole lifecycle** – measures to address access, success and progression are not distinct but rather part of a progressive journey. For example, much of the activity to address HE retention and academic attainment needs to start as part of Outreach.
- **Understanding that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution.** We will implement a wide range of institutional developments and strategic measures. There are many complementary measures, both inclusive and exclusive, needed to close the gaps across the student lifecycle.

Our whole institutional approach

UEA is committed to a whole institutional approach to widening access and participation that spans all aspects of the student journey, including academic, personal, social and professional development; engaging with all staff and services in order to address systemic issues to ensure equality of opportunity.³

This is led by our Widening Participation Committee (WPC), which draws on cross-institutional expertise and meets quarterly to develop strategy and action planning, agree the shape of investment, and monitor progress and impact. This Committee is chaired by UEA's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) and reports to other relevant committees, including our Student Experience Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee, Council and Senate, to ensure whole institutional understanding and buy-in. WPC is supported by steering groups addressing specific strategic issues including WP Research Group and Foundation Year Working Group.

UEA is invested in meeting its aims and objectives through dedicated staff providing strategic leadership to develop, implement and evaluate our APP:

- Academic Director for Widening Participation - University-wide academic leadership and expertise on teaching and learning issues.
- Assistant Head of Outreach and Assistant Head of Planning (WP and Business Intelligence) - strategy development, investment, tactics and activity undertaken across the lifecycle.
- Business Intelligence Manager (WP insight) – implementing our WP Evidence and Evaluation strategy to ensure that all strategy, investment and activity is evidence led and evaluated.

³ Thomas, Liz , Understanding a whole institution approach to widening participation, Offa, 2017

The implementation of strategic measures is undertaken by expert embedded roles:

- An established Outreach team (40 staff by start 2020/21) in our Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing (ARM) Division delivering progressive programmes to address three key barriers to HE: Awareness, Experience and Attainment.
- A team of nine Widening Participation Academic Officers (WPAOs) embedded in Faculties develop subject-specific measures to address priorities across the student lifecycle.
- Inclusive and exclusive roles in our Students' Union (SU), Study Abroad Team, Student Support Service, Careers Service and Planning Division, focused on specific areas of activity.

These roles ensure a clear line of responsibility for widening access and participation across UEA and that resource is available to ensure action is taken across the outcomes of this plan:

- Maintaining a two-way dialogue on widening access and participation across the institution.
- Championing best practice across the student experience to widen access and participation.
- Ensuring consideration of underrepresented students is part of all relevant policy and practice through positions on committees and executives at institutional and departmental level.

In addition, UEA is committed to ensuring widening access and participation is the responsibility of all staff; with awareness, consideration and activity embedded throughout planning and strategy:

- As a central element of an enhanced planning cycle (currently being developed) including building regimes to inform decision making that model the potential impact of policy and procedure on outcomes for different student types.
- Embedding widening participation into the development of institutional tactical approaches to support students, including the development of learning analytics.
- Whole institutional input into, and delivery of, inclusive education and access and participation activity; from our Commercial, Library and Information Technology divisions, through Student and Careers Support, to each School of Study.
- WP management team meets regularly with management of each division and run awareness raising sessions with teams, leading to development of inclusive and targeted approaches.
- Ongoing activity to raise understanding across Schools of Study of student profile and performance by characteristics to ensure commitment to closing retention, attainment and progression gaps through the development and evaluation of specific interventions.

Alignment with other strategies

UEA's Vision for 2030 commits to "live and breathe fairness in everything we do while promoting diversity and ensuring equality." Reflecting this, our UEA Plan 2016-2020 places considerable emphasis on celebrating the diversity of our communities including commitment to proactively working to achieve equality, dignity and respect through embedding key values in our curricula and implementing strategies for widening participation to ensure that UEA courses are open and welcoming to outstanding students from diverse backgrounds. Our next five-year plan is currently being developed and will, again, place emphasis on equality of student support and experience.

Commitment to widening participation is a pillar of strategic planning across the student lifecycle:

- Our ARM Plan takes a cross-team working model to embed Outreach activity across marketing, recruitment, admissions, alumni and communications strategies.
- UEA is currently revising its Learning and Teaching Strategy and our Inclusive Education Policy (IEP) will be one of the core strands of this.
- UEA's Employability Strategy is currently under redevelopment with a focus on embedding employability across the student journey; addressing progression barriers for underrepresented students is fundamental in the planning and aims of this strategy.
- Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022 underscores UEA's commitment to the promotion of wellbeing for all students through a "whole university" approach that embeds mental wellbeing in the teaching and learning context, both attitudinal and structural, recognising that wellbeing is necessary to students' capacity to learn and achieve their potential (HEA, 2017). This strategy commits to promoting a culture in which mental health problems are understood, recognised and not stigmatised.

This high-level commitment is reflected in a range of strategic actions underpinning our APP:

- Our Changing the Culture Taskforce ensuring that UEA is a welcoming environment for all by focusing on zero tolerance for harassment and bullying, celebration of the range of cultures on campus and training for staff and students, including in unconscious bias.
- Our Mental Health taskforce - a University-wide approach recognising that all areas of the institution play a part in creating a culture promoting good mental health and wellbeing.
- UEA's commitment to the Race Equality Charter and UUK/NUS BAME attainment gap framework pledge.
- We have reflected on the outcomes of sector and internal research highlighting the extent to which interactions with staff members and the diversity of staff profile are key variables in student retention and learning and attainment. Staff diversity and wellbeing are closely linked to the objectives of this plan under our new Director of People and Culture.

Careful consideration has been given to aligning the aims and measures of our APP, Equality and Diversity Strategy and our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Our WP activity supports the achievement of UEA's wider equality and diversity aims, including through shared monitoring and evaluation. Our equality and diversity and WP staff work in partnership on analysis of performance and steering related and complementary activity. A full EIA has been carried out finding all protected characteristics to be positively impacted by this strategic plan, noting the commitments made to ensure granularity of ethnicity and disability is considered in action planning.

Working Collaboratively

We note the vital importance of collective responsibility and collaborative action from HE providers in working to improve social mobility.⁴ UEA is a key member of our community with buy-in from the city for our UEA Vision. We will continue to work with HE providers locally, across the wider East Region and nationally to ensure a shared understanding of gaps in provision, learnings from best practice and scope for collaborative action across the student lifecycle.

Since 2017 UEA has had a network to promote and support school governorship for university staff. This network has supported local priority outreach schools in filling governor vacancies as well as enabling Multi-Academy Trusts to include UEA Trustees. We currently have more than 30 places on governing and MAT boards in the region and engagement with governing continues to increase. Regular meetings have included representatives from Outreach, schools, trusts and the local authority enabling UEA school governors to develop their skills and seek peer support; and Outreach staff and governors to share useful information about each other's work. The network is an example of our ongoing commitment to helping local schools raise attainment and awareness.

We host and participate in an increasing number of collaborative outreach activities with local FE and HE providers including joint working with the University of Suffolk on a looked-after children residential. The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, located on the UEA campus, has a strategic commitment to expanding and improving facilities for learning to ensure that programmes equip young people, families and teachers with the confidence to return to the UEA campus independently. UEA staff members will be coordinating the Association for Academic Outreach.

UEA is a member of the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco). A partnership of the five HEIs and eight FECs in East Anglia, it is the largest outreach project ever created in the region. An Outreach Hub will be established during Phase 2 in partnership with key agencies in the region to ensure that it supports local priorities - using our existing infrastructure to build on work already taking place. We are committed to the continuation of the project beyond 2021 and will ensure funding is utilised to embed impactful neaco work into the UEA Outreach team and continue the development and running of the Outreach Hub. The collaboration between the Norfolk HEPs has been a particular strength and we will take an active role in supporting this partnership including sharing practice and resources.

UEA is a lead institution on a project bid to the European Union Erasmus+ fund to address the issue of participation gaps in the uptake of international experience. In Summer 2020, we will be hosting the conference of the Foundation Year Network.

We work collaboratively with other institutions and research organisations on projects to evidence and evaluate our approach, including as contributors to sector events and groups such as the

⁴ Bridge Group, Inspiring Policy: Graduate Outcomes and Social Mobility, 2016

NEON Impact and Evaluation working group. Following on from participation in a research project with agency Alterline and other HEIs into the life stories of black students, we will continue to work with participating institutions to learn from outcomes of action taken.

Our Theory of Change and strategic measures

AIMS	ONGOING MONITORING	TRIGGERED 'DEEP DIVES'	EVALUATION	OUTCOMES
Assessment and monitoring of performance	Robust Evidence Base – Desk research and literature review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking sector policy, guidance and findings Monitoring sector best practice 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding to widening access and participation across sector and whole institution Informed investment Design of effective and measures and initiatives Robust evaluation of strategic approach and theory of change Evaluation baselines and measures of individual initiatives
In depth understanding of contributory factors and lived experience	Performance Monitoring – management information and data science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring metrical performance between groups, intersections, sector and comparators. Data science and predictive modelling. 			
Evidence based measures and investment – theory of change	Understanding why – active quantitative and qualitative research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross analysis of all applicant and student surveys by WP sub-groups to track barriers and motivators. Qualitative tracking of WP student experience 			
Impactful and effective initiatives and interventions – what works?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific targeted reviews of other institutional activity Specific projects to understand context in which UEA is operating 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in sector evaluation projects 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking deeper at performance gaps for specific groups Analyse relationship between input, contributory and output measures 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking participants/ students through interventions and lifecycle Activity measures Impact/outcome measures 	

Figure 6: UEA Access and Participation Evidence Base.

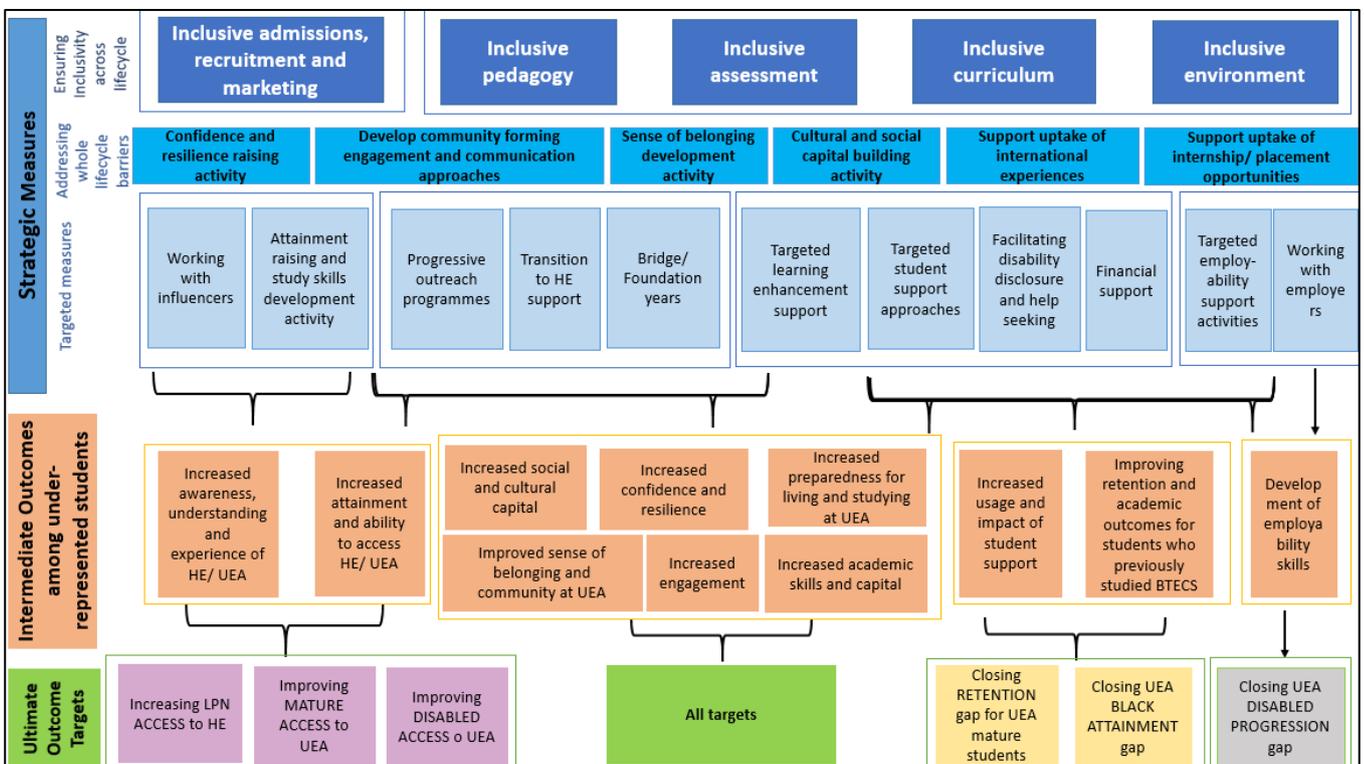


Figure 7: UEA strategic level theory of change diagram

UEA is firmly focused on widening access and participation being a product of both academic achievement and personal wellbeing; our approach is based on an understanding of the broad range of influences and pressures and how these can vary for students from different

backgrounds. Our approach is continually evolving based on the most up-to-date evidence base and evaluation outcomes (Figure 6).

As the foundation of our APP, UEA has developed an overarching strategic level Theory of Change (Figure 7) outlining the interrelated strategic measures required to support intermediate outcomes that lead to closing our performance gaps. Under each strategic measure will be a range of inclusive and exclusive initiatives. Steering groups for each of our ultimate target aims will utilise the most up-to-date evidence to develop, and keep under review, detailed Theory of Change based action plans ensuring the robustness of the causal links between what we do and the intermediate outcomes and ultimate impacts we are looking to achieve. Based on progress made in recent years, much of our work will continue to invest in and develop existing approaches but in some areas, where faster progress is needed, we are committed to developing new approaches.

The following section provides detail on the aims of our inclusive and exclusive strategic measures, the robust links of these to our intermediate and ultimate outcomes and provides examples of some of the input activities that will be the basis of these strategic measures.

1. Foundational measures ensuring inclusivity at all stages of the student lifecycle

Inclusive Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing – Removal of systemic barriers to successful application to UEA to increase diversity including by HE participation, ethnicity and age.

We have identified barriers to widening access linked to recruitment and admissions processes: the admissions process lacks transparency, favouring those with prior understanding; LPN students may make 'safe' choices to ensure a place; and Access to HE students struggle to meet entry requirements due to their course structure.

Working with ARM teams we are developing strategies to link these barriers with our APP aims:

- Access to HE agreements with local FECs – a programme of curriculum, application and admissions support for mature students considering UEA courses. In place for UEA 2020 entry.
- Access UEA Schemes – offering subject-specific programmes of activity for WP students to develop capitals plus admissions support for those considering UEA courses. We will then continue to support these students once at UEA. To be in place for UEA 2021 entry.
- Foundation Year (FY) Contextual Admissions – a reduced tariff offer to students applying to our FY programmes if they meet WP criteria and have attended a UEA Outreach target school is already in place and we will continue to review impact and effectiveness.
- National BTEC student programmes along with Polar Q1 geo-targeting to ensure intersectionality in UEA recruitment. To be piloted in 2020/21 - full roll out in 2021/22. This work will directly address our Polar Q5:Q1 ratio target to close the gap by 2030/31.
- A strong commitment to BAME recruitment working towards a proportion of BAME students at UEA that reflects the profile of East Anglian institutions within the next 10 years. This sets an ambitious target within our local context. We will work nationally with WP charities and organisations to develop this work ready for delivery in the 2020/21 academic year.

Applicants will be tracked and the intake profile of UEA monitored annually to assess the impact of these measures.

Reflecting on the recommendations of the recent Reform HE report regarding potential impact of contextualised admissions we recognise the importance of evidence to enable the development of a transparent and robust policy, and modelling of different approaches is being undertaken.

Inclusive Education Policy – Removal of systemic barriers to equality of HE experience including addressing specific retention and attainment gaps for LPN, disabled, mature and black students.

Studies examining differential outcomes for different groups of students highlight multiple factors impacting on student retention, success and progression at universities. For this reason, our policy is holistic, addressing all aspects of the student experience both inside and outside the classroom.

According to a 2010 HEA report on developing and embedding inclusive policy and practice in HE, this "necessitates a shift away from supporting specific student groups through a discrete set of policies or time bound interventions, towards equity considerations being embedded within

all functions of the institution and treated as an ongoing process of quality enhancement.”⁵ Inclusive Education, thus, forms the underpinning to address all our widening participation aims. For example, outcomes of recent research into black student lives highlighted UEA’s responsibility to change to actively reduce the challenges faced by black students through an approach enabling Black students to see themselves reflected in both learning and living at UEA.⁶

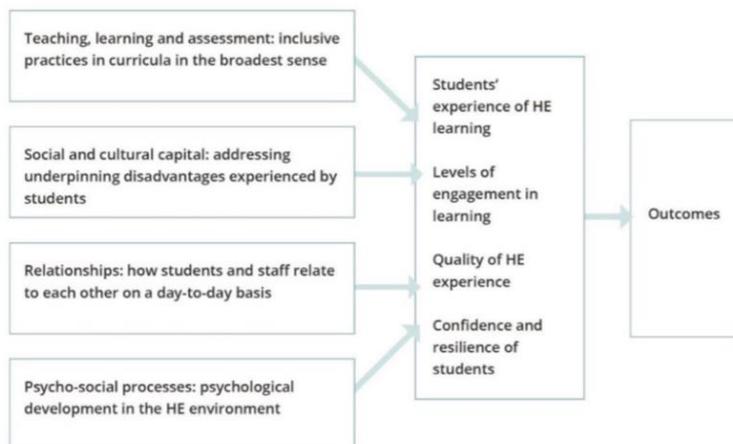


Figure 8 Mechanisms to address differential outcomes ⁷

UEA’s Inclusive Education Policy (IEP) establishes a proactive, whole-institution approach, embedding inclusive practice as part of a mainstream provision (rather than compensatory or additional) to maximise the opportunity for success for all, through four interrelated elements:

1. Inclusive Curriculum – the content of what is taught and learning materials
2. Inclusive Assessment – the way student attainment is measured and qualified
3. Inclusive Pedagogy – the way the content of the curriculum is taught
4. Inclusive Environment – the non-classroom experience

The policy provides a foundation from which to maintain and develop inclusive teaching and learning at UEA, implemented from summer 2019. An evaluation plan drawing on cross analysis of a broad range of related metrics and student feedback will be embedded into implementation.

2. Measures addressing key barriers to widening participation are built into a broad range of inclusive and exclusive activity across the student lifecycle.

Supporting development of a sense of belonging and reducing isolation whilst building confidence and resilience – Foundational in addressing equality of experience aims across the student lifecycle through removal of a highly impactful barrier to engagement. Component in addressing retention and success gaps for BAME, Disabled and Mature students.

*“Students’ sense of being accepted, valued, included, and encouraged by others (teacher and peers) in the academic classroom setting and of feeling oneself to be an important part of the life and activity of the class. More than simple perceived liking or warmth, it also involves support and respect for personal autonomy and for the student as an individual.”*⁸ Narrative evidence from local schools and research with Outreach participants highlight anxiety around belonging as a barrier to HE progression. Sector and internal research have also consistently shown that a strong sense of belonging is at the heart of retention and academic success. UEA research shows the issue heightened for underrepresented students, particularly mature, disabled and black students.

Furthermore sector literature on addressing differential outcomes frequently highlights the impact of learner identity, confidence and resilience as a key compounding factor. Fear of failure, self-doubt and feeling overwhelmed are comment themes in interviews with students at risk of drop out or who have left the institution.

⁵ Helen May and Kath Bridger, Developing and embedding inclusive policy and practice in higher education, HE A, 2010

⁶ Alterline, University Futures – The Black Attainment Gap, 2019

⁷ Mounford-Zimdars, A et al (2015) Causes of Difference in Student Outcomes. London: HEFCE

⁸ Goodenow (1993b) cited in Professor Liz Thomas, Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change – final report from the What Works? Student Retention & Success Programme, 2012, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, HEFCE, HEA, Action on Access

Understanding that UEA's student body is made up of distinct groups, each with different life experiences and backgrounds, and with different aspirations for their time at UEA is thus a central pillar of UEA's strategic Theory of Change for widening participation. We aim to create an academic and social environment where every student can integrate to support all aspects of the student journey including access to HE and retention as well as improving academic attainment.

Based on robust research, and aiming to create a greater sense of belonging for students from underrepresented backgrounds and improved student networks of support, we are investing in the development of a community-forming communications and engagement approach that will have a significant role to play in improving the perception and reality of the student experience from prospective student through to graduation. Our approach here draws on experience in the public and voluntary sector that shows communication approaches based on identifying the underlying drivers of misunderstandings between groups can create practical ways to change perceptions and behaviours and help people to identify with their new surroundings, establish connections and find their place in their community. This approach will be piloted in 2019/20 and rolled out in 2020/21.

We will continue to implement inclusive and exclusive measures across the student lifecycle to enhance sense of belonging and confidence; reflecting on the relational nature of belonging based on interaction between students, teachers and peers⁹ to increase: understanding of diversity across interactions with all staff and students, representation of different student types across all aspects of the student experience and support the development of 'counterspaces' by/for specific student groups. From 2019/20 onwards, we will invest in dedicated roles in the UEA SU and Student Support Service including Residential Life Managers to build social community and peer support networks in our accommodation. Confidence building is a key aim of our outreach and transition work. We will expand our successful Take Five project that takes a student-led approach to developing a culture of wellbeing and inclusion. Impact will be measured by monitoring qualitative and quantitative research with potential and current students.

Supporting development of social and cultural capital – Reducing deficits in the development of capitals across the student journey is key to addressing differential outcomes including those in relation to progression to employment.

Sector research highlights the considerable impact of social and cultural capitals on decision making regarding progression to HE and student experiences and outcomes. E.g. students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to participate in a period abroad and, therefore, miss the opportunity to develop social and cultural capital. Mobile students were more likely than non-mobile students to be employed six months after graduating with related impact on earnings.¹⁰

Utilising the NERUPI framework we will continue to design lifecycle-spanning strategic measures to support underrepresented students in the development of these capitals, including progressive Outreach; exclusive opportunities for target groups to benefit from placement opportunities pre-arrival, during foundation years and undergraduate study; and closing gaps in take up of curricula and extra-curricular fieldwork and placement opportunities.

UEA has identified Study Abroad and Placement in Industry experiences as key strategic routes to developing social and cultural capitals. We will continue to invest in specific roles and activity in our Study Abroad and Placement and Internships teams to target closing these gaps. This investment commenced in 2018/19 with initial emphasis on developing understanding of issues. Active measures will be in place ahead of the start of this plan in 2020/21.

We will continue to monitor uptake of capital building opportunities and impact on participants.

3. Targeted support measures to address specific barriers at points in the lifecycle.

Progressive Outreach Programmes – Targeted activity to facilitate increased HE participation for local students from under-represented groups. Using robust Theory of Change models our work will address locally identified barriers to HE:

Awareness - building understanding of the benefits of HE and addressing decision-making skills, supporting students to use the information provided to make informed choices.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Bridge Group, Inspiring Policy: Graduate Outcomes and Social Mobility, 2016

Experience - Activities that provide positive interactions with HE, alongside identifying role models, will lead to an increased sense of belonging and belief in ability to progress to HE.

A redeveloped Outreach offering of progressive activities and interactions will address the above barriers and facilitate development of capitals. Our Outreach communications strategy and age-specific resources will encourage ongoing interaction; and strong relationships with key influencers (parents, teachers) will build further sense of belonging with UEA. All activity will be mapped against the NERUPI framework and evaluated against its objectives.

Outreach raising attainment programmes - Targeted activity to remove the attainment barrier to HE participation for students from local areas of lower participation

“No matter how much support is provided to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, they will not get into university unless they reach the required academic standards.”¹¹ The Theory of Change model associated with achieving better grades is a complex one that takes in elements of cultural capital-building, confidence-inspiring and motivation-raising, as well as practical skills in terms of time management and exam management. Our programmes will support KS4 and KS5 subject development, with the aim of improving exam results and consequently delivering greater choice in HE progression routes. We are also in the process of exploring a partnership with the charity, IntoUniversity. If successful, this will begin delivery in autumn 2020. All activity will be mapped against the NERUPI framework and evaluated against its objectives.

Greater impact on attainment raising can be achieved through effecting institutional change with teacher training and CPD. We offer subsidised postgraduate places on Education courses and a comprehensive CPD programme, to be developed further for the 2020/21 academic year.

Transition Support – Removing significant barrier to support equality of retention, and success for students with lower exposure to HE and/or increased support needs.

“The first few months at university can play a disproportionate role in shaping the overall experience of HE... Not all applicants are well prepared. There are some significant disparities between what they assume life is like at university, and what it is actually like for most students.”¹² Internal and sector research, including UEA’s Exit Survey and Unite’s Reality Check report, clearly highlight the direct and indirect impact on retention of expectations not meeting reality, and that disparities are more profound amongst students less familiar HE and/or with additional pressures.

We will continue to increase investment in preparedness across age groups, including a comprehensive programme for UEA applicants from WP backgrounds to help prepare them for HE both academically and socially, and to address specific issues identified by some BAME groups. Through our Outreach communications plan we will provide additional support and information for WP groups during the transition from enquirer to entrant; pilot in 2020/21 and roll out in 2021/22.

Across the lifespan of this plan we will continue to invest in impactful transition measures including ensuring the specific needs of underrepresented students are considered and addressed through institutional and local induction schemes and our Students’ Union Buddy Scheme. Tracking student engagement and impact evaluations will inform our work.

Academic Support – Providing tailored academic support to address attainment gaps.

Sector and internal research clearly identify both perceived and actual gaps in the skills required by HE study as highly impactful on retention and attainment. UEA students from diverse backgrounds participating in our qualitative tracker study revealed that fear of failure caused by not knowing what was expected of them was a key drop-out risk factor. For many this was due to struggling to adapt to independent study and for others to lack, or perceived lack, of specific academic skills that had gone unsupported/underdeveloped. Analysis of performance metrics by student characteristic and interrelated factors highlight specific retention and attainment gaps and strengths for students entering with different prior education experience and attainment.

UEA offers bridge/introductory courses in specific subjects and continues to enhance our foundation year course offering. These courses provide a strong platform, giving students a variety of key study skills that will enable them to excel as undergraduates. We will continue to have a

¹¹ TeachFirst, Beyond access: Getting to university and succeeding there, 2017

¹² Unite, Reality Check – A report on university applicants’ attitudes and perceptions, 2017, Unite Students and HEPI

dedicated academic role working on support for underrepresented groups on our Foundation programmes including the development of study skills module for 2020/21.

We will continue to invest in the capacity of our Learning Enhancement team to address issues of academic skills development for specific in-need groups of underrepresented students through embedded and dedicated support and peer assisted learning.

Internal management information and research highlight the importance of working with specific Schools of Study to address specific needs and skills gaps. For example, building on research and pilot projects conducted in 2018/19, we will develop specific support for students who have previously studied BTEC qualifications; and targeted initiatives in Schools of Study where the POLAR Q1, BAME and disabled attainment gaps are significant.

We will evaluate the impact of activities by tracking students through their time at UEA, including utilising cross analysis of stage mark by characteristic and participation in interventions.

Pastoral Support - Addressing support factors impacting directly and indirectly on retention.

UEA's Student Support Centre is a one-stop-shop offering a range of services for students. Ongoing investment in additional staff in areas where there is high underrepresented student need, including in our Student Wellbeing team, ensures an effective and accessible service for in-need students. We will continue to utilise all available data to monitor and evaluate the impact of our student support and will remain alert to any new issues as they arise. Trends from UEA's Non-Academic Experience survey show clear patterns of higher reported usage of, and satisfaction with, a range of Student Support Services among a number of widening participation groupings.

We are considering our approach to embedded pastoral support as part of our ongoing review of student wellbeing and the outcomes of this review will be in place within the lifespan of this plan.

Noting our priorities in terms of students with mental health problems and the wealth of research highlighting low rates of disclosure of mental health problems¹³, particularly among BME and white working class males, we will be working in 2019/20 to reduce this limiting factor on the institution's ability to offer appropriate support; including approaches to encourage disclosure (including addressing gaps in the communication pipeline with students and between departments) and to provide support through different media to complement our face to face approach. We aim for this to be firmly in place for the start of this plan to underpin the impact of our more active measures and will continue to closely monitor disclosure and help-seeking rates.

The consistently higher dropout rate for mature students indicates specific systemic issues - with student satisfaction data highlighting lower satisfaction in key practical course factors such as organisation, timetabling and being able to contact staff when needed. We will continue to work across the institution to address these issues and monitor related student satisfaction rates.

Employability Support – Targeted approaches to address progression gaps.

Sector research into graduate outcomes and social mobility highlights that 'students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to participate in the type of extra-curricular activities that are attractive to employers. They are less likely to make use of careers services or apply for internships'.¹⁴ They are more likely to draw on informal sources for advice, such as websites. These trends are reflected in internal cross analysis of usage of UEA careers services.

We will continue to work with careers experts at UEA to focus on addressing gaps in use of services and the take up of impactful employability opportunities, such as our UEA Award. Building on current approaches, we will implement proactive promotional routes and offer exclusive financial support, internship opportunities and careers activities for specific underrepresented groups. We are implementing methods to ensure co-creation of these approaches with students from target groups, for example through a series of group internship opportunities for disabled students, running in summer 2019, to research and recommend approaches.

We have secured funding from the OfS for the Norfolk Graduate Talent Programme, which will address challenges to students from disadvantaged backgrounds gaining employment in the local

¹³ Unite, Reality Check – A report on university applicants' attitudes and perceptions, 2017, Unite Students and HEPI

¹⁴ Bridge Group, Inspiring Policy: Graduate Outcomes and Social Mobility, 2016

area. The objectives include working with Norfolk SMEs to improve their visibility and ability to recruit graduates, and working with students and recent graduates to develop their skills and attributes. This project will run from 2019 to 2022. Based on a robust evaluation, UEA is committed to investment to embed learnings in subsequent years.

Financial Support – Facilitating equality of opportunity to a student experience related to success.

A review of literature conducted at UEA in 2017 concluded that there was a positive relationship between financial support and retention and academic success by supporting and enhancing the student experience and enabling students to engage with their studies. Analysis of the impact of UEA’s financial support approaches to date indicate an indirect impact on retention based on supporting engagement for the most in need students but none for those with higher income. Financial support, therefore, plays a role in our Theory of Change addressing gaps in the ability of underrepresented students to benefit from an equivalent experience of HE to their more advantaged peers e.g. where lack of funds is an evidenced barrier to students benefitting from elements underpinning success such as developing social and cultural capital.

We introduced a new bursaries approach in our 2019/20 APP, including tightened eligibility criteria and reduction in the level of payments to target the most in need student groups. It is not yet possible to evaluate its impact so we will maintain this approach to allow time for robust evaluation.

Recipient	Amount
Household income £16,000 or less	£1300
Household income £16,001 – £20,000 and from POLAR 1 postcode	£800
Care leavers and estranged students	£2500

Figure 9: Bursaries for new entrants 2020/21 to 2024/25.

The financial support detailed in Figure 9 is provided for no more than four years of study even if a course is longer, with foundation years counting as one year of study. Recipients are able to choose the type of support: fee or accommodation waiver or cash payment.

UEA is committed to robust impact evaluation of financial support. We will model potential approaches to financial support moving away from traditional bursaries to ‘active’ financial support ring-fencing funds for eligible students to spend on specific elements of the student experience that have proven impact on success and progression. Thorough testing and consultation is essential to development so we plan to resubmit this APP if/when we have a robust approach.

3.2 Student consultation

Formal student representation in Access and Participation planning

Student representation in terms of widening access and participation is the remit of UEA Students’ Union’s Undergraduate Education Officer and Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer. Through membership of our WPC, they have contributed to the development of this Plan and will be involved in its implementation and evaluation. Input that has been actioned has included the strategic focus on rapid development of understanding and action to close the black attainment gap and commitment to tighter monitoring of implementation as outlined in section 3.4.

The Officers are also members of other University committees and are involved in cross institutional reviews enabling them to input into decisions that impact on widening participation across the student lifecycle. Our Code of Practice on Student Representation ensures students are represented at School and Faculty level and can contribute to the management and enhancement of their programmes. Piloting of specific Equality and Diversity reps has been taking place during 2018/19. UEA’s WP Management team have regular meetings with relevant SU officers, including leading to the co-creation of UEA’s Inclusive Education Policy, and work with the SU to embed understanding of UEA’s student profile and issues related to specific underrepresented students into induction training for student representatives.

Specific meaningful consultation on the drafting and implementation of UEA’s APP

Our WP Management team attended meetings with SU Council and Officers (including roles specifically related to underrepresented student groups) to present a summary of our strategic and operational plans to address performance gaps. Attendees were provided with the summary in advance to enable consultation with students from a range of backgrounds. These discussions

have provided a broader understanding of issues to be addressed in the implementation of IEP, including regarding access and use of teaching and study spaces for disabled students. We will continue to work collaboratively with student representatives on the implementation of our plan through student representation on key working groups linked to our aims and measures.

The wider student voice in Access and Participation evidence and evaluation

UEA will continue to undertake a wide range of specific quantitative and qualitative research with prospective and current UEA students to increase our understanding of widening participation issues and evidence and evaluate our APP approach. We will also continue to gather student feedback and views through regular all-student institutional surveys and focus groups and, where possible and appropriate, integrate analysis by different student characteristics into this broader activity. UEA students are at the heart of all the evidence and evaluation informing our approach. Examples of action based on these analyses have included significant developments of pre-arrival and induction communications and activity to address the needs of different student types and addressing operational barriers to mature student engagement.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Our evaluation strategy spans all levels of APP strategy and activity to ensure a clear understanding of the impact of our whole approach. Learnings from undertaking the OfS Self-Assessment Tool, both areas of best practice and for improvement, inform the development.

Support for evaluation within institutional culture

UEA is committed to evidence and evaluation shaping its APP approach in terms of the expansion, maintenance, adjustment, redesign or termination of strategic measures and individual initiatives. Critical reflection ensures we question our activities all the way through, facilitating continuous improvement in inclusive practice and the range of exclusive programmes and their content

UEA takes a whole provider approach to the evaluation of the impact of APP strategy and activity; structures and opportunities are in place across the institution to implement robust approaches and discuss evaluation outcomes. An evaluation culture is embedded and is a key theme of the University's emerging Business Intelligence Strategy. We are committed to an annual review of our evaluation strategy to ensure continuous improvement. APP evaluation is overseen by our WPC and supported by our WP Research Group, where professional and academic colleagues discuss research and evaluation insight and facilitate collaborative working.

Data strategy, resources, skills and expertise

UEA has a dedicated WP Evidence and Evaluation team (WPE&E team) of skilled professional insight, market research and data analysis/science staff responsible for the delivery of our WP Evidence and Evaluation strategy with proportionate investment. We also draw on cross-institutional expertise including utilising the skills of our WPAOs and broader academic community and recruiting specific skill sets as required internally or via outsourcing with expert agencies. Aspects of evaluation skills are included in the recruitment criteria of all WP and Outreach related roles to ensure support for evaluation. All relevant staff have considerable opportunities for professional training and upskilling, including attending relevant sector events. We are committed to conducting an ongoing skills audit and making further investment as needed.

We ensure that all of our evaluation methodologies are approved by UEA's Information Compliance and Data Protection team and University Research and Ethics Committee.

We are developing action planning processes for all levels of activity with embedded evaluation planning. Our formal evaluation plans detail the data sources and/or data collection methods to be used, including clear and specific timelines for collection or availability of data, and roles and responsibilities. All evaluation methodologies are relevant and appropriate to the nature of the intervention itself, considering factors including sensitivity of topic, level of anonymity of participants and potential for reactivity effects. Our completion of the self-assessment tool highlighted a lack of systematic consideration of risks within evaluation design; we will be working to improve this through increased piloting of approaches and cognitive testing of questionnaires.

We are committed to using a broad range of data types to provide the most relevant evaluation of different programmes. Mechanisms for utilisation of internal and external data, collection of mass

participant data, survey responses and qualitative data are being embedded across 2018/19 and 2019/20, and during that time we will develop a full schedule of available data. Over the lifespan of this plan we will continue to remain systematically alert to new data sources including, for example, utilising attainment data from the schools we engage with as part of our evaluation.

The standards of evidence and evaluation types achieved

A key strand of UEA's approach to evidencing and evaluating its APP approach is to embed this analysis across all student management information and market research design and analysis. Dedicated resource in our Business Intelligence Unit (BIU) have implemented cross analysis regimes of all key high-level student metrics and student surveys. We continue to develop this for a broad range of contributory measures of student success and engagement in 2019. This team also undertakes qualitative research to inform our approach. Outcomes form a strong evidence base and provide a specific indicator to be tracked for change as part of our evaluation.

Our WP E&E team is rolling out proportionate evaluations for all current UEA APP activity across the student lifecycle measuring behavioural and attitudinal change and based on both narrative and empirical evidence to ensure we have evidence of impact in our own context. This will be in place for the start of this plan and continually reviewed and developed across its lifespan. We are in the early stages of exploring appropriate circumstances for us to utilise experimental methods, using a control or comparison group to understand causal effects. We commit to developing this capability utilising our BIU and academic expertise across the lifespan of this plan.

All evaluations assess impact on intermediate objectives and ultimate aims considering:

a. Appropriate methodologies

- Tracking and monitoring participants - All relevant UEA Outreach activities are input into the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT). Evaluation of late interventions in terms of their impact on a participant's progression into HE is starting. We will continue to track data around more long-term interventions across the lifetime of this plan and develop processes for tracking outreach and student-facing intervention participants through their journey.
- Monitoring change in behaviour or response through existing metrical and survey data sets.
- Pre and post questionnaires – used to measure change in specific factors and effectiveness of activity. Over 2019/20, we will build a bank of impact measure questions mapping to NERUPI aims to allow cross comparison and overall assessment of the effectiveness of our strategy.
- Qualitative discussions – bespoke focus groups and in-depth interviews are used where this is the most appropriate methodology, or as a third touch point to assess the longer-term impact.

b. Proportionality – We will be categorising our activities to target evaluation resources most effectively taking into account: criticality in terms of ultimate aims, age of activity (i.e. untested or established), activity size and targeting, availability of participant data and existing evidence, programme complexity and investment level. We deploy a range of evaluation levels from light touch polling to in-depth pre and post surveying, focus groups and tracking participant data.

c. Audience- We aim, by 2020/21, to broaden the range of audiences we speak to in order to gain multiple perspectives about a programme's impact on young people - for example those of parents, teachers and the student ambassadors working at events.

Use of evidence and evaluation to inform programme design

Project design is underpinned by sector best practice and institutional evidence to evaluate whether the initiative has a strong likelihood of resulting in a positive impact. We are developing clear Theory of Change models for all programmes and activities tied to our aims and objectives, ensuring that we are clear on the outcomes we expect to see. Theory of Change explanations will be firmly embedded into all project and evaluation plans moving forward.

At the programme design stage, the project lead meets with the E&E Team for an evaluation planning meeting. All new programmes are mapped to the NERUPI framework and the evaluation plan is designed to measure the impact in relation to each of the specific aims and objectives identified in the framework. Programme design at UEA is an iterative process. The overall cycle which all projects follow ensures that evaluation findings are fully reflected upon after each iteration, and these learnings are used to inform future practice.

Interpreting results, understanding the impact, using and sharing findings

Each project follows a clear cycle of planning, designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and reflecting. This final stage includes consideration of lessons learnt from the previous cycle, and specific actions to be implemented next time if impact has been less than expected.

Analysis is conducted by a team of skilled professionals. With extensive experience in designing and implementing project evaluations, data analysis, interpretation and communication of findings, the E&E team ensures that interpretation is objective and accurate, and that any conclusions or claims take into account the limitations of the research design, and the quality and robustness of the data which has been generated. Findings relate directly to the NERUPI aims and objectives identified at the outset so that there is a clear assessment of whether the expected programme outcomes have been met. Any areas for improvement are highlighted and specific recommendations for actions made in relation to these. Project leads are then required to update their formal project plans, ensuring that evaluation findings translate into innovations in practice.

The sharing of evaluation findings follows a multi-pronged collaborative approach that engages both project leads and wider stakeholders and ensures learning from the findings.

- Sector and institutional evidence, gathered through a systematic process, is made available via a searchable Zotero library and regular summaries to ensure we remain up to date with the scholarly literature on what works.
- Strategic review - All data collected during individual project evaluations is currently being developed into a series of one-stop interactive dashboards. This will ultimately allow cross analysis by a range of factors, including programme, school, demographic, and NERUPI aim.
- Individual programme review - A written summary is delivered to the project lead.
- Evaluation impact workshops - Wrap up and planning discussion workshops.

We are committed to sharing evaluation findings externally and informing best practice across the sector. As well as participating in sector conferences and events, UEA academics, WP practitioners and central E&E team all take up relevant opportunities to present work in this area and we are committed to increasing this activity over the lifespan of this plan. We are committed to working with The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes

Evaluation of financial support

UEA is committed to ongoing monitoring, evaluation and modelling of our approach to financial support to ensure that spend in this area continues to be impactful and proportionate. We undertake an annual review assessing impact and potential enhancements or alternatives.

- Undertaking a range of analyses comparing bursary recipients and non-bursary recipients including looking at key metrical measures and analysing surveys of student experience.
- Utilising the OfS toolkit to conduct statistical analysis of the impact of previous financial support packages at UEA on retention, success and progression.
- Addition of questions to regular student surveys and our qualitative project following students through their first year, which utilises some questions from the OfS toolkit.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The University undertakes to monitor compliance with this plan and our progress towards milestones (including via the more detailed internal targets and milestones) with live reporting. Development of reporting and prompt communication of progress is the responsibility of our dedicated WP Evidence and Evaluation team and overseen by our Assistant Head of Planning (Widening Participation and Business Intelligence). Overall responsibility for monitoring APP progress sits with our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who is supported by the Academic Director for Widening Participation and our WP Committee, which includes representation from UEA's Students' Union. This will take the form of a standing agenda item at each WPC meeting monitoring progress towards meeting strategic measures and specific actions from our implementation plans, our ultimate APP targets (as outlined in the targets and milestones section), a set of intermediate outcome targets (measuring progress towards our strategic measures) and a series of measures of the effectiveness and impact of our related activities.

Worsening or flatlining progress against milestones will trigger a review, drawing on our evidence and evaluation work. The outcome of this will be the development of an evidence-based action

plan that may, dependent on findings, include adjustment to Theory of Change, addition or adjustment to strategic measures and/or change to activity.

In addition, our Assistant Head of Planning (WP and BI) is working to ensure that APP targets are embedded into the University's planning cycle and impact monitoring regimes to ensure our whole institutional approach to widening access and participation. For example, this is likely to include ultimate APP targets forming a dedicated section of the KPI set that is monitored by UEA Council and Senate; and closing the black attainment gap as a core KPI in the Teaching Excellence Plans developed by each of our Schools of study.

3.5 Provision of information to students

The Reality Check report highlights several areas where more could be done by institutions to align expectations with reality, including better pre-arrival information around contact time, student welfare and support services, and financial literacy and budgeting. We recognise the importance of ensuring prospective students, especially those from underrepresented groups, have access to information to make decisions on higher education. We provide this information across a range of sources, from hard copy information leaflets to emails and webpages.

UEA is committed to publishing clear and accessible information for existing and prospective students in terms of the fees we intend to charge and the details of the financial support we offer including eligibility criteria and the level of financial support students from underrepresented groups will be offered in each year of their studies. We will publish fee and financial support information in a dedicated section of our website as part of our content for Undergraduate students. We will ensure we provide timely and accurate information to UCAS and Student Finance England so they can populate their course databases in good time to inform applications. We will continue to ensure that students receive accurate information about the implications of any policy/funding changes.

The UEA website is currently in the process of being redesigned. All departments have been consulted during the process, ensuring that all audience needs are captured. The relaunch of the new website means that we are not able to provide exact locations of pages and/or documents for the forthcoming year – however, we can assure that consideration has been given to access and participation during the project and that information will be displayed in a clear way and in prominent locations. In addition, the new website will allow a certain level of personalisation meaning that we will be able to work towards flagging specific information, including financial support, to specific potential and current students.

Prior to the relaunch of the UEA website information on fees will be accessible from <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/finance> with further detail regarding bursary support available at <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/finance/bursary-information>.

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0		£9,250
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT		£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year		£1,850
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,385
Other	*	*

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

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

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,935
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	City College Norwich 10004772	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Targets and investment plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of East Anglia

Provider UKPRN: 10007789

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£2,514,132.90	£2,939,415.82	£3,243,870.79	£3,286,065.95	£3,279,244.15
Access (pre-16)	£1,430,541.62	£1,672,527.60	£1,845,762.48	£1,869,771.53	£1,865,889.92
Access (post-16)	£962,912.90	£1,125,796.26	£1,242,402.51	£1,258,563.26	£1,255,950.51
Access (adults and the community)	£98,051.18	£114,637.22	£126,510.96	£128,156.57	£127,890.52
Access (other)	£22,627.20	£26,454.74	£29,194.84	£29,574.59	£29,513.20
Financial support (£)	£4,248,360.00	£3,998,660.00	£3,844,160.00	£3,861,260.00	£3,869,060.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£941,466.77	£968,532.64	£971,782.38	£980,998.25	£985,228.85

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£37,080,905.00	£39,174,810.00	£40,706,335.00	£41,107,705.00	£41,107,955.00
Access investment	6.8%	7.5%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Financial support	10.6%	9.4%	8.6%	8.6%	8.6%
Research and evaluation	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Total investment (as %HFI)	19.9%	19.3%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of East Anglia

Provider UKPRN: 10007789

Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To improve the ration of participation in HE for students from areas of lower higher education participation Q1 V Q5	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Ratio intake to UEA for POLAR4 Q5:Q1 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	2.2:1	1.9:1	1.8:1	1.7:1	1.6:1	1.5:1	Due to the developed nature of our Outreach approach, our milestones reflect steady annual increases in our proportional intake of young POLAR Q1 students working towards eliminating the gap in entry rates between the most (Q5) and least represented (Q1) groups by 2030-31.
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_2	Mature	Progression to UEA from Access to HE courses at local FECs (Using data on size of local HE courses provided by FECs and UEA feeder school data)	No	Other data source	2018-19	24.8%	28%	30%	32%	34%	36%	Access to HE agreements with local FECs will be in place by 2020 so we predict steady annual increases in intake of mature students from local Access to HE courses. We aim to have 36% attending UEA by the end of this plan halting the downward trend in our mature intake
	PTA_3												
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To reduce the attainment gap for students from areas of lower higher education participation	PTS_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage point gap in good honours attainment (1st and 2:1) between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.3	0.8	0	Allowing time for measures to be robustly developed and have impact, we predict slower initial movement on closing attainment gaps but with acceleration in the latter years of this plan to close the attainment gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students by 2024/25. This reflects the inherent time lag in measuring the impact of attainment raising activity as part of outreach and foundation/early UG years and the time required for full implementation of our Inclusive Education Policy.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_2	Ethnicity	Percentage point gap in good honours attainment (1st and 2:1) between white and black students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	18.5	18.5	15.5	12.5	9.5	5.5	Allowing time robustly developed measures to have impact, we predict slower initial movement but with acceleration in the latter years and subsequent plan to close the attainment gap between Black and White students by 2027/28. This reflects the inherent time lag in measuring the impact of attainment raising activity as part of outreach and foundation/early UG years, the impact of transition and sense of belonging and the time required to implement Inclusive Education Policy.
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_3	Ethnicity	Percentage point gap in non-continuation between white and black students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	2.1	1.6	1.1	0.6	0.1	0	Building on existing activity and progress, we predict annual improvements to close retention gap between black and white students by 2024/25
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_4	Mature	Percentage point gap in non-continuation between young and mature students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	2.7	2.2	1.7	1.2	0.7	0.2	Building on existing activity and progress, we predict annual improvements to close retention gap between mature and young students by 2025/26
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_5	Ethnicity	Percentage point gap in non-continuation between white and mixed ethnicity students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	4.6	3.6	2.6	1.6	0.6	0	Building on existing activity and progress, we predict annual improvements to close retention gap between mixed ethnicity and white students by 2024/25
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	

