# University of Birmingham

# Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

## 1. Introduction and strategic aim

### 1.1. Introduction

This Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how we will ensure that all student groups are supported to enter, succeed, and secure good employment or further study outcomes at the University of Birmingham, irrespective of their backgrounds or personal circumstances. This plan focuses on UK undergraduate students and identifies risks to equality of opportunity for these students, alongside a detailed overview of our planned intervention strategies designed to address those risks.

In this plan, we identify nine priority risks to equality of opportunity, and we set out the activities we will undertake to mitigate against them through our intervention strategies. Our strategy, and associated target student groups, has been informed by an in-depth review of student outcomes data across the student lifecycle along with a student consultation supported by our Guild of Students. Our institutional context and mission have also guided our approach and resulting plan.

### 1.2. Context

The University of Birmingham is a vibrant community of over 8,700 staff and 44,600 students, working and studying across our Edgbaston and Dubai campuses, through our international partnerships, and via online professional postgraduate courses. Our current undergraduate student population totals 24,750, with 99.8% studying full time, and almost 20% being international students. Of our UK undergraduate population, 74% come from state schools, 60% are female, 41% are Black and Minority Ethnic, 21% are from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds (POLAR Q1/2), 30% are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds (IMD Q1/2), 4% are mature learners. 18% have a recorded disability, and 20% come from the West Midlands metropolitan area. Our student community therefore reflects the rich diversity of the city of Birmingham and its surrounding areas.

The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion is central to the mission and vision of the University. We were established in 1900 by Joseph Chamberlain with a compelling vision to provide a "*great school of universal instruction*", and with a core commitment to accept women and people of all religious backgrounds as equal members of the University community. We remain as committed today, as ever, to this core founding ethos of inclusive education for all. We work hard to create an inclusive learning and working environment; where discrimination is not tolerated, where everyone can reach their potential, where we learn from our community, and where positive change is enacted. This is integral to our mission as a civic and global university and embedded throughout our Birmingham 2030 strategy. This commitment is also demonstrated by the University being the first to open a secondary training school, the University of Birmingham School established in 2015 is a comprehensive non-selective school with a highly diverse student population drawn from across the city. This has been a significant financial and resource investment and has been at the forefront of the University's contribution to improving access to higher education.

Our institutional commitment to equality of opportunity has been recognised through external awards:

- The University holds an **Institutional Athena Swan Bronze award**. The award recognises the commitment the University has made to the Charter principles and the actions we will take to promote the recruitment, progression, and retention of female academics and to enable gender equality.
- We are a member of the **Advance HE Race Equality Charter**, and currently hold a bronze award with ambitions to achieve silver in the next submission cycle. This reflects our commitment to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students at the University.
- We have been awarded a **Care leavers NNCEL award**, and were rated highly for the support given to both prospective students, and for the mental and physical wellbeing of students. The **suite of support offered** has been designed in conjunction with current care-experienced students.
- We have subscribed to the **University Mental Health Charter (UMHC)** programme. Having audited our current provision against the suggested UMHC Principles of Good Practice we can

demonstrate that a whole University approach to mental health is embedded across curriculum design, student support and services, and within our wider University culture.

- We are a recognised **University of Sanctuary**, reinforcing our commitment to supporting students from refugee and asylum backgrounds. Through this commitment we offer **Sanctuary Scholarships** to students who have sought refuge in the UK and are unable to access government funding.
- We have been awarded the **UKAT institutional award for Outstanding Student Support** for our approach to Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT), which includes an online student support and development 'hub' linking all our student support services to the personal academic tutorial system.

## 2. Risks to equality of opportunity

As a civic institution with a large and diverse student population, we recognise that there are differential outcomes across the student lifecycle. Our academic quality and student support structures have well-established processes to regularly review outcomes and better understand our student population, including through consultation with our students. Reflecting on our internal expertise, latest performance data, and informed by the Office for Student's Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EoRR), we have identified nine principal risks to equality of opportunity that our students may experience.

Figure 1 shows how these risks impact our learners across the three elements of their student journey. The activities and interventions outlined in this Plan are focussed upon mitigating these risks.

| | Access | On-course | Progression |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Prior attainment | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 2. Prior Information and guidance | ✓ | | |
| 3. Financial hardship | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 4. Community and cohesion | | ✓ | |
| 5. Perceptions of university | ✓ | | |
| 6. Access to and uptake of academic support | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7. Networks, connections and background knowledge | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 8. Mental health and wellbeing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 9. Home circumstances | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

**Figure 1: Identified institutional risks to equality of opportunity.**

We have taken a data-led approach to identifying the risks, target student groups, and priorities outlined within this Plan; this is outlined in detail within Annex A. Table 1 provides a broad and evidence-based definition of our key risks, and indicates how they align with the EoRR.

| Risk Theme | Explanation |
|---|---|
| **1. Prior attainment** *Linked to EORR Risk 1.* | Gaps in prior attainment may not only dissuade students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds from applying to university, but impact their decisions whilst there, and their opportunities upon graduation. Gaps in prior attainment have been identified as a significant and persistent barrier to university access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Turhan & Stevens, 2020). Evidence shows that, on average, pupils who are eligible for free school meals achieve lower GCSE attainment than other pupils, with success in both English and Mathematics GCSE particularly impacted (Francis-Devine, Malik & Danechi, 2023). Prior attainment is also reflected in how well students transition and achieve once they arrive at university and what they go on to do once they graduate (OfS, 2022). |
| **2. Prior information and guidance** *Linked to EORR Risks 2 and 3.* | High quality careers advice and guidance in school or college has an essential role in helping students understand their strengths and interests, make informed decisions about their further study or career pathways, improve life opportunities, and contribute to a productive and successful economy. Not all students have equal opportunities to access the information and guidance that enables them to make informed choices about their higher education options. There exists significant variability in careers advice |

| | |
|---|---|
| | and guidance, particularly between state and private schools, and between more and less deprived intakes within the state school sector (Holt-White, Montacute & Tibbs, 2022). |
| **3. Financial hardship** *Linked to EORR Risk 10.* | Research has shown that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are more concerned about the financial implications of higher education, including balancing their finances whilst studying and the accrual of future debt. Not only can this lead to students being dissuaded from engaging in higher education (Moser, Skinner & King 2023), but can also result in an increased likelihood that they withdraw and/or have a reduced student experience (Pollard et al., 2019). Financial challenges and increased time spent working have led many students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to choose to disengage from co-curricular and extracurricular activities (OfS, 2023a), resulting in a detrimental impact on their studies and future career options, as well as on their integration with peer and friendship groups. |
| **4. Community and cohesion** *Linked to EORR Risks 7 and 8.* | A sense of belonging involves a student feeling that they are part of a particular community (Dost & Mazzoli Smith, 2023). The greater the extent to which students feel they belong, feel supported, and feel a part of a cohesive community, the more likely they are to be resilient and cope with any unexpected challenges that they may face. Studies have shown that an increased sense of belonging correlates positively with not only learning, academic excellence and student retention, but also individual motivation and enjoyment of student life (Pedler, Willis & Niewoudt, 2020). Students who feel a greater sense of belonging are more engaged, more likely to join university student associations, and make better connections with peers and staff. However, disadvantaged students are less likely than advantaged students to report that they feel that they belonged at school, to feel socially connected, and to feel engaged in their learning experience (OECD, 2017). |
| **5. Perceptions of university** *Linked to EORR Risk 3.* | Research has shown that applicants to university have firm perceptions of the challenges they are likely to face. These perceptions are different between advantaged and disadvantaged learners. Concerns regarding friendship groups, coping whilst away from home, loneliness, and taking self-responsibility are all mentioned frequently by students. However, advantaged applicants tended to focus more on the importance of developing friendship networks, whilst the most disadvantaged groups are more concerned about practicalities like transport and accommodation and express a greater desire to remain at home. When choosing a university and attending open days, disadvantaged learners cite the cost as the primary reason for not attending. There is therefore a real need to target those most disadvantaged and if this is guided by their specific needs, it will allow more effective and targeted activities to be developed (McCabe, Keast & Kayer, 2022). |
| **6. Access to, and uptake of, academic support** *Linked to EORR Risk 6.* | Insufficient academic support can be a barrier to student success (Enriquez, Lipe & Price, 2017). Whilst some research indicates an effective approach to delivering academic skills support to students is to embed it within module-specific teaching (Gunn, Hearne & Sibthorpe, 2011), there is a growing body of evidence that shows the strongly positive impact of additional, dedicated, centrally led services. This is particularly true within mathematics, a subject known to present barriers to successful student outcomes within a wide range of disciplines in higher education (Lawson, Grove & Croft, 2019). Even where support is provided by a centralised service, those students who might benefit most often choose not to access it. There is therefore an important role in ensuring a connection between university-level support and in-department support which can be facilitated through a personal tutorial programme. This personal tutor–student relationship has been found to increase student satisfaction through the connectedness that it affords (Palmer, O'Kane & Owens, 2009) and can contribute towards an increased sense of belonging (Yale, 2019). |
| **7. Networks, connections and background knowledge** Linked to EORR Risk 7. | Whilst students from the most disadvantaged families are less likely to attend a high-tariff university, those who do attend often have lower prior attainment, on average, than their more advantaged counterparts (Crawford, Macmillan & Vignoles, 2014). One potential explanation for this is that those from more deprived backgrounds are less likely to apply to high-tariff institutions. Research shows that young people who are the first-in-family to attend university are less likely to attend a Russell Group university and are more likely to drop out than those with graduate parents (Henderson, Shure & Adamecz-Völgyi, 2020). These inequalities remain when considering the transition to employment: a higher proportion of students from higher socio-economic backgrounds enter graduate-level jobs than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, with a range of factors, and not just their networks, contributing to this trend (Macmillan, Tyler & Vignoles, 2015). |
| **8. Mental health and wellbeing** Linked to EORR Risk 8. | Sector data shows that there are increasing numbers of students who are declaring a mental health condition, reporting adverse effects of stress, or seeking support for low levels of well-being (Lewis & Bolton, 2023). Any student may experience poor mental health at any stage of their learning journey, but longstanding evidence suggests that students from some marginalised backgrounds may be more susceptible to worsening mental health whilst at university or may experience additional barriers in seeking support for mental health conditions or low levels of wellbeing (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Lowther-Payne et al., 2023). |
| **9. Home circumstances** Linked to EORR Risk 7. | The home circumstances of a student can have a significant impact on their participation with, progression through, and success within higher education. School attainment amongst care-experienced individuals is generally lower than the wider population (Sebba et al., 2015). This lower attainment understandably has an impact upon higher education participation rates for those who are care-experienced and results in this cohort being significantly underrepresented (Harrison, 2017). Care-experienced students are also more likely to be unemployed and less likely to be in professional work than their peers (Harrison, Baker & Stevenson, 2020). Similar trends are observed for young adult carers (Xue et al., 2023), and for estranged students (OfS, 2020). |

**Table 1: Definition of our risks, and associated evidence-base, to equality of opportunity.**

We have designed intervention strategies across the four elements of the student lifecycle (access, continuation, attainment, and progression to employment) to address these risks. These strategies are evidence-led and based on principles of continuous improvement. Evaluation of the impact and

outcomes of our strategies and activities is embedded both within, and across, our portfolio of interventions.

To achieve impact in mitigating our observed risks, it is necessary to adopt a targeted and focussed approach to our interventions and support. As such, Our Plan focuses upon the delivery of a small number of quantitative targets to support those groups at most risk of experiencing equality of opportunity at each stage of the student lifecycle. We will continue to closely monitor indications of risks not included within this Plan through our APP Oversight Group, and address as appropriate. The student groups we explicitly target through this Plan are:

- Students eligible for Free School Meals (observed inequality in access).
- Care Leavers (observed inequality in access).
- Students who live in an area of socio-economic deprivation as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 (observed inequality in continuation, degree outcomes and progression to higher level employment).
- Minority ethnic groups, with a particular focus on Black students (observed inequality in continuation and degree outcomes).
- Students with a declared disability (observed inequality in continuation and degree outcomes).

Risks to equality of opportunity identified for other student groups which we are not explicitly targeting in this Plan are outlined in Annex A.

## 3. Objectives and Targets

We set targets and objectives based on our assessment of performance and linked to the risks we have identified above. Where possible these targets are measurable via externally benchmarked data available in the OfS APP dashboard. We will monitor progress against these targets and objectives annually (see Section 7.1, page 27). Table 2 provides a detailed analysis of our targets and performance milestones, however our objectives through this Plan may be summarised as follows:

- We will **continue to expand, develop and broaden the reach of our outreach initiatives** to widen access to higher education. Specifically, we will increase the proportion of students studying at Birmingham who are eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4 (from 8% to 12%) and double the number of care leavers entering the University (from 14 to 30).
- We will **maintain the proportion of *Pathways to Birmingham (P2B)* students** entering the University at 10% of our intake whilst focussing efforts on ensuring equality of outcomes for these students through our other key interventions.
- We will **reduce the awarding gap** for Black students and students from IMD Quintile 1.
- We will **eliminate the continuation** gap for Black students and students from IMD Quintile 1.
- We will **reduce the gap in progression** to graduate-level employment or further study for students from IMD Quintile 1.
- We will **continue to monitor our high-risk student cohorts** across their study lifecycle.

| Identified at Risk Groups | Indication of Risk | Objective & Targets | Baseline Year | Baseline | Milestones | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | 2028/29 |
| **Intervention Strand 1: Access** | | | | | | | | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | PTA_1 | Increase the proportion of students entering the University who are eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4. | 2021/22 | 8.0% | **9.0%** | **10.0%** | **11.0%** | **12.0%** |
| | PTA_2 | Increase the number of students who are care leavers entering the University as undergraduate students. | 2023/24 | 14 | **20** | **23** | **26** | **30** |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | PTA_3 | Maintain the proportion of Pathways to Birmingham students entering the University at 10% of the incoming cohort. | 2023/24 | 10% | **10%** | **10%** | **10%** | **10%** |
| **Intervention Strand 2: Continuation** | | | | | | | | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | PTS_1 | Eliminate the non-continuation gap for students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 compared to those from IMD Quintile 5 areas. | 2020/21 | 5.6pp | **5.0**pp | **4.0**pp | **2.0pp** | **0pp** |
| Ethnic Minority groups | PTS_2 | Eliminate the current non-continuation gap for Black compared to White students. | 2020/21 | 4.4pp | **4.0pp** | **3.0pp** | **2.0pp** | **0pp** |
| Ethnic Minority groups | | Monitor student satisfaction for Mixed compared to White students in relation to Academic Support, Learning Opportunities, and Assessment and Feedback as measured by the National Student Survey to ensure these do not increase from 2023 levels. | 2023 | -2.9pp (AS) -3.3 (LO) -3.0 (A&F) | **Monitor** | | | |
| All Student Groups | | Monitor non-continuation for students with a declared mental health condition to ensure that no non-continuation gap appears within any future student cohort. | 2020/21 | -0.5pp | **Monitor** | | | |
| **Intervention Strand 3: Attainment** | | | | | | | | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | PTS_3 | Reduce the degree awarding gap (for firsts and 2:1) for IMD Quintile 1 compared to Quintile 5 for 1st or 2.1 awards. | 2020/21 | 11.9pp | **11.0pp** | **9.5pp** | **8.0pp** | **6.0pp** |
| Ethnic Minority Groups | PTS_4 | Reduce the degree awarding gap (for firsts and 2:1) for Black compared to White students. | 2020/21 | 17.3pp | **16.0pp** | **14.0pp** | **12.0pp** | **8.7pp** |
| All Student Groups | | Monitor non-completion and degree awarding gaps for students with a declared mental health condition to ensure that no gap appears within any future student cohort. | 2020/21 | 1.8pp | **Monitor** | | | |
| **Intervention Strand 4: Progression** | | | | | | | | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | PTP_1 | Reduce the gap in progression to graduate-level employment or further study for IMD Quintile 1 compared to Quintile 5. | 2020/21 | 6.0pp | **6.0pp** | **5.0pp** | **4.0pp** | **3.0pp** |
| Ethnic Minority Groups | | Monitor the current gap in progression to graduate-level employment or further study for Black vs White students. | 2020/21 | -1.0pp | **Monitor** | | | |

**Table 2: Our institutional objectives, targets and milestones to address risks to equality of opportunity through this Plan.**

# 4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

The following sections outline our planned interventions for mitigating the nine identified risks to equality of opportunity we have outlined. Our Intervention Strategies, and their associated activities, have been developed through consultation and engagement across the University, including with student groups as we describe later (Section 6, page 26).

Several of the activities we detail have been implemented previously across the University, whereas others form modified versions of existing activities, and others are newly developed for this Plan. Within the Intervention Strategies that follow, we identify these activities as Existing, Enhanced, and New, respectively for transparency. Additionally, whilst some activities are targeted at specific cohorts, others are applicable to all cohorts targeted via this Plan; we differentiate these as appropriate.

Throughout the duration of this Plan, each activity will be evaluated to ensure it is achieving its desired outcomes, and this will be coupled with an evaluation for each Intervention Strategy. We include a summary of our evaluative approach for each Intervention Strategy and provide further details on our overarching evaluation methodology for this Plan in Section 7.

## 4.1. Intervention Strategy 1: Access

The aim of this intervention strategy is to **continue to expand, develop and broaden the reach of our outreach initiatives** to widen access to higher education. Our intervention activities (Table 3) support students from under-represented groups in their application and transition to university. It will increase the proportion of students entering our University who are eligible for Free School Meals and those who are Care Leavers. Through this strategy we will maintain the proportion of Pathways to Birmingham students entering the University (see section 15.1 for definition).

Our flagship access programme, Pathways to Birmingham (P2B), is designed to widen participation to higher education. It is built on extensive engagement with schools across the region, with our students, staff and alumni working directly to raise aspiration and support attainment. The foundations of the scheme, established in 2001, was the first of its kind within the sector and has since been widely emulated across the country. The success of the programme is based on the careful selection of, and sustained engagement with, learners who meet multiple measures of disadvantage – an approach which recognises the varied and complex backgrounds from which our students come, and which is based on recommended good practice (Jerrim, 2021).

Our **Access Intervention Strategy** ensures that we are reaching those students who stand to benefit most from our access interventions and initiatives. In our last APP we set out our ambitious commitment to increase the numbers of students benefitting from this scheme to 10% of our annual intake; a target we have met. We are exceptionally proud of this work. We remain committed to running the scheme at enhanced capacity as demonstrated by retaining a target for this group of students in this current Plan.

We also remain committed to enhancing our focus on supporting raising attainment in years 7 to 11 as an important widening access measure (Heaslip et al., 2020). We are delivering new initiatives to support this agenda, building on a strong track record of pre-16 activity. Our intensive programmes include mentoring, residentials and our Forward Thinking Programme, which reaches over 600 students in years 8-11. A recent evaluation of Forward Thinking with TASO (Jones, Comley & Duxbury, 2023) highlighted the success and ongoing impact that this programme has for our participants. University of Birmingham colleagues, scholars and researchers are also actively engaged in projects designed to support attainment in schools. For example, we are currently working with the Royal Society to pilot their new Seed Grant initiative, an extension of the successful Partnership Grant scheme (http://www.royalsociety.org/partnership), which provides funding to run small-scale STEM investigative projects in schools. The aim of this project is to enable hands-on experimental work in the classroom (led by academics) and to support teachers to enhance and contextualise the STEM curriculum. This exciting new project also offers teacher-focussed CPD and aims to develop relationships which will lead to impactful and long-term engagement between local schools and STEM professionals.

Our commitment to widening participation extends beyond access to just the University of Birmingham. We were the first university to have opened a secondary training school dedicated to raising aspiration and achievement. The University of Birmingham School, established in 2015, is a comprehensive non-selective institution with a highly diverse student population. This has been a significant financial and resource investment for the University and we see this as a core element of our contribution to

improving access to higher education. The school benefits from wide-ranging support from its partnership with the University – for example, the University makes work experience opportunities available for the entire Year 10 cohort – and its comprehensive nature, focus on inclusion, and distinctive character education, echo several of the key educational research specialisms of the University's School of Education (recently chosen as one of fourteen specialist partners for the newly formed National Institute of Teaching). In September 2021 the school reached full capacity for the first time and its distinctive 'nodal admissions' policy, designed to reflect the diversity of the city of Birmingham, has led to the school being one of the most academically, socially and ethnically diverse in Birmingham, and one where "*All pupils…benefit a great deal from coming to this School*" (Ofsted, 2023: p1).

We recognise that effective widening participation in HE requires us to work in collaboration with colleagues and organisations from across the sector (Dhillon, 2012) and working in partnership is central to achieving our core ambitions in this plan. Individual institutions cannot, in isolation, fully address the challenges and inequality of opportunity currently faced by many leaners and we recognise the many benefits and value of working collectively to bring about efficient and sustainable change. This commitment is demonstrated through our work with several key regional and national stakeholders, including:

- **Aimhigher West Midlands**: We are the lead institution for the Aimhigher West Midlands partnership (which includes Aston University, Birmingham City University, University College Birmingham and the University of Worcester), providing an integrated programme of support and advice for young people facing multiple dimensions of disadvantage (Aimhigher, 2024). The partnership is currently delivering a suite of programmes and activity to support attainment raising in schools with a view to develop a longer-term regional offer. This offer will be research-led and support schools and the sector in its changing priorities.

- **Realising Opportunities (RO):** We are a founding member of RO, a unique collaboration of 14 highly selective, research-intensive universities (RIUs), who have made a long-term commitment to, and demonstrated impact in, supporting access to and transition into selective universities. A single, national supported entry route targets the most able 16–18-year-olds at risk from inequalities of opportunity.

- **Advancing Access (AA):** As part of the Russell Group, we provide ongoing investment in Advancing Access. AA is an innovative partnership utilising the collaborative efforts of Russell Group institutions (RGIs), aiming to increase the representation of disadvantaged students at selective universities. The collective provides free Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to teachers and careers advisors, equipping them with the information needed to inform their learners about pathways into RGIs. AA CPD is available to all schools and colleges in the UK, with an additional focus placed upon those with above average levels of disadvantaged learners.

- **National Literacy Trust** – The University has partnered with the National Literacy Trust, an independent charity working with schools and communities to give disadvantaged children the literacy skills to succeed in life. Together we have launched the first university-led literacy campaign in the country – Birmingham Stories. Birmingham Stories brings together the expertise of the National Literacy Trust and the University of Birmingham to deliver a place-based campaign building on the power of storytelling and focussing on reading enjoyment.

### 4.1.1. Objective and Targets

- Number of students eligible for Free School meals increases from 8 – 12% (a percent each year).

- Number of students from a care leaver background entering the University doubles (n.b. intake in 2023, 14 care leavers)

- Students entering the University via the Pathways to Birmingham widening access programmes continue to count for at least 10% of the total incoming home UG cohort.

### 4.1.2. Risk to Equality of Opportunity

Knowledge and Skills (Risk 1); Information and Guidance (Risk 2); Perception of Higher Education (Risk 3); Application Success Rates (Risk 4).

### 4.1.3. Total Cost of Activity Per year (and over 4-year Plan)

£965,000 per year. £3,860,000 over 4-years.

### 4.1.4. Evidence Base and Rationale

In designing this integrated plan of engagement and activity, we have taken full account of the significant research and data relating to student access. Our plan reflects the multiple factors that can influence access to higher education and is based on both our own institutional data and sector-led evidence and research.

### 4.1.5. Evaluation

The University of Birmingham has a longstanding commitment to evaluating the impact of our Access interventions, and to improving our evaluation practice. Evaluations are built into programmes as standard, reflecting the University's commitment to delivering evidence-based widening participation activity. A dedicated APP Evaluation Working Group has responsibility for implementing and monitoring the APP (Access) Evaluation Strategy. This group comprises APP evaluation leads and relevant professional services and academic specialists, who report to the University's Student Access, Progress and Inclusion Committee (SAPIC). Evaluation methods are selected based on the questions identified in each intervention's evaluation frameworks and Theories of Change Findings will be published on the University's website as part of our annual APP report, with a cumulative report being produced at the end of this four-year cycle

**Table 3: Intervention strategy, associated activities and evaluation methodology for Access.**

| Target Groups | Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 2, 5, 6, 7 & 9 | **Enhanced: Pathways to Birmingham (P2B).** P2B is a suite of access programmes for Year 12 and 13 students. The programmes are designed to support students in learning about higher education generally, and more specifically to provide guidance to support their application and transition to the University. We plan to enhance our P2B offering by introducing a new nationwide P2B programme for Year 13 students interested in studying at the University. Students completing this new programme will receive the same P2B benefits as the existing programmes. This includes tailored advice and support, eligibility for enhanced funding and a two grade reduction to the standard admissions offer for the course to which they are applying. | Students have increased knowledge about higher education and the University. Students possess greater confidence in their ability to succeed at university and feel a greater sense of belonging within higher education and more specifically at the University. Students are more likely to apply to the University, be successful with their application and feel confident throughout the application process. | Increased awareness of higher education and the skills necessary to succeed, measured via participant surveys. Increased applications to P2B programmes from eligible students. High progression rates on to UG courses at the University, with P2B students accounting for at least 10% of the home UG intake each year. |
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 & 9 | **Enhanced: Year 11 Online Tutoring .** The University's flagship pre-16 programmes are the progressive and multi-interventional Forward Thinking programme, and our well-established Year 10 Summer School. In both programmes, students gain an insight into higher education by engaging with academics, current students, and members of professional services staff. To enhance these initiatives, we will now offer all participants the opportunity to have 10 one-hour tutoring sessions (via MyTutor) at the beginning of Year 11. We also intend to include more attainment raising activity within these programmes including supporting students with metacognition and revision skills. | Students have increased knowledge about higher education and the University. A positive impact is made on learners' aspirations and attainment. Students are more likely to apply to university and in particular a research-intensive institution like the University of Birmingham. | Increased awareness of higher education and the skills necessary to succeed, measured via participant surveys. Increased academic attainment. Increased applications to the University from Summer School and Forward Thinking participants . |
| Students from under-represented groups identified (by their teachers) as an attainment risk | 1, 2, 5,& 6 | **New: In person tutoring via UG students in schools.** Ten hours of in-person tutoring will be offered to students in Years 7 and 8 to support them in reading and comprehension. Students at involved schools will be selected by teachers to ensure those who will most benefit from this support can take part in the programme. | Improved confidence and ability in reading and comprehension. New skills gained in metacognition. | Improved confidence scores in reading and comprehension as ranked and submitted by both teachers and participants. |
| FSM students and Care Leavers | 1 | **New: A Contextual Offer Strategy.** The University's Contextual Offer eligibility will now focus solely on Free School Meal students and Care Leavers. This is a one grade automatic reduction for anyone who is eligible for this scheme. | An increased number of FSM and care leaver students are able to meet the entry requirements and apply to the University. | Increased number of FSM and care leaver students apply and enrol at the University. |
| FSM students and Care Leavers | 3 | **New: Travel Bursary.** The introduction of a travel bursary to support students attending Offer Holder Visitor Days to enable FSM and Care leaver students to attend and participate. | An increased number of FSM and care leaver students are able to attend Offer Holder Visitor Days. An increased number of FSM and care leaver students apply to the University as a result of attending a Offer holder Visitor Day. | Increased number of FSM and care leaver students attending Offer Holder Visitor Days. Increased number of FSM and care leaver students apply and enrol at the University. |

| Target Groups | Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 1 | **New: Aimhigher West Midlands (AHWM) Activity.** Level Up Literacy - A reading and comprehension programme using an online literacy programme.  Lexia is a computer-based literacy programme and has been shown to be an impactful programme and is recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation. AHWM will be offering the programme to 60 learners in one school working with up to 10 schools across year groups 7 to 9. | Improved literacy skills and confidence.<br><br>Improved academic performance via improving confidence specifically in literacy. | Increased skills and confidence in literacy as determined by pre- and post-assessment. |
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 1 & 2 | **New: Aimhigher West Midlands Activity.** Subject-specific tutoring in English or Maths via MyTutor. Targeted one-to-one interventions have the potential for the largest immediate impact on attainment, with AHWM's own research showing a full grade increase for learners who receive tuition for a full term. This activity will consist of at least 10 learners per school gaining 10 weeks of 1:1 tutoring in Maths and English. | Improved student attainment in relevant GCSE.<br><br>Improved student confidence in tutored subject. | GCSE grade in tutored subject.<br><br>Confidence levels as determined by pre and post-survey. |
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 2, 5, 6, 7 & 9 | **Existing: Realising Opportunities (RO) Programme**. A sustained (2 year) and progressive programme for high achieving students offering a supported entry route culminating in an alternative, lower offer. Groups at risk according to the equality of opportunity risk register will be engaged through targeted eligibility criteria. At present, RO aims to recruit 1250 – 1500 students to the programme each year. | Students are prepared for success at research-intensive universities (RIUs). Student have raised awareness and understanding of RIUs. Broadened geographical horizons to help students make informed academic choices. | Increased number of applicants and entrants to RIUs RO universities from those at risk of inequality of opportunity. |
| Students from low participation in HE backgrounds as outlined in our P2B eligibility criteria (see Section 15.1) | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 9 | **Existing: EPS Futures.** EPS Futures is a fully funded foundation year that leads directly on to our highly regarded Engineering and Physical Sciences degrees. This course is designed for students from areas where a low percentage of young people go to university and comes with significant financial and educational support. | Students from low participation in HE backgrounds receive bespoke financial, academic and social support with transition to university leading to improved confidence and higher academic achievement. | Number of EPS Futures students who complete UG degrees. Employability data of graduating EPS Futures students. |

## 4.2. Intervention Strategy 2: Continuation

The aim of this Intervention Strategy and its activities (Table 4) is to ensure that all our students are supported to thrive in their university experience and progress towards a successful outcome. We will seek to **eliminate the current non-continuation gaps for students from IMD Quintile 1 and for our Black students.** Our intervention activities will ensure that those students we admit from under-represented and disadvantaged groups are provided with the necessary scaffolding and support to be successful throughout their studies. They will establish an inclusive, welcoming, and supportive experience, particularly as students make the transition to university study; ensure support for students' mental health and wellbeing; and embed a collaborative and evidence-driven approach to supporting student outcomes.

The **provision of financial assistance** underpins our entire Plan: from enabling targeted recruitment activity, supporting student performance by reducing financial anxiety, and unlocking access to opportunities and experiences which might otherwise be unattainable. Our ambition is to ensure that our full Birmingham experience is available to all cohorts of learner irrespective of their backgrounds or personal circumstances. There is a comprehensive body of high-quality evidence that demonstrates the positive impact of financial support on student retention, continuation, success, and progression (Alon, 2011; Angrist, Hudson & Pallais 2015; Glocker, 2011; Millea et al., 2018; Mulyaningsih et al., 2022; Page & Scott-Clayton, 2016; Stater, 2009).

In 2023/24 we completed a comprehensive independent review of the financial support that we offer to students. As a result, we have remodelled our two primary financial awards from 2024/25 onwards:

- **The Chamberlain Award** forms a University funded means-tested annual financial award based upon household income that seeks to remove financial barriers to engagement with the student experience. Up to £2,000 per year of study is available to students during their programme:
  - £2,000 per annum (pa) for students from the lowest residual household incomes (≤£25,000);
  - £1,000 pa for students with a residual household income ≥£25,001 and ≤£35,000;
  - £3,000 pa (or £9,000 accommodation off-set) Enhanced Award for Care-experienced students.
- The **P2B Scholarship** forms a £1,500 award, renewable for each year of study, based upon academic success criteria to encourage applicants who participate in our P2B programme to achieve the full entry criteria (based upon examination results) rather than the reduced P2B Offer. It is funded through ongoing philanthropic donation programme co-ordinated by the University's Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO).

We also provide a range of other financial support measures including our Student Support (Hardship) Fund, Bursaries for Young Carers, for excellence in music and sport, and to enable access years of study abroad and internships. Whilst not exclusively targeted towards the student cohorts identified in this plan, there will be some students who qualify for more than one financial support award.

As part of our review of financial support, we completed an associated evaluation of the impact and benefit of these awards upon our students. Whilst findings recognised the positive impact financial support has on students during their studies, it highlighted that financial support alone does not fully address all of the challenges faced by some of our students; this is in line with the research evidence cited above. Financial support needs to complement programme of targeted academic, pastoral and employability support which we work to achieve through our **Birmingham Scholar** framework.

### 4.2.1. Establishing a welcoming and supportive experience

Students who feel a sense of belonging and part of a learning community are more likely to be engaged and successful with their studies (Pedler, Willis & Niewoudt, 2020; Freeman, Anderman & Jensen, 2007). Building upon one of our previously successful initiatives, all student groups explicitly targeted by this Plan will become part of our expanded Birmingham Scholars community. The **Birmingham Scholar Programme** provides tailored opportunity pathways to exclusive personal development activities, priority access to professional development, and additional opportunities for personal tutoring and academic skills support. This community of Birmingham Scholars receive additional information and encouragement to access existing academic support through a dedicated online course environment and newsletters. In conjunction with our academic Schools and Colleges, in-person events and activities will be held throughout the student lifecycle, including an expanded Welcome programme in Year 1, enhanced inductions to subsequent academic years, and a Finalists Programme to help develop belonging and facilitate integration as part of our wider and diverse student learning community.

A team of EDI Student Ambassadors help support the dedicated programme team in informing the design and implementation of the activities of the Birmingham Scholar programme. This not only ensures a visible and active student voice but also re-enforces the importance of visible role-models and provides natural opportunities for peer-peer support. The Birmingham Scholar programme helps integrate many elements of our student support offer including our Personal Tutorial System, where all Scholars receive a dedicated Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) who is appropriately trained and knowledgeable of their needs, and our Academic Skills Centre which provides support in academic writing, mathematics, and digital and study skills. A system for facilitating the referral of Birmingham Scholars to our Academic Skills Centre for support has been established and will be further enhanced throughout the cycle of this Plan, and will be complemented by the embedding of our peer assisted study sessions scheme (PASS) within targeted programmes; PASS is an approach shown to enhance student outcomes (Dawson et al., 2014).

We will shortly be rolling out a cross-institutional learner analytics platform which, complementing our already established minimum of three per year Progress Review Tutorials (PRTs), will support Schools and PATs in the earlier identification of students who may require additional personal or academic help, support and guidance (Scholes, 2016). We recognise that mature learners experience particular challenges and barriers to participating in higher education (OfS, 2021a), and so through a Mature Student Working Group established during this plan, we will develop interventions to support their success within higher education.

### 4.2.2. Support for students' mental health and wellbeing

The provision of mental health and wellbeing support underpins our commitment to all students and forms a core component of our institutional offer. There have been numerous recent national surveys and reports detailing the issues of student mental health (Lewis & Bolton, 2023; OfS, 2023b) and the provision of support (Worsley, Pennington & Corcoran, 2022), which have concluded that demand for university services continues to increase (IFF Research, 2023) in parallel with NHS service pressure continuing to rise (BMA, 2024).

There exists evidence (Stansfeld et al., 2016; House of Commons, 2018) that students from some under-represented backgrounds may be more susceptible to worsening mental health concerns whilst at university or may experience additional barriers in seeking support for mental health conditions (Lowther-Payne et al., 2023) or low levels of wellbeing. Our services have proven effective (OfS, 2021b) in meeting the diversity and need of members of our under-represented student community, and we continue to invest in our university-wide mental health support provision: **Pause@UoB** and our 24/7/365 emotional support service, **UBHeard**.

### 4.2.3. Enhanced practice sharing

We recognise that once students join us, they become embedded in the activity and culture of our academic Schools; this is why we place great emphasis within this Plan upon expanding and enhancing our practices at a School level and in ensuring Schools continue to make connections with the wider institutional support and student opportunity offer. Co-ordinated through our Student Access, Progress and Inclusion Committee (SAPIC), our College Access and Participation Leads will be responsible for working with newly established School-level Access and Participation Leads to develop and implement student-facing interventions and support, and ensure information and opportunities are successfully communicated to the Birmingham Scholar cohort. A newly established Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice will better enable collaborations between academic Schools, Professional Services departments, and officers of the Guild of Students to encourage the uptake of best practice and the sharing of information (Reaburn & McDonald, 2017; Arthur, 2016). Each School produces an Annual Review Action Plan which requires them to identify any continuation or awarding gaps. Progress towards Annual Review actions related to access and participation will now be reviewed and reported at each meeting of SAPIC, with College APP leads responsible for not only monitoring successful implementation of the School-defined actions, but also in supporting Schools to develop their own access and participation strategies aligned with University-level priorities for action.

### 4.2.4. Objective and Targets

- Eliminate the non-continuation gap for students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 compared to those from IMD Quintile 5 areas
- Eliminate the non-continuation gap (4.4%) for Black compared to White students by the end of this plan.
- Monitor student satisfaction for Mixed compared to White students in relation to Academic Support, Learning Opportunities, and Assessment and Feedback as measured by the National Student Survey.

### 4.2.5. Risk to Equality of Opportunity

Knowledge and Skills (Risk 1); Information and Guidance (Risk 2); Insufficient Academic Support (Risk 6); Insufficient Personal Support (Risk 7); Mental Health (Risk 8); Cost Pressures (Risk 10).

### 4.2.6. Total Cost of Activity Per year (and over 4-year Plan)

Total cost £11,192,000. £44,768,000 over 4-year of plan.

### 4.2.7. Evidence Base and Rationale

The activities detailed within this intervention strategy are based around the established research literature, sector evidence, and our own data analysis to ensure our target cohorts experience a co-ordinated and coherent programme. Key to this will be ensuring our growing Birmingham Scholar community receive bespoke support and opportunities. Financial support has been subject to rigorous evaluation over the years and the OfS continues to promote the positive impact of targeted financial support and the continuing importance of rigorous and ongoing evaluation. We recently tasked independent consultants to conduct an evaluation of our financial support in line with the principles of the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit.

### 4.2.8. Evaluation

Activities within this intervention strand will primarily be evaluated to OfS Type 2 standards. Our evaluation strategy will consist of a range of methodologies including pre/post surveys, pre/post qualitative research and case studies, and use of existing data sources (UKES, NSS), non-random comparison of continuation outcomes for targeted students who participate fully, partially, and not at all in the intervention activities with the whole year group. An evaluation of our financial support offer, based upon the OfS financial support toolkit, will continue periodically through our Evaluation Working Group.

Our University website will be the primary mechanism by which we will publish the outcomes of these evaluations, starting in 2025, with individual activity evaluation reports incorporated into an overall annual Birmingham Scholar evaluation report. In addition, case studies will be shared via our website and at relevant disciplinary and sector conferences. Our Student APP Reference Group will meet annually to gather student feedback on progress and to generate ideas to enhance activity. By early 2027 we will have conducted an interim evaluation of this intervention strategy, with an overall evaluation of progress by 2029..

## Table 4: Intervention strategy, associated activities and evaluation methodology for Continuation

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | **Enhanced:** Through a package of financial support:<br>1. Maintain the current rate of new Pathways to Birmingham Scholarship recipients each academic year.<br>2. Maintain the number of students in receipt of the Chamberlain Award (at circa 25% of the Home UG student population).<br>3. Increase the number of students in receipt of the Chamberlain Award for Care Leavers. | These financial awards aim to support students with the costs of living and studying at the University.<br>Financial concerns are reduced, and reduced reliance on and need for part-time employment to enable participation in wider experience.<br>Students are able to fully participate in all aspects of university life. | Increased continuation/completion rates.<br>Increased in-course attainment.<br>Increased engagement of the Birmingham Scholar cohort with wider opportunities.<br>Increased sense of student belonging and confidence measured by internal surveys. |
| 4,5 & 7 | **Enhanced**: All students entering the University from traditionally underrepresented groups or from cohorts where awarding gaps exist, will become part of our expanded Birmingham Scholars Network and benefit from enhanced information, and access to support and guidance throughout their studies. An expanded transition to university programme will be offered to all Birmingham Scholar students to facilitate community building within, and across, discipline areas. This will include an annual series of memory-making activities and extra-curricular activities to support the development of personal growth and social capital. | Birmingham Scholars have increased access to information and knowledge of the opportunities and support available, along with a greater sense of community and belonging.<br>New Birmingham Scholar students will have increased opportunities to develop informal networks through informative social events, peer support from Birmingham Scholars in their later years, and access to 'Guides to the University of Birmingham' developed by Birmingham Scholars themselves. | Increased continuation and completion rates.<br>Improved student survey satisfaction ratings amongst the target/Scholar cohort.<br>Increased sense of student belonging as measured by internal student surveys.<br>Increased in-course attainment. |
| 4 & 7 | **New**: The Birmingham Scholar programme will have a new dedicated communications channel through the MyUoB app Birmingham Scholar students. There will also be enhanced development of the Birmingham Scholar webpage and the term-time newsletter. | Improved communications available via the University App (preferred by students) will promote higher levels of engagement with bespoke supportive activity. Communications written by students, for students, will foster a greater sense of belonging and convey a greater sense of the benefits of engaging in the activities and opportunities. | Improved student survey satisfaction ratings amongst the target / Scholar cohort.<br>Increased sense of student belonging as measured by internal student surveys.<br>Improved engagement with dedicated Scholar activities. |
| 4 & 7 | **New**: Student EDI and Careers Network will co-develop transition to university/professional life workshops for Birmingham Scholar students. The new workshops will support Birmingham Scholars' transition into university life and to stimulate their early navigation of personal strategies for developing their future professional selves. | Early engagement and relationship-building with Birmingham Scholars, particularly to signpost and refer target students to relevant services. | Increased sense of student belonging as measured by internal student surveys.<br>Improved engagement with dedicated Scholar activities.<br>Enhanced graduate outcome measures |
| 3,4,5 & 7 | **Enhanced**: Student EDI in partnership with GO Global will provide fully funded international mobility opportunities for target cohorts. A top-up fund will be established to bridge the gap in WP funding under the Turing Scheme. Additionally, a new module on inclusive international travel will be created in the Student EDI online course to support students with EDI concerns to navigate practicalities and build confidence to travel. | Increased levels of participation amongst target group students with international mobility opportunities. International Mobility is valued be employers, students report its life changing' effect. Existing, dedicated communications and priority access to opportunities will be maintained for target cohorts undertaking study abroad and wider international mobility opportunities established and offered for underrepresented groups. | Increased continuation and completion rates.<br>Improved student survey satisfaction ratings amongst the Scholar cohort.<br>Enhanced graduate outcome measures for Target Groups. |
| | **Enhanced**: The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Student Ambassadors (EDISA) operated by the Student EDI team will increase the range of student-led activities for students from underrepresented backgrounds. A team of 10 students, from underrepresented backgrounds themselves, will work in partnership | A greater range of staff across the University understand the challenges faced by WP students.<br>Increased visibility of inclusive and accessible practices across the University.<br>An increased range of student-led EDI activities for underrepresented student cohorts. | |

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | with academic and professional services departments to address student-related EDI matters. | | |
| 6 & 8 | **New**: Development and implementation of a University-wide learner analytics platform to enable staff to understand a student's engagement with the (digital) components of their course in real-time, and to proactively identify and provide pastoral/academic support, or sign-post accordingly, to those with little or no engagement. Referrals will include those to the Academic Skills Centre (ASC) and Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) Scheme. | The roll-out of a learner analytics platform will facilitate the timely and direct engagement of members of academic and professional services staff in providing interventions and referrals to support students who might be at risk of leaving, non-progression, or failure to achieve their full academic potential. | Increased continuation and completion rates. Increased in-course attainment. Increased sense of student belonging and confidence towards their studies as measured by internal student surveys. |
| 9 | **New**: Creation of a Mature student working group to bring together staff and student expertise from across the institution to enhance the outcomes for Mature Learners. | Improved co-ordination of support and information sharing for targeted groups of Mature Learners. An enhanced understanding of the barriers and challenges that Mature Learners face amongst University staff. Increased co-ordination, dissemination, and uptake of best practice for promoting mature student success. | |
| All Risk Areas | **Enhanced:** The development of annual School-level action plans, with associated targets and performance measures, will monitor progress towards tackling identified progression and awarding gaps through an enhanced Annual Review process. Increased monitoring of School-level plans will take place at College level via the College APP leads, and via the University's SAPIC (Student Access, Progress and Inclusion Committee). | By establishing agreed School-level targets and regularly monitoring progress towards them will allow effective practices to be identified and more successfully (quickly) rolled-out across the institution. | |
| 6 | **Enhanced**: The University's established PASS scheme will be embedded in Schools with statistically significant non-continuation gaps for our APP Target student cohorts. | A positive impact on Target Cohort perceptions of learning and their acquisition of independent learning skills. A positive impact on the academic and social transition of Target Cohorts. | Increased continuation and completion rates. Increased in-course attainment. Increased sense of student belonging and confidence towards their studies as measured by internal student surveys. |
| | **New:** A new system will enable any undergraduate attaining lower than 2:1 to be referred by their Personal Academic Tutors (PATs) directly to the ASC for enhanced, personalised, one-to-one appointments. | Enhanced information sharing between students, PATs and the ASC enabling more targeted academic skills support to be delivered to students most in need. A positive impact on acquisition of independent learning skills by Target Cohorts. | |
| 4,6 & 8 | **Existing:** Academic School led Progress Review Tutorials (PRTs) will be held at key points throughout each academic year during the student's time at Birmingham via our network of academic School-based PATs. Utilising real-time data from our newly developed learner analytics will allow PATs to initiate individual interventions in response to academic engagement or progress concerns. | Enhanced information sharing between PATs and Professional Services Departments, for example via our Academic Skills Centre or Birmingham Scholar programme will enable the development of increased, and better-targeted group-based interventions and support for learners. | Increased continuation and completion rates. Comparative student survey satisfaction ratings. Staff survey outcomes. Increased sense of student belonging and reduced student anxiety as measured by internal student surveys. Increased in-course attainment. A reduction in referrals of students to College and University wellbeing services. Increased awareness amongst the Birmingham Scholar cohort of the opportunities and support available to them, coupled with a greater sense of |
| | **Enhanced:** All students identified as Birmingham Scholar will have a PAT within their academic School who is trained to support their specific needs and circumstances. | As identified as a need by our student reference groups, Birmingham Scholar students will have a common, and specialist, point of contact within their academic skills to provide advice and guidance or signpost to alternative support and opportunities as appropriate. Birmingham Scholar students have an increased sense of in-course belonging and identity and will meet regularly in groups with staff who are able to understand and support their needs. | |

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Risk Areas | **New**: Building upon our Birmingham Standards Framework develop 'Birmingham Standards in Access, Participation, Progression and Inclusion' to establish minimum expectations for APP-related practice for implementation across the University and to underpin future curriculum design and transformation. | Greater clarity of staff and student expectations towards APP-related practices will help ensure a more consistent, inclusive, and supported experience for all learners.<br>Increased visibility of inclusive and accessible practices.<br>A focus upon equity, diversity and inclusion embedded across all levels of activity, leadership, and governance. | cohort identity, as measured by Birmingham Scholar surveys.<br>Increase in students' reported engagement with information and subsequent engagement with available opportunities. |
| 4 & 8 | **Enhanced:** We will continue to invest in the high volume supportive mental health interventions that have proven to be engaging with/to and beneficial to the target student groups outlined in the APP - specifically: **Pause@UoB** (a no wait mental health drop-in hub) and **UBHEARD** (a 24/7/365 emotional support telephone service, text service and online portal.) Both services have good levels of engagement from traditionally under-represented service users (ethnic minority heritage, declared disability, care leavers) | Drop-in mental health interventions via Pause@UoB aim to reduce the stigma to early help. UBHEARD, similarly seeks to improve early support and intervention by offering low stigma access. Overall the aim are: to improve course engagement, satisfaction, and personal wellbeing for all students; to support students from underrepresented groups or those requiring mental health support during university to achieve their full academic potential and to ensure a positive student experience. | Increased continuation and completion rates.<br>Increased in-course attainment.<br>Student Mental Health and awareness of support is increased - as measure through the regular student wellbeing survey and relevant questions in other internal surveys. |
| All Risk Areas | **New:** Establish and facilitate an 'Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice' to better enable collaborations between academic Schools, Professional Services departments, and officers of the Guild of Students to encourage the uptake of best practice and the sharing of information. | A greater range of staff across the University understand the challenges faced by Widening Participation students.<br>More effective identification, sharing and uptake of effective and inclusive practices to support WP students across the University. | Increased continuation and completion rates.<br>Comparative student survey satisfaction ratings.<br>Increased sense of student belonging as measured by internal student surveys.<br>Increased in-course attainment. |
| All Risk Areas | **New**: School and College APP leads established within our academic Schools and 5 Colleges. College leads will act as champions of APP activity and School leads will support staff with the development of enhanced APP practices and provide a more visible contact/lead for student APP-related activity and information. | Increased co-ordination and monitoring of APP-related activity and targets.<br>Increased visibility of, and subsequent engagement with, opportunities for support and enhancement by Birmingham Scholar students. | |
| All Risk Areas | **New**: The Birmingham Scholar programme will enter a partnership to collaborate with the University of Southampton's Ignites programme and the University of Leeds' Plus programme. This will include joint activities, student/staff development opportunities, practice sharing, and evaluation. | Enlarged scale of evidence-led collaborative activity for targeted cohorts with small populations (e.g. care experienced students).<br>New activities for underrepresented groups with joint evaluation methodologies between the three programmes. | Increased continuation/completion rates.<br>Comparative student satisfaction ratings.<br>Increased sense of student belonging as measured by internal student surveys.<br>Increased in-course attainment. |

### 4.3. Intervention Strategy 3: Attainment

The aim of this intervention strategy and its associated activities (Table 5) is to ensure that all our students have equitable opportunities to achieve success in their degree and award outcomes. Through it we will seek to **reduce the current degree awarding gap (First and 2.i) for students from IMD Quintile 1 and for our Black students**. It forms a natural extension of Intervention Strategy 2 (Continuation) as part of the student lifecycle and contains activities and interventions that we have designed to ensure: a university curriculum that is genuinely inclusive and provides equity in opportunity for all learners; and, staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to enable all students to fulfil their full potential.

Our NSS 2023 data shows that 84% of our students are positive about the teaching on their course; 79% are positive about the learning and opportunities they receive; 82% are positive about the level and quality of academic support; and 87% are positive about the learning resources they have access to. We recognise our institutional desire to improve, and through our Educational Excellence initiative we are working to enhance our student experience across these areas, but also in relation to assessment and feedback (where 68% of students were positive) and in organisation and management (73%). Significantly we have identified the need to monitor student satisfaction, as measured by the NSS, for Mixed students in several category areas to ensure currently observed gaps do not increase from their 2023 levels. A recent analysis of our student appeals data indicates that there is a disproportionately high number of students from minority ethnic groups submitting appeals than would typically be expected when compared with our overall student population. Whilst we have made some progress in addressing this in 2022/23, the proportions remain high for Asian/Asian British and Black/Black British learners. We have not included this as a risk indicator at this stage, but feel it merits further exploration and monitoring; based upon this exploratory work, we will develop mitigating interventions as appropriate.

We have recently established our Birmingham Standards in Assessment and Feedback and have working groups and institution-wide projects to explore enhanced assessment and feedback design. We recognise that many of our learners will have had their prior school and college assessments disrupted by Covid and so have less experience of formal in-person examinations. In 2023/24 we made changes to our academic teaching year and assessment calendar in response to staff and student feedback to ensure all students receive increased opportunities for assessment support and to consolidate their learning. We are expanding this by developing a new University-wide curriculum review and transformation process that will ensure all programmes are periodically reviewed against our Birmingham Standards in Access, Participation, Progression and Inclusion. In parallel we will facilitate an assessment change programme to ensure our assessment practices are more inclusive for all our learners.

Activities introduced within Intervention Strategy 2 (Continuation) will also achieve impacts here including our PAT programme, Inclusive Student Educational and Experience Community of Practice, increased institutional-wide use of learner analytics, and our enhanced Birmingham Scholar programme; this latter initiative will increase the engagement of our target cohorts with the additional opportunities available to them. Our Academic Skills Centre will expand its offer by taking academic and mathematics support provision, which already includes a mathematics support centre that is staffed and open to students for 30 hours per week during term-time, 'on the road' and across the institution to target and support students within their academic Schools or in more familiar and convenient locations.

University staff, both academic (Farr-Wharton et al., 2018) and professional services (Graham & Regan, 2016), have a vital role in enhancing student outcomes, with development opportunities known to positively impact teaching practices and student learning (Southwell & Morgan, 2009). Our Academic Development Programme integrates our Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education to provide new staff with comprehensive preparation for the teaching, learning and assessment aspects of their role. For more established staff members, our Beacon Professional Recognition Scheme, accredited by Advance HE, award Fellowships to eligible staff in recognition of their continuing success in teaching and supporting learning. Since its implementation in 2015 over 800 colleagues have progressed through the scheme: 217 as Associate Fellow; 332 as Fellow; and 262 as either Senior or Principal Fellow.

Our Inclusive Educator Award is an online short course that allows individuals to check the different aspects of their practice and to develop more inclusive practices where needed. It has now been successfully completed by nearly 1,600 colleagues, and within this APP cycle we will further expand the content and scope of the Award and integrate it completion as part of all our teaching development programmes.

Led by our Student Educational and Experience Community of Practice, we will share sector best practice in inclusive learning, teaching and assessment will be via interactive workshops, online materials and training resources.

### 4.3.1. Objective and Targets

- Reduce the degree awarding gap (first and 2:1s) for IMD Quintile 1 compared to Quintile 5 students (17.3% to 8.7%).

- Reduce the degree awarding gap (first and 2:1s) for Black students compared to White students (from 11.9% to 6.0%).

### 4.3.2. Risk to Equality of Opportunity

Knowledge and Skills (Risk 1); Information and Guidance (Risk 2); Insufficient Academic Support (Risk 6); Insufficient Personal Support (Risk 7); Mental Health (Risk 8); Cost Pressures (Risk 10).

### 4.3.3. Total Cost of Activity Per year (and over 4-year Plan)

300,000 per year. £1,200,000 over 4-years.

### 4.3.4. Evidence Base and Rationale

This Attainment intervention strategy forms a progression of intervention strategy 2 (continuation) and focuses upon enabling all students to achieve successful degree outcomes. It has been grounded in the established research literature, sector evidence, and our own data analysis, and the activities described in our Attainment intervention strategy are also applicable here as they span the entire student lifecycle; to avoid duplication and repetition they are not repeated. Our personal tutorial programme and learner analytics work, coupled with the proposed enhancements to our University-wide curriculum, including the further embedding of our graduate attributes will help ensure all learners are offered equitable opportunities to progress and achieve their full academic potential. We will extend this work to include an emphasis upon revising our institutional-wide approaches to assessment and this will be underpinned by newly developed 'Birmingham Standards in Access, Participation, Progression and Inclusion' to establish minimum expectations for APP-related practice across the entire institution. Recognising that students upon entering university become quickly aligned with their discipline communities, we seek to ensure that all students have access to regular in-course opportunities for support and guidance through a personal tutorial system that actively connects with our wider institutional support offer. Through the establishment of an active community of practice, we will ensure all students receive a high-quality and consistent experience, and one where approaches and interventions that prove successful in one disciplinary area can transfer successfully to others and the wider sector.

### 4.3.5. Evaluation

Activities within this intervention strand will primarily be evaluated to OfS Type 2 standards to evidence impact that those receiving the intervention achieve enhanced outcomes, however some will necessarily be evaluated to Type 1. Whilst our evaluation strategy for this strand will consist of a range of methodologies, and use of existing institutional and national data sources, underpinning our approach will be strategies to explore the impact upon both staff and institutional practice, and upon student outcomes. This includes through the non-random comparison of continuation outcomes for targeted students who participate fully, partially, and not at all in the intervention activities with the whole year group. Our University website will be the primary mechanism by which we will publish the outcomes of these evaluations, starting in 2025, with individual activity evaluation reports focused upon student outcomes incorporated into an overall annual Birmingham Scholar evaluation report to reinforce the coherence of our approach. Activities within this strand are focused upon enhancing staff and institutional practices, and so evaluation methodologies align with our overall evaluation plan to evidence the extent of this change as well as capturing case studies of good practice. Necessarily, intervention activities take place at a range of levels, including disciplinary via our academic Schools, and so we will encourage case studies good practice to be shared internationally via our institutional approach to Educational Excellence and at relevant disciplinary and sector conferences, workshops, and events. Internally, we will maintain our Student APP Reference Group on an annual basis to ensure student feedback on our progress and to generate ideas to enhance activity. By early 2027, we will have conducted an interim evaluation of this intervention strategy to ascertain whether we are likely to meet our objectives, with an overall evaluation of progress by early 2029 to ascertain whether objectives have been met and identify relevant learning to share with the sector.

**Table 5: Intervention strategy, associated activities and evaluation methodology for Attainment.**

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4,5,6,7 & 8 | **New:** Roll-out a new University-wide curriculum review and transformation process to ensure the embedding of equitable and inclusive practices within the core curriculum and in-line with our 'Birmingham Standards in Access, Participation, Progression and Inclusion'.<br><br>**Enhanced**: Building upon the recent (2023/24) changes to our academic teaching year and assessment calendar we will continue to develop our curriculum. By embedding our Graduate Attributes within all programmes, we will ensure our curriculum affords all students an equal opportunity to develop, and reflect upon, their skills, attitudes and behaviours in a way that will enhance their studies whilst at university and support their progression beyond it.<br><br>**New**: An assessment change programme will be developed to ensure a future Birmingham assessment experience that offers reduced assessment loads, increased variety and that is genuinely inclusive for all learners. | A focus upon equity, diversity and inclusion embedded across all levels of activity, leadership and governance within the University.<br>A greater range of staff across the University understand the challenges faced by Widening Participation students and involved in implementing practices designed to support them.<br>Programmes that have undergone curriculum enhancement are student-centred and focused upon accessibility, inclusivity, and equitable opportunities for student success.<br>By more effectively embedding skills and graduate attributes within the curriculum will ensure all students have equitable opportunities to succeed within their studies and access increased opportunities beyond it.<br>Academic staff will have increased agency and expertise to make changes to their assessment practices to: reduce assessment loads; increase assessment variety; and design assessments that are more inclusive for all learners. | Increased in-course attainment.<br>A reduction of awarding gaps for Target Groups.<br>Comparative student satisfaction ratings from national (UKES, NSS) and internal surveys and measures.<br>Increased student sense of belonging and identity as measured through module and programme evaluations, student surveys and internal data collection.<br>Enhanced graduate outcomes for Target Groups.<br>Greater assessment variety, and reduced programme assessment loads, as identified by internal measures. |
| 4,5,6,7 & 8 | **Enhanced**: Build upon the success of our Inclusive Educator training course and increase its uptake across the University by its further embedding as part of our professional development programmes so that its completion is a requirement for all members of staff completing PGCertHE and Beacon awards.<br><br>**Existing**: Through our Higher Education Futures Institute (HEFi), curriculum design and development workshops and events will be offered to all members of staff to facilitate the sharing and uptake of evidence-based inclusive learning, teaching, assessment, and support practices identified from within the University and beyond.<br><br>**New**: Building upon successful practice identified from within our College of Medical and Dental Sciences online resources and training materials showcasing best practice in supporting learners from widening participation cohorts will be developed and disseminated via the University's Educational Excellence initiative and used to inform curriculum enhancement and innovation. | The Inclusive Educator training course supports staff to review the different aspects of their practice and to develop more inclusive practices where needed.<br>A focus upon equity, diversity and inclusion embedded across all levels of activity, leadership, and governance within the University.<br>A greater range of staff across the University understand the challenges faced by Widening Participation students and involved in implementing practices designed to support them.<br>Curriculum design and transformation will be based upon evidence-informed best practices in inclusive student education. | A reduction of awarding gaps for Target Groups.<br>Comparative student satisfaction ratings from national (UKES, NSS) and internal surveys and measures.<br>Increased student sense of belonging and identity as measured through module and programme evaluations, student surveys and internal data collection.<br>Staff engagement data with offered workshops and events.<br>Availability of case studies of examples of new and enhanced inclusive practices.<br>Number of digital engagement interactions by staff with developed resources, case studies and materials. |
| 4,6 & 7 | **New**: Working with Careers Network and the Academic Skills Centre a *Birmingham Finalists Programme* will be created for Birmingham Scholar students to facilitate a community of final-year students focused upon helping them achieve their study and career goals. Current and previous Birmingham Scholar students will help inform and contribute to its development. | Birmingham Scholar students will have increased awareness, and hence access to, University support for their studies and career progression and will continue to interact as part of a supportive peer community throughout their studies. This will lead to increased student confidence and increased career readiness. | Increased student sense of belonging, identity and confidence as measured through module and programme evaluations, student surveys and internal data collection.<br>A reduction of awarding gaps for Target Groups. |

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Enhanced graduate outcomes for Target Groups. Extent of Birmingham Scholar engagement with in-person and online activities and resources. |
| 6 | **New:** The University's Academic Skills Centre (ASC) team will establish formal engagement networks with School and College APP Leads to: 1. Ensure Target student cohorts are aware of the Academic and Maths Skills support opportunities available. 2. Take Academic and Maths Skills support (i.e. 1:1, drop-in support) 'on the road' to students' more familiar or convenient locations. 3. Co-design and develop new in-course and additional learning enhancement interventions for Targeted cohorts. | Targeted, personalised interventions that can be more robustly evaluated and good practice rolled-out. APP student cohorts will have increased awareness, and hence access to, University support for their studies. | Increased student sense of belonging, identity and confidence as measured through module and programme evaluations, student surveys and internal data collection. An elimination of awarding gaps for Target Groups. Enhanced graduate outcomes for Target Groups. |

### 4.4. Intervention Strategy 4: Progression

The aim of this intervention strategy and its activities (Table 6) is to **continue to improve progression outcomes for students from low socio-economic backgrounds**. Our interventions will prepare our students to prosper as citizens and become highly employable graduates, equipped to succeed in their chosen careers and life choices, or to progress their aspirations through successfully accessing further study. Through this strategy we will close the gap in progression to graduate-level employment or further study for IMD Quintile 1 student compared to Quintile 5.

In our last APP we committed to reducing the graduate employability gap for our students with multiple measures of disadvantage (specifically our P2B students), and our black students. In the latest Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) data we now see a higher graduate employment rate for our black graduates. We recognise there remains an awarding gap between our black students and white students, which can impact success in attaining graduate level work or study. We will continue to monitor outcomes for this group of students, maintaining the interventions currently in place and enhancing where required.

Closing the gap for our P2B has been more challenging, we have made some positive progress (from 9.5% in 2016/17 to 6% across 4 years of GOS) but there is continued work to do. The intersectionality of this group with IMDQ1, West Midlands domicile, and ethnicity provides a challenge which we are committed to overcome, and our focus on IMDQ1 in this cycle will further support this group.

Launched in 2021, our institutional Employability Strategy was developed in close collaboration with all stakeholders, including our students, recent alumni and employers, and supports our Educational Excellence ambitions. It aligns to five core principles, one of which is inclusivity, ensuring the strategy supports a diversity of career aspirations, enabling social capital and connections for *all* our student groups. Drawing on our strong partnerships with employers, organisations, and alumni globally and regionally, it recognises universities do not operate in isolation. We are working proactively with employers to create shared diversity and inclusion approaches that address the effect poor practice amongst employers and in the wider labour market is having on graduate outcomes (Christie, 2016). We aim to provide opportunities for *all* our students to engage externally – enabling them to make connections from their disciplines to the world around them, enhancing both their learning and their employability. Since the last APP we have mapped four years of GOS data against engagement with our flagship career programmes/innovations. It shows those who engage are more likely to be further along in terms of career readiness and hence are more likely to be in a positive graduate outcome.

Evidence shows there are barriers for students from low socio-economic backgrounds to access extracurricular and co-curricular activities (Dickinson, Griffiths & Bredice, 2020). Our internal data, the identified risks and sector evidence shows this group are less likely to be geographically mobile, and hence more likely to seek graduate opportunities within the West Midlands region, are less likely to enter further study, and are less likely to get a 2.1 or higher. Through the new and enhanced Progression interventions which form a core part of our Employability Strategy, we aim to address these risks. By engaging a higher proportion of our IMDQ1 cohort throughout their time at the University and immediately after graduation with our flagship programmes, our graduate support programme and access to PGT bursaries, we will support their transition to graduate level work and/or further study.

To maximise engagement of this often hard to reach cohort, our **Careers Network** will work in close partnership with our academic Schools, including taking a subject focus where data shows high numbers of IMDQ1 students with progression gaps.

The University's **Birmingham Scholars Programme** is aimed at supporting less advantaged students including IMDQ1. We will embed the interventions outlined in Table 5, designed and delivered to maximise engagement and completion by our target groups.

**The Birmingham Award** is a co-curricular programme that students take alongside their degree to develop, recognise, and articulate the attributes they have developed from engagement in student life at Birmingham. The Award has been re-designed in collaboration with students to foster a more inclusive approach, reducing the amount of social, cultural and economic capital required. Birmingham Scholars will be auto-enrolled and benefit from dedicated support to help maximise their completion of the Award.

**The Careers Mentoring programme**, relaunched in 2023/24 with a new Mentoring Connect platform, offers students access to a wide range of mentors and alumni who support in career decision making, sector intelligence and expanding networks. The new platform offers greater flexibility to undertake mentoring in a format that suits our target students.

A new tailored version of the reputable Stanford University **Life Design Programme** (https://lifedesignlab.stanford.edu/) will be created, equipping students to apply design thinking to life challenges and career thinking. The programme will be prioritised for Birmingham Scholar students.

Weeklong **Employability Challenges,** co-created with employers and offering priority access to Birmingham Scholars, where students work in multidisciplinary groups, provide the opportunity to develop a range of graduate attributes, build confidence and social capital.

Through collaboration with our Guild of Students, we are in the top five UK universities in terms of numbers of students successfully securing paid opportunities with **10k Black Interns**. This compliments our already comprehensive package of funded, local and or virtual work placement opportunities, removing barriers to access. The **Gateway to Work Experience Bursary** is exclusively for Birmingham Scholars to improve their personal and professional development by allowing them to take up critical development experiences they may otherwise not be able to afford.

Our **Graduate Support Programme, UoB and Beyond** was launched in 2020, to our recent graduates. The programme makes proactive contact with recent graduates from our target groups, supporting them to access ongoing careers coaching, tailored internships, and digital resources. We are extending this programme to Final year Birmingham Scholars who will be offered **Progression Coaching** to help them address a range of complex barriers they face entering the graduate labour market. Those with little or no work experience can apply for short, funded work placements through our **UoB Graduate Internships**.

The University is proud to now offer 50 scholarships, worth £4,000 each, to enhance the accessibility of postgraduate study for students from low socio-economic backgrounds, via our **Postgraduate Access Scholarship**. The programme also includes application support, career planning tools, enrolment onto the Postgraduate Professional Development Award and access to the Masters Consultancy Challenge.

### 4.4.1. Objective and Targets

- Reduce the gap in progression to graduate-level employment or further study for IMD Quintile 1 compared to Quintile (6.0% to 3.0%)

### 4.4.2. Risk to Equality of Opportunity

Progression from Higher Education (Risk 12).

### 4.4.3. Total Cost of Activity Per year (and over 4-year Plan)

£485,000 per year. £1,832,000 over 4-years.

### 4.4.4. Evidence Base and Rationale

Sector evidence and our own data analysis, indicates that students with significant attainment gaps, students with no engagement with employability activity and/or no previous work experience, and a lack of career confidence are less likely to be in a positive graduate outcome 15 months after graduation. Activities to improve the progression outcomes have been developed based on evidence-based assumptions, robust data sets and sustained monitoring. Type 1 evaluation has informed the design of a coherent Theory of Change setting out what we do and why. Using Type 2 evaluation we have embedded the associated methodologies, measures and metrics into each of the programmes where we monitor and measure progress against targets for engagement and completion against comparator groups.

### 4.4.5. Evaluation

All engagement with, and completion of, the activity programmes will be tracked and analysed to determine continued uptake of careers related activity during time at the University compared to comparator groups. Targets will be set and monitored for engagement of target groups and their completion of programmes, compared to other groups. Measures of career readiness will be collected each academic year, via online registration, and mapped against engagement with programmes to evidence impact. Changes in confidence and knowledge to inform decisions measured and tracked through pre and post evaluation surveys for our core programmes. We will continue to monitor and map graduate outcomes against engagement and career stage to ensure a continued evidence-based approach.

We will monitor the number of Tutor referrals and the uptake of progression coaching. A follow-up process will be in place to close the loop on those referred by academics. Participation of target groups with opportunities for external engagement during final year and beyond compared to the comparator group will be captured. Targets will be set and monitored for the number of meaningful

connections/phone calls with target groups. We will continue to monitor and map graduate outcomes against engagement and career stage to ensure a continued evidence-based approach. We will proactively collate and publish student and graduate case studies to evidence impact of programme and use this as a mechanism to promote the activities to the target cohorts.

The number of home undergraduates transferring to higher degrees at the University will be tracked and compared to previous years along with the proportion of available scholarships that are being taken up by IMDQ1 Birmingham graduates. We will monitor their engagement with academic skills support, the Life Design programme and employability activity and use pre- and post-evaluation and student feedback to measure education gain. We will track pre and post evaluation and measure longitudinal increases in career readiness and work experience gained compared to comparator groups. Student stories will be published on our website demonstrating the impact of programmes and the associated transformative experience.

**Table 6: Intervention strategy, associated activities and evaluation methodology for Progression (to employment or further study).**

| Associated UoB Risks (Table 1) | Activity | Outcome(s) | Outcome Measure(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | **Enhanced:** With greater emphasis on sense of belonging, community and engagement, the Birmingham Scholar programme will more effectively integrate Careers Network's flagship employability programmes.<br><br>In addition, Birmingham Scholars will benefit from a new activity - workshops based on Stanford University's Life Design model to support Birmingham Scholars' transition into university life and to stimulate their early navigation of personal strategies for developing their future professional selves.<br><br>Using detailed analysis of Graduate Outcomes at programme level, and our lead indicators we will design and test the impact of targeted and integrated employability packages for subjects where there are significant gaps for IMDQ1 vs IMDQ5. | Increases in IMDQ1 students in graduate employment or further study 15 months after graduation.<br>Increased career readiness, career confidence and decision making evident amongst Birmingham Scholars in their final year.<br>Enhancements in social capital, building network and professional connections and developing work related skills through participation in work experience, mentoring and experiential learning by Birmingham Scholars.<br>Enhanced sense of belonging for the community of Birmingham Scholars which is evident in the extent to which they are engaging with extra-curricular/employability activity and completing the Birmingham Award.<br>Growth in numbers participating with Careers Network activity and the employability programmes by Birmingham Scholars overall, and those in targeted schools.<br>Stronger partnerships between Careers Network and Academics and Employers. | HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey.<br>Career Registration: proportion of Scholars in the final year with no work experience.<br>Proportional engagement, and increased completion rates, of Scholars with Careers Network services and the flagship employability programmes.<br>Evaluation of education gain against Birmingham's Graduate Attributes.<br>Case studies. |
| 7 | **New**: A more robust Graduate Support Programme **UoB and Beyond** - for final years and recent graduates which will ensure recent IMDQ1 graduates are supported with careers guidance, job search, job application support and career coaching.<br><br>Final year students at risk of under- or unemployment will be provided with Progression Coaching to help them develop career goals and take steps towards achieving their ambitions. They will have access to short graduate internship opportunities which will develop their work-related skills, professional connections and confidence to acquire long term graduate job roles.<br><br>Partnering with Job Centre plus and partner universities in the West Midlands region we will provide tailored support to our recent graduates who are registered unemployed. | Final year (IMDQ1) students more aware of the opportunities available to them and increased confidence to apply for graduate opportunities.<br>Graduates feel supported through engagement with the Enhanced Graduate support programme.<br>Increases in recent (IMDQ1) graduates' participation in Birmingham Graduate Internships and career coaching.<br>Increased confidence and success amongst recent (IMDQ1) graduates to acquire roles in the West Midlands region.<br>More IMDQ1 recent grads in graduate level employment, further study, or business start-ups. | HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey<br>Proportional engagement of IMDQ1 graduates with Careers Network activity, career and progression coaching, and internships; and increased completion rates.<br>Evaluation of education gain against Birmingham's Graduate Attributes.<br>Case studies.<br>Graduate calling campaign evaluation. |
| 7 | **New**: We will launch the Postgraduate Access to Birmingham Scholarships alleviating barriers restricting students, from under-represented backgrounds, pursuing postgraduate study. This initiative will provide a route for our IMDQ1 students to continue their studies at their university and enable more IMDQ1 students to undertake higher degrees. Students will benefit from financial support, academic skills support, complemented by a Life Design programme and tailored employability support. | Increased IMDQ1 students studying higher degrees at Birmingham.<br>IMDQ1 feel supported and have engaged with academic support, development opportunities, and employability support. | Proportional engagement of IMDQ1 students in the Postgraduate Scholarships and successful completion of studies.<br>Evaluation of education gain against Birmingham's Graduate Attributes. |

# 5. Whole Provider Approach

We have adopted a cross-institution and collaborative approach to the development of this Plan with views and perspectives drawn from students, academic and professional services staff, and wider sector colleagues. The Plan has been developed by a Steering Group of senior professional services and academic staff chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) and supported by a Task Group consisting of colleagues from across the University leading on access and participation activities. Disciplinary insight from our five Colleges has been provided via SAPIC which has considered the development of our targets and intervention strategies and informed the design and refinement of our activities. University Education Committee, University Executive Board, Senate and Council have all been consulted to inform and shape its development.

Our work in access and participation is a fundamental component of our Birmingham 2030 Strategic Framework and is considered in both our Education for Sustainable Futures and Engagement and Impact Pillars. It therefore forms part of a whole institutional approach, where its consideration is embedded across key strategies and plans. This strategic focus enables us to work towards establishing a culture where equity in access and participation are considered the norm and allows us to utilise our growing University community to effect further positive change. Table 7 shows other key areas of the University's strategy, policy or student-facing work where access and participation is naturally embedded:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Race Equality Charter** | The University is a member of Advance HE's Race Equality Charter (REC) and was awarded a Bronze REC award in May 2020. Our Race Equality Action Plan includes information on how we developed our approach, how we listened and responded to the concerns of our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff and student communities and how we will monitor and be held accountable for outcomes. |
| **Birmingham Award** | The Birmingham Award, an optional co-curricular award programme designed in partnership with employers, helps students recognise and articulate their graduate attributes developed through engagement in student life and beyond. Recently redesigned for inclusivity, following consultation with our students, the award now acknowledges a broader range of activities, including life-wide learning opportunities like student caring responsibilities, part-time work, and digital content creation. |
| **Student Minds** | The University has recently joined the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter programme. We are currently implementing its evidence-informed principles to adopt a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing that will consolidate our existing activity, including Pause@UoB and UBHeard initiatives. |
| **Athena Swan Charter** | The University is committed to the aims and principles of Athena Swan. We currently hold an Athena Bronze Award as an institution and aspire to all of our Schools achieving Athena awards. The majority of Schools in the Colleges of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences and Medical and Dental Sciences hold Athena awards, with a growing number held in the Colleges of Arts and Law and Social Sciences. |
| **EDI Strategy** | Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy incorporates activities to promote equality across the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics, our Athena and Race Equality Charter action plans and actions to address degree attainment gaps. The EDI Strategy is aligned with the People and Culture pillar of our Birmingham 2030 Strategic Framework. |
| **Guild Advice** | Guild Advice is a free, impartial and confidential advice service offered by our Guild of Students for students at the University of Birmingham. Education and Welfare Advisors provide specialist and practical advice on a range of subjects relating to student life, including finance. |

**Table 7: Areas of the University's student-facing work where activities or support for access and participation are naturally embedded.**

Each School produces an Annual Review Action Plan which requires the identification any continuation or awarding gaps. This is complemented by annual Educational Excellence meetings to enable Schools to look strategically at how they will develop their provision and practice. Progress towards Annual Review actions related to access and participation is reviewed and reported at each meeting of SAPIC, with College APP leads responsible for not only monitoring the successful implementation of the School-defined actions, but also in supporting Schools to develop their own APP strategies aligned with University-level priorities for action.

Ensuring a high-quality student experience is at the very heart of what we do. In 2023/24 we enhanced our approach by making changes to our academic teaching year and assessment calendar to ensure all students received increased opportunities for assessment support and to consolidate their learning. We have recently introduced Birmingham Standards as part of our Educational Excellence work to ensure all staff delivering taught programmes audit their teaching annually and adopt a common set of institutionally agreed standards as part of their teaching and

learning practice. We have revised and relaunched our Birmingham Graduate Attributes to define the skills, behaviours and values that we believe students develop by connecting with the culture, curriculum and community of the University; these attributes underpin our programme and learning design. Related, we have introduced our UoB Xtra programme, which runs during the Summer Term each year, and provides an opportunity for all students to prepare for the next year of study or life as a Birmingham graduate, and to help them develop their academic skills and knowledge. Throughout the lifecycle of this Plan, we will continue to innovate to enhance our all-student curriculum offer.

We will continue to engage others beyond the University, and actively seek to extend our approaches for sharing our learning and experience with others. We have established a new partnership with the Universities of Leeds and Southampton via a joint Birmingham Scholar – Plus – Ignite programme which is recognised by the Russell Group as an example of good collaborative practice. We continue to work closely with our University of Birmingham School, and our staff are members of its governing body ensuring we have direct feedback as to the challenges and successes of our distinctive outreach initiatives; our Student and Recruitment and Outreach Team also has extensive and longstanding collaborations with those in the school, college and FE sectors. We will continue to collaborate to bring added value to the work of regional organisations such as Aimhigher West Midlands, and our recently established University-level Employer Advisory Board will help us to further explore collaborative employer-led strategies to enhance the transition of disadvantaged cohorts into the workplace.

Through this plan and our related strategies, policies and workstreams, we are seeking to further embed a positive and proactive culture towards access and participation across the University. To support us in this aim we will engage our Strategic Change and Internal Audit Teams during 2024/25 to assist in successfully operationalising this plan and in identifying and mitigating risks to success. Simultaneously, and then throughout the lifecycle of this Plan, Development and Alumni Relations (DARO), whose fundraising already secures in excess of £2million per annum to enable additional APP-related work and activity, will continue to work to secure additional philanthropic donations to help us further extend our activity and ambition in access and participation.

## 6. Student engagement and consultation

This Plan has been developed in partnership with our students. In December 2023, a series of student consultations were held, co-chaired by the Education Officer from Our Guild of Students, and engaging students from across the University, including our current cohorts of Birmingham Scholars. From these consultations, five of our identified risks to equality of opportunity **Table *1*** were independently validated as priorities for APP activity within this cycle. In May 2024, we re-engaged this group of students to show how we had refined the intervention strategies.

Outside of this student consultation process, our Guild Education Officer and Postgraduate Officer have been integral to the development of this plan. Working with Task Group members, and more formally through SAPIC, they have helped shape the design of our interventions and activities: as an example, our newly introduced postgraduate scholarships targeted at widening participation students were first championed by the Guild before being further developed through SAPIC. This partnership has been vital and collaborative, as the Guild themselves acknowledge:

*"The Guild have been working in partnership with the University on the Access Plan, its targets and initiatives and we are glad that the University has incorporated our views and suggestions as the plan has developed. Our members play a central part in supporting the delivery of targets and initiatives in roles such as E&D ambassadors, Student Reps and Officers, and through our membership of key University-level committees such as SAPIC. We look forward to playing an active part in the oversight and evaluation of the plan going forward".*

Our ongoing dialogue with our Pathways to Birmingham students has informed our strategies and activities, particularly feedback from students who have made use of our activities and services targeting retention, success and employability. This has been further supplemented by the independent review of our financial support packages to help understand how students use the funds and what has the most value to them. From this, we have redesigned and will re-launch our scholarship packages within this next APP cycle to allow us to target more students who are most in need.

To further support our engagement with students we will hold an annual forum with student representatives, supported and co-hosted by the Guild, throughout this next APP cycle. The forum will review the progress and successes of the plan and its associated initiatives, as well as provide advice and guidance to inform our future policies and practices. It will offer an important platform for students to better understand the national and University access and participation agenda and its implications for them as individuals and/or target groups, and to ensure that the University can continue to recognise the wide, and changing, range of student perspectives. We will use this same forum to highlight our academic practice and research in access and participation to our student body, and through their ongoing feedback, further develop and refine our approach.

# 7. Evaluation of the plan

## 7.1. Monitoring progress

Our Plan has been considered and approved by the University Executive Board, and our overall approach considered by Council. Our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) holds executive lead for the development, delivery and success of our APP strategy and plans. Monitoring of progress against our objectives and targets is embedded within our institutional governance framework. SAPIC has oversight of data, implementation delivery, and evaluation outcomes, and has institutional strategic responsibility for ensuring successful delivery of the APP. An APP Oversight Group, comprised of APP practitioners drawn from across the University and with responsibilities for the activities detailed within our Intervention Strands, will meet four times per year to monitor progress against targets and objectives made within the Plan.

Co-ordinated through SAPIC, our College and School APP leads will be responsible for implementing our student-facing interventions and support, and ensure information and opportunities are successfully communicated to target cohorts. A newly established Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice will better enable collaborations between academic Schools, Professional Services departments, and officers of the Guild of Students to encourage the uptake of best practice and the sharing of information.

## 7.2. Evaluating success

Our Plan embodies our institutional commitment to widening access and reducing inequalities in higher education. Through successive cycles of action-based research (McNiff, 2013), the success of our interventions will be assessed by an overarching Evaluation Strategy with the objectives to:

1. Generate robust evaluation evidence to improve fair access and participation in higher education by helping us understanding what we do, identifying how and why specific approaches work, and identifying where improvements can be made to increase the effectiveness of our institutional policies and interventions.
2. Provide a framework for ensuring high-quality evidence-based monitoring to support improvement, accountability, and strategic decision-making to inform the effective targeting and allocation of resources.
3. Ensure engagement between our academic community and professional services departments to enable the exploration and development of cross-institutional innovative approaches in activity and evaluation.
4. Enable the development and capture of evidence of impact and learning that can be shared more widely within the higher education and related sectors.
5. Provide a framework for the evaluation of our APP work between 2025 and 2029.

The development of this strategy has been informed by our experience in implementing our 2020 - 2025 APP as well as outcomes from the OfS self-evaluation tool (OfS, 2024) exercise which we undertook in April 2024. As the Table 8 shows, we have scored as 'Advanced' in three areas and 'Emerging' within two others. For all five areas, we have identified future actions to increase our institution-wide evaluation knowledge and expertise and will continue to apply the OfS self-evaluation tool on an annual basis to monitor our progress.

| Area | Score | Identified Strengths | Identified Weaknesses | Future Actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategic Context** (Maximum Score = 24) | **20 (Advanced)** | Evaluation activity is naturally and routinely embedded within institutionally led interventions, with clearly established frameworks for assessing delivery and impact. | Development and roll-out of training and support for a ToC-based evaluation by academic Schools; increased opportunities for institutional-wide reflection and practice sharing of widening participation activity. | 1) Development of Birmingham Standards in APP-evaluation and wider sharing of evaluation toolkit. 2) Establishment of 'Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice'. |
| **Programme Design** (Maximum Score = 18) | **17 (Advanced)** | Programme design is informed by evidence, with objectives and measures identified for all activities. Success measures are aligned with overall APP targets. | Benchmarks still to be established for some newly identified cross-institutional activities. | 1) APP Evaluation Working Group will oversee development of benchmarks and targets for all APP-defined activities by September 2025. |
| **Evaluation Design** (Maximum Score = 9) | **7 (Emerging)** | Type 1 (Narrative) evaluation methodologies have been identified for all activities with all having an aspiration towards Type 2 (Empirical). | Currently no Type 3 (Causal) evaluation methodologies identified for activities. | Through a collaborative institutional approach overseen by our APP Evaluation Working Group and working more widely with the higher education sector we will continue to aspire towards Type 3 methodologies. |
| **Evaluation Implementation** (Maximum Score = 20) | **16 (Emerging)** | Robust data collection mechanisms are in place meeting legislation for data handling. Institutional-wide ethical review procedures recently updated and reflect nature and requirements of APP-related evaluations. | Evaluation risks to be better considered along with enhanced tracking of APP cohorts throughout their student journey to ascertain causal impact. | 1) Establish a common ethical review framework for APP-related activity to expedite and enhance the ethical review process. 2) APP Evaluation Working Group to establish a common risk-based assessment template for APP activity. 3) Implementation of a University-wide learner analytics platform to enable enhanced student tracking. |
| **Learning from evaluation** (Maximum Score = 22) | **18 (Advanced)** | Clear and transparent mechanisms are in pace to facilitate the institution-wide sharing of evaluation results and to utilise these to inform future practice, activity, and strategy. | Greater visibility in sharing findings and impact of practice with higher education sector, in communicating how effects are causal and in articulating how evaluation findings have informed improvements to interventions. | 1) Ensure findings are more robustly shared with the sector through our annual Birmingham Scholar report which will detail our APP progress. 2) Increased sharing of findings through our 'Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice' which will facilitate evidence-based dissemination internal and external to the University. |

**Table 8: Outcomes from the application of the OfS self-evaluation toolkit to the University.**

Our Evaluation Strategy will be implemented and monitored by the *APP Evaluation Working Group* and will report to the APP Oversight Group and SAPIC. The Group comprises evaluation leads for Access, Success (Continuation and Award) and Progression, who each have significant expertise in Theories of Change (ToC) and in TASO (Transforming Student Outcomes in Higher Education) methodologies. The Group also includes academic expertise in evaluation and educational research, including from our recently established Educational Equity Initiative (EEI) (UoB, 2024) within our College of Social Sciences. EEI brings together educational researchers, practitioners, and policy makers with the goal of an inclusive and equitable quality education for all. It will thereby assist in ensuring a whole-provider approach to our APP evaluation and provides new ways of testing and evaluating approaches in educational settings to inform policy and practice.

As a university, we are involved in numerous regional and national initiatives related to the aims and objectives of our APP and we will continue to leverage the opportunities provided by such collaborations to bring added value to our 2025 – 2029 APP activities. We continue as founding member of Aimhigher West Midlands. The recent Aimhigher West Midlands evaluation plan was rated as excellent by the OfS. We will maximise the existing and recognised expertise on evaluation in our long-standing Aimhigher West Midlands partnership to collaborate and better understand the impact of the interventions within this Plan. Reinforcing our engagement with TASO, we have led multiple TASO projects including the 2023 Impact evaluation of the University of Birmingham's Forward Thinking programme (Jones et al., 2023). Most recently, we have been commissioned by TASO to develop an intervention blueprint to support disabled students' transition to higher education which reinforces our expertise in delivering TASO-defined interventions and evaluation methodologies (TASO, 2023).

All students entering the University from traditionally underrepresented groups or from cohorts where continuation and awarding gaps exist will become part of our expanded Birmingham

Scholars Network. Our evaluation approach is therefore based upon the development of an overarching Theory of Change (ToC) for the Birmingham Scholar Network with underpinning ToC models for each of our four intervention strategies. The activities within each of our Intervention Strategies are evidence-based, underpinned by clear indicators and measures of success, and have defined evaluation methodologies. The evaluation of all activities aligns with required OfS standards, and all are at a minimum of Type 1 (Narrative) with the majority aspiring to Type 2 (Empirical Enquiry). Through the expertise afforded by our APP Evaluation Working Group, and through our active involvement in cross-sector working groups we will further aspire to develop, pilot, and disseminate Type 3 evaluation methodologies as appropriate.

To ensure a consistent approach, share experience and minimise duplication of effort, we will develop a range of evaluation resources and toolkits for those leading activities within our academic Schools and Colleges, and this will be complemented by a training and mentoring program will help empower all University staff to develop robust evaluation practices. Overseen by our Evaluation Working Group, we will provide workshops across the University, and where appropriate the wider sector, on effective evaluation strategies and methodologies, discipline-specific training and opportunities for skills engagement, and a University-wide mentorship programme.

It is essential that all evaluation and research activity is undertaken within an ethically appropriate framework to ensure that those who form the target of our APP interventions are protected from harm. As such, any evaluation activity that might be published will therefore require ethical approval. The requirement for an appropriate ethics review is part of the University's Code of Practice for Research[1] and although we have recently revised our ethics review process, each evaluation activity currently requires its own separate review. Our Evaluation Working Group will ensure all evaluations are undertaken with ethical integrity and that an appropriate ethics review has been undertaken, but more broadly will work with our Research Ethics, Governance and Integrity team to explore whether a blanket ethical approval process might be awarded to APP evaluation activities it identifies as 'low risk'. Table 9 provides details of activity which will be evaluated over the duration of this plan. Throughout this APP cycle we will publish case studies and examples of practice detailing the impact of our work in access and participation, with our primary reporting on our progress towards the objectives and targets described here through an annual Access and Birmingham Scholar report every autumn which will be released via the University's website[2] .

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[1] See: https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/codesofpractice/index.aspx
[2] https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/equality/widening-participation/access-and-participation-evaluation-and-impact

| Activity | Evaluation Methodology | Publication Summary Plan and Timeline |
|---|---|---|
| **Strand 1: Access** | | |
| Pathways to Birmingham | Pre and post-programme survey comparisons including TASO-validated access questions for local and national strands (Type 2). Outcome tracking via UCAS weblink (Type 1). Proportion of learners that are care leavers/eligible for Free School Meals compared to previous cycles – including how many enter the University (Type 1). | Annually in Autumn term, with cumulative report at the end of the four-year cycle. |
| Year 10 Summer School | Pre and post-programme comparison including TASO-validated access questions – learners and parents (Type 2). Quasi-experimental comparison of GCSE results and eventual destinations between Summer School participants who took part in tutoring and those who didn't (Type 2/3). Dosage response-analysis of whether more sessions attended results in differential GCSE outcomes (Type 2). | Annually in Autumn term, with cumulative report at the end of the four-year cycle. |
| In person tutoring via UG students in schools | Pre and post-programme survey comparisons including TASO-validated access questions (Type 2). Grade progress analysis (Type 2). | Annually in Autumn term, with cumulative report at the end of the four-year cycle. |
| Travel bursary | Offer Holder Visit Day (OHVD) data – proportion of learners eligible for Free School Meals and care leavers attending OHVD before and after bursary implemented (Type 1/2). | Annually in Autumn term, with cumulative report at the end of the four-year cycle. |
| UNICONNECT Activity – Level Up Literacy | Initial vs. final assessment. Before any literacy sessions, all students will complete an initial assessment (standardised tool that is part of the Lexia system). This assessment will be undertaken again after 6 months and after a year. Where possible, learners assigned to a control group will complete these same assessments and results between the two groups will be contrasted. | Results will be shared with relevant governance bodies and disseminated via a sector-wide report. Results will likely be published in Spring/Summer 2025. |
| UNICONNECT Activity – Maths/English tutoring | Comparison between learners' mock/predicted grades (before attending any MyTutor sessions) and final GCSE results. Where possible, we will compare differences between mock and final grades in a group of learners who attended tutoring sessions with a group of learners that did not. | Results will be shared with relevant governance bodies and disseminated via our annual APP report. |
| Realising Opportunities (RO) | An annual evaluation report on Type 1, 2 and 3 analysis is compiled by the IES, as directed by the RO central team. This evaluation report uses both internal data, gathered through IES led student surveys, but also uses external data, such as HESA and the National Pupil Database, for comparator purposes. RO is able to demonstrate success using comparator data gathered from pre- and post-programme evaluation, based on 4 points of evaluation. | External reports will be compiled against strategic aims and will be published on our website. These reports will include detailed analysis on RO's data and evaluation, with headline statistics and comparator data used to raise RO's profile and share best practise with the wider sector. The website will also be redeveloped to include an impact hub, making our data accessible across the sector. |
| EPS Futures | Independent evaluation in year 3 of delivery by the Education Equity Initiative (EEI) to understand the experiences and outcomes of the small cohort of students who have benefitted from the programme. A co-produced qualitative methodology will be used to mobilise knowledge from the participants about their learning and employment aspirations. Analysis of degree and employability outcomes for the EPS Futures students will be undertaken at the end of their UG programmes. | Report published late 2024. Conference presentation and peer reviewed publication to inform wider practice in the sector 2025. Annual report of outcomes from 2025 (when first cohort graduates). |
| **Strand 2: Continuation** | | |
| Inclusive Student Education and Experience Community of Practice; School and College APP Leads | Annual questionnaires focused upon staff engagement, activity and impact; annual student questionnaires focused upon experience or use of existing metrics (e.g. UKES and NSS) including non-continuing students as appropriate; bi-annual student focus groups (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; case studies of good practice shared via Educational Excellence website; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. |

| Activity | Evaluation Methodology | Publication Summary Plan and Timeline |
|---|---|---|
| School-level APP plans | Ongoing monitoring of progress of APP plans through institutional committee structures relative to identified targets; localised embedding of evaluation in School-level activity; tracking of progress on School APP targets compared to institutional benchmark and targets; measures of student experience (e.g. UKES and NSS) (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2) . | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; case studies of good practice shared via Educational Excellence website; learning and experience shared at disciplinary and sector events and conferences. |
| Progress Review Tutorials (PRTs) and Specialised Personal Academic Tutors (PATs) | Extent of student engagement with PRT process; annual student questionnaires focused upon experience or use of existing metrics (e.g. UKES and NSS) including non-continuing students as appropriate; focused PAT feedback obtained from focus-group style discussions at PAT Network (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; case studies of good practice shared via Educational Excellence website; learning and experience shared at disciplinary and sector events and conferences. |
| Birmingham Scholars Network; transition to University programme and package | Pre- and post- intervention (Transition programme) or annual (Network) questionnaires; extent of engagement data; student feedback via bi-annual focus groups; staff reflection upon delivery and student engagement; progress tracking relative to benchmarks (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. |
| Learner analytics platform | Non-random comparison of student engagement, in-course success, and continuation outcomes for targeted Birmingham Scholar students who participate fully, partially, and not at all in the intervention activities with the whole year group, facilitated through use of data provided via the learner analytics platform (Type 2 aspiring to Type 3). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences |
| Mature Learner working group. | Measures of extent of engagement with working group and subsequent activity; qualitative case studies of activities arising and impact; mature student focus groups (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; case studies of good practice shared via Educational Excellence website; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. |
| Enhanced Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) scheme | Analysing the relationship between PASS participants and non-participants against (a) continuation, (b) attainment, and (c) degree outcomes. Analysing degree outcomes and graduate outcomes for PASS Leaders against non-leaders (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2026. |
| New PAT referral scheme to the ASC | Analysing the demographic of referred students against our APP target cohorts. Analysing in-course attainment and degree outcomes for referred students (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2026. |
| **Strand 3: Success** | | |
| University-wide curriculum review; embedding graduate attributes; assessment change; curriculum design and development; Inclusive Educator | Annual questionnaires focused upon staff engagement, activity and impact; quantitative data related to extent of programme and assessment change; annual student questionnaires focused upon experience (e.g. UKES, NSS); analysis of student wellbeing data and metrics; two-year student focus groups; non-random comparison of student engagement, in-course success, and continuation outcomes for targeted students on changed programmes relative to whole-year group (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2024; case studies of good practice shared via Educational Excellence website; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. |
| Birmingham Finalists Programme | Pre- and post- intervention (Transition programme) or annual (Network) questionnaires; extent of engagement data; student feedback via two-year focus groups; staff reflection upon delivery and student engagement; progress tracking relative to benchmarks; internal Careers Network annual survey and longer-term graduate outcomes data (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2026; learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. |

| Activity | Evaluation Methodology | Publication Summary Plan and Timeline |
|---|---|---|
| Scholarships | The evaluation will provide a benchmark for the new version of the Chamberlain Award being introduced for 2020. The aim of the analysis is to ascertain if the Chamberlain Award has a demonstrable impact on progression (from one year of study to the next), retention (drop-out rates) and attainment (degree outcomes). Key questions will include: 1. Do the awards improve retention rates? a. Progression from 1st to 2nd year. b. Repeating years – do students complete on time? c. Drop-out rates. 2. Do the awards help to ensure equity in terms of attainment – how do their degree outcomes compare to the comparator group? More broadly, the evaluation work seeks to answer two key questions: 1. Does our finance package help to recruit students? 2. Does our financial package help to retain students? | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2026. |
| Enhanced Academic Skills Centre offer | Analysing the demographic of student engagement with the Academic Skills Centre and Maths Support Centre (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). Analysing the in-course attainment and degree outcomes for APP cohorts based on engagement with ASC/MSC activity (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2). | Ongoing periodic internal reports from October 2025; Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2026. |
| **Strand 4: Progression** | | |
| Careers Network's (CN) employability programmes | Targets will be set, monitored and analysed for engagement with and completion of CN programmes and activities, compared to comparator groups. Changes in confidence and knowledge will be measured through pre- and post-evaluation surveys. Career readiness will be collected each academic year and mapped against engagement with programmes, and Graduate Outcomes will be mapped against programme engagement to evidence impact. Student stories will be collated demonstrating the transformative impact of programmes to our target group. (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2) | Birmingham Scholar Annual report on University website from September 2025, with learning and experience shared at sector events and conferences. Annual internal reports capturing engagement, completion rates, up-take, from September 2025. Career Readiness and Graduate Outcomes reported annually. Student stories published on our website from September 2024. |
| Graduate Support Programme UoB and Beyond, for final years and recent graduates. | Targets will be set, monitored and analysed for engagement and completion for target groups, measured against other groups for: Personal Academic Tutor referral, progression coaching, engagement with opportunities for external engagement during final year and into graduation, and meaningful connections with target groups. We will continue to monitor and map Graduate Outcomes against engagement and career stage to ensure a continued evidence-based approach. Student stories will be collated demonstrating the transformative impact to our target group. (Type 1 aspiring to Type 2) | Annual internal reports capturing engagement, completion rates and changes in confidence/knowledge from September 2025. Graduate Outcomes reported annually from September 2025 Student stories published on our website from September 2024. |
| Postgraduate Access to Birmingham Scholarships Scheme | The number of Home undergraduates transferring to higher degrees will be tracked and compared to previous years along with the proportion of available scholarships taken up by IMDQ1 Birmingham graduates. We will monitor engagement with, and impact of, our wrap-around support: academic skills, Life Design programme and employability activity, using pre and post evaluation and student feedback to measure educational gain. (Type 2) | Annual report of proportion of IMDQ1 BirminghamHome students taking Postgraduate Access to Birmingham Scholarships December 2024. Annual report on engagement with and impact of wrap-around support from June 2025. Student stories published on our website from June 2025. |

**Table 9: Activity level evaluation approaches and methodologies linked to OfS access and participation standards of evidence.**

# 8. Provision of information to students

## 8.1. Publication of the Plan

Our Plan, and previous Plans are available at:
https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/about/equality/widening-participation

We will also publish an accessible summary of the plan and fee information documents from the Office for Students will also be available there.

## 8.2. Fee Information

The fees we charge are available at: https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/fees-funding/tuition. This provides the most up-to-date information for current and prospective students.

## 8.3. Financial Support

All our information is made available on our website. All qualifying award students are automatically notified by letter of their eligibility and the payment schedule of their award.

Information on the Chamberlain Award and Enhanced Chamberlain Award including application process and parameters can be found at:
https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/funding/undergraduate/chamberlain-award2020, with information for continuing students available at:
https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/funding/chamberlain-award.aspx. These webpages outline the application criteria, expected timelines for relevant communications, and the process for applying for an award.

The Funding, Graduation and Awards team within Student Services are available to offer guidance and support on the process and their dedicated email address for queries about the Chamberlain Award is shared on the webpages, which are accessible to current and prospective students.

# Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

## 9. Overview and approach

The purpose of this annex is to highlight major areas of concern in the student journey for underrepresented students. The indications of risk highlighted within **Table 2: Our institutional objectives, targets and milestones to address risks to equality of opportunity through this Plan.Table 2.** will inform the main objectives for the 2023 Access and Participation Plan (APP). The rest of this Assessment of Performance relates to areas where we will continue to monitor and target/deliver activity.

Data is from the OfS APP dashboard unless stated otherwise.[3] We have made extensive use of the dashboard provided by the OfS as this provides a standardised view of the data. Alternative sources include internal data on student groups not held or reported by the OfS. The assessment of performance has reviewed trends over time, as well as comparisons to the sector, rather than to comparator groups as this is an assessment of our performance, and therefore risks to our students, rather than a benchmarked exercise.

The OfS define "Indications of risk" as:[4] *the way in which a risk might impact a student group in a manner that is visible in data. For example, a provider may see that there is a gap in on-course attainment rates for a certain group of students. This is the indication of risk. It is not the risk itself, but it is linked to a risk.*

## 10. Statistical significance and small numbers

Where there are small sub-groups within data splits, we have considered the OfS dashboard 2- and 4-year aggregated data. When this aggregated data is suppressed, internal data has been considered. However, as with any data, caution is used in drawing conclusions from small populations, and where there has been change over time because of external factors, such as Covid. The targets that have been set are those that can be monitored through the OfS dashboard data or require internal data to monitor because the target group is not available in the OfS published data.

We have focussed on full-time, all undergraduates, as the majority mode of the University within our specific context. We only offer two, very specific part-time undergraduate programmes, which are both highly vocational in their own specific ways, and which have particular entry requirements because of their specialisms. We have not focused on Completion as a measure, as the most recent data relates to 2017/18 entrants, and therefore there is concern in drawing conclusions from this old data, and applying it to entrants in 2025, eight years after this data, and with a pandemic during that period.

## 11. Intersectional characteristics

We have placed reliance on the OfS dashboard for reviewing intersectional characteristics. This means groups are aggregated at a relatively high level (eg IMD Q1/2 or all ethnicities other than white), and three-way correlations using this data source aren't available. We will continue to use internal data to review and monitor these intersections where populations aren't large enough for OfS publication.

It is not possible from this data to determine if a student holding all the underrepresented characteristics puts them at a greater risk than possessing just one of those characteristics. There is a longer-term piece of work for OfS and providers to consider and analyse this data.

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[3] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/data-dashboard/
[4] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/how-to-use-the-risk-register/

# 12. Data review

## 12.1. Student Lifecycle Stage: Access

### 12.1.1. Students on Free School Meals (FSM)


Access indicator values for: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4)

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Eligible | 11.4% | 10.0% | 12.4% | 13.9% | 13.3% | 14.7% | 13.6% | 14.0% |
| Not eligible | 88.6% | 90.0% | 87.6% | 86.1% | 86.7% | 85.3% | 86.4% | 86.0% |
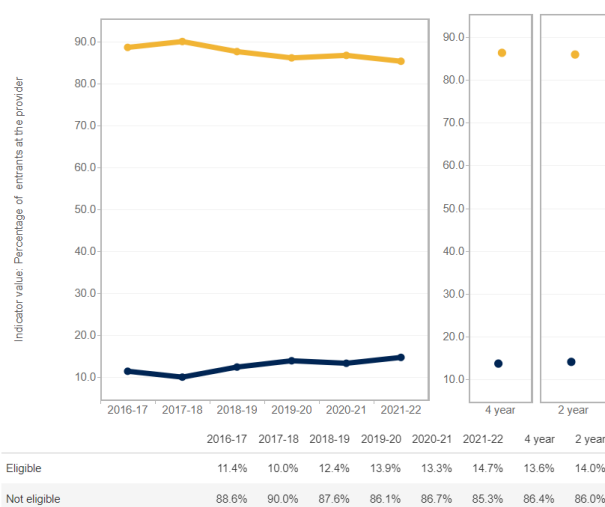
*Figure 1 FSM vs non-FSM entrants over time*

In 2021/22 the University had the highest number of entrants eligible to FSM outside of London based Russell Group providers (730, 14.7% of the entrants).

The trend at Birmingham over 6 years is for the proportion to gradually increase, while the sector proportion of entrants had declined to 18.2% in 2021/22.

Internal data for 22/23 and 23/24 (based on applicant data, rather than the OfS/DfE augmented, but less timely data in the OfS dashboard shows the entry rates at 7% and 8% respectively. This reinforces the gradual increase over time.

**Conclusion:** There is a gap between the proportion of the Birmingham entry cohort, and the sector entry cohort. Therefore, there is a risk of equality of opportunity that FSM eligible students don't have the same chance to enter the University. Increasing access for FSM eligible entrants therefore becomes a key objective for the University. **(Objective PTA_1)**

### 12.1.2. Care leavers

Internal data shows that we have increased to 14 in 23/24. However, care leavers remain a very small proportion of our entry cohort of 5,500 in 23/24. This data comes from the self-declaration made by applicants on their UCAS form, and therefore the information available to the University for supporting the applicants through to making contextual offers.

**Conclusion:** Care leavers are a small proportion of our entry cohort. This probably indicates a risk a lack of prior information and guidance, and prior attainment for care leavers. Increasing access for care experienced entrants therefore becomes a key objective for the University to align with the support they receive once here. **(Objective PTA_2)**

## 12.2. Student Lifecycle Stage: Continuation

### 12.2.1. Students from IMD Quintile 1


Continuation gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

*Figure 2 Continuation gap for IMD Q5 vs Q1*

| | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintile 5 compared with 1 | 4.0pp | 3.5pp | 4.6pp | 4.7pp | 1.7pp | 5.6pp | 4.2pp | 3.8pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: 3.8pp
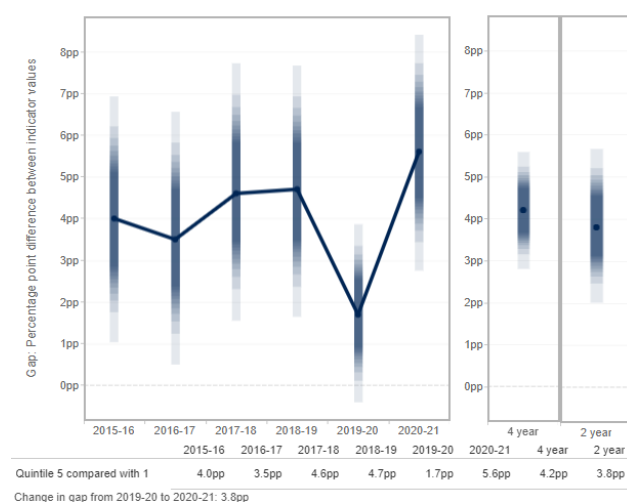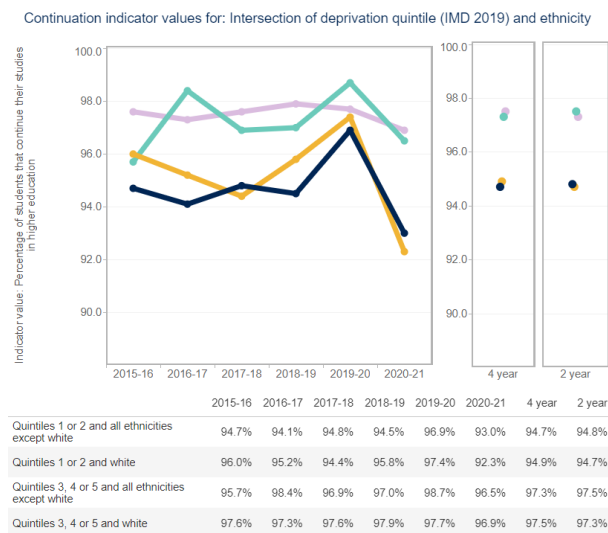
Figure 3 Intersectional continuation rates (IMD and Ethnicity)

| | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintiles 1 or 2 and all ethnicities except white | 94.7% | 94.1% | 94.8% | 94.5% | 96.9% | 93.0% | 94.7% | 94.8% |
| Quintiles 1 or 2 and white | 96.0% | 95.2% | 94.4% | 95.8% | 97.4% | 92.3% | 94.9% | 94.7% |
| Quintiles 3, 4 or 5 and all ethnicities except white | 95.7% | 98.4% | 96.9% | 97.0% | 98.7% | 96.5% | 97.3% | 97.5% |
| Quintiles 3, 4 or 5 and white | 97.6% | 97.3% | 97.6% | 97.9% | 97.7% | 96.9% | 97.5% | 97.3% |

The continuation rate for IMD Q1 entrants was 91.8% in 2020/21, and the gap between Q5 and Q1 was 5.6pp, the highest since 2015/16. These gaps are above the sector (at 9.1pp).

The trajectory has seen a gradual decline over 6 years, with the gap gradually widening. There is one exceptional year, 2019/20 which was due to COVID academic regulations. The 4 year average stands at 4.2pp in 2020/21. Using OfS intersectional data, we see gaps based on IMD, but with little impact of ethnicity (IMD Q1/2 vs Q3/4/5 and white vs Black and Minority Ethnic) – 4 year average.

**Conclusion:** There are large gaps based on IMD within ethnicity, so ethnicity alone does not explain the IMD gaps. Support improvement through an intervention strategy, and related target and milestones. **(Objective PTS_1)**

### 12.2.2. Black students



| | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White compared with black | 2.4pp | 3.6pp | -0.8pp | -0.6pp | -0.8pp | 4.4pp | 0.9pp | 2.0pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: 5.2pp
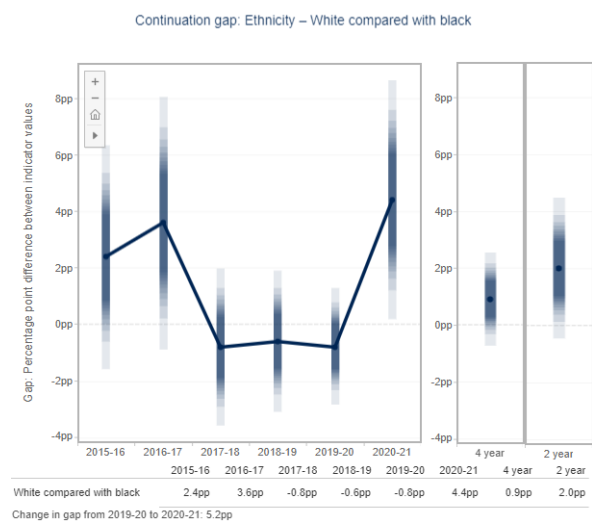
Figure 4 Continuation gap white vs black students

The continuation rate for black students was 91.8% in 2020/21, and the gap between white and black students was 4.4pp. The trend has been generally little to no gap over 6 years with

the gap being largely within statistical insignificance, although COVID will have helped maintain this in 2019/20. But the continuation rate in 2020/21 is the lowest during that period, and with the largest gap. The 2 year average is 2.0pp in 2020/21. The entry cohort of black students has also been increasing over this period, with even larger cohorts in 2021/22 through to 2023/24. The intersection with IMD is shown here.

**Conclusion:** The continuation gap between black and white students has widened in 2020/21. Combined with the degree awarding gap, this demonstrates a clear inequality of opportunity and outcome for black students. Therefore, improving continuation of black students is one of the objectives of the APP. Support improvement through an intervention strategy, and related target and milestones. (**Objective PTS_2**)

### 12.2.3. Students with a declared disability

Continuation gap: Disability type – No disability reported compared with multiple impairments



| | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No disability reported compared with multiple impai... | 4.7pp | 1.4pp | 9.3pp | 4.1pp | 5.6pp | 4.3pp | 5.7pp | 5.0pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: -1.3pp
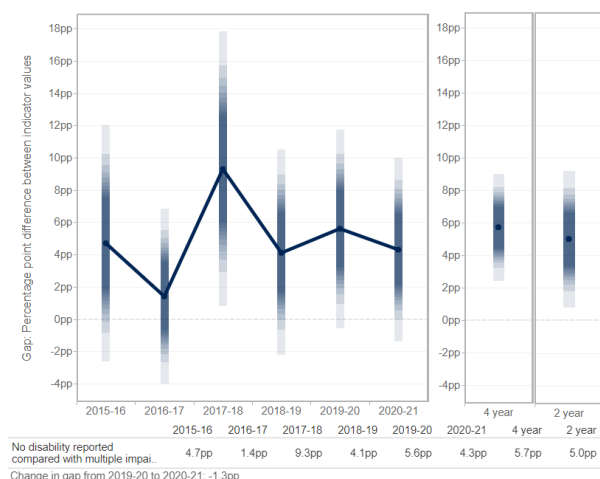
*Figure 5 Continuation gap non-disabled vs multiple impairments*

Detailed data show that there is no gap in the long term 4 year average for most specific disabilities (see: Other identified potential risks section 13, page 43). **Error! Reference source not found.**  The data therefore suggests that there is no indication of risk to continuation for students based on their ethnicity alone.

**Students with a declared** disability, but there is a gap for multiple impairments and no disability of 5.7pp (see above). This gap has been present in some form over the previous six years.

**Conclusion:** Although the continuation gap has narrowed in the most recent year, it appears to be persistent over time. Gap has also not closed for those with multiple impairments. Support improvement through an intervention strategy relating explicitly to mental health as these students are more likely to have multiple impairments

## *12.3.*     Student Lifecycle Stage: Attainment

### 12.3.1.     Students from IMD Quintile 1

Attainment gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintile 5 compared with 1 | 14.6pp | 16.7pp | 16.5pp | 10.5pp | 12.2pp | 11.9pp | 12.9pp | 12.1pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -0.3pp
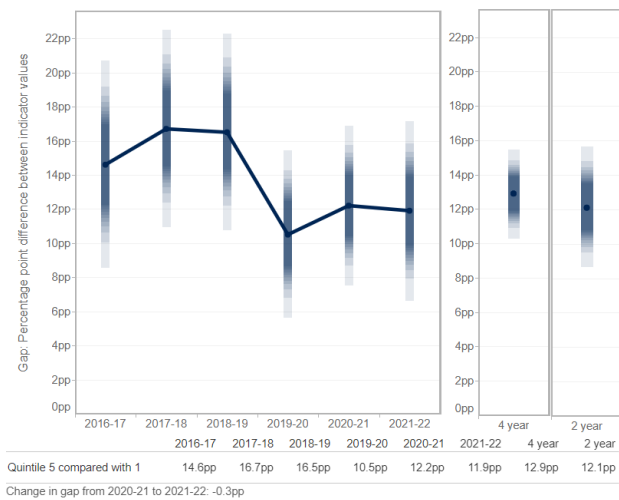
*Figure 6 Awarding gap IMD Q5 vs Q1*

Attainment indicator values for: Intersection of deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) and ethnicity

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintiles 1 or 2 and all ethnicities except white | 73.4% | 74.6% | 76.8% | 85.3% | 83.8% | 79.3% | 81.3% | 81.6% |
| Quintiles 1 or 2 and white | 89.0% | 87.0% | 86.4% | 95.0% | 95.8% | 90.4% | 91.9% | 93.1% |
| Quintiles 3, 4 or 5 and all ethnicities except white | 87.2% | 85.6% | 86.1% | 92.9% | 92.6% | 88.6% | 90.1% | 90.7% |
| Quintiles 3, 4 or 5 and white | 90.8% | 92.7% | 93.2% | 96.8% | 96.6% | 93.9% | 95.2% | 95.4% |

*Figure 7 Intersectional awarding gaps (IMD and Ethnicity)*

The data shows that there is a significant gap between IMD Q1 and Q5, and that this gap has existed over the last 6 years, with the only small improvements during the implementation of emergency regulations during COVID. The 4-year average gap is 12.9pp, with the 2020/21 gap being at 11.9pp.

It should be noted that the sector average attainment for all students is 79.1%, with the sector average for Q1 at 68.4%, while the University's awarding rate for IMD Q1 is 85.6%, so IMD Q1 students at Birmingham have a better awarding rate than the average student in the sector.

Intersectional data (chart above) show that there are intersectional gaps between IMD Q3/4/5 AND white students compared to the three other intersectional groups. Although the largest gap is to the IMD Q1/2 AND all ethnicities except white – 14.9pp in the 4-year average.

**Conclusion:** The gap between Q1 and Q5 students has persisted at over 10pp for the previous 6 years, with the only improvements during the periods when emergency university legislation was put in place. Improving good honours rates for IMD Q1 students is therefore a key objective of this plan. (**Objective PTS_3**). This is supported through an intervention strategy, and related target and milestones.

### 12.3.2. Black students



Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with black

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White compared with black | 13.0pp | 15.9pp | 17.8pp | 12.0pp | 16.6pp | 17.3pp | 16.0pp | 16.9pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 0.8pp
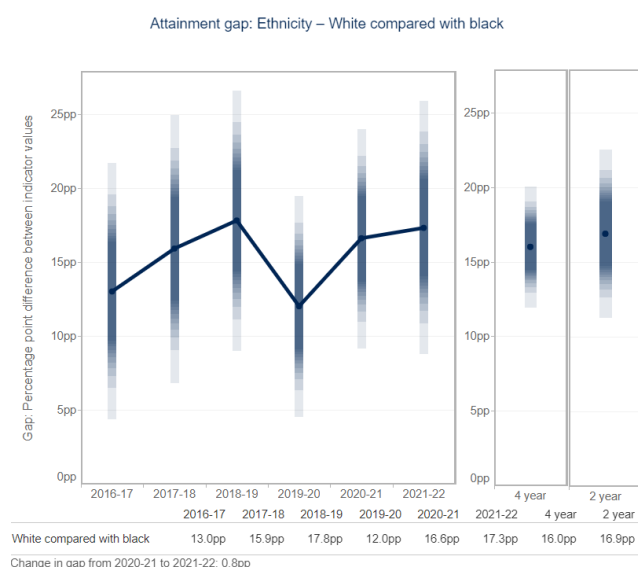
*Figure 8 Awarding gap white vs black students*

The data (below) shows a significant gap in good honours awards between black and white students that has gradually widened over time. There were small improvements during the implementation of emergency regulations during COVID in 2019/20. The 4-year average is 16.0pp and the gap in 2020/21 was 17.3pp.

The sector attainment rate for black students 63.1%, and sector average attainment rate is 79.1%. The University's attainment rate for black students is 76.0%. So, black students at the University have a small gap to the sector average attainment but are 13.1pp above the sector awarding rate for black students.

**Conclusion:** The gap between black and white students has persisted at over 12pp for the previous 6 years, with the only improvements during the periods when emergency university legislation was put in place. There is also a clear intersectionality between ethnicity and socio-economic deprivation as shown above. Improving good honours rates for black students is therefore a key objective of this plan. (**Objective PTS_4**). This is supported through an intervention strategy, and related target and milestones.

## *12.4.* Student Lifecycle Stage: Progression

### 12.4.1. Students from IMD Quintile 1



Progression gap: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 5 compared with 1

| | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintile 5 compared with 1 | 4.8pp | 9.0pp | 7.0pp | 4.2pp | 6.4pp | 5.5pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: -2.8pp
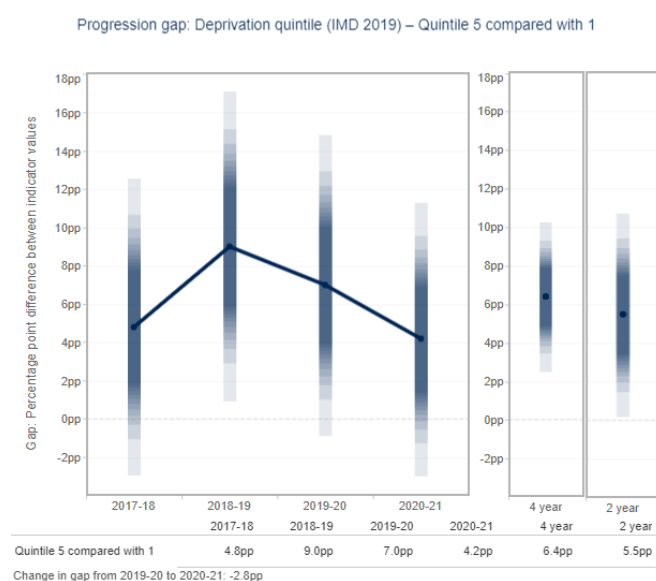
*Figure 9 Progression gap IDM Q5 vs Q1*

There is a small gap identified IMD Q1 students of 6.4pp for the 4 year average. The 2020/21 data shows that on a year by year basis that the gap is small, and closing, with a wide statistical significance. The indicator is 79.4% in 2020/21, with the 4-year average at 76.1%. This compares to a sector gap of 10.8pp, and an indicator of 67.7%. The sector overall rate is 82.7% in 2020/21.

**Conclusion:** Although IMD Q1 students from the University have a better chance of progressing to employment or further study than the average IMD Q1 student in the sector, their progression rate is lower than the overall sector rate. Improving good progression for IMD Q1 students is therefore a key objective of this plan. **(Objective PTP_1)**

# 13. Other identified potential risks

The rest of this Annex of the Assessment of Performance relates to areas where we will continue to monitor and target/deliver activity, or where we conclude that there is no indication of risk.

## 13.1. Student Lifecycle Stage: Access

### 13.1.1. Socio-Economic: IMD



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintile 5 compared with 1 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.7 |
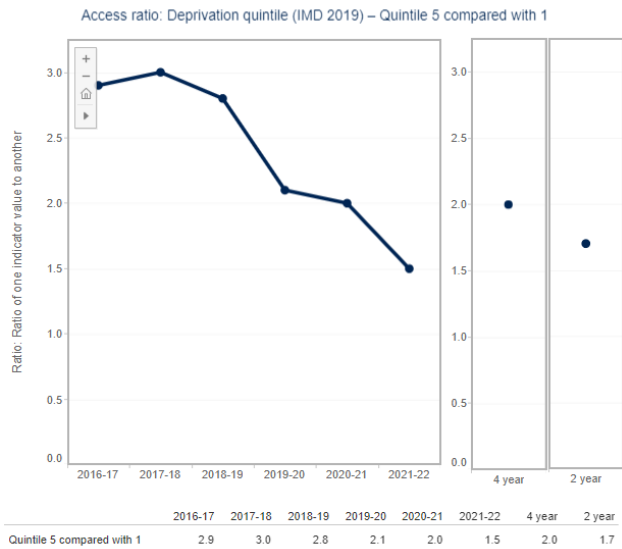
*Figure 10 Ratio of IMD Q5 to IMD Q1*

The ratio of IMD Q5 to Q1 has been decreasing consistently over the last six years, and in 2021/22 it was 1.5:1. There is a clear trend with this indicator heading towards the point of near equality between students from IMD Q5 and IMD Q1. The University is below the sector ratio of 0.9:1, but sector trend has been flat for six years, whereas the University has a clear trend of this measure improving.

Based on this data, and because IMD is an area-based indicator, rather than specific to an individual, we have not identified this as an indicator of risk.

### 13.1.2. Educational Disadvantage: POLAR4



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quintile 5 compared with 1 | 6.9 | 7.6 | 7.3 | 5.4 | 4.9 | 4.0 | 5.1 | 4.4 |
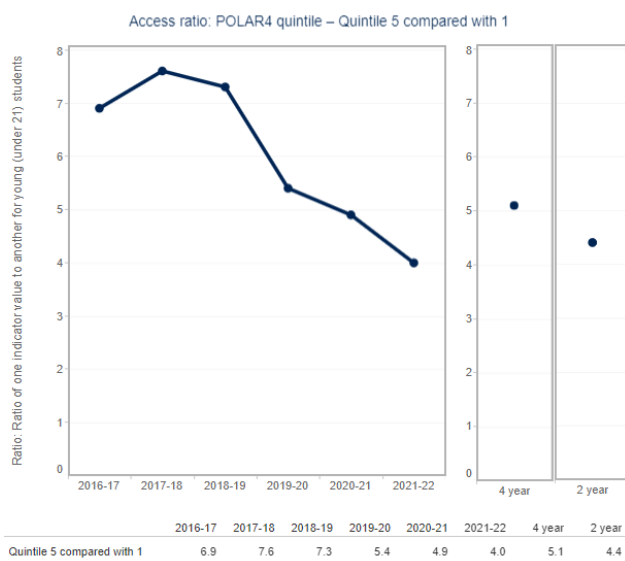
*Figure 11 Ratio of POLAR4 Q5 to IMD Q1*

The ratio of POLAR4 Q5 to Q1 has been decreasing consistently over the last six years, and in 2021/22 it was 4.0:1. This was a target in the University's 2020 to 2025 APP, and the actions put in place have ensured that we have hit this ambitious target ahead of schedule.

The University is below the sector ratio of 2.4:1 but the sector trend has been nearly flat for six years, whereas the University has a clear trend of this measure improving.

### 13.1.3. Mature students



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mature (21 and over) | 4.4% | 3.2% | 3.8% | 4.0% | 4.0% | 3.4% | 3.8% | 3.7% |
| Young (under 21) | 95.6% | 96.8% | 96.2% | 96.0% | 96.0% | 96.6% | 96.2% | 96.3% |
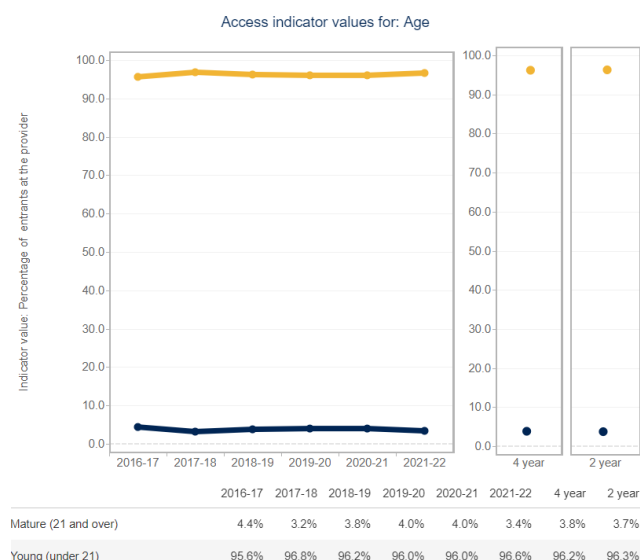
*Figure 12 Percentage of mature vs Young entrants*

The percentage of the mature student entrants has remained relatively static over time, with the number of entrants being about 200 per annum. The University has had one specific programme for mature entrants (the graduate medicine route), which accounted for 20% of the mature intake. All others UK domiciled mature entrants are enrolled in the broad range of disciplines across the University, and are not a homogenous group. They are at various stages of life, and will have entered University for a large variety of reasons.

We acknowledge that access rates for mature students are lower than the sector average. Additionally, as set out in our institutional context, our strength as an institution lies in the delivery of full-time programmes. The evidence suggests these can be less appealing to some mature students than those under 21. For this reason, we have elected not to include a target for this group. We will continue to welcome and invest in supporting the student experience for those mature students that choose to study with us, ensuring that targeted measures are in place to address continuation, completion and awarding issues should they evolve into trends.

### 13.1.4. Ethnicity



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asian | 15.8% | 16.6% | 17.2% | 19.3% | 20.5% | 25.7% | 20.9% | 23.2% |
| Black | 5.6% | 4.7% | 5.5% | 6.5% | 6.7% | 9.4% | 7.1% | 8.1% |
| Mixed | 4.8% | 5.0% | 5.2% | 5.6% | 5.3% | 6.4% | 5.7% | 5.9% |
| Other | 0.9% | 1.1% | 1.4% | 1.5% | 1.8% | 1.8% | 1.6% | 1.8% |
| White | 72.9% | 72.6% | 70.7% | 67.1% | 65.7% | 56.7% | 64.7% | 61.1% |
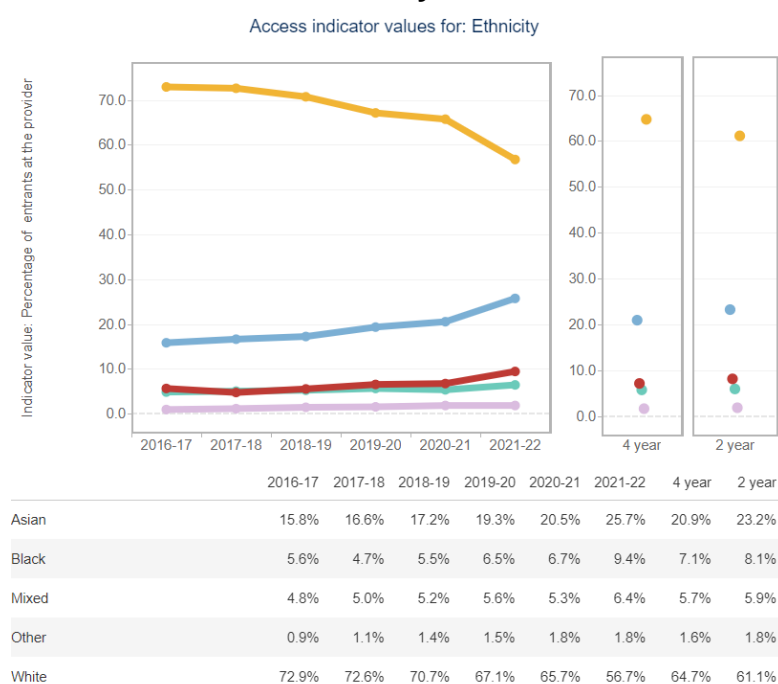
*Figure 13 Proportion of entrants by ethnicity*

The University ethnicity mix has changed rapidly over the last six years. In 2021/22 the proportion of white entrants decreased to 56.7%, whereas the sector proportion has remained relatively constant at between 65% and 70%.

Intersectional data shows that the largest decrease has been in white students from IMD Q3/4/5 making up just 46.5% of the entry cohort in 2021/22.

The data therefore suggests that there is no indication of risk to access for students based on their ethnicity alone.

### 13.1.5.      Students with a declared disability



Access indicator values for: Disability

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Disability reported | 11.8% | 10.8% | 12.2% | 13.3% | 15.2% | 14.6% | 13.9% | 14.9% |
| No disability reported | 88.2% | 89.2% | 87.8% | 86.7% | 84.8% | 85.4% | 86.1% | 85.1% |

*Figure 14 Proportion of entrants by disability*

The percentage of disabled entrants has been increasing gradually over the last 6 years and is now 14.6% in 2021/22 from 11.8% in 2016/17. The sector trend has also seen this increase, but the University is about 2.8pp below the sector percentage of 17.4% in 2021/22.

The comparison of the University percentage to the sector reflects our subject mix, with a lower proportion of students with reported disabilities in medicine, dentistry and allied health, which will reflect some of the limiting factors of the fitness to practice requirements of these disciplines, even after making reasonable adjustments.

The data therefore suggests that there is no indication of risk to access for students based on disability.

## *13.2.*      Student Lifecycle Stage: Continuation

### 13.2.1.      Student on free school meals (FSM)



Continuation gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible

| | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not eligible compared with eligible | 3.9pp | 3.6pp | 3.5pp | 3.9pp | 2.1pp | 5.7pp | 3.8pp | 4.0pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: 3.6pp

*Figure 15 Continuation gap for FSM vs non-FSM students*

FSM eligible students had a continuation rate of 90.8% for those entering in 2020/21. There is a 5.7pp gap to non-FSM eligible students, this is the largest gap over 6 years, and is higher than the sector average of 5.2pp. The 4-year average of 3.8pp is also lower than the sector average of 5.0pp.

Noting there are issues with being able to use FSM as an indicator for identifying students for ongoing intervention, we will continue to monitor our performance of FSM eligible students alongside the IMD Q1 students, who we have a target for. There is a large overlap between IMD Q1 and FSM eligible, and by targeting IMD Q1 we will work with a larger cohort of students.

### 13.2.2.    Mature students
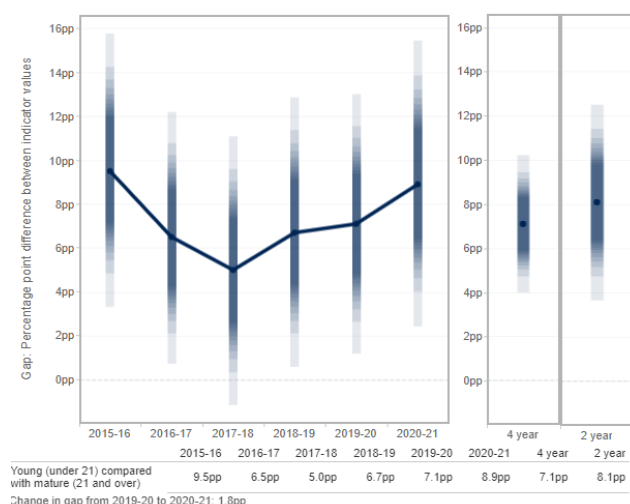


Figure 16 Continuation gap for young vs mature students

The continuation rate for mature students was 87.0% for 2020/21 entrants, and there is a 8.9pp gap to young entrants. The largest gap was for 2015/16 entrants. And the 4 year average gap is 7.1pp, which is better than the sector gap of 8.7pp.

Our entry cohort of mature students is small, and will be reducing as we close entry to Graduate Entry Medicine, which was the only course specifically aimed at graduate students. Mature students have access to all relevant support services. With a small, and diverse cohort of students across the breadth of our courses, we do not intend to specifically target an intervention.

### 13.2.3.    Ethnicity (other than black)
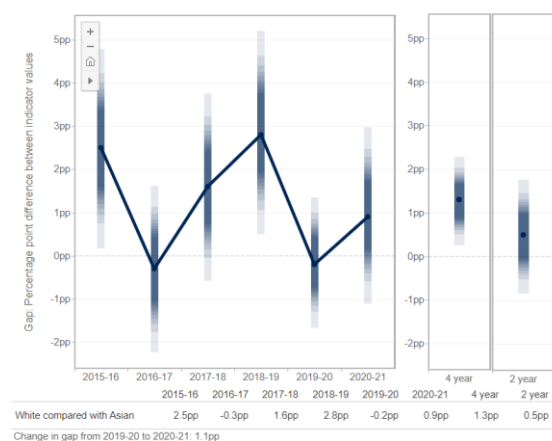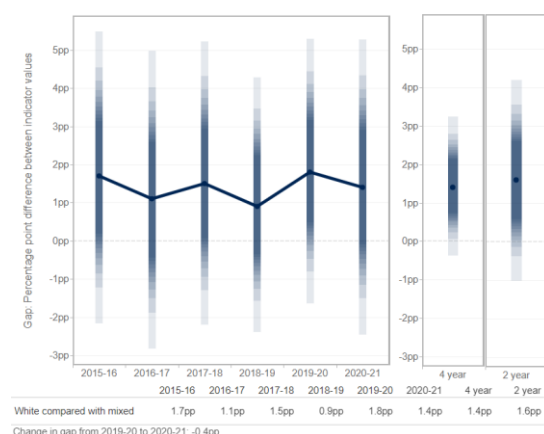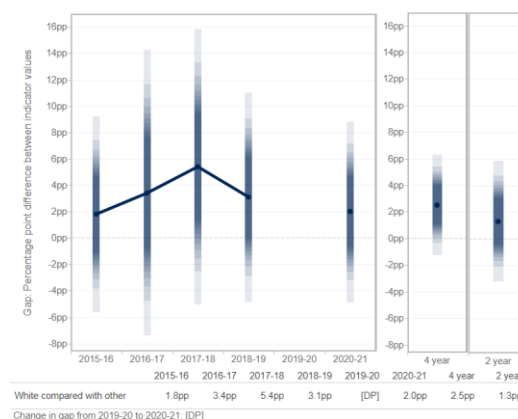




Figure 17 Continuation gaps for white vs various ethnicities



There are other, much smaller ethnicity continuation gaps, which are also less statistically significant because of the smaller groups of students. Latest data (2020/21 entrants shows a 0.9pp gap for Asian students, 1.4pp for mixed students and 2.0pp for other students, none of these are significant, unlike the gap for black students of 4.4pp. The data therefore suggests that there is no indication of risk to continuation for students based on their ethnicity alone.

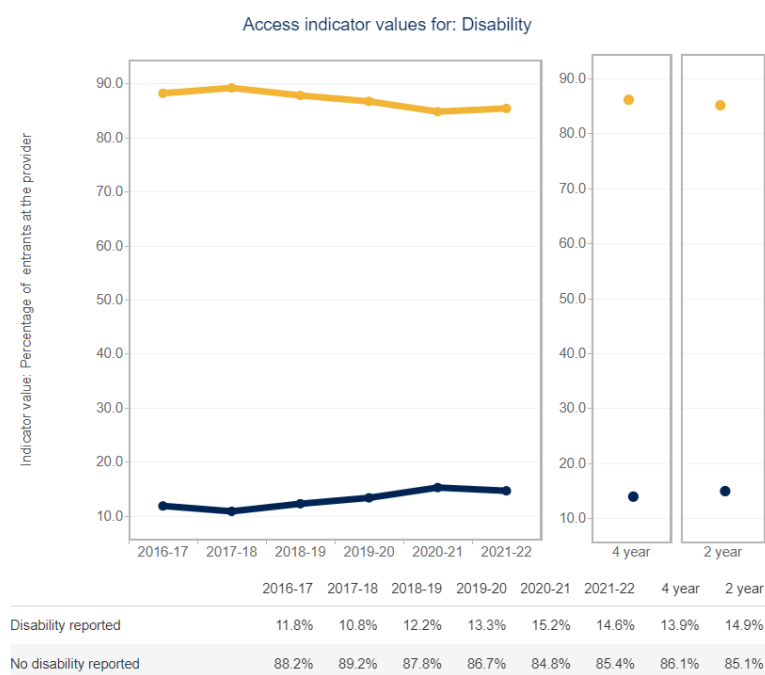### 13.2.4.    Students with a declared disability

The 4-year average shows that in 2020/21 there is a gap of 1.1pp, and that the trend over 6 years shows there is generally a gap, although in 2020/21 the gap has almost closed, and was 0.3pp in 2020/21. There is a gap of 3.9pp in the 4-year average between no disability and social or communication impairment, however the population is very small (130 over 4 years), and the gap is likely to be not statistically significant with only 2 years of data available. We will monitor this group,

and if there are greater numbers, and the gap appears to be statistically significant, then we would consider further action.



*Figure 18 Continuation gaps for non-disabled vs various specific disabilities.*
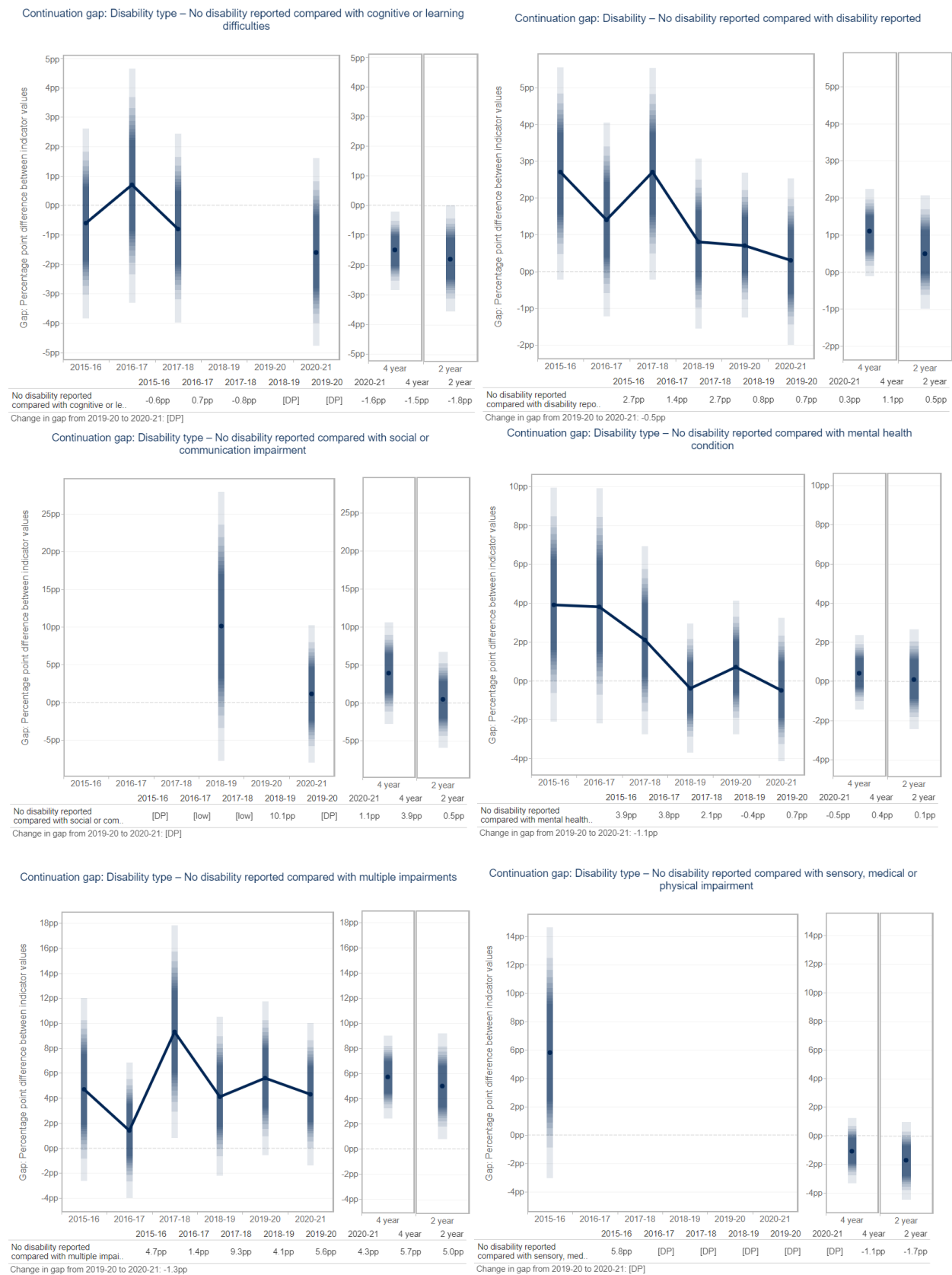
### 13.3. Student Lifecycle Stage: Attainment

#### 13.3.1. Student with Free School Meals

Attainment gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not eligible compared with eligible | 11.6pp | 15.9pp | 13.3pp | 6.5pp | 11.7pp | 13.1pp | 11.2pp | 12.5pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 1.4pp

*Figure 19 Awarding gap for FSM vs non-FSM students*

There is a persistent awarding gap for FSM students across the last six years. However, we can't put in place an intervention that uses FSM specifically because of the restrictions on the onward use of this data derived from DfE sources. Therefore, we will rely on the intersection of FSM and IMD Q1 and have identified IMD Q1 as an indication of risk for awarding.

#### 13.3.2. Mature students

Attainment gap: Age – Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over)



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Young (under 21) compared with mature (21 and over) | 9.2pp | 8.5pp | 12.3pp | 9.5pp | 14.0pp | 14.1pp | 12.5pp | 14.2pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 0.1pp
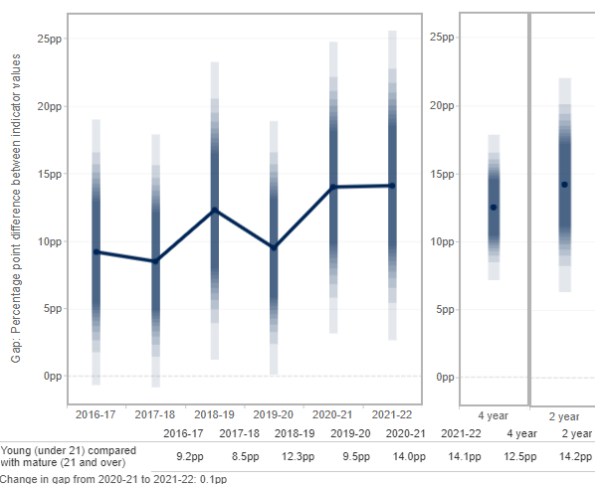
*Figure 20 Awarding gap for Young vs Mature students*

In the context of the University, the graduating cohort of mature students on courses that award classified degrees is quite small, with just 120 in the 2021/22 qualifying cohort. As the graduate medicine course is not included in this measure, it therefore means that this small cohort of mature students is distributed across all other subject areas. Mature students will have access to all the relevant support services that are available to other students. But with a small, and diverse cohort of students across the breadth of our courses, we do not intend to specifically target an intervention.

#### 13.3.3. Students with a declared disability

Attainment gap: Disability – No disability reported compared with disability reported



| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No disability reported compared with disability repo. | 1.3pp | 2.7pp | 4.3pp | 1.4pp | 1.3pp | 2.8pp | 2.6pp | 2.2pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 1.5pp
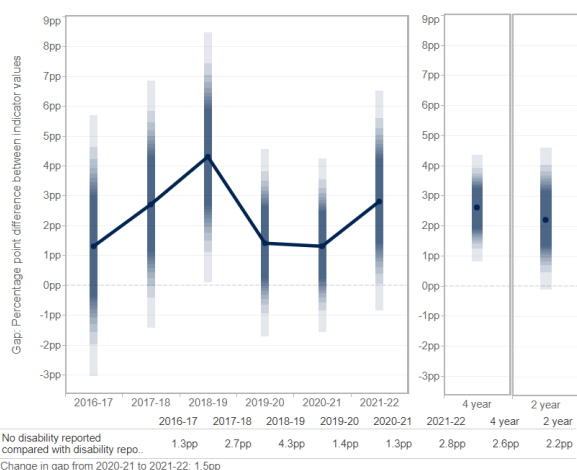
*Figure 21 Awarding gaps for non-disabled vs no disability.*

Awarding gaps for students with disabilities are exceptionally small, especially in comparison to those related to IMD or ethnicity where the gaps are over 10pp. The one exception is the gap between non-disabled and those with multiple impairments. As we note elsewhere, we believe that this will be combinations of impairment that include mental health.

We have described interventions that include support for mental health, and although we don't have a specific target, we will monitor awarding rates for those with reported mental health disabilities specifically.
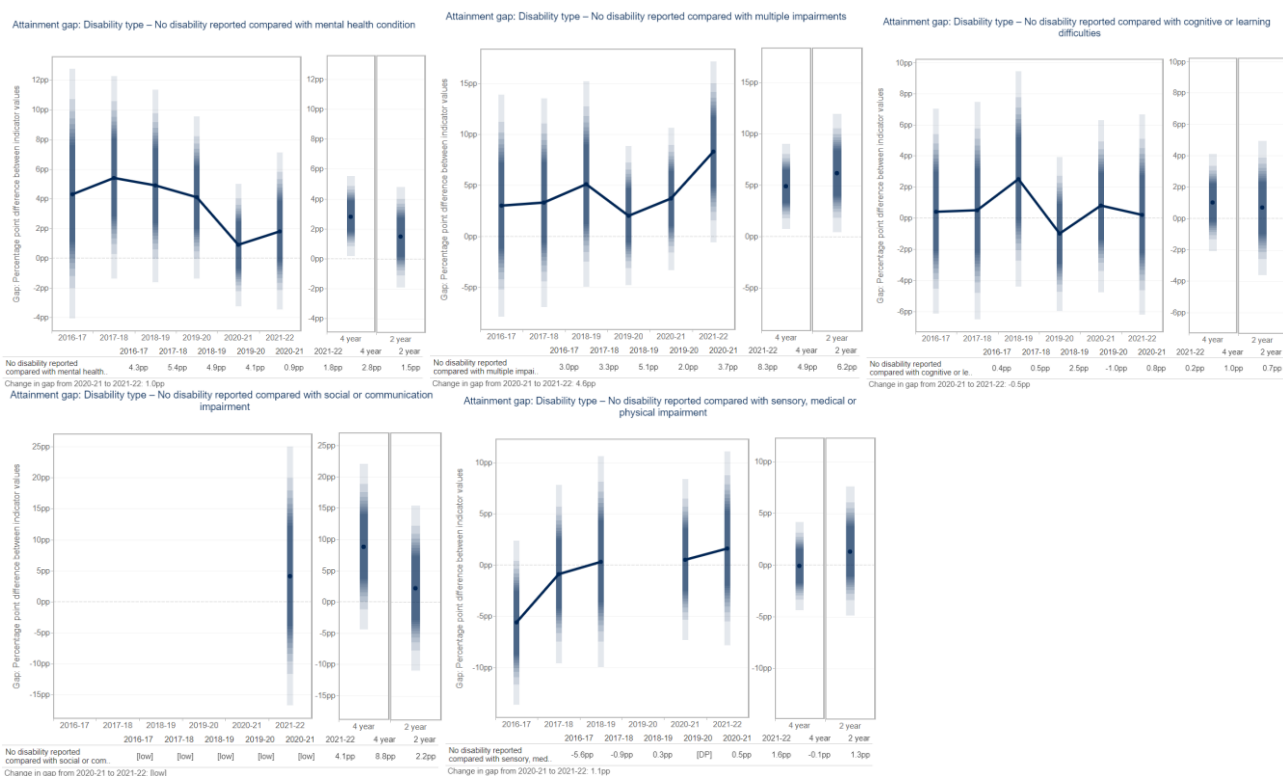
*Figure 22 Awarding gaps for non-disabled vs various specific disabilities.*

### 13.3.4. Intersection of Socioeconomic and Ethnicity
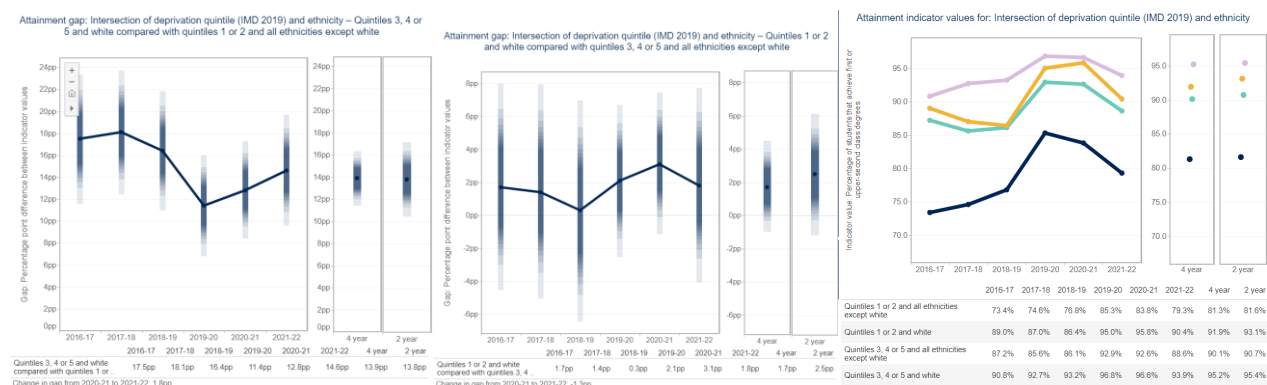


*Figure 23 Intersectional awarding rates (Ethnicity and IMD)*

As described above, there is a clear intersectional relationship between ethnicity and socioeconomic background, with gaps between the three groups where students have characteristics of either non-white ethnicity, or IMD Q1/2 compared to white students from IMD Q3/4/5. But with IMD Q1 and black students identified as specific risk indicators, the interventions that address these risks should have an impact on the awarding rates for ethnicities other than white too.

### 13.3.5. Ethnicity (other than Black)

**Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with Asian**



| White compared with Asian | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 10.9pp | 11.5pp | 9.7pp | 7.5pp | 7.4pp | 9.0pp | 8.4pp | 8.3pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 1.5pp

**Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with mixed**



| White compared with mixed | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 4.7pp | 9.3pp | 6.0pp | 3.7pp | 3.2pp | 2.8pp | 3.9pp | 3.0pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: -0.3pp

**Attainment gap: Ethnicity – White compared with other**



*Figure 24 Awarding rates for white vs various ethnicities.*

| White compared with other | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 12.9pp | 6.6pp | 18.4pp | 6.6pp | 4.0pp | 6.4pp | 8.2pp | 5.0pp |

Change in gap from 2020-21 to 2021-22: 2.4pp

There are gaps in awarding rates between white students and other ethnicities as the figures above show. However, the awarding rates gaps are not as big as for black students, which has been identified as a specific indication of risk. The section below shows the intersectional relationship between ethnicity and socioeconomic background. This shows that there is a relationship between these two characteristics. Therefore, through the identification of IMD Q1 and black students as a specific risk indicators, the interventions that address these risks should have an impact on the awarding rates for ethnicities other than white too.

## 13.4. Student Lifecycle Stage: Progression

### 13.4.1. Students on Free School Meals (FSM)

**Progression gap: Eligibility for free school meals (at key stage 4) – Not eligible compared with eligible**
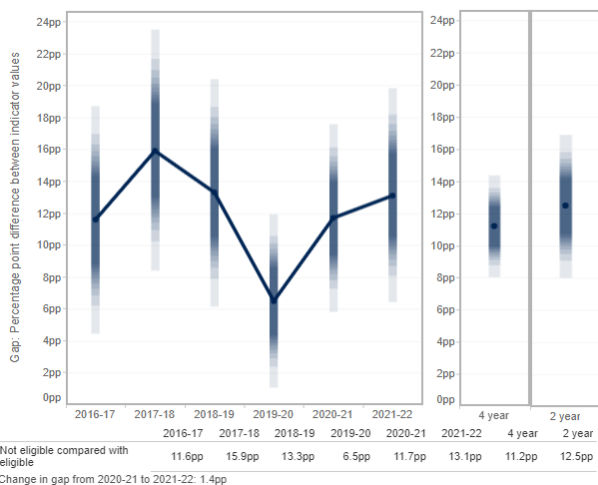


| Not eligible compared with eligible | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 4 year | 2 year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2.8pp | 6.1pp | 9.5pp | 2.9pp | 5.5pp | 6.4pp |

Change in gap from 2019-20 to 2020-21: -6.6pp
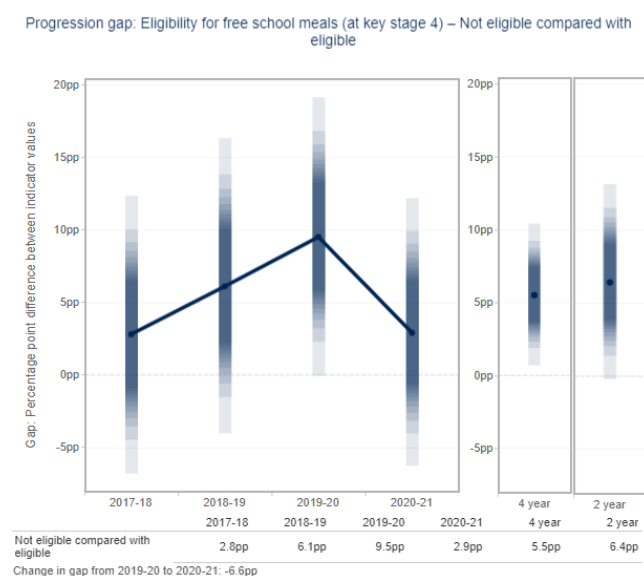
*Figure 25 Progression gap FSM vs non-FSM*

There is a small and persistent progression gap for FSM students, although in any specific year it isn't that statistically significant. The 4-year average shows the gap as 5.5pp. However, we can't put in place an intervention that uses FSM specifically because of the restrictions on the onward use of this data derived from DfE sources. Therefore, we will rely on the intersection of FSM and IMD Q1 and have identified IMD Q1 as an indication of risk for awarding.

### 13.4.2. Students with a declared disability
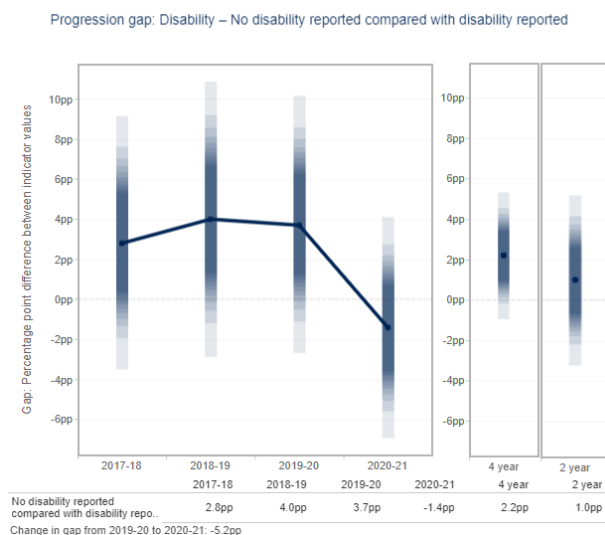


Figure 26 Progression gap disability vs no disability.

There has been a small gap over the last four years, but in the most recent data there is a gap of -1.4pp with a relatively wide statistical significance. The 4-year average shows a small gap of 2.2pp, while the more recent 2-year average is just 1.0pp is likely to be statistically insignificant. Therefore, disability isn't identified as a risk indicator for lower progression rates.

### 13.4.3. Ethnicity
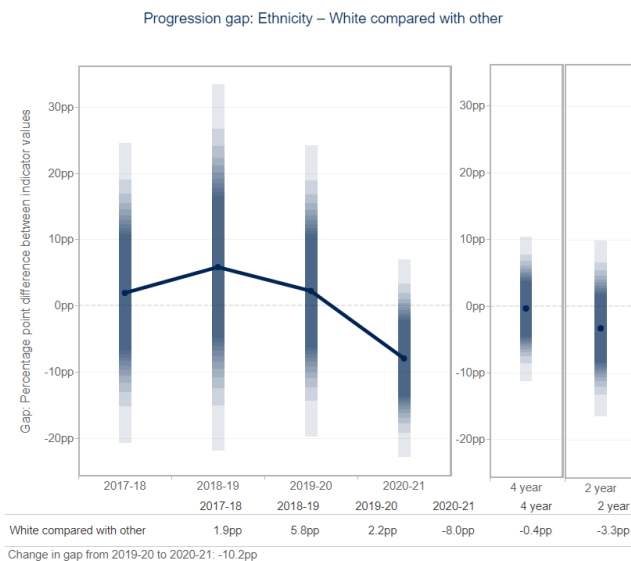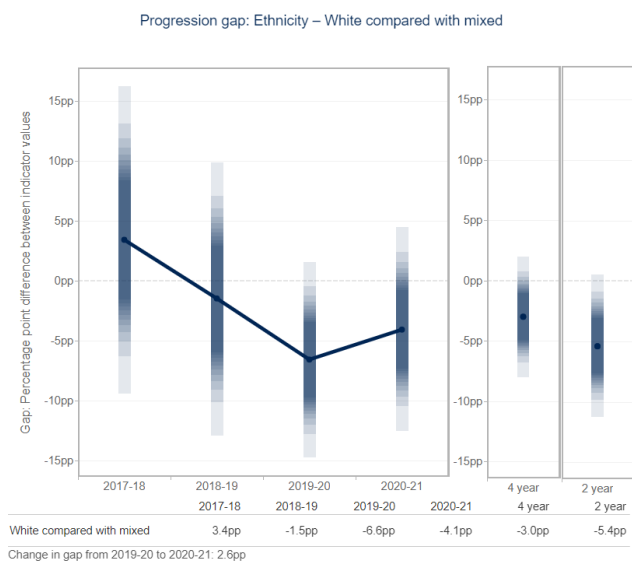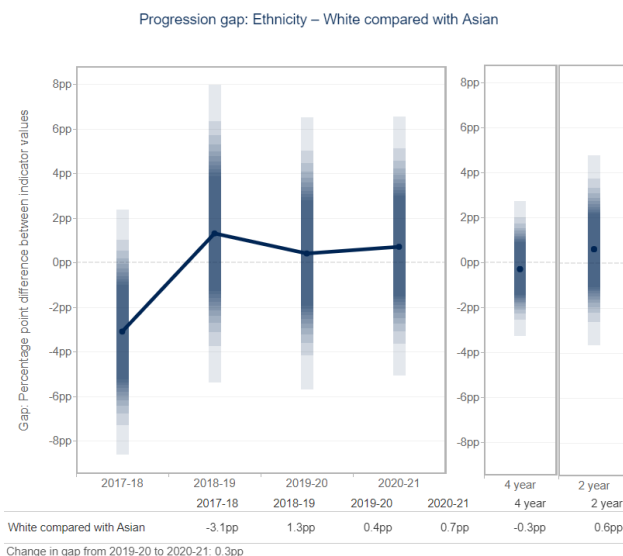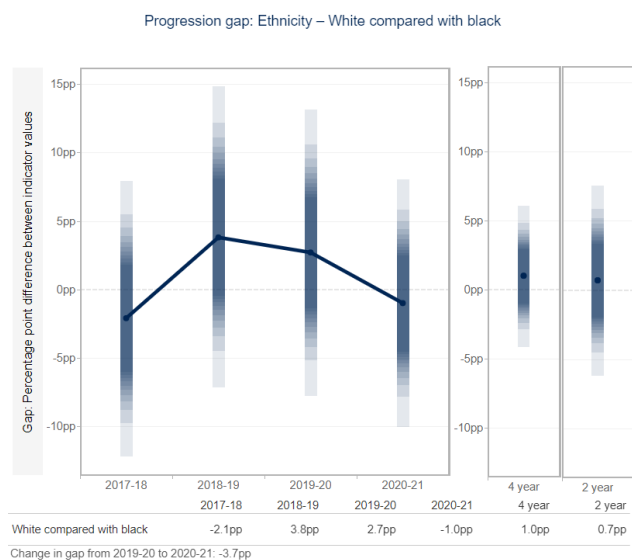








Figure 27 Progression gaps for white vs various ethnicities.

There are no gaps in progression for the different ethnicities when compared to white progression, and in some cases there are negative gaps such as the 4-year average for white vs mixed ethnicity of -3.0pp. There is therefore no identified risk to progression based on ethnicity. We will however monitor progression gaps to ensure that no gap emerges in the future.

# 14. Indicators of risk

*Table 3 Summary of Indication of Risks*

| Risk No | Indication of Risk | Student Characteristics | Lifecycle |
|---|---|---|---|
| PTA_1 | In 2021/22 there were 13.6% of students entering the University eligible for free school meals. | Eligible to Free School Meals | Access |
| PTA_2 | In 2023/24 there were 14 care leavers (as declared through UCAS) entering the University. | Care leavers | Access |
| PTA_3 | In 2023/24 the proportion of Pathways to Birmingham entrants was 10.3%. | "Pathways to Birmingham" entrants | Access |
| PTS_1 | In 2020/21 the continuation gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 was 5.6pp. | Socioeconomic - IMD Q1 | Success - Continuation |
| PTS_2 | In 2020/21 the continuation gap between black students and white students was 4.4pp. | Ethnicity - Black | Success - Continuation |
| PTS_3 | In 2021/22 the awarding gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 was 11.9pp | Socioeconomic - IMD Q1 | Success - Attainment |
| PTS_4 | In 2021/22 the awarding gap between black students and white students was 17.3pp | Ethnicity - Black | Success - Attainment |
| PTP_1 | In 2021/22 the progression gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 was 4.2pp. | Socioeconomic - IMD Q1 | Progression |

# 15. Student Group Definitions

## 15.1. Eligibility Requirements for Pathways to Birmingham (P2B)

P2B uses a basket of indicators to identify disadvantage. All applicants attend a partner school for their Key Stage 5 study and have attended a non-selective state-funded school at Key Stage 4. Applicants who have experience of public care are not required to meet any further criteria. All other applicants are required to meet at least three other criteria of disadvantage. The additional criteria include FSM eligibility, living in a low participation area measured by POLAR/TUNDRA, no parent/carer experience of higher education, low household income, below average school attainment for KS4 or KS5, disability and in receipt of a PIP, estranged from parents or guardians, young carer status or those facing other extenuating circumstances.

[See: https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/pathways-to-birmingham/eligibility-criteria ]

# Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan.

We have adopted the approach of embedding the evidence base and literature throughout our APP. What follows are the references cited.

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# Fees, investments and targets
## 2025-26 to 2028-29

**Provider name: The University of Birmingham**

**Provider UKPRN: 10006840**

### Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

**Inflation statement:**

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

**Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants**

| Full-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | | N/A | 9250 |
| Foundation degree | | N/A | 9250 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | | N/A | 9250 |
| HNC/HND | * | N/A | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | N/A | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | | N/A | 9250 |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | | N/A | 1850 |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | | N/A | 1385 |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26**

| Sub-contractual full-time course type: | Sub-contractual provider name and additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * | * |
| HNC/HND | * | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

**Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants**

| Part-time course type: | Additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | N/A | * |
| Foundation degree | Professional Golf Studies FdSc | N/A | 4750 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | N/A | * |
| HNC/HND | * | N/A | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | Food Safety (Chemical Engineering) | N/A | 4625 |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | N/A | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | N/A | * |
| Sandwich year | * | N/A | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | N/A | * |
| Other | * | N/A | * |

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26**

| Sub-contractual part-time course type: | Sub-contractual provider name and additional information: | Sub-contractual UKPRN: | Course fee: |
|---|---|---|---|
| First degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * | * |
| HNC/HND | * | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * | * |
| Turing Scheme and overseas study years | * | * | * |
| Other | * | * | * |

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

**Provider name: The University of Birmingham**

**Provider UKPRN: 10006840**

### Investment summary

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

**Notes about the data:**

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

**Table 6b - Investment summary**

| Access and participation plan investment summary (£) | Breakdown | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access activity investment (£) | NA | £2,472,000 | £2,558,000 | £2,649,000 | £2,745,000 |
| Financial support (£) | NA | £10,351,000 | £10,487,000 | £10,288,000 | £10,161,000 |
| Research and evaluation (£) | NA | £684,000 | £718,000 | £754,000 | £792,000 |

**Table 6d - Investment estimates**

| Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000) | Breakdown | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access activity investment | Pre-16 access activities (£) | £648,000 | £667,000 | £687,000 | £709,000 |
| Access activity investment | Post-16 access activities (£) | £1,824,000 | £1,891,000 | £1,962,000 | £2,036,000 |
| Access activity investment | Other access activities (£) | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 |
| **Access activity investment** | **Total access investment (£)** | **£2,472,000** | **£2,558,000** | **£2,649,000** | **£2,745,000** |
| **Access activity investment** | *Total access investment (as % of HFI)* | 4.5% | 4.5% | 4.5% | 4.6% |
| **Access activity investment** | *Total access investment funded from HFI (£)* | £1,938,000 | £2,005,000 | £2,076,000 | £2,150,000 |
| **Access activity investment** | *Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)* | £534,000 | £553,000 | £573,000 | £595,000 |
| Financial support investment | Bursaries and scholarships (£) | £10,091,000 | £10,227,000 | £10,028,000 | £9,901,000 |
| Financial support investment | Fee waivers (£) | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 |
| Financial support investment | Hardship funds (£) | £260,000 | £260,000 | £260,000 | £260,000 |
| **Financial support investment** | **Total financial support investment (£)** | **£10,351,000** | **£10,487,000** | **£10,288,000** | **£10,161,000** |
| **Financial support investment** | *Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)* | 18.8% | 18.6% | 17.6% | 17.0% |
| Research and evaluation investment | Research and evaluation investment (£) | £684,000 | £718,000 | £754,000 | £792,000 |
| Research and evaluation investment | *Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)* | 1.2% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.3% |

# Fees, investments and targets

## 2025-26 to 2028-29

**Provider name: The University of Birmingham**

**Provider UKPRN: 10006840**

## Targets

### Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

| Aim [500 characters maximum] | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase the proportion of students entering the University who are eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4 | PTA_1 | Access | Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) | Eligible | | To increase the proportion of entrants who are eligible for Free School Meals. Baseline 23/24. Internal data, based on FSM information disclosed by applicants during application process and used for making in-cycle admissions decisions. | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Increase the number of care leavers entering as undergraduate students | PTA_2 | Access | Care experienced students | Care experienced students | | To more than double the number of care experienced students. Based on internally held data, baseline year 23/24 entrants. | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | Other (please include details in commentary) | Headcount | 14 | 20 | 23 | 26 | 30 |
| Maintain the proportion of Pathways to Birmingham students | PTA_3 | Access | Other | Other (please specify in description) | | In the context of increased UG entrants, to maintain the proportion of Pathways to Birmingham students. Using internally held data, baseline year 23/24 | No | Other data source (please include details in commentary) | Other (please include details in commentary) | Percentage | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| | PTA_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

### Table 5d: Success targets

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Eliminate the continuation gap for students from IMD Q1 | PTS_1 | Continuation | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 5.6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Eliminate the continuation gap for black students | PTS_2 | Continuation | Ethnicity | Black | White | | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 4.4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Close the awarding gap for students from IMD Q1 | PTS_3 | Attainment | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 11.9 | 11 | 9.5 | 8 | 6 |
| Close the awarding gap for black students | PTS_4 | Attainment | Ethnicity | Black | White | | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 17.3 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 8.7 |
| | PTS_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTS_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

### Table 5e: Progression targets

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Lifecycle stage | Characteristic | Target group | Comparator group | Description and commentary [500 characters maximum] | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Units | Baseline data | 2025-26 milestone | 2026-27 milestone | 2027-28 milestone | 2028-29 milestone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Close the progression to employment and further study gap for students from IMD Q1 | PTP_1 | Progression | Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD]) | IMD quintile 1 | IMD quintile 5 | | No | The access and participation dashboard | 2020-21 | Percentage points | 6 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| | PTP_2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | PTP_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTP_12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |