

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

INTRODUCTION-SETTING THE CONTEXT

Staffordshire University, established in 1914, set out to be a modern, relevant and vocationally-inspired institution, working with local industry to support regional economic growth and provide opportunities for the people of Staffordshire. We have built on this strong heritage in our new Strategic Plan. Approved in 2016/17, the "Connected University" strategy continues to put students first, focusing on high quality and relevant courses and excellent learning and teaching.

The three Strategic Aims in the University's Strategy are embedded in our Access and Participation Plan and all other key strategic documents. We aim to:

- develop **Connected Communities** – providing inspirational environments bringing communities together;
- facilitate **Innovative and Applied Learning** – delivering research and teaching that is integrated and applied, delivering real world learning in a global context;
- support **Talented People** – by being creative, innovative and inclusive; empowering people to be the very best.

In recognition of the unique and challenging context in which we operate, we have developed an ambitious long-term strategy, which extends beyond the time horizon of the current Strategic Plan and towards delivering our 2030 Vision (approved by the Board of Governors in February 2019). The communities the University both serves, and works in partnership with, face established and fundamental socio-economic challenges affecting life chances, including access to Higher Education, student success and progression from University.

Based in Stoke-on-Trent - with Centres of Excellence in Stafford and Shrewsbury, a base in Lichfield and the recently established Digital Institute London - 28% of our students are drawn from the local Stoke-on-Trent area. 30.2% of neighbourhoods in Stoke-on-Trent are classed in the most deprived 10% of neighborhoods nationally, placing the local authority 14th overall in the index of Multiple Deprivation¹. Our students² have well-established and distinctive characteristics:

- **Commuter Students:** The majority of our students (59.1% full-time) commute to the University, which presents a range of recognised challenges that the University is actively addressing
- **Low Participation:** 48.8% of all student groups covered by this plan are drawn from POLAR4 Quintile 1 & 2, including 51.26% of full-time students and 42.69% of our part-time students. A significant number are from the most deprived groups as measured by the Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDAC) index. 24.51% of our students are from Quintile 1 of the index.
- **Mature students:** 50.5% of all student groups covered by this plan are classified as mature on entry, including 35.1% of full-time (compared to 21% nationally) and 88.8% of part-time students (89% nationally).
- **Multiple deprivation:** 44.80% of students fall within IMD Quintile 1 (25.85%) and Quintile 2 (18.95%). 49.30% of full-time and 33.54% of part-time students fall within IMD quintiles 1 and 2.

¹ 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-indices-of-deprivation>

² The students referenced in this document are those 'qualifying students' as defined by Regulation 5 of the Student Fees (Qualifying Courses and Persons) (England) Regulations 2007, amended in particular by The Student Fees (Qualifying Courses and Persons) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

- **TBlack Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME):**

17% of all student groups covered by this plan are from a BAME background, including 19% of full-time students (compared to 21.8% nationally) and 12.2% part-time students (13.9% nationally). Breakdown provided in the *(see table 1 right)*.

Ethnicity	Full Time	Part Time	Overall
Asian	8.34%	5.27%	7.44%
Black	6.46%	2.63%	5.34%
Mixed	3.62%	2.98%	3.43%
Other	0.56%	1.33%	0.78%
Unknown	3.11%	1.35%	2.60%
White	77.91%	86.43%	80.39%

- **Disabled students:** 15.9% of all student groups covered by this plan have a declared disability, including 19% of full-time students (compared to 13.4% nationally) and 8.3% part-time students (19.3% nationally). Only 40% are currently registered for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), a trend that is being actively reviewed. 3.45% of our students have a declared mental health impairment or medical condition, a group of students we proactively support.
- **Care leavers:** 0.6% of full-time students are care leavers.

Building on our **Student Journey Project** we have reviewed and developed our infrastructure to support students throughout their lifecycle. This project covered from outreach and recruitment through transition to university, retention, supporting academic success to the development of wider employability attributes that lead to employment or further study. Interventions have been designed to make improvements for all students with bespoke journeys created for the wide range of students we teach.

One of the key mechanisms that affects positively the academic performance of students entering higher education with non-traditional qualifications (BAME and Mature), and/or returning to education as mature learners, are our courses with Foundation Years delivered either by the University or jointly with our educational partners. We have 394 students undertaking these courses.

We have remained active in the position of part-time higher education, despite the funding disparities that have caused other providers to reduce their part-time provision. We are proud we have been an early proponent of fast-track (accelerated) degree programmes and we are embracing the opportunities supported by the Apprenticeship Levy to develop a wide range of higher and degree apprenticeships, working with local and national employers.

A number of our Schools support learners from the Ministry of Defence, studying part-time to enhance both their military careers and re-training after discharge or retirement. This group of students have unique characteristics with many having significant professional qualifications and with our wrap-around support these students have high retention rates (91% (3-year average)) and high achievement rates (91% (3-year average)). These courses attract high numbers of male students, which affects the demographic profile of our part-time undergraduate courses, and this is the only part of our offer where female students are under-represented.

Significant progress has been made in relation to student employability. Personal and professional development is embedded in all our courses. Our Graduate Attributes are evidenced and written into our **Connected Curriculum** to support students to evidence and develop transferable skills. Building on this success we are developing the Staffordshire Award to ensure that all of our students have the opportunity to develop a broader range of skills and experience irrespective of their courses.

As the Connected University, at the core of the Award is the development of digital skills

– the vertical blue blocks in the Award Framework.

The achievements of students in relation to these digital pillars will be recognised through Microsoft Digital Badging. Microsoft is just one of the employers with whom we collaborate to support the development of our curriculum, placement opportunities and the Staffordshire Award.

Our relationships with NHS trusts have also created new employment opportunities. In response to difficulties experienced

by one of our NHS Trusts (Shropshire and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust) and our reputation for teaching quality, students who perform well during practice learning placements are now given a golden ticket, which is a guaranteed offer of a graduate nursing role upon graduation from the University.



We have continued to deliver and develop two annual events when we showcase the work, skills and experience of our graduates to employers. These are GradEx - the annual final-year student exhibition which has taken place for 20 years - and our Arts Degree Show. Its focus has been on promoting the work and skills of our computing, engineering and arts students, with those in the involved departments increasing their graduate prospects by between 8% and 45%. As a result of this success, this approach is being expanded to cover all disciplines from summer 2019 onwards.

This work has already resulted in improved and good graduate outcomes. Our Graduate Prospects for full-time students have increased by 1.4% to 81.5% for 2016/17 graduates, compared to the HESA benchmark of 74.5%. Whilst our Employment Performance Indicator has reduced from 97.5% to 95.5%, we are still placed 1.3% above the HESA benchmark. Owing to their careers and the regional wage economy, our graduates do not earn as much as their contemporaries, but they do benefit from sustained employment, three and five years after graduation. In terms of sustained employment, we are ranked 20th and 35th nationally for female and male graduates respectively in the latest LEO dataset for five years after graduation with graduates in Computer Sciences, Engineering, the Arts and Education performing very well. Our subject mix means that we prepare a significant proportion of our students for socially valuable but lower paid roles, for example in the fields of health and education. We believe that these outcomes are good given the relatively small number of graduate-level jobs in the regional economy: -15% below the national average in Stoke-On-Trent and -10% across the geographical area of our Local Enterprise Partnership. Our reviewing of the success rates in relation to progression to employment (in section 1 below) has not identified any performance gaps that required additional strategic interventions over the period of this Plan. We shall, of course, continue to develop our infrastructure and support mechanisms (as described in section 3) and continuously evaluate performance profiles for all groups of students.

In preparing our plan, we have undertaken detailed analysis (see section 1) of datasets and reports we use routinely, and the new rich sector resource provided by the OfS. The latter has enabled us to undertake more sophisticated analysis to benchmark our performance in relation to specific groups of students with the sector, and to identify universities that have successfully addressed challenges we will be tackling over the next five years, using TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education) and other sector resources/case studies.

This document is focused on the key strategic actions the University will be delivering over the next five years whilst we also continue to deliver a full range of interventions and learning and teaching approaches to support all students.

We are fully committed to ensuring that we meet the Key National Performance Measures set by OfS. Of the three that relate to us we already exceed the target in one and have already undertaken preparatory work to address the other two. This is detailed in the next section.

1. ASSESSMENT AND PERFORMANCE

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

We are proud of our sustained track record of raising aspirations and attracting students from vulnerable groups with no prior experience of higher education. We have achieved our targets (based on the base-line year of 2013/14³) in this area. The most recent sector data shows that we attract successfully:

- State School students (98.9%): +2.3% above benchmark in HESA performance indicators (T1) 2016/17-2017/18.
- Applicants with no previous experience of HE and from low participation neighbourhoods in 2016/17-2017/18 (17.1%): +1.3% above UK sector average & +10.6%⁴ above benchmark for students from low participation neighbourhoods in HESA performance indicators (T1) 2016/17-2017/18.
- The percentage of 18-year-old students from Deprivation Quintile 1 has increased from 21.8% in 15/16 to 25.8% in 17/18⁵
- 82.3% of black new entrants in 18/19 came from IMD deprivation 1 and 2, compared to 55% of the overall university new entrant population.

We achieve success in this area as a result of building resilience in our students, with the established wide-ranging and co-ordinated work we do drawing staff from across our University (staff, students and educational partner schools and colleges) and other HE partners, working in vulnerable communities where participation rates to Higher Education are low. Crucial to success here is the work we do with NCOP Higher Horizons+ and the Stoke Opportunity Area.

Student Success: Continuation

Given our complex student demographics, with wide-ranging socioeconomic and cultural barriers, we use as standard in our reports Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) as a key measure. This is evaluated alongside other characteristics to identify intersections of disadvantage. Continuation rates have improved across all IMD quintiles from 2015/16 to 2016/17. IMD quintiles 2-4 have seen the highest increases (+4.60%, + 1.80%, +4.00% respectively), whilst IMD quintile 1 (the most vulnerable and challenged group) has increased by +0.30% and quintile 5 (the least vulnerable group) by +0.80%. As is the case across the sector, there is a persistent continuation rate gap between IMD quintiles 1 and 5: in 2016/17 -7.5% compared to -7.9% across the sector. Since 2012/13 the gaps were -6.1% and 6.3% respectively.

Priority 1: Reduce the continuation rate gap between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5.

The OfS' National Key Performance Measure relates to POLAR4 rather than IMD: Reducing the gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 quintiles 5 and 1

³ Used for our previous OFFA agreements and Access and Participation Plan.

⁴ Access and Participation Dashboard- Staffordshire University: Quintile 1 proportion of 18 year olds- <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

⁵ Internal analysis of New Entrants data based on total APP accountable population

respectively. OfS' ambition for the section is to eliminate the absolute gap (the gap caused by structural and unexplained factors) by 2030. We are fully committed to addressing this challenge.

Currently the continuation rate gap between POLAR4 quintile 1 and 5 is -3.4%, compared to the sector -5%. However, the gap has widened since 2012/13 when it was -1.5% and we have seen fluctuating performance profile with different cohort groups, with our best year being 2014/15 (*see table 2 right*).

PROVIDER_NAME Category %	SECTOR					Staffordshire University				
	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
POLAR4Q1	90.4	90.0	89.4	89.3	89.2	89.6	83.0	87.2	83.8	85.5
POLAR4Q2	91.8	91.3	91.0	90.8	90.9	87.4	87.1	85.8	85.3	91.7
POLAR4Q3	92.6	92.4	92.0	91.5	91.7	90.6	87.0	87.2	85.3	91.1
POLAR4Q4	93.1	93.1	92.4	92.2	92.3	90.2	89.0	86.7	86.9	92.7
POLAR4Q5	94.6	94.6	94.2	94.2	94.2	91.1	87.5	84.5	91.5	88.9

Priority 2: Reduce the continuation rate gap between POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 5 by 2025.

Student Success: Attainment

In recent year we have been successfully closing the attainment gap between students from quintiles 1 and 5 with indices of multiple deprivation (*see table 3 below*). The gap in 2017/18 was -16.4%, when 62.2% of students from IMD quintile 1 achieved a First-Class degree or a 2:1. This compared to sector attainment gap of -18%.

Through the work we have been undertaking as part of our Student Journey Project, with changes to curricula and academic support arrangements, we have been improving our degree outcomes overall and for all groups with the exception of student from IMD quintile 3 where rates have remained static. We will conduct a detailed evaluation of this group, including an evaluation of difference associated with subject mix and assessment strategies. Whilst we have not included as a priority action in section 2 below, we will continue to seek to close the gap between quintile 1 and 5. Improving attainment rates for all students is a priority for which we have a University KPI to ensure that our students realise fully their potential at a level equivalent to the higher education sector overall.

PROVIDER_NAME Category %	SECTOR					Staffordshire University				
	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
IMDQ1	62.0	62.8	63.8	65.9	67.1	59.5	52.0	57.9	56.5	62.2
IMDQ2	68.6	69.5	70.7	72.1	73.5	59.5	65.8	56.4	68.7	69.2
IMDQ3	74.4	75.7	76.3	78.0	78.9	70.0	67.2	65.1	67.6	67.7
IMDQ4	77.5	79.0	80.1	81.4	82.4	66.2	68.2	70.5	66.2	74.5
IMDQ5	80.0	81.9	82.9	84.2	85.1	66.8	76.4	69.3	74.3	78.6

The Polar 4 data shows that students from lower quintiles have a performance gap but unlike the IMD performance gap, students from Polar 1-3 all have a similar performance gap (*see table 4 right*). This shows that while

PROVIDER_NAME Category %	SECTOR					Staffordshire University				
	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
POLAR4Q1	69.4	70.8	72.1	73.1	74.6	64.8	62.0	64.6	63.4	71.3
POLAR4Q2	73.0	73.6	74.9	76.7	77.6	62.7	63.2	61.2	61.3	69.0
POLAR4Q3	73.8	75.4	76.7	78.1	79.0	65.8	71.0	64.1	70.2	69.9
POLAR4Q4	75.0	76.5	77.4	79.3	80.0	67.0	68.1	63.7	71.0	75.7
POLAR4Q5	79.4	81.3	81.7	83.4	84.1	64.2	72.5	73.0	69.2	78.4

students from low participation neighbourhoods are less likely to achieve a good degree, this is further impacted by other factors, therefore we feel it is more appropriate to focus on the IMD quintile 1 vs 5 gap.

Priority 3a: Reduce the IMD attainment gap between IMD quintiles 1 and 5 by 2025.

Priority 3b: Remove the POLAR4 attainment gap between POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 5 by 2025.

Progression to employment or further study

As an institution we have run various initiatives to support students to progress into highly skilled employment or further study. This has led to a significant improvement in the outcomes of all students: improving from 57.1% in 2013/14 to 81.3% in 2016/17, with a rate of improvement better than the sector. Our progression rates are 8.3% above the sector average. We have closed the gap between Polar4 Quintile 1 and 5 from 7.5% in 2014/15 to 3.7% in 2016/17. Student with multiple indices of deprivation also outperform the sector, however in the last year the gap between quintiles 1 and 5 has increased from 1.8% to 8.7%. Through our Connected Curriculum we are seeking to continuously enhance the social capital of our most disadvantaged students through work-based learning, projects and placements.

Priority 4: Close the progression to graduate employment gap between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5. N.B our target is based on Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education data. This target will be revisited when the new sector dataset is available.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

We have increased the participation rates of the following groups of students from the most deprived backgrounds (POLAR quintile 1) students over the period 2015/16-2018/19:

- Asian students – 48% in 2015/16 to 55% in 2018/19
- Black students – 57% in 2015/16 to 63% in 2018/19
- The percentage of students from mixed race and other groups has increased over the same period but the numbers are small: 33% in 2015/16 to 41% in 2018/19 and 41% in 2015/16 to 48% in 2018/19, respectively.
- A disproportionate number of Black students (24%) study Nursing and Midwifery subjects, compared to other ethnicities (10.5%).
- A disproportionate number of Asian students (17.2%) study Business subjects compared to other ethnicities (4.8%)

Despite this success, we recognise significant challenges remain to increase the overall numbers and proportion of students (all POLAR 5 quintiles) from BAME, mixed race and other backgrounds to bring us closer to the sector profile.

PROVIDER_NAME Category %	SECTOR					Staffordshire University				
	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Asian	11.9	12.5	12.9	13.3	13.7	8.1	8.5	7.8	7.3	6.6
Black	8.6	9.8	10.2	10.4	10.5	8.1	7.9	7.2	7.3	6.6
Mixed	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.8	3.5	3.4	3.6	4.2	3.5
Other	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.2	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9

Our profile in 2017/18 demonstrates the scale of the challenge (*see table 5 above*)

- Asian students – 6.6% compared to the sector average of 13.17%
- Black Students – 6.6% compared to the sector average of 10.5%
- Mixed race students – 3.5% compared to the sector average of 4.8%

Our ambition to increase numbers of Black students is less driven by the need to better reflect the communities with whom we work and serve, because we have higher participation rates of Black students (6.6%) than the local and regional population averages: 2% Stoke, 1% (Staffordshire) and 3% (West Midlands).⁶ Our motivation is based on educational research, pointing to a correlation between the number of BAME students in higher education cohorts and their attainment levels, so that we can close our BAME attainment gaps. Our own data analysis has confirmed this theory.

⁶ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?opt=3&theme=&subgrp=>

Priority 5: Increase participation rates of Black and Asian students studying at the University to ensure that by 2024/25 participation rates at least match the percentages of those groups regionally.

Student Success: Continuation

We are making good progress improving continuation rates of our BAME students, although our rates are still below the sector. However, we believe the work we have done in relation to targeted spiral induction, timetabling⁷ (as many are commuter students) and academic support means that we are on an improving trajectory.

The sector BAME continuation gap has increased from 2.80% to 3.20% from 2015/16 to 2016/17, during the same time we closed the gap from 7.60% to 4.00% from 2015/16 to 2016/17, with Black students' rates declining by 0.3% but this percentage change is skewed by the small numbers in this group.

Priority 6: Reduce the continuation rates between black and white students.

Student Success: Attainment

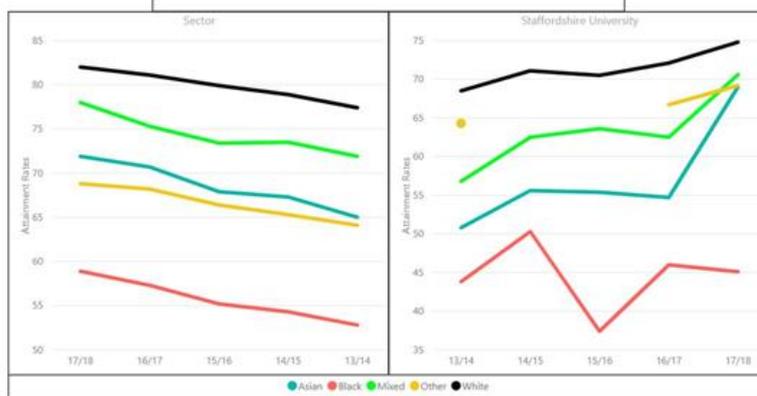
The attainment gap for BAME students is 15%, compared to 13.2% nationally. Our BAME attainment gap has improved from a high of 20% in 2015/16 to 15% in 17/18 and this has been down to steady improvements within certain ethnic groups (*see table 6 below*):

- Asian student outcomes improved from 50.8% in 2013/14 to 69% in 2017/18
- Mixed student outcomes improved from 56.8% in 13/14 to 70.6% in 2017/18

Overall Black student attainment has remained static at 45% with an attainment gap of 30% compared to White students.

- We have a disproportionate number of Black students in our Nursing and Midwifery courses which have lower attainment rates than the University average. However, even in in this School there is a Black/White attainment gap of 19%.
- Other courses, where the numbers of Black students are smaller (and therefore they represent a smaller proportion of the cohorts) have bigger attainment gaps: e.g. Computer science 20%, Psychology 29%, Biosciences 38%.

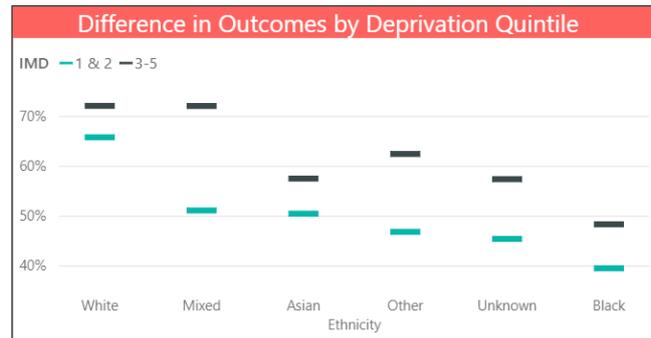
PROVIDER_NAME	SECTOR	Staffordshire University									
Category %		13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Asian		65.0	67.3	67.9	70.7	71.9	50.8	55.6	55.4	54.7	69.0
Black		52.8	54.3	55.2	57.3	58.9	43.8	50.3	37.4	46.0	45.1
Mixed		71.9	73.5	73.4	75.3	78.0	56.8	62.5	63.6	62.5	70.6
Other		64.1	65.3	66.4	68.2	68.8	64.3			66.7	69.2
White		77.4	78.9	79.9	81.1	82.0	68.5	71.1	70.5	72.1	74.8



⁷ See section 3 below.

Reviewing outcomes for students from different ethnic backgrounds and deprivation quintiles we found that Black students from all backgrounds (either Q1 & 2 or 3-5) have lower outcomes than all other students (see table left), but that there is clearly an interplay between both cultural and socio-economic factors because:

- Black students from IMD Quintiles 1 & 2 have significantly lower outcomes than all other students from that category: 39.3% compared to 66.31%.
- The attainment gap for Black students between IMD Quintiles 1 & 2 and 3-5 have an attainment gap of 27.4%.
- Black students enter our degree courses with significantly lower prior educational attainment rates. The average tariff points on entry for black students was lower than those for white students by: -18.6 points (-16% difference) in 2016/17, -10 points (-8% difference) in 2017/18, -23 points (-19%) in 2018/19.



The average module mark of BAME students is 2.84% lower than for White students. With the exception of Black students, the attainment gap reduces as student progress through their courses moving from level 4 through to level 6.

- The BAME attainment gap is 3.33% in level 4 and reduces to 1.78% in level 6.
- Asian student's attainment gap is 3.97% in level 4 and decreases to 0.8% in level 6.
- Black student's attainment gap increases from 4.73% in level 4 to 6.6% in level 5 and 6% in level 6.

We have signed the UUK pledge to work collaboratively to tackle racial inequality and close the BAME attainment gaps by adopting the principles outlined in the recent report '*Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #Closing the Gap*'. The key recommendations in the report and related research have shaped our discussion on the key enabling actions needed to achieve the strategic aims and objectives detailed in section 2 of this Plan. Since its publication we have hosted an AdvanceHE event on inclusive teaching and learning and we have established a cross-University Group to deliver these principles in our Connected Curriculum. Based on the current research, we recognise that closing the attainment gap for black students in particular will be very challenging, requiring a multi-factorial approach that involve us working with the OfS, the sector and schools and colleges to tackle fully the range of contributing factors:

- Poor prior educational attainment – evident in the entry profile of our black students (cited above) – and associated challenges in terms of the lack of role models, changing school-based and university-based curricula;
- Challenges associated with poverty and balancing study with work and caring responsibilities.
- The impact of poverty and funding in terms of decision-making about travel to study distances and the associated challenges for commuter students.

Along with the OfS, our strategic ambition is to remove any attainment gap between black and white students within the timescale of this strategy and we will work with our network of schools and colleges to achieve this. Given the scale of the challenges and the educational, social and economic profile of our black students, we have set targets to reduce the gap to no more than 10% by 2024/25. We shall of course work to exceed this target.

Priority 7: Reduce the attainment gap in degree outcomes between Black students and White students 2024/25.

Progression to employment or further study

Since 2014/15 the progression to employment rates for BAME students have risen in line with the University's overall rate of improvement and the progression gap compared to White students is narrowing. A gap of -5.1% remains between BAME and White students, but all groups perform better than the sector average. Black students do better than other BAME groups; the gap between Black and White students is 3%. This is due to the high proportion of Black students entering employment directly from our Nursing courses. Our priority is to address the -9.1% employment gap between Asian and White students.

Priority 8: Close the progression to graduate employment gap between Asian and White students.

1.3 Mature students

Access

50.5% (of all student groups covered by this plan) are mature. We recruit higher proportions of mature students than the sector average: 36.2% of full-time students compared to 27.8% nationally. Our success in this area is as a result of well-established outreach programmes and the courses we offer in health and allied subjects and courses for the armed forces. One of our flagship interventions for mature students (studying both full and part time) is our **Step Up to Higher Education course**, which reaches out to 'non-traditional' or 'harder-to-reach' learners. Recognised as sector best practice in March 2018 by MillionPlus (the Association for Modern Universities) '*#ForgottenLearners: building a system that works for mature students*', this intensive pre-session course effectively prepares students for the transition to higher education and provides the academic skills and resilience training needed for academic success.

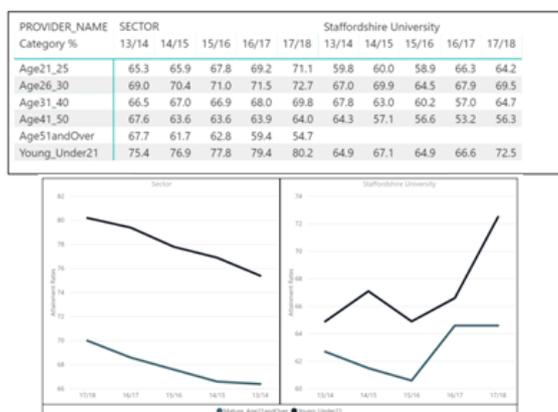
Student Success: Continuation

Continuation rates for mature students have remained static (at 84% over the past five-year period, narrowing temporarily in 2015/16). There is a -5% continuation of mature students compared to young students.

Priority 9: Reduce the gap in continuation between mature and young students.

Student Success: Attainment

There is an attainment gap of 7.9% between mature students and young students and the gap is wider now than in 2013/14 when it was just 2.2%. Our attainment rates remain -5.4% below the sector average. Students between the ages of 41 and 50 are less likely to get a good degree and until 2017/18 the performance of these students continued to drop. This subcategory has a very small population of the mature student body, and we find that majority of our mature students are between the ages of 21 and 25, which also saw a stagnation in outcomes in 2017/18 (*see table 7 left*) We shall be addressing the diversity of performance across our subjects, focusing particularly on mature students in Business who perform significantly below the University average.



Priority 10: Close the attainment gap between mature and young students.

Progression to employment or further study

Notwithstanding challenges in terms of continuation and degree outcomes, our mature students have good progression rates to employment. As is the case across the sector, our mature students are more likely to either be in highly-skilled employment or further education than young students. In 2016/17 88.3% of mature students were in highly-skilled employment or further education compared to 77% of young students.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

We have improved participation rates of students with a declared disability from 12.8% in 2013/14 to 18% in 2017/18. We exceed our benchmark in terms of the numbers of students in receipt of disability allowance: +1.4% above HESA benchmark in HESA Performance Indicators (WP4), 2017/18.

Student Success: Continuation

With the dedicated support package, we provide to our disabled students they continue to have higher continuation than students without a disability across the University for the three continuous years; 2014/15 (+1.40%), 2015/16 (+2.60%), 2016/17 (+0.90%). This contrasts with the sector, where disabled students show a lower continuation rate across all recorded years: in 2016/17 89.4% compared to 90.3% for students without a declared disability.

Across the sector, students with mental health issues have the lowest continuation rates across all recorded years. However, for the University these students scored the joint highest rate in 2015/16 (89.00%). Whilst a decrease has been seen for 2016/17, we are still +1.1% above the sector at 86.8%. We are seeking to enhance the support we provide to students with Cognitive and Learning Issues (-1.0% compared to sector average) and Multiple Impairments (-2.40% compared to sector).

We have found that this dedicated support package is not adequately supporting our part time disabled students. We find that while we are significantly above sector average for continuation for part time students (75.2% vs 58.3%), we have a continuation gap of 5.8%. When reviewing the data in more detail we found that as with the sector our part time students with mental health disabilities are performing significantly below students with no disability. (53.8% vs in 77.4% in 15/16) and these continuation figures have dropped from a high of 65% in 12/13.

Priority 11: Reduce the gap in continuation rates between part-time students with a declared mental health impairment and those without a declared disability.

Student Success: Attainment

We have continued our successful academic and student support work in supporting full-time students to close the disabled attainment gap to 1.9%, which is more than 1% lower than the sector attainment gap of 3%. Whilst we have not included a target in our action plan, closing the gap entirely remains an institutional priority.

Students with Mental Health disabilities are within a 1% attainment gap of students with no disability. We note that there is a 12.7% attainment gap for disabled students on part-time courses. The majority of our part-time learners are employed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), in active military service and are without a disability. The percentage of MOD students achieving 2:1 and 1sts is higher than all other part-time students. This is due to the alignment of the prior experience of our leavers with the part-time degree courses we offer. MOD students are accepted with 'advance standing' into level 6 of undergraduate degree programmes, based on extensive prior professional training and experience. Given this profile of part-time students, we have not included a target in our action plan, but we continue to monitor achievement rates for all part-time students.

Progression to employment

Since 2014/15 we have found that our disabled students have performed better than students without disabilities, with a positive performance gap of 1.2% in 2016/17. We have a track record of improving outcomes for students with all types of disability over the past three years. We now outperform the sector by a considerable margin.

1.5 Care leavers

We know that the challenges experienced by Looked After Children and Care Leavers as they progress through childhood and into adulthood are considerable. The findings of the HERACLES (Higher Education: Researching Around Care Leavers' Entry and Success) project show that work still needs to be done to raise aspirations, support students into HE and equip them with the confidence and skills to thrive and achieve. We have, as such signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant – see: <http://spectrafirst.com/identity-cms/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Care-Leaver-Covenant-Summary.pdf> We will continue to enhance our package of support for our estranged or a care leaver students (currently 96). We will also continue to work collaboratively through our local Widening Participation Collaborative Group to deliver activities for access to higher education to this target group.

Access

Over the past 4 years the university had maintained an intake of 0.6% of our student base from a care leaver background. This is slightly above the sector average of 0.5%.

In England approximately 6.1% of all care leavers in 17/18 studied in higher education; in Stoke-on Trent and Staffordshire this was lower at 3.7% and 5.5% respectively. Stoke-on-Trent has on average a higher percentage of 10-21-year-old care leavers than England (154 per 10,000 vs 141 per 10,000) therefore the university has identified that improving access is a priority. The establishment of a Care Leaver Oversight Group will focus upon enhancing opportunities and increasing support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers at all stages of their Student journey. A key priority is the development of city partnership, which will include structured support for care leavers from Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire whether they are progressing to Staffordshire University or elsewhere.

Further reviews of care leaver demographics over the past 4 years shows that students are more likely to be from an ethnic background (23.71%), from IMD quintiles 1 & 2 (57.73%) and have a disability (36.08%), therefore many care leavers have multiple protected characteristics.

Student Success: Continuation

Due to the small number of care leavers continuation data is combined for the last 4 years. Reviewing the data, we found that care leaver continuation rates are 1% higher than non-care leaver continuation rates.

Over 4 years our total retention rate over all levels continues to be 0.5% higher for care leaver students than non-care leavers.

We have developed over several years, holistic support for care leavers and estranged students which is designed to remove barriers and increase opportunities throughout the student experience. Dedicated support contacts in Student Services provide wrap-around care and support from first contact through to graduation and beyond. This includes contact prior to enrolment, support attending Open and Offer-Holder Days, meetings with care agencies and 1-2-1 meetings at the University or online. Support continues throughout the students' time at the University. This includes financial support for the duration of their studies and connected financial advice and guidance. Care Leavers are offered 365 accommodation in University Halls of Residence with discounted accommodation through the Summer months. Additional support is provided at key points of transition – this includes, for instance financial assistance through the summer holidays and a

graduation and support package, which enables care leavers to attend graduation without worrying about the financial impact for them or their guests.

Student Success: Attainment and Progression to employment

Due to the limited data collection prior to 15/16 we are unable to provide data on outcomes of care leaver students overtime. This issue has now been addressed and will be able to provide outcomes analysis for students graduating in 18/19 onwards.

Priority 12: Increase participation rates of care leavers studying with us, to ensure that by 2024/25 participation rates at least match the percentages of those groups regionally.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Black students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2.

As identified above, there is one key intersection of disadvantage that is statistically significant: Black students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2. We include both quintiles to ensure we have an appropriate population size for analysis, because the number of Black students is small compared to other student groups. See above for priority actions related to this group.

Part-time students

We have found that the mix of students who have entered part time education is different from our full-time students. In antithesis to the demographics of our full-time students, part-time students are more likely to come from the most advantaged backgrounds; 23% from IMD quintile 5 and 16% from IMD quintile 1.

Priority 13: Reduce the proportional gap of IMD quintiles 1 compared to IMD Quintile 5 entering part-time study.

Part-time students from all backgrounds have significantly better continuation results than the sector, especially Black students for whom there is only a 1.9% continuation gap compared to White students (sector average is 8.7%). There is a 6% attainment gap between part-time students from IMD 1 and 5, but this has been improving and is smaller than both the sector gap of 20.9% and our full-time attainment gap. While disabled students perform better than the sector, there is still an attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled part-time students of 12.8%. The numbers of part-time BAME students are too small to enable us to provide details by each BAME group. There is still a BAME part-time student attainment gap of 16.9%, improving from 30% in 2013/14.

Our rates of progression to employment from part-time study are significantly higher than the sector, and the gap between IMD 1&2 and IMD3-5 has closed to 1.1%. Compared to White students, BAME students are more likely to be in high-skilled employment or further study (97.7% in 2016/17, +4.5% than White students).

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

59.1% of full-time students commuted to study with us in 2018/19 compared to 38% nationally. This has remained consistently around the 60% since 2014/15.⁸ Owing to the increased costs of higher education and the removal of maintenance grants, many of our students from low participation neighbourhoods choose to live at home. A significant number are mature on entry and may not have studied for some time. Some are travelling significant distances to attend. Many students have work commitments (and in some cases caring commitments) that need to be balanced with their studies, which are undertaken on either a full-time or part-time basis.

⁸ Internal analysis of APP eligible full-time students

Intelligence on these students suggests that they potentially have difficulty accessing traditional student services and coping with a fragmented and/or inflexible timetable because the commuting costs in time and money are high. The transition into university can be very challenging and these students may feel marginalised from the university community. Work to support commuter students has now been integrated into our 'business as usual' activity and will continue throughout the period of this plan. For example, we have developed the 'sticky campus' (through the Student Hub initiative and through a programme of sports, cultural and other social events) and our Connected Community strategy (using partnerships and other networks, and digital technological innovation in terms of learning and teaching through the Connected Curriculum) to support these students.

2. PRIORITY AIMS AND TARGETS

Our self-assessment has confirmed that priority action is needed in two of the three parts of the student lifecycle: Access and Student Success (*see table 8 below*)

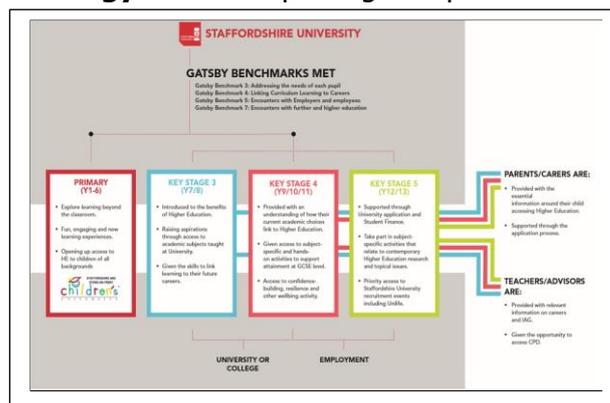
Priority	Aim	Baseline 2017/18	Target 2024/25
Access			
Priority 5a	Increase participation rates of Black students studying at the University to ensure that by 2024/25 participation rates at least match the percentages of those groups regionally	3.5%	6%
Priority 5b	Increase participation rates of Asian students studying at the University to ensure that by 2024/25 participation rates at least match the percentages of those groups regionally	5.9%	10%
Priority 12	Increase participation rates of care leavers studying with us to ensure that by 2024/25 participation rates at least match the percentages of those groups regionally	0.6%	1%
Priority 13	Reduce the proportional gap of IMD quintiles 1 compared to IMD Quintile 5 entering part-time study	7.2%	3.5%
Continuation			
Priority 1	Reduce the continuation rate gap between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5	7.5%	2.5%
Priority 2	Reduce the continuation rate gap between POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 5 by 2025	3.4%	0%
Priority 6	Reduce the continuation rate gap between Black and White students	11%	5%
Priority 9	Reduce the gap in continuation between Mature and Young students	8%	1%
Priority 11	Reduce the gap in continuation rates between part time students with a declared mental health impairment and those without a declared disability	24%	3%

Attainment			
Priority 3a	Reducing the attainment gaps in degree outcomes (1sts and 2:1s) between IMD quintiles 1 & 5	16.4%	6%
Priority 3b	Remove the attainment gaps in degree outcomes (1sts and 2:1s) between POLAR quintiles 1 & 5	7.1%	0%
Priority 7	Reducing the attainment gaps in degree outcomes (1sts and 2:1s) between Black and White students	30%	10%
Priority 10	Reducing the attainment gaps in degree outcomes (1sts and 2:1s) between Young and Mature Students	8%	0%
Progression			
Priority 4	Close the progression to graduate employment gap between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5.	8.7%	0%
Priority 8	Close the progression to graduate employment gap between Asian and White students.	9.1%	0%

Work to continuously improve progression to employment will continue, but we have not set specific strategic targets in the plan for the period 2020/21-2024/15.

Key Enabling Actions:

1. We will implement our new **School and Colleges Strategy** and underpinning Passport to HE scheme (**ConnectU**) which targets institutions for key relationships and progression agreements based on their student demographics and discipline profile. We will broker relationships with new institutions that have been identified as having a more diverse student base than our existing key 'feeder' schools and colleges to increase the number of BAME applicants by 2024/25. One of the ways we will do this is by attracting more BAME staff and student ambassadors to support schools and college liaison and open days.



2. We will promote **inclusive admissions practices** to increase the numbers and percentage of Black and Asian students given a formal offer by:
 - Delivering unconscious bias training for staff involved directly with admissions to courses requiring an interview, to be monitored through annual appraisals (Performance Development Reviews).
 - Introducing and monitoring on a monthly basis the offer rates of interviewed applicants from the target groups in the student recruitment and admissions reports to the Senior Leadership Team.
3. We will expand our use of **contextual admissions** from 2020 recruitment cycle. Contextual data is currently used across the University:
 - to target widening participation and IAG activities
 - for monitoring and reporting

From September 2020 contextual admissions data will also be used to:

- establish who to interview (for interviewing courses)
- inform decision-making on a specific application
- decide whether to make a reduced offer
- identify applicants who may need additional support or advice during application, transition or progress through higher education.

We will examine applications holistically, using a variety of contextual data which will be clearly set out on our website. On this basis of a contextual flag, admissions officers will make a standard conditional, unconditional, or reduced tariff offer.

4. As part of our continuing commitment to collaborative widening participation activities, we will continue to host **Higher Horizons+ Hub** at the University as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), up until July 2021. We will work collaboratively on activities as part of the NCOP network including the development of the new Outreach Hub.
5. We are passionate about transforming the lives and aspirations of the individuals and communities we serve, and this is demonstrated through our sponsorship of Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT). SUAT believes that its academies should be at the heart of their communities; that education goes beyond the classroom and the school day, and that every person's role within the Trust is to deliver outstanding provision in whatever sphere, so that maximum progress by the pupils can be made. SUAT continues to grow and now includes 14 academies across Staffordshire.

6. Across the institution, we have shown that progression routes into higher education for students who are less confident, or underachieving, are key to widening access. We have a comprehensive portfolio of Foundation Year routes mapped to all of our courses, some of which are embedded in our local FE College partners' provision, providing level 3 entry across the University. The Foundation Year includes significant additional support such as tailored maths interventions, student-organised industry field trips and regular events to create connections, aid progression and promote a sense of belonging.
7. We are developing our new academic framework (see section 3) which promotes inclusivity and student success through our **Connected Curriculum** approach. We will engage all our students, including those with protected characteristics, in opportunities to develop their social capital through interdisciplinary working and projects and networking, thereby preparing them with the breadth of skills and knowledge required by employers, raising their aspirations, and delivering an excellent student experience.

In addition to the traditional subject-based learning and teaching and academic student support approaches, the Connected Curriculum will introduce personalisation and, therefore, the ability to systematically provide additional targeted support for the priority groups identified above in our strategic map. We will conduct knowledge and competency testing at all levels of study and provide bespoke bite-sized (largely) digitally enabled learning, for example to build resilience, confidence and skills – digital, technical and professional – and to support the acquisition of knowledge (for example from other disciplines) to enable the successful completion of project-based components or interdisciplinary modules for the degree. This will be supported by the resources and nudge technology developed through the GAME project (see below). Examples of practical applications of our Connected Curriculum include:

- Developing and utilising learning resources and reading lists that include BAME authors, with culturally diverse themes and case studies. This will enable students to see themselves reflected in the curriculum.
- Internationalisation of the curriculum to prepare our students for a global workforce.
- Making all courses (by 2030) accessible using digital and blended learning approaches so students can study any time and any place, thereby enabling students to better balance study with commuting, work and other commitments.
- Allowing students to experience a variety of mediums of teaching and learning delivery, including peer support, digital and interactive approaches.
- Encouraging students to work with different peer groups to increase their knowledge acquisition and diversity skills.

Expected outcomes of implementing the Connected Curriculum are:

- Achievement of the targets set out in relation to non-continuation, degree outcomes and progression from education.
- Enhanced employability and personal well-being throughout the careers of graduates, as measured by LEO and surveys of our alumni in the future.

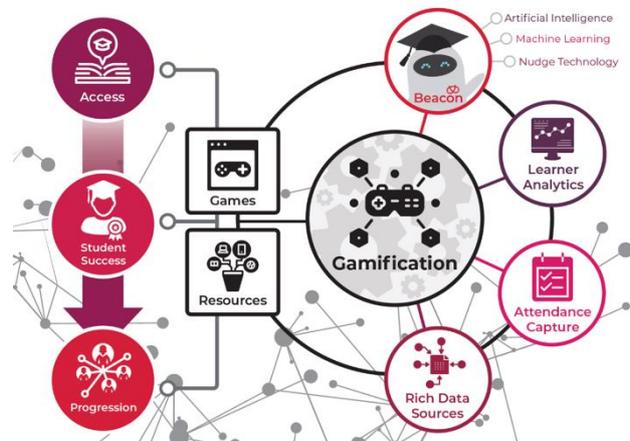
8. Our **Academic Enhancement Theme** for the 2019/20 Academic Year will be **Resilience** and we will seek to engage our whole community in the development of a comprehensive framework of engagement and delivery that is designed to both remove unnecessary barriers and challenges, whilst also equipping and enabling our student community to overcome difficulties and achieve success.

The output of this ongoing project will see the development of a framework of enhancements, opportunities and activities for all students that will build resilience and support with both their transition into university and out into the workplace. We will place significant emphasis upon relationships as we look to further develop peer support and mentoring and enhance our approach to teaching and learning. As a whole community approach, staff from across the

University at all levels, the Students' Union and students will work in partnership to determine priorities, share in delivery and assess impact. The impact of this work will be routinely monitored at the University's Quality and Enhancement Committee.

9. We will develop and deliver our new **state-of-the-art digitally-enabled student engagement model (GAME)**.

GAME is flagship initiative in our 2030 Strategy (see section 3) as we look beyond our current Connected University Strategic Plan. It will create an integrated and intelligent student support environment that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning and nudge technology to identify the behaviours and therefore the specific needs of individual students, and target priority groups, for example, to offer additional study skills support or promote specific services and resources. It will also be used to profile 'at risk' groups and alert personal tutors.



GAME will draw together and enhance continuously the digital innovations we are developing to support students – Beacon (our student support and digital coach⁹), learner analytics and attendance capture systems – with rich institutional datasets and a maturing staff capability to use business intelligence to change practice and curricula. Student-led projects, as part of the Connected Curriculum will enhance the resources by applying and testing gamification principles to both engage targeted groups of students (beginning with the priority groups highlighted earlier) and change behaviours (for example, increase engagement with personal tutors, asking for help sooner, engaging with learning resource, engagement with learning and teaching).

Using anonymised business intelligence from our existing resources (Beacon, learner analytics, CRM, attendance capture), students will test and develop new ways to gamify learning, personal development, career planning and accessing student support. The outcomes of this work will be enhancements/development of existing resources and the creation of new resources, including the creation of games and apps, for example, to help applicants/students prepare for university, to develop resilience and grit, to promote mindfulness and wellbeing, to develop employability skills.

When selecting students for the project we will choose disproportionately high numbers of Black and Asian students. Our interdisciplinary approach will be important here because the number of students from these two groups studying Computing and Games are lower than the overall University averages. 5% of students in Computing and Digital Technologies are Black and 8% are Asian. We envisage the outcomes of the initiative to include:

- Achievement of the targets set out in Table 8 related to non-continuation, degree outcomes and progression from education.
- Enhanced social capital for students involved because they will have:
 - Work experience with tangible and evaluated outcomes on students' CVs.
 - Wider personal networks within the University community and externally which may create future career development opportunities.
- Published research in the area of gamification and educational practice in particular.

10. We will deliver (with Keele University and partners) the OfS-funded **Start to Success Project**. This involves a whole community approach to supporting student transitions into, through and

⁹ See section 3, p.18. below for details of these resources.

beyond university, and will improve the mental health and wellbeing of students in the North Staffordshire Region.

- **Peer Mentoring** – The Implementation of an innovative Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Peer Mentoring Scheme that will span all levels of learning (UG, PGT, DL etc). This is a joint initiative with our Students' Union and will be co-created with our students. It will enable access to appropriate peer support for students experiencing anxiety, increasing stress levels, isolation.
- **Transitions Support** - The introduction of a dedicated and focused approach to pre-entry support in schools and colleges will help ensure continuity of care and the ability for students to gain access to services and support much earlier into their transition to HE.
- **Progression and Exit** – A dedicated role will develop a holistic approach to the delivery of support for students when they choose or are required to take a break in their studies or who leave their studies as a result of poor health/mental health and wellbeing. Building upon successful work already in place within an academic School at the University, the project will ensure continuity of support and a more personalised and personable approach to care and support at these difficult points of transition.
- **Analysis and Impact to support continuous improvement** – Detailed analysis of the impact of the interconnected strands of the project will be undertaken and overseen by a connected Governance and Steering framework with wellbeing leads at both Staffordshire University and Keele undertaking detailed analysis of recruitment, retention and progression data. This will be triangulated with relevant data and information from the project partners in the NHS, third sector and FE sector to build up an impression of the overall experience of students studying in the North Staffordshire region.

11. **We will deliver our diverse and inclusive University community initiative and achieve the Race Equality Charter Mark by** building on our outcomes from the Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) Race Equality Charter Mark Pilot in 2014. We were one of the first universities to achieve the Charter Mark through the pilot programme in recognition of our approach to advancing racial equality in higher education. Out of 21 applications for the Charter Mark at this time, we were one of only eight universities to receive a Bronze award. We continue to be one of only 12 universities to hold the Charter Mark to date.

The overall aim of the Race Equality Charter Mark is to provide a framework through which the University can work to identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers for Black and Minority Ethnic staff and students.

As part of our re-submission for the Charter Mark, we are developing an institutional action plan which follows the guiding principles of the Charter Mark and provides a framework for us to actively review the way that we attract, develop and retain BAME staff. As part of this, our focus is on the following:

- Actively reviewing the overall staffing profile by ethnicity to ensure that roles across academic, professional support and management grades reflect a diverse workforce which takes account of our local and regional population, from where we recruit. We aim to ensure that we have a better distribution of staff through the University's staffing structure including the number of BAME staff in management and leadership positions.
- As part of this review across roles and grades, we are also exploring headcount, FTE and working hours. We aim to determine whether working arrangements adversely impact on certain groups of staff more than others in order that we may understand and actively explore any reasons for this and develop appropriate plans to address any concerns.
- Turnover rates amongst staff by ethnicity are being considered and we aim to determine whether particular groups of staff are likely to leave the University's employment more than others and explore the reasons for this and address any dysfunctional activities.

- The ethnic profile of our decision-making Committees and Boards is currently being considered to determine whether any particular groups of staff are under-represented across the University.
- Our recruitment and selection statistics are currently under consideration to understand the number of applications that we receive from BAME applicants and determine whether there is any link or correlation with applications from particular groups of staff not progressing to shortlisting and interview. We aim to ensure that we have in place recruitment practices that increase the number of applications received from and shortlisted BAME candidates.

12. **Additional Activity**

In addition to these Key Enabling Actions, we will continue to deliver the following range of support to promote student success and progression, as part of business as usual:

- The Staffordshire University Passport Scheme 'ConnectU' to raise attainment and increase aspirations.
- Subject Clubs to provide enrichment for years 9 – 13 and work with the Stoke Opportunity Area to improve IAG and Maths and English Level 2 outcomes.
- Expand our Step-Up programme to include the Foundation Year programmes and introduce a "Step up to Masters" route across the University.
- Deliver family/community events to develop cultural understanding of BAME issues.
- Deliver conferences for Level 3 students at partner FE institutions on campus during their foundation year of study, supporting progression to the level 4 Connected Curriculum.
- Operate the Student Hub facility to enhance the accessibility to all support services for students, benefitting particularly commuter and part-time students and those with mental health issues, with related digital resources and services.
- Deliver a year-round Spiral Induction Programme which provides support and information for all students, personalised to the needs of individual students dependent upon their circumstances and background.
- Develop welcome, induction, support packages and networks for specific groups such as BAME, mature or commuter students, care-leavers or students with mental health issues.
- Increase funding (for example for assistive technology, hardware and accommodation) and enhance dedicated support for Disabled Students (including ASD students), including peer engagement and employment opportunities.
- Develop digital learning resources, including VLE and Lecture Capture, to facilitate any time, any place learning and teaching, to benefit particularly commuter and part-time students.
- Develop global perspectives through student mobility, including Go International pledge activity.
- Professional Mentoring Programme and a 1:1 Coaching Programme including student coaches.
- Continue to develop digital literacy and evaluate whether to offer students the opportunity of Microsoft Imagine Academy.
- Continue to run a dedicated employability week, including a Careers Fest and specialist recruitment fairs such as GradEx and develop these further by introducing a University Learning Award programme of activity which will integrate with, and support, the interdisciplinary approach of the Connected Curriculum.

13. **Bursaries and Hardship fund eligibility**

The University access and participation plan is focused on flexible and individualised approaches to supporting our students. Due to the large number of our students having multiple indices of deprivation, this focus on the individual through Hardship and Experience funds is felt to be more effective in ensuring continued engagement with their studies and supporting enhanced achievement outcomes. Our strategic approach is informed by detailed analysis of quantitative

and qualitative feedback from students. When we evaluate student retention and success in 2017/18, we found that overall students from low income backgrounds were no more likely to continue and complete their studies if they were in receipt of a bursary. However, qualitative feedback and applications to our hardship fund identified a small number of students with acute needs. Based on this intelligence, we have revised our strategic aims in relation to bursaries and student funding, to focus on the smaller number of very vulnerable students at their time of need (often in the latter stages of level 4), rather than offering general funding for larger groups. We have reallocated funds formerly for bursaries to invest more in our Hardship Fund and have set criteria for the key priority groups. To support this work, we have employed a resident 'Money Doctor' to provide students with budgeting and debt advice, which is of particular importance when students begin their studies.

This sets out the following priority areas and criteria:

Priority Students	Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students from low income backgrounds • Disabled students • Mature students • Students with children or other dependants • Students who are care leavers • Students who are permanently estranged from their parents • Students who are carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are a current and active student (you have not withdrawn or intermitted) • Are classed as Home/EU for fees • Are studying full or part time (if part time you must be studying at 25% of a full time equivalent course) • Are enrolled onto a course which is a minimum of 1-year duration • Are enrolled onto a course that leads to an award such as a HND, Foundation Degree, BA, BSc, BEng, PgCert, PGDip or a Masters • Have taken out your full loan entitlement, including your full tuition fee loan (if eligible) and have received your first loan instalment for the academic year

The level of financial support is dependent on need with payments in some cases being as high as £2500 and with a minimum level of £25.

Whilst the University has reduced its general bursary offer, we will continue to award bursaries to care leavers and estranged students as part of our commitment to the Stand-Alone Pledge and to help mitigate the significant barriers these students experience to entry into Higher Education. Students will receive bursaries worth £750 per year of study. To be eligible for a care leaver bursary, students must be under the age of 25 and have spent at least 13 weeks in care since the age of 14 and have been in care on their 16th birthday. To be eligible for an estranged student bursary, students must be under the age of 25 and have been assessed as estranged with Student Finance.

We also support students with specific learning disabilities by covering the full cost of diagnostic assessments the completion of which is a pre-requisite for students being able to claim additional DSA support from Student Finance. Students who are identified as requiring specialist DSA equipment can also apply for support with the cost of this, up to a maximum of £200.

To improve social mobility, we have established the Student Experience Fund. The aim of the fund is to help students take up domestic and international opportunities including *(but not limited to) placements, internships and cultural exchange trips*. Awards are made based on individual circumstances and availability of funds, with an award minimum of £25, with students making (where possible) a financial contribution. Students provide details of how the proposed experience will enhance their studies and career ambitions. All Home/EU students can apply, but priority is given to students from low income households.

Further details can be found on our webpages below

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/bursaries>

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/info_centre/finance/

3. STRATEGIC MEASURES

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

The University has adopted a “theory of change” framework to plan and evaluate projects across the University by measuring success and impact. The framework was developed as part of the Student Journey project whereby all stakeholders (students and staff) were involved in the scoping, planning, delivery, identification of success criteria and learning from what worked and, as importantly, what did not. The objectives of the Framework are to:

- Provide Accountability
- Focus on long term strategic objectives
- Ensure value for money
- Support future decision making

This is achieved through:

- **Action** – Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?
- **Impact** – What was the impact these actions had?
- **Meeting KPIs** – How did this support the strategic KPI’s of the University?

We will explicitly follow a “pathway to impact methodology”, to ensure that our projects are making a difference for the student experience. Building from our Academic Strategy, which explicitly connect learning and teaching with research to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes; our research projects (involving staff and student in relevant areas) will engage with this methodology. Further information about data including informed interventions and our reporting and evaluation strategy are provided below.

Measuring success in this way means we have immediate results on whether actions within a project were successful, which then provides leading indicators over a medium time scale to allow us to monitor and make changes if results were not as expected, which would then be linked to our strategic KPI’s over the long term.

This will allow us to evaluate all of our projects against our 2030 Strategic Vision and will be shaped by the following principles:

- Everything that we do will be data informed.
- Learning will be individualised (hyper-personalisation).
- 24/7 support will be embedded into our Estates, digital, student support and learning and teaching strategies.
- We will be the innovators of automated student and staff support.
- All courses will have an integrated digital strand/core digital-skills.
- Change will be managed and supported by a dedicated cross-institutional Transformation Team.

These principles were promoted and endorsed by students via feedback through the following consultation channels facilitated by the Students' Union such as the: Better Staffs Forum, Student Journey Project and Catalyst Project Consultation.

Our new Academic Strategy will have a 10-year horizon to deliver our 2030 vision. Its key strategic aim and objectives are to develop and deliver innovative, connected teaching, research and professional practice to secure financial sustainability and academically sustainability through:

- Supporting students from diverse backgrounds, often defined by disadvantage and personal challenge.
- Securing/maintaining/developing and growing niche courses.
- Delivering education that is research-informed and informing our research work.
- Pioneering approaches to digital pedagogy.
- Developing curricula relevant to employer needs and professional practice to secure graduate future skill.
- Recruiting, developing and retaining high quality academic staff, identifying, growing and joining together pockets of international and world-leading research.
- Diversifying and maintaining a balanced portfolio.

At the core of our Academic Strategy is the **Connected Curriculum**. We have identified clear expectations for each level of study to systematically embed skills, knowledge and pedagogies, so that each level of study builds on the previous one from level 4 through to level 8, thereby enabling students to see their own development path through each level of study and recognise the 'distance travelled'. Scoping of the Connected Curriculum has involved 5 workshops involving 74 staff and students during 2018/19 academic year. This will involve us describing this journey in new ways to students, their supporters and employers (setting aside language used by the Academy), working differently as educators and altering some of the building blocks of our courses. Wherever possible (e.g. digital skills) learning will be recognised through 'badges' and external/professional/industry accreditation to ensure their learning has the maximum value and recognition in their future careers, which will be transformed by digital technologies.¹⁰

We believe we are well-positioned to deliver this vision and our ambitious Access and Participation Plan because we benefit from:

- Strong leadership and governance.
- A track record of delivering major change at pace.
- An established whole-institution approach to performance evaluation and management supported by a professional data and business intelligence function that has facilitated change in relation to student and graduate outcomes.
- A sector-leading digital infrastructure.

Both the Board of Governors and the Senior Leadership Team are committed to our strategic vision to transform the lives of our students and our connected communities. We have a strong **track record of working collaboratively to achieve major change** in designing and implementing our current Connected University Strategy. We have regular, honest and detailed conversations about the challenges we face and how we will solve them, for example, during the past year this has included student retention, student mental health and closing the BAME attainment gap. Through our institutional lead on BAME attainment, we are actively engaged in national fora and

¹⁰ Increasing importance of digital skills: <https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/learning/en-us/pdfs/linkedin-learning-workplace-learning-report-2018.pdf>. <https://www.burning-glass.com/research-project/uk-demand-digital-skills/>

have hosted internal events related to closing attainment gaps¹¹, informed by an internal review of BAME attainment in 2017/18.

Three years ago, we set out a clear path: to be bold, to set ourselves stretching targets and to make our student, staff and our communities proud of the University (#ProudToBeStaffs). We have made significant strides since we set ourselves this challenge. We have achieved our target for 2021 to be in the top 50% in all three UK league tables, due to significant improvement in student satisfaction and graduate destinations. We have risen 43 places in the Complete University Guide over the past three years. We are now in the top 10 for student satisfaction in the Complete University Guide and the top 10 for Teaching Quality in the Sunday Times Good University Guide.

We have an **established whole-institution approach to performance evaluation and management and evidence-based decision-making**. All staff in the University have access to dashboards providing live data (and data for year-on-year analysis) to move the widening participation and access agenda forward in an evidence-based way. We have a core suite of detailed reports that track performance at School, Department and Course level in relation to all University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Performance Measures (PMs), student demographics, contextual information on individual disciplines/cognate disciplines and performance gaps for specific groups: BAME, female, mature, disabled, part-time learners, commuter students. School Health Checks are provided monthly. Course health checks are in user testing and include mark profiles by all modules and performance gaps for specific groups: BAME, female, mature, disabled, part-time learners, commuter students, comparing the course with other courses, Departmental averages, School averages, University averages. Our personal tutoring dashboard provides a 360-degree view of individual students and the ability for personal tutors to contact students and support services (for referrals e.g. for a specific academic skills intervention, counselling etc). Personal tutors are also able to log interventions relating to their tutees. Staff are able to drill down further using circa 20 thematic dashboards related to specific areas of activity, including NSS (quantitative and qualitative data split by subject/department), student retention, progression, and awards. Wherever possible benchmarking data is provided, at individual University level so academic teams can identify where good or improving practice can exist elsewhere to aid their quality enhancement activities. This approach is also adopted by our Students' Union, which has developed a student engagement index, monitored through dashboards. Leading indicators and trends are shared with the University through regular meetings with the University leadership and Sabbatical Officers, of the University Committee and through the work of student representatives.

Data from these also feed into the dashboards for annual and continuous monitoring for quality assurance and quality enhancement purposes. Our detailed evaluation of student retention during 2018 identified the need to change our Academic Regulations to address a gap that meant a group of students with a specific attainment profile were not able to access a restudy opportunity.

We have a **sector-leading digital infrastructure**. We were the first HEI in Europe to migrate fully to the cloud. This transformation to cloud-based infrastructure acts as a fast, agile platform for innovation and experimentation; allowing us to instantly build and pilot a wide variety of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and analytics. Our innovative approach to leveraging the potential of cloud infrastructure has led us to become one of only three Microsoft Innovative Institutions in the world. We work closely with Microsoft to deliver innovative approaches to learning and teaching, having the ability to communicate directly with the MS development team to influence the roadmap of Teams - a product which we were the first university to employ as a virtual learning environment for our students. These developments have been informed by evidence on future workforce needs, feedback from employers (in national publications and through our employer for

¹¹ Related to key sector reports such as <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/bame-student-attainment-uk-universities-closing-the-gap.pdf>;

a) and sector-developments including evaluation work by JISC¹² and UCISA.¹³ We out perform the sector in terms of positive feedback from our students on our digital infrastructure in the JISC Digital Experience Insights Survey: 84% of students say that the "Quality of digital teaching and learning is above average" (compared to the sector average of 74%) and 78% of our students tell us that "Digital Skills are important in my chosen career" (compared to the sector average of 69%).

Artificial Intelligence is a disruptive technology with huge potential that has yet to be realised across higher education. As part of our 2030 strategy, we have implemented one of the first **AI- digital coach for students- Beacon**. The objective of the coach is to address some of the aforementioned challenges facing our students, improving retention and attainment by providing 24/7 support and guidance to our students as well as personalised 'nudging' towards activities and resources that will help students with their attainment. The coach will go beyond the traditional reactive 'FAQ-bot' approaches by pro-actively engaging with students and starting conversations to ensure they settle into university life and have the best support possible. We believe in a human-centric approach to artificial intelligence – augmenting people's abilities, freeing up people's time and encouraging a growth in social activities – ultimately, creating stronger connections between students. The combination of student attendance/engagement data, other sources of information (e.g. 'How is a student feeling each week') with Learner Analytics will enable Beacon to coach and guide students towards improved wellbeing, attainment and social activity. At peak times, in excess of 200 students access Beacon and it is used fully on a 24/7 basis.¹⁴ Beacon has won the 'Best Not-for-profit' award at the UK Digital Leaders Award 2019.¹⁵

3.2 Student consultation

The University strategy places students at the centre of everything we deliver, and we are proud that this Access and Participation Plan has been developed in partnership with the Students' Union and the wider student network.

Students and staff have been consulted at each stage of the development of the plan through a series of workshops and events, recognising that it builds on previous projects that the university initiated to support both access and student success. Particular focus from students was given to improving access for BAME, commuter, mature and students with care responsibilities and, reducing the BAME student attainment gap.

It should also be noted that student representation runs throughout our committee structure, cross institutional projects and major activities including the development of our academic framework and the design of our student support. The PVC Student Experience, Deans and Service Directors meet regularly with Student Union staff and sabbaticals, this has now been formalised in a Students' Union Liaison Committee which provides an opportunity to discuss the direction of travel of University developments and feedback on the impact on the student experience.

Our new Access & Participation Group has joint membership and will monitor and evaluate the activities within our plan relating to access, retention, attainment and employability, and includes in its membership representatives from the Students' Union. Following consultation through our Students' Union Liaison Committee we have introduced a Standing Student Panel. The membership of the panel will represent the full range of backgrounds of all students supported by the activities in our Access and Participation Plan. The Access and Participation Group will be directly accountable to both the Standing Student Panel and the Senior Leadership Team, prior to approval by Academic Board and Board of Governors.

¹² http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6967/1/Digital_experience_insights_survey_2018.pdf

¹³ https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/digcap?_ga=2.183009254.17153436.1566341869-1563201501.1566341869

¹⁴ Internal Digital Services monitoring reports.

¹⁵ <https://www.staffs.ac.uk/news/2019/07/uks-first-ai-digital-student-coach-wins-national-technology-award>

The Access and Participation Plan has been presented to the University's Academic Board and Board of Governors for approval; both committees have Students' Union representatives including the Students' Union President.

The preparation of this plan involved a workshop including academic staff and students where a detailed analysis was conducted of the national dataset and our performance profile. Priorities and actions were identified with reference to internal feedback datasets related to all student groups.

3.3 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework

At Staffordshire University we are committed to promoting and enabling a positive culture where staff, students and visitors are confident to be their authentic selves. We focus on inclusion as a way to ensure equality of opportunity for all our people and to demonstrate our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights. This commitment is reflected in our Core Values: **ambitious and inspirational; brilliant and friendly; curious and daring; and proud to be Staffs.**

To ensure a mainstream, sustainable approach to meeting our legal duties, under the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and ensuring we deliver on our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion we have identified two key Equality Objectives and the strategic equality outcomes we ensure:

- The student journey – there is an inclusive approach to the student experience that promotes diversity and enables all our students to flourish; leaving with the best possible outcomes and with the knowledge and skills to make choices about fulfilling careers.
- The staff journey – there is an inclusive approach to recruitment and progression that promotes diversity across the University and enables all our staff to have opportunities to develop themselves and their careers.
- The academic journey – there is an inclusive learning environment that draws on the knowledge, experience, international perspective and cultural capital of our diverse students and staff.

The plan has been developed, approved and will be monitored through our Equality, Diversity and Framework the outcomes of which will be published annually. These documents are available at: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/equality/index.jsp

4. EVALUATION AND MONITORING

4.1 In developing our Evaluation Strategy we used the Office for Students Self-Assessment Tool. We found that further development opportunities existed in one 'expected area' in the section on 'Strategic Measures', namely a sufficient skills base or expertise among professional service staff and academic staff to undertake or commission evaluation of Access and Participation Plan programmes." It was in light of this finding that we conceived the establishment of the Education Research Group, detailed below.

4.2 We aim to undertake evaluation work that is:

- Appropriate and proportionate to the type of intervention – to ensure that we find ways to quickly innovate for smaller-scale activities, whilst prioritising resources and expertise on interventions with the potential to have a significant impact on a large number of students or staff.
- Academically rigorous, building our capabilities within the University and promoting/supporting wider changes across the sector.
- Student-centred – with student input in the design and delivery of evaluation work and all sections of the student community are engaged in our evaluation work in totality.

We will **achieve this by** deploying the following framework:

Type of intervention	Methodology for evaluation	Outcomes – positive changes to...	Oversight Responsibility
Light touch e.g. information provision, changes to communications and institutional materials.	Qualitative - student and staff feedback via pulse surveys, click throughs, shares/likes on the staff app (workvivo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction rates Engagement rates Affinity rates – target groups. participation rates of under-represented groups. 	University Inclusion Group
One-off e.g. workshops, training courses, events.	Qualitative – feedback questionnaires. Quantitative – attendance rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction rates Engagement rates Changes to practice 	University Inclusion Group
Long-term e.g. mentoring programmes, skills development initiatives, changes to spiral induction, careers coaching.	Qualitative – feedback questionnaires. Quantitative – attendance rates Statistical analysis (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to practice Participation rates of under-represented groups. Student satisfaction and positive feedback. Retention rates Academic progression rates Degree outcomes Graduate destinations. 	Education Research Group
Multi-activity e.g. support service innovations; cross-curricula work, personal tutoring developments; changes informed by 'big data'.	Statistical analysis using big datasets, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographics Behavioural data - (e.g. attendance at classes, type and usage levels of learning resources Transactional data - e.g. personal tutoring meetings, accessing student support services) Outcomes: formative and summative assessments, degree outcomes, graduate outcomes. <p>These data will be analysed to identify causal relationships between different and multiple factors, such as entry profiles, personal circumstances/profiles, disciplinary and/or pedagogical differences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention rates Academic progression rates Degree outcomes Graduate destinations Increases in positive responses in NSS from target student groups (see priorities above) for the following NSS questions 4-7, 20. 	Education Research Group

This work will be **delivered by**:

- Academic staff – members of the education research group and staff involved in gamification of learning and departmental/school-based work. A proportion of academic staff time for this work will be funded through the plan.
- 3 doctoral students (funded through the plan): one focused on closing attainments gaps (education research); one focused on the use of big data and learning analytics to shape targeted interventions, and another on inclusive pedagogical practice.
- Members of the Education Research Group.
- University Planning and Business Intelligence Team supported by Digital Services.

The outcomes of our evaluation work will be **disseminated** via:

- Internal monitoring and policy papers – to School Academic Committees, Quality and Enhancement Committee, Academic Board (annually) and Strategy and Performance Committee (annually). Headlines and links to papers are shared via the staff app.
- Research papers – internally and to academic journals.
- Key findings will be shared with TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education).

As a result of deploying our multi-tiered Evaluation Strategy:

- Intelligence from light-touch and one-off evaluation interventions will be referred through to relevant schools and professional services via our continuous monitoring quality enhancement process. Continuous monitoring logs are reviewed routinely by School Academic Committees and annually by the Quality and Enhancement Committee.
- Proposed changes to professional practice and/or the infrastructure of the University (that may impact on the delivery of the plan) identified through our evaluation of longer-term and multi-activity will be reported on at least a six-monthly basis to Quality and Enhancement Committee in the Access and Participation Report. Any additional strategic actions will be included in the Annual Quality Enhancement Plan which is approved annually by Academic Board and progress in relation to the Plan is received at each meeting of Academic Board and reported annually to the Board of Governors.
- An integrated analysis of the outcomes of individual projects identified in our Access and Participation Plan will also be undertaken in the Project Realisation and lessons learnt report, received and assessed by our Strategic Change Board.”

4.2 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Student Experience) has executive responsibility for the implementation of this plan, through the Access and Participation Group, reporting to the Student Standing Panel (see section 3.2 above) and Senior Leadership Team. The Executive, of whom the Pro Vice Chancellor (Student Experience) is a member, will monitor progress and is responsible for decisions concerning the deployment of resources. The wider Senior Leadership team will oversee the project governance of projects such as the GAME project. The University’s Strategic Change Board reports to Senior Leadership Team and has detailed oversight of all institutional projects, to identify any project slippages and make recommendations on remedial action and/or investment to address these. The Quality and Enhancement Committee (which reports into Academic Board) will contribute to the development of policy and the Connected Curriculum. It will also monitor performance.

The Board of Governors receives an annual report on academic quality and standards, which includes access, student success and progression. From 2019/20 this report offers greater granularity to include performance profiles in relation to priority/vulnerable groups at departmental level. The Board has a track record of engaging actively in detailed discussions on BAME and student success of other vulnerable groups, underpinned by detailed data analysis and information on agreed action plans. The Strategy and Performance Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Governors, receives regular reports on the University’s performance in relation to all key performance indicators, including those related to this plan. It also receives a report, at every Committee meeting, on student retention.

The Board of Governors has approved the inclusions of priority aims into the University KPIs. Performance in relation to KPIs is reviewed by the Board of Governors’ Strategy and Performance Committee at every meeting and are included in all School performance reports and Quarterly Business Reviews (QBRs) involving the Executive and School SMTs.

5. PROVISION OF INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Committed to ensuring our final Access and Participation Plan is fully accessible, we shall publish the final (OfS approved) plan on our website at <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/legal/policies/Staffs-access-and-participation.jsp> This link also offers the opportunity to receive the plan in alternative accessible formats. We publish our fees on our website: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/>. Our bursaries and financial support are also set out on our website: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/financial-support/> This includes an email address for queries.

We work with the Students' Union to publicise financial support and offer help in completing applications to ensure students receive the support they need. The information on this link also includes a link to our Student Protection Plan <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/legal/policies/Student-Protection-Plan-2019-2020.jsp>.

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	17/18 onwards	£9,250
Foundation degree	17/18 onwards	£9,250
Foundation year/Year 0	17/18 onwards	£9,250
HNC/HND	17/18 onwards	£9,250
CertHE/DipHE	17/18 onwards	£9,250
Postgraduate ITT	17/18 onwards	£9,250
Accelerated degree	20/21 onwards	£11,100
Sandwich year	19/20 onwards	£1,850
Erasmus and overseas study years	17/18 onwards	£1,385
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409	£4,800
First degree	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409 - BA Education Studies 20/21 onwards	£7,500
First degree	Burton and South Derbyshire College 10001004	£6,350
First degree	Eastwood Park Limited 10020883	£6,500
First degree	Heart of Worcestershire College 10007977	£8,000
First degree	Institute for Children, Youth and Mission 10001288 - 19/20 onwards	£6,000
First degree	Institute for Children, Youth and Mission 10001288 - Belfast site 18/19 onwards	£6,000
First degree	Liverpool Media Academy Limited 10031239	£8,500
First degree	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£6,200
First degree	Shrewsbury Colleges Group 10005822	£6,500
First degree	South Staffordshire College 10023526	£5,950
First degree	The Growth Company Limited 10004177	£6,120
Foundation degree	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409	£4,800
Foundation degree	Burton and South Derbyshire College 10001004	£6,350
Foundation degree	City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College 10065146	£4,800
Foundation degree	Eastwood Park Limited 10020883	£6,500
Foundation degree	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£6,200
Foundation degree	Shrewsbury Colleges Group 10005822	£5,940
Foundation degree	Shrewsbury Colleges Group 10005822 - 19/20 onwards	£6,500
Foundation degree	South Staffordshire College 10023526	£5,950
Foundation degree	The Growth Company Limited 10004177	£6,120
Foundation year/Year 0	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409	£5,950
Foundation year/Year 0	City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College 10065146 - 20/21 onwards	£5,950
Foundation year/Year 0	Stoke on Trent College 10006349	£5,950
HNC/HND	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£6,200
HNC/HND	Shrewsbury Colleges Group 10005822 - 19/20 onwards	£6,500
HNC/HND	South Staffordshire College 10023526	£5,950
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409	£9,000
Postgraduate ITT	Thomas Telford School 10006894	£9,250
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	Ashton Sixth Form College 10000409 - Undergraduate Certificate in Education Post-Compulsory Education and Training	£5,950

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

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

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

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£4,650
Foundation degree	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£4,650
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group 10004603	£4,650
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Targets and investment plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Staffordshire University

Provider UKPRN: 10006299

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£1,322,492.28	£1,359,693.68	£1,448,367.58	£1,534,877.80	£1,626,129.78
Access (pre-16)	£105,859.44	£108,982.29	£112,197.27	£115,507.09	£118,914.55
Access (post-16)	£1,115,917.11	£1,147,024.54	£1,229,424.70	£1,309,476.10	£1,394,078.73
Access (adults and the community)	£100,715.74	£103,686.85	£106,745.61	£109,894.61	£113,136.50
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£724,675.00	£742,793.00	£769,681.63	£806,443.83	£845,023.15
Research and evaluation (£)	£404,259.00	£418,408.07	£433,052.35	£473,209.18	£488,896.50

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£23,450,405.00	£23,930,486.00	£25,078,233.00	£26,270,786.00	£27,521,002.00
Access investment	5.4%	5.5%	5.5%	5.6%	5.7%
Financial support	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
Research and evaluation	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Total investment (as %HFI)	8.9%	9.0%	9.0%	9.1%	9.2%

