

University of Central Lancashire

Access and participation plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

This section provides an assessment of performance by the University of Central Lancashire relating to access, student success and progression, focussing on gaps in outcomes between students from different backgrounds. Unless stated otherwise, data referenced throughout our assessment of performance is drawn from our returns to HESA, which allows us to compare our data with that from other providers of higher education, giving us a better understanding of how to rate our performance.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

In 2017/18, the participation gaps at UCLan for full-time students from the least represented group using the POLAR 4 measure compared with the proportion of 18 year olds within the population from these areas were 3.1pp for first degree students, 7pp for other undergraduates, 3.2pp for all undergraduates and 1pp for those on undergraduate courses with a postgraduate component. During the most recent five years, the largest gap for full-time first degree students was 5.7pp; at its smallest it was 3.1pp, with an average (mean) gap of 4.5pp. As table 1, below, shows, although the trendline is not smooth, the trajectory is positive, with a 2.6pp reduction over the last five years.

Percentage population gap in Young participation (POLAR 4) Q1 compared to the population			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Trend	Change 2013/14 to 2017/18	Change 2016/17 to 2017/18
Full time	First degree entrants	Sector	8.1	7.5	7.3	7	6.7		-1.4	-0.3
		UCLan	5.7	4.6	3.4	5.7	3.1		-2.6	-2.6
	Other undergraduate entrants	Sector	0.4	-0.9	-0.4	-1.3	-1.6		-2	-0.3
		UCLan	7	6	8	-13	7		0	19
	All undergraduate entrants	Sector	8.1	7.4	7.3	6.9	6.7		-1.4	-0.2
		UCLan	5.9	4.9	3.6	4.5	3.2		-2.7	-1.2
Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	Sector	12.5	12	11.2	10.7	10.5		-2	-0.2	
	UCLan	6	9	1	6	1		-5	-5	
Part time	First degree entrants	Sector	3	3	1.4	2.9	2.2		0	-0.8
		UCLan	N	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
	Other undergraduate entrants	Sector	2.2	0.9	1.7	2.3	0.5		-1.7	-1.9
		UCLan	-1	0	3	-1	5		5	5
	All undergraduate entrants	Sector	2.4	1.4	1.7	2.6	1.3		-1.1	-1.4
		UCLan	-2	1	2	1	5		10	5
Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	Sector	DP	-5	5	DP	DP		N/A	N/A	
	UCLan	N/A	N/A	N/A	DP	N/A		N/A	N/A	

Table 1: Participation rates of students from POLAR 4 quintile 1 (lowest participation) areas compared with the population of 18 year olds (source: HESA data)

The picture for full-time students on other undergraduate courses has been less clear, with some quite significant variances from year to year. Although the increase between 2016/17 and 2017/18 is concerning, the five year trend shows no change, with the gap starting and finishing at 7pp. The numbers of students in this category are relatively low and have declined significantly over the same period, but we will investigate the causes of this gap so that we can identify ways to reduce it in future years. Numbers on undergraduate courses with postgraduate components are low, so gaps are not statistically significant. Overall, for all full-time undergraduate entrants, the gap has been reducing year on year since 2013/14, with the exception of a small increase in 2016/17, which was reversed the following year. This would indicate that our initiatives in this area have had an impact at this level.

For part-time entrants, numbers are small, so gaps cannot be calculated for all groups. As with the full-time figures, the picture for part-time other undergraduate entrants has fluctuated year on year, so this will be included in our investigations.

Young participation (POLAR 4) Q1 18 year olds			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Trend	Change 2013/14 to 2017/18	Change 2016/17 to 2017/18
Full time	First degree entrants	UCLan	1840	2100	1830	1670	1510		-330	-160
	Other undergraduate entrants	UCLan	240	170	120	130	110		-140	-20
	All undergraduate entrants	UCLan	2170	2380	2040	1860	1710		-450	-150
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	UCLan	80	110	90	60	100		10	40
Part time	First degree entrants	UCLan	N	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
	Other undergraduate entrants	UCLan	90	110	60	60	30		-60	-30
	All undergraduate entrants	UCLan	100	120	70	70	30		-70	-40
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	UCLan	N/A	N/A	N/A	DP	N/A		N/A	N/A

Table 2: numbers of students in the cohort (source: HESA data)

The proportion of full-time students from POLAR 4 quintile 1 (lowest participation) areas has been consistently around 14% at UCLan for the last five years, whilst the proportion from quintile 5 has ranged between 17.2% and 20.2%, showing that quintile 5 students are appropriately represented within the UCLan population.

Young participation (POLAR 4) Q1 18 year olds (%)			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Trend	Change 2013/14 to 2017/18	Change 2016/17 to 2017/18
Full time	First degree entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	12.8	13.9	15	12.5	15.1		2.3	2.6
		Sector Q1 age 18	10.4	11.1	11.2	11.2	11.4		1	0.2
	Other undergraduate entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	11	12	10	31	11		0	-19
		Sector Q1 age 18	18.1	19.4	18.9	19.5	19.8		1.7	0.3
	All undergraduate entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	12.6	13.6	14.9	13.7	14.9		2.3	1.2
		Sector Q1 age 18	10.4	11.1	11.2	11.3	11.5		1	0.2
	Undergraduate with postgraduate	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	12	9	17	12	17		4	5
		Sector Q1 age 18	6	6.5	7.3	7.5	7.6		1.6	0.2
Part time	First degree entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	N	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
		Sector Q1 age 18	16	16	17.1	15.3	16		0	0.7
	Other undergraduate entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	19	19	15	19	15		-5	-5
		Sector Q1 age 18	16.3	17.7	16.7	15.9	17.7		1.4	1.8
	All undergraduate entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	20	18	16	17	15		-10	-5
		Sector Q1 age 18	16.2	17.1	16.8	15.6	16.9		0.7	1.3
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	Population age 18	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.2	18.1		-0.4	0
		UCLan Q1 age 18	N/A	N/A	N/A	DP	N/A		N/A	N/A
		Sector Q1 age 18	DP	25	15	DP	DP		N/A	N/A

Table 3: proportions of students in POLAR quintiles 1 and 5 (source: HESA data)

The picture in terms of participation of under-represented groups amongst part-time students has shown a high degree of change at UCLan over the past five years. From an initial gap of 1pp in 2013-14, the proportion of POLAR 4 quintile 1 students overtook the proportion of quintile 5 students in 2014-15 to give a gap of -4pp. This negative gap was retained at a reduced level of -1pp in 2015-16, but in the following year, the gap flipped and widened significantly to 5pp in 2016-17 and this remained for 2017-18. The significant reduction in part-time student numbers during this period at least partially explains the gaps and means that the majority of gaps are not statistically significant.

Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), at 31.3% (2017/18), the proportion of 18 year olds from quintile 1 areas within the UCLan population is greater than the proportion within the UK population, which is 22.1%. Over the past five years, the proportion from this group studying at UCLan has increased year on year, from 24.6% in 2013-14. At UCLan, the highest entry rate per ten thousand is for quintile 1, with quintiles 3, 2 and 4 all having higher rates than quintile 5. The gap in 2017/18 between IMD quintile 1 in the population and for UCLan was -9.2pp.

For IMD quintile 2 in 2017-18, the proportion of 18 year olds within the UCLan population was 18.4% compared with 20.3% within the population, a gap of 1.8pp, which is not statistically significant. The proportion from this group at UCLan has fluctuated over the past five years, from 18.5% in 2013-14, to a high of 20.1% in 2015-16 and a low of 17.9% in 2016-17. For IMD quintile 3, the proportion within the population is very close to the proportion at UCLan (18.9% and 17.5% respectively), with a gap of 0.2pp, which is not statistically significant. For IMD quintile 4, the proportion of 18 year olds within the population is 18.9%. At UCLan, the proportion from this quintile has fluctuated over the last five years, but the overall trend is down slightly (from 19.6% to 16.6%). For IMD quintile 5, the proportion of 18 year olds within the population in 2017-18 was 19.9% and 15.1% at UCLan, with a gap of 4.8pp. The trend at UCLan for this group over the past five years has been downwards, from a high of 19.8% in 2013-14 to a low of 15.1% in 2017-18. Given the increases in quintiles 1 and 3, these reductions are to be expected.

The proportion of 18 year olds from IMD quintile 1 within the part-time student population at UCLan has fluctuated over the last five years and so gaps in access have also fluctuated, from a low of -4pp in 2013/14, to a high of 2.8pp in 2015/16, which fell to -1.5pp in 2016/17, but rose again sharply to 22.1pp in the most recent figures (2017/18). These figures are based on small numbers and relate primarily to those studying other undergraduate courses (not first degrees), but this upward trajectory is of concern. The make-up of the part-time population does appear to have fluctuated considerably over this period:

participation by part-time students from IMD quintile 2 in comparison to levels within the population fell markedly during the period, whilst that of students from quintiles 3 and 4 rose notably; participation from IMD quintile 5 students also fell during this period. However, we will investigate this gap further to enable us to identify the drivers and develop appropriate interventions.

Both measures, show that, for full-time students, UCLan makes a significant contribution to the access agenda at sector level. The data also suggest that further increases in numbers of students from the lower quintiles using either measure should not be actively sought, as this would risk creating an opposite imbalance.

Success

Non-continuation

The gaps in continuation between most and least represented groups have reduced over the last five years for all groups at UCLan other than 'undergraduate with postgraduate component'.

Percentage gap in continuation by Young participation (POLAR 4)			2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Trend	Change 2012/13 to 2016/17	Change 2015/16 to 2016/17
Full time	First degree entrants	UCLan	6	-1	2	1	0		-5	-1
	Other undergraduate entrants	UCLan	10	9	5	N	-5		-15	N/A
	All undergraduate entrants	UCLan	6	0	2	1	0		-5	-1
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	UCLan	DP	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
Part time	First degree entrants	UCLan	DP	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
	Other undergraduate entrants	UCLan	6	DP	-10	5	DP		N/A	N/A
	All undergraduate entrants	UCLan	5	DP	-5	0	DP		N/A	N/A
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	UCLan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A

Table 4: Percentage gap in continuation by POLAR 4 (source: HESA data)

The numbers in the latter category are small and the gaps are not statistically significant. Similarly, the 'other undergraduate' category has seen a significant reduction in the gap between the two most recent years, but low numbers make it difficult to draw firm conclusions. Numbers for part-time students are too low to provide a complete dataset. Again, this does not mean these should be ignored, but it is difficult to use these data to set meaningful targets, so this will be an area to monitor and seek further sources of evidence on whether there is a real issue here – if this is found to be the case, we will take action to address it.

UCLan-Young participation (POLAR 4) population			2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Trend	Change 2012/13 to 2016/17	Change 2015/16 to 2016/17
Full time	First degree entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	400	440	530	490	410		20	-80
		POLAR4 - Q5	530	650	730	560	590		60	30
	Other undergraduate entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	50	60	30	N	50		0	N/A
		POLAR4 - Q5	70	100	60	40	40		-40	0
	All undergraduate entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	450	510	580	530	470		20	-60
		POLAR4 - Q5	630	780	820	620	650		20	20
Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	DP	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A	
	POLAR4 - Q5	DP	30	40	30	DP		N/A	N/A	
Part time	First degree entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	DP	DP	N	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
		POLAR4 - Q5	DP	N	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A
	Other undergraduate entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	70	DP	40	60	DP		N/A	N/A
		POLAR4 - Q5	80	N	40	40	30		-50	-10
	All undergraduate entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	80	DP	40	60	DP		N/A	N/A
		POLAR4 - Q5	90	30	50	50	40		-50	-10
Undergraduate with postgraduate component entrants	POLAR4 - Q1	DP	DP	DP	DP	DP		N/A	N/A	
	POLAR4 - Q5	DP	90	90	90	DP		N/A	N/A	

Table 5: POLAR 4 population in the cohorts (source: HESA data)

Using IMD, the gaps in continuation rates are also very small: for example, the gap for all undergraduates between quintile 1 and all other quintiles ranged between 2.3pp and 1pp over the last five-year period (2012/13 to 2016/17). The picture is similar for part-time students and when comparing quintiles 3, 4 or 5 with 1 or 2. Again, these data suggest that UCLan makes a positive contribution towards equality of opportunity at sector level. Our evaluation indicates that our bursary schemes contribute to this. We provide a significant level of financial support focused on enabling students to focus on their studies, rather than the need to earn money, and achieve success during their time at UCLan. Use of the OFFA evaluation toolkit has shown that students with low incomes who are receiving financial support are more likely to continue into the second year of their course; less likely to cease study without gaining a qualification; and slightly more likely to obtain a first or upper-second class degree.

Feedback from students and case studies of those in receipt of financial support indicate that this is highly valued and makes a significant difference to some students' ability to stay the course. Our experience of administering the National Scholarship Programme taught us the importance of providing more structured support to our lowest income students over the full duration of their study.

Attainment

Using POLAR 4, the gaps in attainment for full-time undergraduate students at UCLan from quintile 1 compared with all other quintiles are not statistically significant, but have been increasing over the last three years for which data are available. At 9pp in the most recent year (2017/18), this is a gap that has caused us concern. Using IMD, the gap in attainment for full-time undergraduate students at UCLan from quintile 1 compared with all other quintiles was 12pp in 2017/18. This is comparatively low, but has increased slightly over recent years (although the increase is not statistically significant). For part-time students, the gap is 15pp in the most recent year. Attainment gaps using these measures, whilst not all statistically significant, are higher than we would like to see, so in response, we have been piloting the introduction of a Peer Assisted Study Scheme (PASS) and are also exploring the feasibility of using learning analytics to enable us to identify students in need of support at an earlier stage. Early indications are that PASS has been welcomed by those involved, but its full impact will not be known until 2022.

Progression to employment or further study

Using POLAR 4, the gaps in rates of progression to employment or further study between those from quintile 1 and those from all other quintiles over the period 2012/13 to 2016/17 are not statistically significant, but have been decreasing for all full-time groupings. The most recent gap (2016-17) was 3.1pp. Using IMD, the gaps between those from quintile 1 and those from all other quintiles over the same period are also not statistically significant. These gaps have decreased over the past five years, and the most recent gap (in 2016-17) for all full-time undergraduate leavers was 0.6pp. For part-time leavers, lower numbers have meant that the gaps using POLAR 4 have not been statistically significant during this period. This is also largely the case with IMD, with the exception of first degree leavers. In this latter grouping, the 2016/17 gap of 17.8pp was found to be statistically significant, which is of concern., This will be an area we will explore further to identify drivers and appropriate interventions, but the lack of continuity in available datasets for progression means that we are unable to set specific targets at this time.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

The proportion of full-time Asian 18 year olds at UCLan has increased over the past five years (2013/14 to 2017/18) from 14.4% to 20.6%, compared to an overall population level of 8.2%. As a result, the participation gap has been a negative figure throughout the period and reached -12.4pp in 2017-18. The entry rate for every ten thousand in the population reached a high of 55 that same year, the highest rate for all ethnic groups. For part-time students, the proportion has fluctuated over the same period as has the participation gap, which has not been statistically significant. We will continue to monitor this and act if new data gives cause for concern.

Over the past five years, the proportion of Black students at UCLan has fluctuated markedly, from a low of 2.3% in 2013-14 to a high of 4.5% in 2014-15, falling thereafter to 3.1% in 2017-18. During this period, the proportion of Black 18 year olds within the population was 3.6%. At its greatest the gap was 1.1pp and the most recent gap was 0.5pp, but in the latter years, the gap has not been statistically significant. Numbers of Black part-time students have been low throughout this period, meaning that data is not reliable for use in identifying gaps. We will continue to monitor this and act if new data gives cause for concern.

The proportion of students with mixed ethnicity at UCLan has grown from a low of 2.2% in 2013-14 to a high of 4.8% in 2017-18, whilst the proportion within the population was 3.2%. As a consequence, the participation gap at UCLan for this ethnic group fell from 0.9pp to -1.6pp. The proportion of the population with an ethnicity described as 'other' has been 1.1% during the last five-years, whilst the proportion at UCLan has fluctuated, resulting in very slight growth over the period as a whole, from 0.5% to 0.6%. As a result, the participation gap for this group has reduced from 0.6pp to 0.4pp. The white proportion of the population at UCLan has fallen from 80.4% to 70.9%, against an overall

population of 84%. As a result, the participation gap for this group has increased from 3.6pp to 13.1pp over the past five years. Within Preston and the Lancashire wards closest to the University campuses, the black, Asian and minority ethnic population accounts for up to 26.8% of the population, so at least some of this gap is accounted for by local demography, but we are conscious of wider concerns around participation levels amongst white working class males, so our monitoring, evaluation and analysis work will include exploration of this. Part-time numbers are again too low for reliable use in identifying gaps.

Success

Non-continuation

At UCLan, none of the gaps in continuation rates by ethnicity were large or statistically significant over the past five years (2012/14 to 2016/17). We have work in train to increase continuation rates generally and are mindful that this could be more effective with some groups than others, so will monitor this to ensure gaps are not created.

Attainment

The gaps in attainment between white and black students have reduced over the past five years at UCLan. For all undergraduates, there has not been a steady trend, with a significant reduction in 2014-15, followed by an almost complete reversal in the following year. Since then, the reduction has been more consistent. The overall reduction during the period was -7pp.

Percentage gap in attainment between white and black students			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Trend	Change 2013/14 to 2017/18	Change 2016/17 to 2017/18
Full time	First degree leavers	UCLan	24	16	24	19	17		-7	-2
	All undergraduate leavers	UCLan	24	16	24	19	17		-7	-2
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component leavers	UCLan	DP	DP	DP	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A
Part time	First degree leavers	UCLan	N	N	N	N	N		N/A	N/A
	All undergraduate leavers	UCLan	N	N	N	N	N		N/A	N/A
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component leavers	UCLan	N/A	N/A	DP	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A

Gap not statistically significant
 No statistical significance between the years
 N Fewer than 20 students in the population
 N/A No students reported in the population
 DP Suppression for data protection reasons

Table 7: Gaps in attainment between white and black students (source: HESA data)

The gaps in attainment between white and Asian students at UCLan have fluctuated over the past five years between 9 and 11pp,. Our work in this area has shown that this is not a particularly homogenous group, so data at this level can be misleading. For example, attainment levels for those from 'Asian or Asian British – Indian' and 'other Asian backgrounds' is much more on a par with their white peers, but attainment for those from 'Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi', 'Asian or Asian British – Pakistani' and 'Chinese' ethnicities is between 29pp and 17pp lower. This further disaggregation raises issues with low numbers, so qualitative data is being gathered to facilitate appropriate interventions.

Attainment gaps between white students and those of mixed ethnicity are not statistically significant at UCLan, but have fluctuated from 3pp in 2013-14 to 5pp in 2017-18 for full-time students, with insufficient data for part-time students. There is insufficient data regarding those from other ethnicities. Again, qualitative data and other sources of information are important and included under our priorities for monitoring, evaluation and analysis (see section 2) is an action to source appropriate additional data to help us understand the drivers of gaps and how best to address them.

At an aggregated level, the attainment gap for full-time students between white and black, Asian and minority ethnic students at UCLan has fluctuated similarly to the gap between white and black students, but there has been a 0.7pp reduction over the last five years, resulting in a gap of 11.8pp. The overall black, Asian and minority ethnic attainment gap has been an area of focus in our Access Agreements over the past few years and we have been undertaking extensive work in this area to identify barriers and effective approaches to removing/ overcoming these. We are encouraged to see some positive impact, albeit at a lower rate than we would have liked, and see this as a firm foundation on which to build more focused work on the attainment gap between Black and white students.

Progression to employment or further study

The majority of the gaps in progression to employment or further study by ethnicity at UCLan over the most recent five years for which data are available are not statistically significant. However, gaps do appear to have increased over the last two years and a statistically significant gap has emerged

between white and Asian students. Further analysis of the data has shown that those Asian students who are in employment or further study have higher rates of graduate level employment than white students, so it may be that these students are more able to delay taking up employment until they secure higher level jobs. We will continue to monitor this as the switch to Graduate Outcomes data takes effect, to ensure all our graduates are able to achieve strong progression rates, and take action where necessary.

1.3 Mature students

Access

The proportion of full-time mature students (age 21 and over) at UCLan was 38.8% in 2017-18 and has increased over the most recent five-year period (2013-14 to 2017-18), by 7.8pp. The proportion amongst part-time students was 89% in 2017-18. UCLan therefore makes a positive contribution to access for mature students.

Success:

Non-continuation

Continuation rates for full-time mature students (all undergraduates) at UCLan have improved over the past five-year period (2012-13 to 2016-17), rising from 84.7% to 86.4%. Continuation rates for part-time mature students have been lower, but have risen from 71.5% to 77.7% over the same period. Although these figures suggest that initiatives to improve continuation rates for mature students are having a positive impact, we will continue to work to reduce the gap in continuation rates between young and mature part-time students.

Attainment

Attainment rates for full-time mature students (all undergraduates) at UCLan have also improved over the past five years, from 68% achieving a first or upper second class degree in 2013-14, to 71.3% in 2017-18, albeit with a drop in the rate between the two most recent years. For part-time mature students, the UCLan picture shows a rate of 62%, however, there has been a marked drop between the two most recent years, so this will be an area to monitor to ensure it isn't the start of a downwards trend.

Progression to employment or further study

Rates of progression to employment or further study for full-time mature students at UCLan have shown considerable improvement over the past five years, rising from 71.4% in 2012-13 to 82% in 2016-17. For part-time mature students, the picture is even more favourable, with 90% of UCLan students progressing to employment or further study in 2016-17. UCLan therefore makes a positive contribution to progression for mature students.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

The proportion of full-time disabled students at UCLan in 2017-18 was 13.6%. Changes for different types of disability have been small (all lower than 1%). However, for part-time students, the proportion of disabled students at UCLan is low and saw a marked fall between 2016-17 and 2017-18 from 9.9% to 6%. This pattern is similar across all types of disabilities. This will be an area to explore further to understand why there is such a difference and identify effective measures to increase numbers.

Success:

Non-continuation

None of the gaps in continuation rates at UCLan between disabled and non-disabled students have been statistically significant over the past five years. In the most recent year (2016-17), the gap was 2pp for full-time students and 0 for part-time. When looking at specific types of disability, it is apparent that students with multiple disabilities are more likely to leave their course early, followed by those with mental health issues. Continuation rates for both of these groups have improved in recent years following changes in our support services, however rates for those with cognitive and learning disabilities have declined. Those with sensory medical and physical disabilities have continued at a

slightly higher rate than those with no disability in three of the last five years. We need to explore how we might make better use of other sources of information on this to enable us to better understand the drivers.

Attainment

Whilst there are gaps between the attainment of disabled and non-disabled students at UCLan, these gaps are not statistically significant due to the relatively small numbers of disabled students and to fluctuations in those numbers. The increase of 5.4pp in the proportion of disabled students achieving first or upper second class degrees is positive, but is below the rate of increase for non-disabled students, which was 8.1pp over the same period. Again, the rate of improvement is lowest for students with multiple disabilities and mental health issues, although in most of the last five years (2013-14 to 2017-18), the latter group has performed as well as or better than those with no disability. This is an area where we can do more to contribute towards the overall OfS target of eliminating the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled and non-disabled students during the period of this plan.

Percentage gap in attainment between non-disabled and disabled students			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Trend	Change 2013/14 to 2017/18	Change 2016/17 to 2017/18
Full time	First degree leavers	UCLan	2	3	5	1	4		3	3
	All undergraduate leavers	UCLan	1	3	5	1	4		3	3
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component leavers	UCLan	DP	DP	DP	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A
Part time	First degree leavers	UCLan	5	25	N	5	N		N/A	N/A
	All undergraduate leavers	UCLan	5	25	N	5	N		N/A	N/A
	Undergraduate with postgraduate component leavers	UCLan	DP	N/A	DP	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A

Gap not statistically significant
 No statistical significance between the years
 N Fewer than 20 students in the population
 N/A No students reported in the population
 DP Suppression for data protection reasons

Table 8: Gap in attainment between non-disabled and disabled students (source: HESA data)

Progression to employment or further study

Gaps in rates of progression to employment or further study for disabled students compared to those with no known disability have improved over the past five years (2012-13 to 2016-17) and not been statistically significant. The most recent gap (in 2016-17) was -3pp. At the more detailed level, students with cognitive and learning disabilities have often seen better outcomes than those with no disability. Patterns at this level have not all been consistent, for example students with multiple disabilities have tended to have rates just below those with no disability, but in our most recent year of data (2016-17) this group fared significantly better, with 85% in employment or further study, compared to 74% without a disability. We will continue to monitor this as the switch to Graduate Outcomes data takes effect, to ensure there are no material gaps for any group.

1.5 Care leavers

Access

We have seen a marked increase in the numbers of (self-declared) care leavers studying with us at UCLan over the last five years:

Full time Care leavers (rounded)

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
First degree	25	150	290	295	280
Other undergraduate	0	10	20	10	10
All undergraduate	30	155	310	305	290

Part time Care leavers (rounded)

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
First degree	0	5	15	20	25
Other undergraduate	0	10	15	15	10
All undergraduate	0	15	30	35	35

Table 9: Numbers of care leavers at UCLan (source: internal data as supplied to HESA)

Success: Non-continuation, Attainment and Progression to employment or further study

Using the OFFA Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit, we have identified that outcomes for care leavers studying with us have improved markedly in recent years. Numbers are too low for other undergraduate courses to allow inclusion, but the figures for full-time first degree entrants are as follows:

Full time first degree entrants (%)		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Trend
Source: Financial Support Evaluation HESA data		(2010/11)	(2011/12)	(2012/13)	(2013/14)	(2014/15)	(2015/16)	
Degree completion-Gained first degree or higher qualification	Care leaver	50.0	70.0	89.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Not a care leaver	87.8	84.7	92.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Gap	37.8	14.7	2.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Positive graduate outcomes (DLHE)	Care leaver	N	88.9	66.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Not a care leaver	77.5	72.1	63.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Gap	N/A	-16.8	-3.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Degree result- First and upper second class degree	Care leaver	40.0	26.7	51.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Not a care leaver	56.5	46.4	60.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Gap	16.5	19.7	8.3	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Table 10: Outcomes for care leavers at UCLan (longitudinal study examining completed cohort outcomes using OFFA toolkit and HESA data)

These improvements coincide with the introduction of specific support packages and close liaison with local agencies working with young people in care/care leavers, so we are very pleased to see the positive outcomes from this work.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Our initial examination of the data we have of the intersections of different measures of disadvantage has identified challenges relating to small numbers, availability of some data items and the complexity of the methodology required to enable us to understand the impacts and draw firm conclusions on which to base future plans. We will develop this area of analysis further over the period of this plan. In the meantime, we will evaluate the effectiveness of current initiatives to enhance inclusivity and measure the impact on attainment, progression and satisfaction across and within the student population.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Carers: Following identification by our Student Support Service and our Students Union of the specific needs of students who are also carers, we have provided specialist support to such students in recent years. We have recently started to collect full data on the numbers of students impacted, and are finding that it is not uncommon for students to self-declare as carers in error, so we are treating these data with caution. For example, to date this year, 1479 students have identified themselves as carers through online enrolment, but of these only 129 have provided us with evidence of meeting the criteria for a student carer and are receiving support; 860 have not responded to our three contact attempts; and a further 319 have confirmed to us they are a student carer, but have not supplied evidence or engaged in any further contact. It is unclear whether those in this latter category simply do not require support, whether they are not strictly carers, or whether they have other reasons for not engaging further. We will continue to refine our monitoring of this area to ensure we are able to identify the impact of our work with this group.

Estranged students: Similarly, we have recently identified the additional support needs of students who are estranged from their families and have put support packages in place. Last year we supported a total of 54 students. Again, our data require further work as we rely on students self-declaring, but we are developing plans to refine this.

Children from military families: Our work with military veterans has highlighted barriers to access and success in HE faced by those from a military background. We have now commenced asking students to declare this background during enrolment, so that we can start to make an assessment of issues in this area.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities (GRT): Numbers of students at UCLan from GRT communities are small, which makes it challenging to identify clear impacts from our work. However, research outcomes from our EU funded PEER action research programme with 550 Roma children and young people across nine EU countries indicated the need for increased attention on the provision of

appropriate education for members of GRT communities in the UK. Strategies for success to guide young people to be more open to the idea of going into HE include attending with other community members they know and building trust between the education establishment and communities.

Refugees: Numbers of refugees within our local area have begun to increase in recent years but remain low. We do not currently have much data, but are exploring what is available.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

We are committed to enabling people, irrespective of their backgrounds, to fulfil their potential, develop as global citizens and meet their life and career goals. We therefore work with students from all backgrounds, but we are aware that some face greater challenges than others in accessing and succeeding in higher education. We therefore focus our access and participation work particularly on students from under-represented groups.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Our overall aim is to enable people, no matter their background, to fulfil their potential and meet their life and career goals.

Based on assessment of our performance, we have identified the following areas on which to focus our work:

- **Improve attitudes towards Higher Education** of young people that we work with from under-represented groups – By 2024-25, we will improve positive attitudes by 10% (A2).
- **Support attainment-raising in Schools:**
 - Our GCSE Science workshops aim to improve pupil performance in certain areas. We hope to achieve a 15% improvement by 2025 amongst participants (A3).
 - During 2022-23 we will work with Schools and the [Lancashire Uni-Connect partnership](#) to develop a programme of work to start in 2023-24 (A4).
- **Care-experienced students** – By 2024-25, 30% of the young people we engage with who have experience of the care system will progress to Higher Education (A5).
- We will close the gap between **Black student and White student attainment** of a good degree by 50% by 2024-25 (S2)
- We will close the attainment gap between **disabled and non-disabled students** by 2024-25 (S3)
- We will close the gap between the number of disabled students progressing to **highly skilled employment or further study** compared to non-disabled students by 50% by 2024-25
- **Diversifying our pathways for learning** – By 2024-25, we will:
 - Increase the number of **degree apprenticeships** by 15%
 - Work with our **partnership network** to deliver level 4 and 5 [Higher Technical Qualification](#) (HTQ) in at least seven partner institutions

Our analysis shows that we have been particularly successful in widening **access** broadly so our objectives here are:

- A1. Continue our current highly effective practice to ensure we remain at the forefront of success in widening access and maintain our current strong contribution to the national picture, throughout the period of this plan. In particular, we are committed to maintaining our position against POLAR4, IMD and mature student indicators for access.
- A2. Raise aspirations and improve attitudes towards higher education of young people living in low-participation neighbourhoods through sustained programmes of outreach, resulting in a 9 percent increase in positive attitudes amongst participants, by 2025. We will distribute an annual attitudinal survey that aims to measure HE-capital with all participating schools. In 2021-22 we will collect baseline data with Year 7 students and those in other years who have yet to engage with outreach activity (as assessed by HEAT tracking). From 2021-2025 we will measure the shift in the perceptions and attitudes of learners who have engaged with SUN programme activities and aim to

see a positive shift in learners who have taken part in three or more activities. As interim milestones, we are aiming for a 3% improvement in 2022-23, 6% in 2023-24, 9% in 2024-25. We intend to develop this into a formal target once the data is available.

- A3. Contribute to the improvement of attainment rates prior to higher education through programmes of work focused on GCSE Science, resulting in a 15 percent improvement in results for GCSE level questions amongst participants in each programme, by 2025.
- A4. Work strategically with schools, colleges, Uni Connect partnerships, and other key stakeholders to understand how we can support primary and secondary education for young people across Lancashire.
- A5. Work with care-leavers to increase HE-progression rates, resulting in 30% of participants entering HE by 2025.

Our analysis shows that we make a positive contribution to **student success** for a number of groupings, but there is more work to do. Our priorities here are as follows:

- S1. Continue our effective practice in supporting students from our target groups to complete their studies, through financial and other support packages and initiatives to ensure continuation rates for these groups remain on a par with those from less disadvantaged backgrounds throughout the lifetime of this plan.
- S2. To eliminate the unexplained gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white and Black students by 2025. We are not currently able to identify the proportion of the gap which is 'unexplained' so we will use the following interim target: to reduce the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white and Black students by 50% by 2025 (see linked priority M5). In the longer term, our aim is to remove all ethnicity attainment gaps.
- S3. Eliminate the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled students and non-disabled students by 2025, including a focus on disabled part-time students.

Our analysis shows that we make a positive contribution to **progression to employment or further study** for the majority of disadvantaged groups, based on DLHE data. Our priorities in this area are:

- P1. Continue our current programme of work to enhance rates of progression to employment or further study, providing opportunities throughout students' time with us. The lack of a continuing dataset means we are unable to set specific targets for employment and further study, but we will do so as soon as the new Graduate Outcomes data allows. In the meantime, we aim to ensure students from target groups benefit from our support for student/graduate start-ups and enterprise skills development and have set ourselves a target of facilitating 6 start-ups and/or participating in enterprise skills development sessions for each year of this plan.
- P2. Work with the new Graduate Outcomes data, as it emerges, to assess whether changes from DLHE data have resulted in significant and/or material gaps in outcomes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, by 2022.

Our analysis also shows that there are areas where our understanding of issues/drivers and outcomes could be enhanced by further **monitoring, evaluation and analysis**. Our priorities in this area are:

- M1. Explore ways in which we can use other data/information to inform and assess our access work with those from disadvantaged backgrounds for which numbers are low, including those on 'other undergraduate' or 'undergraduate with postgraduate component' courses; part-time courses; disabled students; and carers. We aim to have a clear approach by the end of 2020/21.
- M2. Enhance our understanding of the drivers affecting access, attainment and progression by students from POLAR 4 and IMD quintile 1, by 2022.
- M3. Monitor the impact of our work to increase continuation rates generally to ensure this does not result in significant or material gaps between students from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more advantaged peers, by 2022.
- M4. Explore ways in which we can use other data/information to inform and assess our student success work with those from disadvantaged backgrounds for which numbers are low, including

continuation rates for disabled students; carers; estranged students; and children from military families. We aim to have a clear approach by 2025.

- M5. Develop methodology to establish the proportion of the attainment gap between white and Black students which is unexplained and enable us to set measurable targets to eliminate this by 2025. Methodology to be developed by 2021.
- M6. Develop our analysis of the intersections of disadvantage to ensure we are gathering the right data and monitoring differences in outcomes over the full student lifecycle to enable us to understand our performance better and develop appropriate responses for our next Access and Participation Plan, from 2025 onwards. This will help to identify issues that might be hidden by less sophisticated analysis.
- M7. Examine how we might make better use of other data/information to enhance our understanding of differential outcomes in progression to employment or further study and the drivers for these. We aim to have a clear approach by 2024/25.

As our analysis, monitoring and evaluation progresses, it is likely that we will identify further priorities and strategic targets.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

We take an evidence informed approach to change (see logic chain diagram, Appendix 1) set within the context of our strategy and values. We have a long history of success in widening access to under-represented groups. It is core to our mission and values and features strongly in our overall University Strategy. This is expressed through the following strategic aims, which are mapped to our strategic priorities (from page 13 onwards):

1. Develop ways of **identifying students early** who are not engaging and ensuring timely referrals to support (Priority S1)
2. Establish, embed, and extend **flexible and diverse modes of learning** to increase student choice (Priority S1)
3. Offer **financial support**, including bursaries and hardship funding for eligible students, and practical support and advice around money and for students applying to [Student Finance England](#) (Priority S1)
4. Undertake a **university-wide approach** to equality, diversity and inclusion (Priority S1).
5. Provide a full range of student support services including inclusive learning, mental health, counselling and wellbeing to facilitate student achievement (Priority S1).
6. **Engage students** in developing personal, social, and professional skills, confidence, and emotional intelligence (Priority P2).
7. Embed **careers support**, employability, and graduate attributes into the curriculum (Priority P2).
8. **Engage external partners** to work together on improving access to higher education, success in their course, and progression to employment or further study (Priority A1, A2, S1 and P1).
9. Extend our **programme of work with schools** – this supports more pupils from under-represented groups to attain good grades and progress to study for a higher education qualification (Priority A2 and A3).

Alignment with other strategies

Access and Participation are at the heart of our mission and strategy. The University 2021-28 strategy outlines our vision to transform lives by delivering an outstanding educational experience, creating prosperity and opportunity in the communities we serve. Our aspirations are to provide second to none support and opportunities for personal growth that gives our students the skills, knowledge and experience they need to succeed at life. We will champion equality, diversity and inclusion to make sure our students thrive, whatever their background.

The following supporting strategies are the primary mechanisms for delivery of these strategic aims:

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: Our EDI strategy focuses on creating a sense of belonging for staff and students, which underpins many of our approaches to access and participation. Enhancing sense of belonging is core to our aspiration to eliminate or significantly narrow disparities and inequalities that currently present in our students. We will strengthen our efforts to support social mobility across all of our communities. Our ongoing work across EDI will focus on the following four pillars. These are to:

- Diversify our people profile.
- Eliminate or significantly narrow gaps within the learner body relating to recruitment, progression, awards and graduate outcomes in relation to protected characteristics.
- Develop an enhanced inclusive culture and mindset within the staff and learner body, leading to a stronger sense of belonging for all.
- Develop a national and international research profile in relation to EDI.

Sub-Strategy 1 Student Opportunity and Success: Our first priority must be, as always, the success of our students. We'll enable them to seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work, and for life. We will provide a superlative, inclusive student experience, ensuring that all our students – irrespective of their background – have the opportunities and support they need to access, participate and succeed in learning. Our objectives linked to this strategy are:

- Retention, ensuring we have the mechanisms and structures in place to support every single student to progress and complete their studies successfully, irrespective of their background and circumstances.
- Attainment, to make sure our attainment and the percentage of good degrees is in line with our competitors. Our approach to assessment and academic support means every student will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.
- Graduate outcomes, by supporting our students to secure a rewarding career in skilled employment, study further, or establish their own successful businesses. Our students will gain the real-world experience employers need, making our talented graduates highly sought-after across the world.
- Second-to-none support, with an effective, whole-university approach, maintaining a consistent and joined-up support network, with an emphasis on early intervention.
- Access and participation, becoming recognised as the exemplary, inclusive, university of opportunity that we are. We'll be even more supportive, celebrating diversity so our students benefit from a vibrant learning community and sense of belonging.
- Student voice and experience, by listening and responding effectively to every single student. This includes maintaining appropriate channels of informal and formal feedback and responding to all feedback in a timely manner. We'll also establish dashboards to draw out major themes and help us plan for future needs.

DigiLearn Strategy: Our DigiLearn Strategy focuses on the use of technology to improve access and inclusivity, reflecting our whole institution approach and commitment to equality of opportunity. This strategy is delivered primarily by the Technology Enhances Learning and Teaching team, in close collaboration with academics and other colleagues across the university.

Pennine Lancashire Strategy: As part of our Pennine Lancashire Strategy, the University continues to invest in the development of our Burnley Campus. Pennine Lancashire, which comprises the boroughs of Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale has a population of over half a million residents and is the only area in the UK of this size without a university (PLLACE, 2008). Three of the five boroughs feature in the top 15% of the most deprived areas in the UK: Burnley (17th) being the most deprived followed by Hyndburn (28th) and Pendle (42nd). Our overarching aims here are to:

- Become a regional asset situated in the heart of Pennine Lancashire with national and international recognition and reach.
- Deliver the benefits of higher education to individuals, employers and the wider community and contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of the Pennine Lancashire area.
- Help to transform life opportunities and empower our students and staff to achieve to their full potential.

Sub-strategy 5: Our Place in the World: This sub-strategy outlines how we will fulfil our role as an anchor institution with a multi-campus presence. It's our duty to enrich the cultural lives of our communities and champion social progress. We'll never stop striving for positive change in the lives of our students and local communities. So, we'll continue to create opportunities for them to improve their lives, achieve their potential, and secure a successful future for themselves and their families. We will:

- Promote social mobility and raise aspirations amongst our communities by engaging with people of all ages from all walks of life.
- Widen and develop workforce skills by training essential workers. We'll also work with businesses to promote growth and increased productivity through our innovation and knowledge transfer activities.

All of these strategies contribute to our strategic objectives for access and participation. By creating a whole institution approach in which inclusivity and accessibility are embedded within our practice at every stage of the student lifecycle and in all our locations, we aim to create a learning environment within which all students, including those within our target groups, have equity in opportunity.

Strategic measures

The University has a whole-institution approach to widening participation. We are committed to closing the gaps in participation and ensuring students from under-represented backgrounds succeed at UCLan and have good progression routes. We are committed to meeting the objectives and targets of this plan and have a strategic approach to achieving these changes, working across the whole institution. We are keen to avoid knee-jerk responses to spikes in the data. Whilst we will use data as an evidence base and as a measure of whether we are achieving the changes required, we will take a longer-term and holistic view in our analysis. This will help us maintain progress towards meeting our key aims and avoid confusion in what our institutional priorities are.

Access

Priority A1: Continuing effective practice: Engaging with the communities around our campuses in Preston, Burnley, Whitehaven and Cyprus as a responsible corporate neighbour is core to our approach as a civic university. We work in a variety of ways including sponsorship, sharing of expertise, offering use of resources and representing our areas in regional and national debates, to address cultural, educational and social issues alongside multiple partner agencies. Many of the locations in close proximity to our campuses are experiencing significant levels of deprivation, including Blackpool, Burnley, Hyndburn and Pendle. We are investing in these areas, examining the impacts of poverty, gathering qualitative data on increasing social equality, working to raise aspirations and increase levels of educational attainment in these areas.

Collaboration is an important part of our effective practice. UCLan is the lead institution for the Lancashire Uni Connect Future U. We are also a partner in the Cumbria Uni Connect, Hello Future. Through the Uni Connect partnerships we work collaboratively with other HE providers to support widening access for under-represented groups across our region. Collaboration through these partnerships will support activity that aims to close the gaps in access for specific groups which are under-represented in higher education and raise attainment. Specific aims will be developed for this work, using evidence such as regional outreach mapping, alongside county-wide data on HE progression. Collaborative activity will prioritise care-experienced students, disabled students and learners living in low participation neighbourhoods. We will continue to analyse and review the needs of the students within our local region and where gaps or needs are identified, we will work collaboratively with others to address this appropriately. UCLan is the lead institution for the Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance Lancashire and North West Hub. Through this hub we will work collaboratively with other HEIs across the region to engage young people from military families. Analysis from our assessment of performance shows that we perform well on access targets. We will continue to explore if we have specific areas of under-representation through our analysis of intersectionality. We will also look at whether we have under-representation at a faculty and school level. If we find specific areas where there are gaps in access, these findings will inform our outreach activity from 2020-21 onwards.

We are facing a STEM skills shortage nationally and regionally and as the 2017 Industrial Strategy outlines, STEM-related jobs are likely to double compared with those in other professions by 2023. As

such, we will deliver a great deal of STEM-engagement activity as part of our WP programmes to highlight the pathways through HE into professional careers, which are likely to be in demand. We work in partnership with the Royal Institution of Great Britain (Ri) running a Young Scientist Centre, where we offer a range of STEM-related workshops. Workshops are free of charge for all primary schools that have a high proportion of pupils from under-represented groups and all state secondary schools. We run the Lancashire Science Festival, in partnership with STEM industry collaborators, which is aimed at schools and families and reaches over 12,000 people per year. The festival has a high proportion of visitors from areas of high deprivation (IMD) and our research¹ shows that the festival positively impacts parents' attitudes towards HE and STEM.

Priority A2: Work strategically with schools to improve attitudes towards Higher Education: We take a strategic approach to widening participation and has a long-term partnership programme with primary and secondary schools through our School-University Network (SUN). With these partner schools we deliver a sustained and progressive programme of outreach activity for students from groups that are under-represented in HE. Our aim is to raise aspirations across the school and increase HE participation. We aim to achieve this change by delivering a programme of activities with our partner schools that develop and build HE capital from primary age onwards. As we expand our campus in Burnley, we will be working with schools across the region to develop strategic partnerships and understand how we can best support schools and colleges across the area.

Priority A3: Support attainment raising in schools: We run workshops in the UCLan and Ri Young Scientist Centre that focus on the Science practical lessons covered in the GCSE syllabus. The workshops give pupils access to specialist equipment in small groups, which are often not available in schools. We are assessing whether the workshops improve performance in sample GCSE questions linked to the workshop content through a randomised control trial.

We will work with the Uni Connect partnerships to explore whether tutoring programmes that have been offered to post-16 groups can be adapted and offered to KS4 pupils. We will work strategically with schools to understand how we can support attainment-raising and support charities and other third-sector organisations working in Lancashire to achieve this aim. We will continue to deliver activity that enriches and supports curriculum delivery in different subject areas covering KS2-4 and use evaluative methods to understand whether these interventions impact attainment.

We will deliver our new Scholar Programme aimed with KS5 pupils. The programme will help develop independent study skills and support pupils to complete a research project. The programme will develop academic skills needed in Higher Education and we will evaluate the programme to understand whether it has any impact on KS5 attainment.

Priority A4: Working with care-experienced people to increase HE progression rates: We will continue to work with other HEIs, local authorities and charities to offer a collaborative programme of WP activity for care-experienced and estranged young people. We are developing a forum for care-experienced students that aims to provide an informal support network for those participating. The long-term plan is to extend the function of this programme to become a group mentoring project, inviting young people with experience of care who are interested in university to attend. The aim of this will be to help access to HE and increase students' support networks and chance of succeeding if they choose to study at the University.

Priority A5: Addressing barriers to access for students from groups under-represented in higher education. We have introduced a contextualised admissions policy, which takes into account applicants' individual circumstances. We currently use postcode indicators (POLAR4, IMD, IDACI and EST) and care-leaver status as our contextualised admission criteria. Applicants who meet the criteria are eligible for an offer reduction of 8 UCAS points. We are exploring whether the criteria can be expanded and applied to other groups of students under-represented in HE, however this is subject to availability of data to inform implementation at the point of offer.

Priority A6: Enabling adults to access higher education: We have a strong commitment to supporting adult learners to re-engage with education to reskill/upskill, particularly in the context of the current economic climate as a result of Covid. We have developed a Return to Study Entry Programme which provides access to higher education for mature students with no formal level 3 qualifications, who have experiential learning and potential to succeed. Over six-weeks, students will undertake tailored study skills and associated preparatory content, as well as subject-specific content in their area of

¹ See <https://bit.ly/2Wrdlhp> and <http://clou.uclan.ac.uk/25859/> and <https://bit.ly/2ZVi9TQ>.

interest. Successful completion provides access to Year 0 or Year 1 of a degree depending on performance.

Priority A7: Diversifying our pathways for learning: We provide non-standard/alternative access routes to all our undergraduate degrees through foundation entry courses and higher-level apprenticeships. We offer 29 Degree apprenticeships in many subject areas and plan to expand the number of apprenticeships we offer by 15% by 2024. We are also working to make apprenticeships more accessible for all, delivering a range of events and initiatives that bring employers offering degree apprenticeships into contact with those who are interested in pursuing this pathway. By facilitating these contacts, we are making apprenticeships more accessible to people from all backgrounds.

We have a long and successful history of working collaboratively to extend educational opportunity within the region. Widening access to higher education is the major driver behind our extensive collaborative arrangements with further education colleges and other partner organisations. Our collaborative partnership currently includes 22 organisations and is acknowledged as the first partnership in England to franchise HE provision to FE Colleges. Through this partnership model, we are able to help people access flexible learning options in a number of different locations, creating provision that is highly accessible as well as opportunities for underrepresented groups to succeed in and progress from higher education. Collaborative partnerships are split between validated (directly funded) and sub-contractual (indirectly funded), arrangements with sub-contractual partners being included in this plan.

We are applying to IfATE for HTQ status for level 4 and 5 provision across our collaborative partnership provision. To date we have submitted for four standards in cycle 2 – all of which have successfully obtained the HTQ Kite mark status. We are preparing to submit for a further four standards in cycle 3, which if approved, will create HTQ provision across nine of our partners. One of the significant benefits of our partnership provision is providing local HE for students who might not otherwise engage in university study. The Higher Technical Qualification badging will benefit students, partners and employers, create technical pathways from T-Levels as well as attracting mature learners, and raise awareness of technical education. We will be working across our partner network to increase the geographical reach of our HTQ courses over the coming years.

Success

Our work in the area of student success is both targeted and inclusive and a number of individual initiatives address more than one of our priorities.

Priority S1: Continuing effective practice: We provide a range of tailored support packages to enable students from particular target groups to complete their studies. The following services are specific to UCLan campuses, but most Partners offer their own tailored packages, or charge reduced fees.

Care leavers: we offer a dedicated point of contact for advice and support, from application through admission, enrolment and study offering advice on a range of issues and signposting/referring to other services, as required. We provide access to study skills support, enhanced careers support and a personalised care leaver plan that covers both academic and pastoral support throughout their time at UCLan. We include waivers on deposits for University-owned accommodation/year-round accommodation contracts for students who may not have alternative accommodation during vacations. Financial support is also offered, including a cash bursary of £1000 per year of study, paid in four instalments through the year at times when students need additional financial support the most (at the beginning of October, beginning of December, beginning of March, and end of May), plus advice on additional funding sources. Further information on the Care Leavers' package of support can be found at: https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/money/care_leavers_support.php. We have recently signed the Care-Leaver Covenant and we are developing an independent student forum for care-experienced and estranged students.

Students who are estranged from their families are prioritised for financial support and have a dedicated point of contact for advice and support, who works with each student to create a personalised estranged student plan. With 147 officially recognised estranged students in 2016/17, UCLan has the sixth highest number of estranged students across the country, so we have taken the Stand Alone Pledge to show our commitment to support for these students throughout their time with us. We offer a designated bursary of £1000 per student in line with the support we offer to care leavers. Eligibility is

determined through the Access to Learning fund application and payable once the application is assessed. Applications are accepted throughout the academic year. Full details are available at https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/money/care_leavers_support.php.

We support **students who find themselves homeless**. In addition to a specialist support package, we provide emergency accommodation, providing accommodation rent-free for the first week, to give students time to make more permanent housing arrangements. We have a strong network of public and voluntary sector links and work closely with the Housing Advisory Service within our Local Authorities.

The University has developed targeted support for **students with caring responsibilities** who care, unpaid, for a family member with an illness or a disability, mental health condition or an addiction. This includes: the provision of support for Student Carers through a named contact and a personalised Carers plan that covers both academic and pastoral support throughout their time at UCLan; targeted financial support of a minimum of £500 per year of study. Eligibility is determined through the Access to Learning fund application process and payable once the application is assessed. Applications are accepted throughout the academic year. Full details are available at: <https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/support/money/alf.php>. We track the progress of these students and evaluate the support given, to assess impact. In addition, the Students' Union provides support to develop a network and/or forum.

We provide targeted financial support for students with low household incomes (below £20,000), informed by our analysis of students' reasons for withdrawing from their courses, Students' Union feedback from current and previous students, and the outcomes of national research. Financial support will continue to be provided to students in cash and include a higher bursary payment during students' final year, which is intended to reduce the need to undertake part-time employment at this critical point in their studies.

Our Harris Bursary Fund provides financial support to students in need, at appropriate points throughout the student lifecycle. We target support to mature students, those with family responsibilities, and students in hardship who are living at home but struggling to meet the costs of travel. Priority groups targeted via Hardship Funding are: disabled students and students who are unable to work due to illness; students who are homeless or facing eviction; students receiving the final year loan rate who are in financial difficulty; and postgraduate students who have been unable to secure alternative funding. These groups may receive bursaries or priority loans, dependent upon need, which are payable at two points in the year, following the bi-annual Panel meeting, in December and April. Information on the Harris Bursary Fund is updated annually at: http://www.uclan.ac.uk/fundraising/harris_bursary_fund.php.

Following the removal of the Access to Learning Fund, we set aside a similar amount on an ongoing basis (c£1m) to support students suffering financial hardship. This fund gives students facing hardship additional financial support to access and remain in Higher Education. Targeted areas for this funding include assistance for students in areas such as: supporting dependents whilst studying; students who may be estranged from their families; emergency payments for unexpected financial crisis; help for students who may be considering giving up their course because of financial problems. Information on the range of financial support and criteria for assessment can be found at: http://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/money/alf_info.php.

We understand that students who 'commute' onto campus face additional pressures and challenges, such as greater isolation and transport costs, which are drivers in the higher levels of withdrawal for such students. We have therefore introduced a heavily subsidised bus scheme from key regional hubs, intended to support the creation of 'home study groups' to increase peer support. This provision is being evaluated post-pandemic to establish whether it effectively supports students from under-represented groups well.

We have silver award Armed Forces Covenant status for the work the university does to support staff and **students from military backgrounds**. Staff work closely with military families to advise on further and higher education opportunities for all members of the family. They advise and guide service families on school moves and work with local schools to inform and raise awareness. We also have a range of initiatives within UCLan including a support forum for those from a military family/ background,

assisting with direct application arrangements and transition to study, and increasing awareness and skills of staff across the university. In addition, we are undertaking research to identify effective ways of ensuring successful experiences of higher education for those from military backgrounds.

In close liaison with Preston City of Sanctuary, the Lancashire Syrian Resettlement Programme and other regional support networks, the University is investigating practical ways in which it can support **refugees/the displaced community**. We provide dedicated academic and wellbeing support, host and source professional placements and projects and host professional and personal development sessions on subjects including language tuition, further education and careers advice and readiness. We have introduced a Sanctuary Scholarship to support refugee and asylum seekers who do not have access to student finance support.

Our student support mechanisms are structured in a holistic way to ensure that students can access everything they require from a single starting point in our Student Information Centre. In Preston all of our student support services and staff are housed in the new Student Centre in the heart of the campus. This means students can go to one place for all support and advice, making services accessible. We are cognisant of the profile of our student body and design our extensive support delivery to meet the diverse needs of our students. Support starts during the application stage and continues with an extensive Welcome programme to ensure a smooth transition into higher education.

The university has invested significantly in a proactive, early intervention approach to support student success. This includes the use of a predictive analytics system to identify students with concerning patterns of engagement, and the investment in Student Coaches in all Schools to monitor and reach out and provide support and referral to student services as required. Year Tutors play a critical role in overseeing the student experience of each level of study on each course. Personal Tutors are allocated to all new level 3 and level 4 students from 2022-23. Training and support materials are managed by the Centre for Collaborative Learning working with Student Services and The People Team. This approach ensures wrap-around personalised support for all students helping them to succeed in their studies.

We have a number of initiatives that aim to support students with the transition to university life. Our Getting Ready resources help students prepare for life at university and we run events during August and September, prior to Welcome Week, where new students get a chance to meet current students online, ask questions and form social connections ahead of their enrolment. We deliver a comprehensive induction programme which seeks to enhance the sense of belonging and ensure students are confident with the academic, social and emotional aspects of university life.

The Inclusive Support Student Transition & Residential Programme offers online, and physical student led pre arrival activities and events for offer holders declaring a disability. The programme aims to prepare attendees for the transition from college to life as a UCLan student. Through one-to-one support from a Student Wellbeing Ambassador, the buddy scheme guides the attendee through accessing these events as well as answering the attendees' questions about studying at UCLan. The programme is structured to focus on key services and areas of higher education that may be overwhelming, for example: what it feels like to live in student accommodation (residential attendees); improving confidence and social skills; workshops on preparing financially; managing your mental health & wellbeing and familiarisation with study facilities such as the library and academic support from Wiser. The programme provides an opportunity to engage with offer holders so that we can better understand their disability related needs and implement adjustments accordingly, support could be applying for DSA or understanding what evidence is needed to have reasonable adjustments implemented.

We have found that students who live in UCLan Halls and/or take up opportunities to engage with the activities of the Students' Union are more likely to complete their programme of study successfully. We continue to work closely with the Students' Union to expand the range of such opportunities and support their plans to increase the number of societies that are associated with academic subject areas. We also have Residence Officers who work closely with students in Halls to run a range of social activities and to address problems at an early stage, for example supporting homesick students, especially those from first generation families who may need additional support during transition. Our Safety and Security team is also fully integrated into student services, providing first response, support and referral to internal emergency duty and external services.

Priority S2: Reducing the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white and black, Asian and minority ethnic students: Building on our analysis of our Black attainment gap, we have identified the academic schools where there are the most significant gaps. Action plans for each school set out the local measures we will be taking to address the causes of these gaps. These are complemented by institution-wide measures including a course inclusivity checklist, unconscious bias training and SU-led black, Asian and minority ethnic student experience projects. Staff development is available and the effectiveness of this will be monitored for the duration of the plan. Students will be actively involved in the evaluation

Priority S3: Maintain the elimination of the attainment gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled and non-disabled students: We have seen a sustained decrease in the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students since 2017-18. We aim to maintain the elimination of this gap. We will achieve this by evaluating the actions that have driven this decrease in gap and ensuring our learning from this is implemented across courses.

We provide comprehensive support for students with disabilities (including SpLD). This begins at Open Days and continues throughout the applicant process, to ensure appropriate adjustments are in place when teaching begins. Students are encouraged to disclose their disabilities (or changes to them) throughout their course. Each student is provided with a named Inclusive Support Adviser, who keeps academic and support staff updated of reasonable adjustments. We also provide adapted accommodation, extensive assistive technology (free of charge), interpreters, library support, mobility support, campus orientation and captioning of media content. Students with a diagnosed mental health condition have a named Inclusive Support Adviser with a speciality in mental health. Not all students who would benefit from support have a recognised disability and these students are supported by a range of proactive and reactive services, which start during the Welcome period, with the provision of a UCLan Student Notebook giving practical tips for settling in, making friends and seeking help. Our drop-in zone operates during daytime, evenings and weekends, for advice on mental health, wellbeing, disability and/or financial issues. A *Well@UCLan* programme offers practical support on topics such as managing anxiety and sleeping well. Our team of Mental Health Advisors, Counsellors and Wellbeing Advisors offers individual support and referral to NHS and other external specialist services. Wellbeing Mentors in Student Services also provide 1:1 peer support with things like settling in, finding friends and getting around campus. Students employed as Wellbeing Ambassadors support students with disabilities and other assessed needs to ensure they can fully access the curriculum and extra-curricular activity. This includes mobility support, note taking and accompanying students to societies. Our supportive network of Academic Advisors works closely with Student Services to design activities that maximise engagement during the critical first year of study. Following identification of a particular attainment gap for disabled part-time students, we will review our arrangements to ensure they are effective for this group.

In addition to these targeted measures, a range of other measures aim to support all students in achieving high grades. Our Centre for Collaborative Learning (CCL) enables and promotes excellence in learning and teaching at UCLan by:

- Enabling and supporting the development of academic practice and academic staff.
- Supporting and informing inclusive learning and assessment design.
- Identifying and sharing the best of UCLan's learning and teaching practice across the University and externally.
- Supporting and informing collaborative endeavour on curriculum development.
- Identifying and promoting the development of innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment underpinned by pedagogic research and scholarship.

Our Peer Assisted Study Sessions (the PASS scheme) provide an opportunity for higher year students to develop their skills and knowledge by facilitating supplemental support for lower year students, who in turn develop deeper cohort relationships and their own metacognition. PASS also enables immediate feedback to teaching teams and responsive curriculum delivery. The scheme is run and facilitated by PASS leaders (current students) and PASS coordinators (recent graduates). As a result of the positive impact of a pilot, the scheme is being phased in across the University and will be fully embedded by 2020/21. We also see PASS as one of the initiatives that will contribute to improved attainment for students from the more disadvantaged POLAR and IMD areas and intend to develop meaningful targets once data is available in 2022.

WISER, our study skills support team, gives academic support to students in all subject areas, both undergraduates and postgraduates. Workshops, tutorials and 1 to 1 advice sessions help students to learn how to study more effectively and communicate at an advanced and professional level. Bespoke specialist workshops, created in conjunction with module tutors or course leaders are also provided. The WISER team are upskilling wider staff to embed best practice within the curriculum that will support students from all backgrounds and promote an inclusive approach.

Progression

Priority P1: continuing to enhance rates of progression to employment or further study: Our work in the area of progression is both targeted and inclusive and a number of individual initiatives address more than one of our priorities. A significant proportion of our students originate within the local area and around 75% of graduates stay within the North West each year. Many of our students are the first in their family to participate in higher education and are firmly embedded within their communities, so a high proportion has much more restricted access to high quality employment opportunities than graduates in larger cities where the density of job opportunities is greater and salaries higher. Research by Lancashire LEP found that Lancashire underperforms against the national average (excluding London) on a number of key indicators with 1,000 fewer jobs per 100,000 working age residents than the national average; Gross Value Added levels per worker and per head below the national average (-£10,359 and -£6,605 respectively); and only five businesses per 1,000 working age residents, compared to the UK's 54 average. In recognition of these obstacles, we have established a two-pronged approach to improving outcomes for our graduates. The first centres on our long-term commitment to Lancashire and the North West and sees us contributing strongly to efforts to improve the long-term prospects of our region through active roles in the Northern Powerhouse, Lancashire LEP, and other such programmes, as well as a strong focus on entrepreneurship and support for graduate start-ups. Data from the Higher Education-Business and Community Interaction Survey has consistently shown us to be amongst the highest performing UK universities for the number of graduate start-ups – in 2018-19, we had 43 new graduate start-ups (placing us third in the country) and 201 still active from previous years. To date we have not collected data allowing us to assess rates of access to such support by graduates from our target groups, but we are addressing this and intend to tailor aspects of this work to ensure these students also benefit.

The second prong focuses on ensuring that we are equipping our graduates to make the most of the opportunities that are available in our area. All students have access to a diverse range of careers and employability development opportunities designed to suit individual and sector needs. Our Matrix-accredited careers team offer both face to face and online careers and employability resources and events/activities. Our CareerEDGE platform provides access to the CareerEDGE+ employability model and self-assessment which allows students to rate their confidence against the elements of the model namely, career planning, experience, their degree, generic skills and emotional intelligence. Employability is embedded into the curriculum with professional skills development, real world inspired learning and external awards included as part of the programme. National research has clearly shown that graduates with work experience are more successful in gaining high quality employment, and we have embedded structured work experience into every programme through opportunities for placements, internships and other forms of work experience and volunteering. We use our Harris Bursary Fund to direct financial support to students who would find it difficult on financial grounds to access work experience and global experience opportunities. Our Student Ambassador and PASS schemes and initiatives run by the Students' Union also provide a variety of opportunities for paid work experience through the year. Bespoke sessions and enhanced career support are provided for students from our targets groups. Employers and alumni are key in acting as role-models and offering insights into the professions. We are working with local employers and alumni through our online jobs and networking platform called Handshake which allows students and graduates to interact individually with employers/alumni or attend virtual events hosted by employers. We also identify mentoring opportunities for school and college students as well as our undergraduate students. Linking with a practitioner in business is a key way of supporting students' development throughout their studies as it highlights the range of career options available and helps them develop appropriate networks to support their progression.

UCLan graduates who are not in work after graduation are offered the opportunity for paid graduate-level work experience or a free place on postgraduate leadership awards and other qualifications, including our Graduate with Confidence programme which incorporates a range of employability and

enterprise workshops alongside resilience and confidence sessions designed to boost career prospects.

Students are encouraged to consider postgraduate study through exposure to live research projects. UCLan was the first university to send undergraduate students to the National Conference of Undergraduate Research, held annually in the USA. We offer a popular Undergraduate Research Internship Programme which provides extended, paid, research posts over summer. We offer all our graduates a 20% reduction in fees if they continue their studies with us. We will also be delivering a range of postgraduate degree apprenticeships as an alternative route to study at this level.

Priority P2: embedding careers support, employability and graduate attributes into the curriculum. Our Centre for Collaborative Learning have overseen the introduction of a curriculum framework that provides a vehicle to guide course design and the inclusion of curriculum elements which are not course specific. It creates a more holistic approach to planning and delivering courses at the Preston, Westlakes and Burnley campuses. The framework aims to support the development of graduate attributes that will enable students to progress onto good outcomes after their study. Key components include emotional intelligence, digital literacy, creativity, placement and work-based learning, employability and enterprise, and transferrable skills. The framework allows a flexible approach across different courses with varying delivery methods but ensures a continuity in quality and a focus on developing graduates equipped to success in their careers or further study.

3.2 Student consultation

The University works closely with its student body on all aspects of strategy and policy. Students are represented on all University committees at institution and faculty level. In developing this Access & Participation Plan, we have engaged with and involved students, working closely with Students' Union.

We proactively seek feedback from students. The SU are members of the Access and Participation Plan Steering Group. They are actively involved in seeking feedback on our plans, actions and progress to date; feeding in to meetings and events. Students have been involved in the preparation of our plan through feedback initiatives including a survey. Student Ambassadors and PASS leaders also contributed to the development of the plan and will be actively involved in assessing the impact of its effectiveness. Students are represented on project groups for the initiatives identified in this plan.

As we deliver the plan we will continue to seek greater opportunities for student engagement through evaluations, as part of working groups to develop interventions, and in assessing performance against the plan. We will also be looking to identify ways to enhance our Student Staff Liaison activity to provide an opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the APP and to achieve the intended outcomes.

In addition specific student feedback was sought to inform this plan. It identified that students value our inclusive and welcoming approach. When asked what UCLan does well to support access and participation, support for mature and disabled students was cited the most alongside bursaries and financial support. Responses included:

"[UCLan] provides a lot of support and is easily accessible for any student with any kind of disability"

"As a mature student I have been made to feel very welcome across the campus, with teaching staff and facilities available to me outside of the standard teaching/working hours - the transition back into formal teaching/learning was supported greatly by understanding academic staff."

When asked what students felt UCLan could do to improve supporting access and participation, bursaries and financial support as well as better information and signposting were the most cited responses. Examples include:

"Make the information regarding support more widely available."

"The bursary could be better explained. More awareness on the website of how large the mature student population is so you feel more confident."

The student population for this survey was small in this first instance. The survey will be repeated regularly and we will continue to analyse the results, using this to inform our practice.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

The work we do in our access and participation plan is informed by evidence about what works for students. We will collect data and feedback to evaluate:

- our overall approach to access and participation
- the impact of the different activities we are doing to achieve our aims
- the 9 strategic programmes of activity outlined above (page 11 and detailed in the logic model diagram in Appendix 1)
- how we are performing against our commitment to enabling people, no matter their background, to fulfil their potential and meet their life and career goals.

Our evaluation is underpinned by a theory of change. We will evaluate whether we make the required progress from our current performance to the targets we have set out over the five-year plan. We will use a mixed methods approach for evaluation, using quantitative data to assess our overall performance and qualitative methods to evaluate the efficacy of individual programmes. We will also use evaluation of specific programmes across the whole student life cycle to help inform programme design and to ensure we have continuous improvement. This will allow us to make changes to delivery, which will create maximum positive impact for students.

Evaluation of Access Activities

All the programmes and activities run through our Access work have bespoke evaluation that measures whether the desired impact or outcome of the intervention has been achieved. For example, we are running a randomised control trial to assess whether our Young Scientist Centre GCSE science workshops help raise attainment of learners in target groups. We are also researching the impact of ambient information delivered through community engagement events, such as the Lancashire Science Festival, on parent and carer attitudes toward university. The initial findings have been published in the Journal for Widening Participation and Life Long Learning and we plan to expand on this work over the next five years.

Alongside specific activity evaluation, we are running a longitudinal evaluation with our SUN schools. Students complete an annual questionnaire that measures HE-capital, assessing whether they feel that HE is 'for people like me'. The questionnaire also assesses perception around the cost of university, the value of going to university and difficulty of accessing university. The questionnaire results are mapped against activity participation recorded in our tracking service (HEAT). Our long-term plan is to identify which activities have the most impact on aspirations and attitudes towards HE and use HEAT tracking data to analyse which attitude shifts are most likely to result in progression into HE. We will also investigate whether the age at which an attitude change occurs affects likelihood of progression.

Our academic research also informs our evaluation and revisions to our approach. Specific studies include research into how intersectional barriers of race, class, and gender create a feeling of imposter syndrome in Higher Education and how foundation and widening participation access programmes help to alleviate this. Another study is exploring interventions that challenge dominantly perceived views of Higher Education amongst South Asian communities, Eastern Europeans and White British young men from low participation backgrounds in Pennine Lancashire and peripheral areas, with a view towards creating a culture where this is viewed in terms of benefits rather than barriers.

We have developed an evaluation framework for access activity. The framework is based on a theory of change that identifies the outcomes we hope to achieve through our outreach activity. We have developed a question bank that is intended to measure whether these outcomes have been achieved. Appropriate questions can be selected for each activity and by using a standard approach, we can assess common impacts across different activities. We will be exploring whether we can use standardised questions from the work conducted by TASO and the Brilliant Club in our framework.

To enable us to develop this strand of our evaluation work further, we have **M1** which will help us develop a clear approach to this area.

Evaluation of Student Success and Progression

We have been developing an increasingly strategic approach to our monitoring and evaluation of student success and progression initiatives. We have begun to embed data collection into our enrolment and registration processes and are exploring ways in which we might measure baselines, when students arrive at university, and track distance travelled each year to allow us to compare distance travelled for target groups in comparison to the whole student body. This will enable us to evaluate whether our interventions are affecting students' confidence and perceptions in key areas and revise our programmes accordingly. We intend to use career pulse which will allow us to signpost students to resources that may benefit them if they identify areas for improvement.

We invest heavily in financial support packages which are aimed at helping to relieve financial pressures which might otherwise cause our students to underachieve or withdraw from their studies and we evaluate these arrangements each year to ensure this investment is having the impact it is designed to achieve. We make regular use of the OFFA Toolkit for evaluation of our financial support arrangements, drawing on HESA and Student Loans Company data to examine the outcomes for those students in receipt of financial support in comparison to non-recipients, which has found there to be positive impacts on both continuation and attainment. We also make significant use of case studies and other qualitative sources of information, drawn from both our own direct work with students facing financial hardship and from the work of our Students Union in this area. Feedback from these mechanisms has led to significant changes to our offer in recent years, including the timing of payments and the amount of funds in each year of study. We will continue to use these data to guide and inform any future changes to arrangements, reporting findings initially to our Access and Participation Steering Group, from which any applicable recommendations for change will be made to the appropriate decision-making body or lead officer.

The University's Centre Collaborative Learning supports teaching staff to conduct pedagogical inquiry focussed on improving teaching within specific schools and faculties. Care is taken to support staff to consider the continuation, attainment and progression of underrepresented groups and to consider variation between groups. In addition, a number of studies (nine in 2018-19) focus on specific teaching and learning interventions to support improved participation and attainment by students from underrepresented groups, for example, a study by McKee and Nir, *The Participation Puzzle: research into levels of attendance and participation of students in LLS*, used 2016/17 data showing that black, Asian and minority ethnic students attended better but performed less well; and that they described their experience of studies less positively than white students. In response, the school is redesigning year 1 curriculum using principles of decolonisation. Other studies include participatory research to explore barriers to education and employment as experienced by military families.

The logic chain diagram below illustrates how we aim to achieve our outcome targets and how this will be measured in the area of Student Success.

To enable us to develop this strand of our evaluation work further, **M2** and **M3** will allow us to identify whether additional targets and focused work in this area are appropriate. **M5** will help us refine our target around Black attainment rates.

Subsequently, **M4**, **M6** and **M7** will enable us to develop appropriate responses in these areas for our next Access and Participation Plan.

Building on our current evaluation of work to support progression, which asks students to assess the impact of support on their ability to take action, and underpinned by **M7**, the logic chain diagram below illustrates how we aim to achieve our outcome targets in the area of Progression.

We have developed an equality, diversity and inclusion dashboard available to all staff that allow them access to data about student body characteristics, attainment gaps and graduate outcome at a school and course level. Making this information easily accessible to all colleagues enables monitoring and evaluation to take place locally and central oversight if gaps emerge.

P1 will help us ensure that those from less advantaged backgrounds benefit from our success with graduate start-ups. We will use HEAT tracking to record in-reach activities and use this to map data received through graduate outcome tracking to assess how effective specific activities are. In addition, **P2** will help us identify if specific interventions are required.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

We monitor progress against delivery through our operational and strategic reporting. Targets and milestones identified here are monitored by the APP operational group that reports to the APP steering group. The steering group will oversee implementation of actions to ensure ongoing progress against yearly milestones in our access and participation plan. We will monitor impact on our target groups, to ensure we are addressing our aims. Where needed, we will adjust our interventions in the best interests of our students. The steering group provide assurances to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Teaching and Students Committee. Both committees form part of the governance of the university and report into the Academic Board. The Students' Union is represented on the operational group and steering group. Overall responsibility for Access and Participation Plan resides with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students and Teaching).

The detailed work to develop our Access and Participation Plan and coordinate evaluation of the impact is undertaken by the steering group, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students and Teaching). This group includes representatives of University services responsible for the delivery of the activities described, academic colleagues and the Students' Union. We ensure continuous improvement through evaluation and are continuing to enhance our ability to monitor impacts, through arrangements to track the progress of students involved in specific initiatives or in receipt of financial support and overall monitoring of any differentials in levels of access, completion, attainment and progression by factors known to impact on these aspects of the student lifecycle. For example:

- We monitor annually the progression of students from HE courses offered through partner organisations to 'top-up' courses at UCLan and progression of students from the foundation year programmes.
- We use institutional data to identify different aspects of under-representation within the access, success and progression remits to inform our strategy and actions.
- We draw on findings from national research and evaluation to ensure we are able to maximise the impact of our activities and resources and support our students in fulfilling their full potential.
- Delivery of specific initiatives is monitored through our planning process via local Delivery Plans.

Progression against the plan will be the responsibility of the Access and Participation Steering Group led by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student and Teaching).

4. Provision of information to students

We are committed to publishing clear and accessible information to existing and prospective students on all aspects of their course and particularly the financial expectations. We have produced a summary document available on our website. The University is compliant with the consumer law requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). Students of all types are provided with detailed information with respect to fees, additional costs, and the financial support packages we offer. We also provide fee repayment examples based on future salary levels.

Applicants are provided with the following information as part of their formal offer:

- The cost per year of the programme, as well as the course duration and total course cost (in addition to a caveat re. potential inflationary increases during subsequent years of study) within the offer letter which is emailed to students
- The course handbook, which details the implications of continuous unauthorised absence on tuition fees, and links to the Tuition Fee Policy
- A student regulations and policy document which includes the Tuition Fee Policy, and a separate Tuition Fee Policy for students studying for the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
- A Standard Additional Costs document which provides details of standard optional additional costs (relating to the course, indicative living costs, or other one-off items)
- Accompanying information and conditions of offer document, which provides details regarding the payment of fees, the total amount of tuition fees payable, tuition fee team contact details and cancellation arrangements
- A model cancellation form.

Our web-pages also provide detailed advice regarding budgeting, including information on bank accounts, benefits, council tax, income tax, debt advice and tips. Information on how to make secure online payments to the university is also provided, together with FAQs. We communicate through the following channels: 'Student life' and 'Money' pages on our website; talks and publications at Open and Applicant Days, and all on or off campus events; pre-entry information mailings and electronic communications to applicants and enquirers; public engagement events; leaflets and guidance information in public places; staff advising students at recruitment fairs and open days or working with under-represented groups through a wide range of outreach activities.

We are also committed to providing timely, accurate information to UCAS and the Student Loans Company so they can populate their course databases in good time to inform applicants. We will publish our approved Access & Participation Plan prominently on our website in a way that is easily accessible to both current and prospective students.

