

University of Central Lancashire

2019-20 access and participation plan

Assessment of current performance

The University of Central Lancashire has a long track record of success in delivery of its strategy for widening access to higher education. Our effectiveness in this continues to be achieved under the direction of our Learning & Teaching Strategy, supplemented by our outreach & engagement strategy and our Strategy for Pennine Lancashire, and through the implementation of a range of initiatives, developed over a period of years, which are now embedded in core business. Our 2019–20 Access & Participation Plan consolidates and builds on this with further enhancements drawn from our ever-increasing understanding of the specific issues faced by our students, the dynamics of our local context and national research.

Our assessment of performance to date has been based on the use of targets and milestones and underpinned by evaluations of individual activities. We are currently revising this approach and plan to transition to a more holistic and comprehensive approach to performance assessment which will systematically examine each of the stages of the student lifecycle allow us to identify specific areas where action is required and to focus resources effectively to ensure we deliver on our intended outcomes. In tandem, we have just launched a programme of work to develop our overarching University Strategy for the period 2020-2030 and we intend to ensure that our access and participation work is embedded throughout this, along with our broader work on equality, diversity and inclusion. To underpin this, we are currently engaged in a detailed analysis of our data to ensure we collect all the information we need and use it effectively to inform our planning and delivery. Our assessment of current performance is, therefore, not yet complete, but is based on the data we have at this time and will be supplemented by further work.

Based upon assessment against our targets and milestones: our overall performance remains solid and latest results demonstrate steady improvement against most indicators. Whilst this is in line with our HESA benchmarks – which have been developed to take account of our specific context – it is not always in line with the more stretching targets we have set ourselves, and we are keen to drive further improvements. In summary, performance against our core targets is as follows:

- ***To remain at or above benchmark for the recruitment of young full time first-degree students from low participation neighbourhoods:*** we achieved 17.5% in 2016/17, which is above our HESA benchmark of 14.8%, but lower than our target of 18.5% and a drop from our 2015/16 position of 19%.
- ***To achieve year on year increases in the percentage of full time first-degree students expected to complete their degree:*** 2015/16 data (latest available) is tracking at 73.8%, which is slightly above our HESA benchmark of 73%. We are disappointed with this outcome as we had hoped to achieve a target of 79%. Our longer-term trend against this target has been mixed, with some significant fluctuations in the data over a longer term, but internal leading indicators suggest that our revised approach is starting to show impact. We are determined to make further progress.
- ***To reduce the attainment gap between BME and White students:*** this has improved from 14.2% in 2015/16 to 11.5% in 2016/17, just ahead of our stretch target of 12%. Our work in this area has helped up to understand the complexity of factors impacting on attainment and that targeted outcomes require carefully nuanced approaches.
- ***To increase the proportion of full-time first-degree leavers in employment/further studies:*** Year on year increases in this figure have led to 93.9% of our 2015/16 graduates achieving

positive outcomes and draft internal figures give us confidence that this upward trend has continued for our most recent graduates.

We continue to make progress against the other milestones and targets that we have set, as follows:

- ***To engage high school students through a range of outreach activity aimed at increasing engagement with and aspirations for higher education:*** we had originally planned to work with up to 200 students, but have significantly exceeded the target, working with 1063 students in 2016/17.
- ***To work in collaboration with FE partners to strengthen the progression of vocational learners, including apprentices, into HE:*** in 2016/17, we significantly exceeded our target of 300 learners, working with 488 during the year.

We added two new targets for 2017/18, which are work in progress and it is currently too early to assess performance, as follows:

- ***To engage primary school pupils through a range of outreach activity aimed at increasing engagement with, and aspirations for, higher education***
- ***To raise attainment in schools by running six subject-based conferences across Lancashire and Cumbria to develop subject expertise and best practice in raising attainment.***

Initial findings from our emerging student lifecycle analysis show that we have a particular strength in **access**: Our previous access programmes have demonstrated that extended, sustained outreach activity has a positive impact, with 66% of participants progressing to HE (against an average expected participation rate of 20% in low participation neighbourhoods). The use of an umbrella programme, bringing together a range of targeted groups, was also shown to be successful in removing any ‘labelling’ of small numbers of students and related reinforcement of barriers to participation. We are now increasing the reach of this programme to engage with larger numbers of students.

We have a very broad and diverse student body, with proportions of part-time (15.2%) and mature students (54.7%) being higher than the national average and the proportion of those from neighbourhoods where participation in higher education is low being 6.6% above the national average at 18.4%. We are looking to develop appropriate benchmarks to help us assess whether other aspects of our student profile – including the proportions of care leavers, disabled students and those from specific ethnicities are appropriate.

Student success is very important to us and we are committed to ensuring that all our students are supported to reach their full potential, regardless of their background. Our analysis has shown that, just as at national level, those from areas of low higher education participation, low household income, and/or socioeconomic status are doing less well than their more privileged counterparts. We have been trialling targeted approaches aimed at specific groups of students, but have been keen to avoid creating or exacerbating stigma through selective programmes focusing on ‘disadvantage’, so have also piloted a number of more inclusive initiatives. We have chosen to focus primarily on one known area of differential outcomes – the BME/White attainment gap – and explore the factors at play and possible solutions in depth, then apply this learning to other areas, rather than risk diluting our efforts and results. We are continuing to learn and increase our understanding of this area and have noted that different groupings within the BME category are differently affected – for example, some BME sub-groupings outperform their White peers. We have found that some initiatives have been particularly successful at improving success rates for certain groups of students, but have had little impact for others. We remain committed to this goal and are continuing to develop our understanding of the factors involved and refine our approach.

Although not a formal target, we have been particularly successful in closing the attainment gap for students with disabilities. This is due to substantial investment in disability support and technology to enable access to learning. Institutional wide commitment, exemplified through the delivery and review of our Learning & Teaching strategy, has been essential to this success. Future plans build on this approach.

We provide a significant level of financial support to our students, which is focused on enabling them to focus on their studies, rather than the need to earn money, and achieve success during their time at UCLan. Recent use of the OFFA evaluation toolkit has shown that this is effective.

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
- slightly more likely to obtain a first or upper-second class degree

We are pleased to report that our latest analysis indicates that there is no longer a significant relationship between POLAR quintile and degree result – in previous years students from the highest quintiles were more likely to obtain a first or upper-second class degree than those from the lowest quintile.

Analysis of **progression to employment and/or further study** shows that, as is the case across the sector, UCLan graduates from the lowest POLAR quintiles are 4.4% less likely to be in graduate level employment/further study six months after graduation. Students from a BME background are 1.8% less likely to be in graduate level employment/further study than their white counterparts. The likelihood of being in graduate level employment/further study increased with age: those aged 30 and over on entry are most likely to be in graduate-level employment/further study (88%) and those aged 18-20 on entry are least likely (64.9%). The difference between disabled students' outcomes and those for students with no known disability is smallest at 0.4%. One of the greatest differences in outcomes is between male and female graduates, with female rates of graduate level employment/further study 4.7% higher than those for males. Because such outcomes are significantly affected by specific local factors, we are working to identify an appropriate benchmark set to assess these outcomes against and will provide a further update in our next report.

We provide significant support to the following groups within our student body: care leavers, carers, those estranged from their families, but the small numbers of individuals involved means that all statistics need to be used with caution, so we work on a case by case basis.

We have begun to collect additional information from our students to enable us to monitor the following attributes for impact: Carers; students estranged from their families; those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; Refugees. We are also preparing to collect data on children from military families. Once we have established our current baseline position, we will develop targeted initiatives, as appropriate. We are also commencing work to examine how best to monitor the impacts where these and other characteristics intersect and will report further on this in our next update. Our piloting of the Starfish system and PASS mentoring programme (see below) have taught us that we need to further emphasise an increasingly personalised approach to learning and student support.

Some factors have presented a challenge in data terms: for example, we support a number of people with mental health problems, but we do not formally record or track the success of those students, unless their mental health condition is reported as a disability. We feel that there is an important balance to be struck in capturing data to allow for ongoing monitoring in order to identify circumstances where interventions might be required while also avoiding inadvertently labelling

students or overly formalising life events as ‘conditions’. We therefore make use of softer evidence for the success of our support provision and other initiatives, which allows us to reflect on our approach and refine aspects, if required.

We have not yet established targets beyond 2020 for our work in this area, but will do so as part of our full strategic review, which is informing the development of our new strategic plan 2020-2030. Our key areas of focus have become the success of our students during their time with us and their subsequent progression to employment and/or further study.

Ambition and strategy

Our University Strategy 2015-20 commits to provide access to all, “*enabling people, irrespective of their backgrounds, to fulfil their potential, develop as global citizens and meet their life and career goals*”. We will continue to recruit from a broad range of backgrounds and to maximise our students’ engagement, performance and attainment during degree studies and beyond by:

- **Maximising opportunities for participation in higher education and social mobility through:**
 - **Continued outreach activity:** working with local schools, post-compulsory institutions and community organisations to raise aspirations and attainment, providing specific target groups with the opportunity to engage in a sustained, linked and varied programme of higher education access and outreach
 - **Long-term public and social engagement:** this activity is a central theme of the University’s Strategy and is core to our mission and values
 - **Enhancing progression to higher education:** development of our Burnley Campus and procurement of Training 2000, in particular, are enabling us to focus on students from areas of low participation and those with low levels of prior attainment, such as those from a military background who have experienced a lack of continuity in their formal education.
- **Developing people and places:** we will continue to develop best practice in the design and delivery of professional learning to raise attainment and enhance employability. We will provide inclusive learning, making best use of the latest technology. Our creative and integrated physical and digital learning spaces will promote innovation, collaboration, employability and the development of communities of learning.
- **Continuing to invest in student support:** we recognise the diverse needs of our student population and provide increasingly tailored and targeted professional and financial support.
- **Learning from our own experiences** and actively drawing on research from across higher education. We will draw on our increasing understanding of the different experiences and outcomes achieved by those with specific characteristics to increasingly tailor our approaches and focus our future strategy.

We also work extensively in collaboration with other providers of higher education through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme and through specific local initiatives.

This section provides an overview of our strategic ambition and approach; examples of specific actions and initiatives to achieve our intended outcomes are outlined in the following section.

Building on our strong record of accomplishment in widening access to under-represented groups, we want to maximise the opportunity for participation in Higher Education and to increase opportunities for social mobility. We achieve this through continued outreach, our long-term public and social engagement programmes, and through specific strategic arrangements with our Burnley campus and Training 2000.

Continued outreach activity

In 2017-18 we set up the School University Network (SUN), working in close partnership with several secondary schools and their feeder primary schools to create sustained engagement with schools and young people. Our strategic aim is to expand this programme to include more schools in different geographies. We will build on our existing targeted work with specific groups by analysing which groups are under-represented in our student body, taking into account intersection between different areas of disadvantage. We will develop outreach programmes that reach groups identified as being under-represented in our institution. A particular focus, given the known skills gap in the region and the gender imbalance ([Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, 2015](#); [Engineering UK, 2017](#)) in participation, is Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) outreach. We address this gap through our Young Scientist Centre and Lancashire Science Festival. Our evaluation demonstrates how experiences are likely to lead to increased interest in science subjects and possible uptake of such subjects at A-level and beyond.

We remain committed to 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 26 partners, one of the largest HE/FE collaborations in England. Our relationship with FE college partners has, and continues to, change in the light of revisions to government policy, which has led to a significant reduction in indirectly funded student numbers and a growth in partners gaining directly funded numbers. Despite this, and to support highly successful subject-based networks in areas such as post-compulsory Teacher Education, Sport, and Children, Young People and their Services, the University continues to be the validating partner for courses which are now directly funded. Burnley College, City & Islington College, Furness College, Huddersfield New College, Lancaster & Morecambe College, Preston's College, Runshaw College, School of Electronic Music and SSR are all delivering UCLan HE through an indirectly funded (subcontractual) arrangement included in this plan.

UCLan is also a strategic partner with the University Technical College (UTC) in Wigan (opened in 2013) and in the West Lakes Multi Academy Trust. Particular themes of the UTCs are to improve gender balance within the industries served and increase access by students from low participation areas. Activities are designed to tackle issues around achievement and aspiration, and to remove barriers to students from disadvantaged areas having the opportunity to participate in the most challenging areas of study.

Outreach activities delivered in schools complement the work taking place as part of the Lancashire National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) Future U programme and we will continue to work with the Future U team to ensure activity delivered is complimentary. We are committed to working closely with other HE providers within Lancashire and Cumbria to share best practice and to be open and transparent about the schools we are engaging with. This will help us to ensure that, as a sector, we are reaching the widest possible cohort of students from under-represented backgrounds and activity is complimentary, targeting students who may not benefit from activity already offered under the new NCOP provision.

Long-term public and social engagement

Public, social and community engagement is a key strategic theme within the University's overarching aim of Unlocking Potential. This portfolio of activity is inclusive of public engagement, research engagement, community outreach, staff and student volunteering, social cohesion and inclusion, and includes a varied programme of cultural events and activities. This work is led by a central Engagement Unit, but is firmly embedded across other key areas including Equality and Diversity, Student Recruitment, Research Services and the academic structure. Public/research engagement is a key part of the academic culture, with central support to enable researchers to

develop engaging content and reach wider audiences through established programmes of work such as the Lancashire Science Festival, broadcast and media opportunities or bespoke interactions developed as part of the cycle of ongoing research, for example in the co-creation or direction of research in community health by service-user engagement.

We take an evidence-driven approach to the delivery of this activity, with an emphasis on mapping social impact and perception change; formative evaluation is the backbone of our practice. This work is improving the quality and volume of 'HE capital' that under-represented audiences have access to, with 'science capital' a key theme of this, linked to regional sector skills analysis and known national participation challenges. Our ambition is to understand barriers to participation and to seek to address these through the creation of ongoing engagement opportunities. The intention is to provide a spectrum of opportunities for under-represented audiences to interact with HE, current research and particularly STEM subjects. This work has been developed over several years and we are now conducting live research across the engagement portfolio, with the aim of sharing best practice across the academic community through the publication of peer-reviewed work.

Enhancing progression to higher education

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).

More than half of Lancashire's GVA/productivity gap when benchmarked nationally is accounted for by Pennine Lancashire, (Eskogen, 2014) partly as a result of an economy that 'is founded on relatively low wages, low added value [and] low skilled employment' with over £2billion per annum missing from the area's economy (PLLACE, 2008:4). Qualification levels are below the Lancashire average: for example, 27% of the sub-region's residents have NVQ4 or above compared to 31% across Lancashire and there is a similar gap at NVQ3 and NVQ2 (Eskogen, 2014). This, along with a difficulty in retaining graduates, is considered a key barrier in attracting inward investment and developing a knowledge economy in Pennine Lancashire.

Our overarching aims 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.

Evidence indicates that our Burnley campus and partnership arrangements make a significant contribution to the diversity of our student entry. Currently 78% of students at our Burnley campus are aged over 21 compared to 51% at main campus and 59% at other partners. 23% of students on UCLan direct-delivery programmes at Burnley are BME compared with 22% at the main campus. UCLan Burnley Campus has a specific aim to recruit to the target groups of mature adult returners, Asian females, and students from the local and surrounding areas. Our acquisition of Training 2000 strongly supports this agenda: Between the academic years 2015/16 and 2017/18, Training 2000 trained an average of 1403 students each year, of which 51% were identified as mature, 9% as BME, and 5% as having a learning difficulty, disability or mental health problem. Approximately 80% of students trained by Training 2000 are now recorded as being in Full-Time employment or have progressed into Higher Education.

Developing people, and places:

We provide non-standard access to all our undergraduate degrees through a suite of foundation-entry year courses. Supporting student transition into and through higher education has been identified as one of the areas of the University Learning & Teaching strategy which requires focus. We aim to deliver an excellent student experience while students transition between the phases of their learning journey. This work recognises the different pathways for students into the University environment, through traditional school and college entry, vocational education and training, in partnership with colleges and training providers and as apprentices. Our subject-based social media-led introductory campaigns and activities for new students have been demonstrated to be very effective in helping students progress and maximise attainment while at university and in achievement of their career goals.

We continue to invest in our Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, through which we are providing enhanced support for staff engaged in learning and teaching. This includes a greater focus on inclusive learning; enhanced provision of interactive technologies (our sector-leading practice in the use of Surface Pros has been recognised and showcased by Microsoft); and continuing to ensure we have a high proportion of staff with teaching qualifications.

Our student body is diverse and learning, teaching and assessment approaches need to recognise this diversity. The diversity of the University is not only represented through the protected characteristics of learners, but also through their mode of study (part or full time, apprentices) or their choice to commute, reside on campus or live in the city. We continue to invest in our curriculum and focus on inclusive learning. Our objective is to further develop our cultural competence to provide an accessible and enabling learning environment to all students, regardless of background.

Continuing to invest in student support

We recognise the diverse needs of our student population and provide targeted professional and financial support. Our approach to financial support is continually evolving as a result of our analysis of students' reasons for withdrawing from their courses, Students' Union feedback from current and previous students, and the outcomes of national research. The Students' Union favours an approach which continues to provide a high level of support to the very poorest students, but allows for differing levels of support for other students presenting varying needs. Feedback from previous and current first year students suggests that, although the availability of financial support is not a key determinant in the decision to come to University, once here it is highly valued and makes a significant difference to some students' ability to stay the course, thus impacting favourably on student success and progression. We have, therefore, focused all our financial support on incentivising progression and require all students in receipt of additional payments to identify how this funding has benefitted them – overwhelmingly these case studies report that such funding makes it possible for them to continue their studies. The primary group of students applying for additional support are parents and others with caring responsibilities and we have tailored support to their needs, for example, making hardship payments during the summer to prevent them needing to claim benefits and therefore leave their course. Our experience of administering the National Scholarship Programme taught us that concentrating financial support in the early stages of the student journey (the first year) was not the most effective way of enabling students to complete their full course. With this in mind, we have refocused our bursaries to provide more structured support to our lowest income students over the full duration of their study. Financial support will continue to be provided to students in cash and through payments to support student success. In particular, we have introduced a new higher bursary payment during students' final year. This is intended to reduce the need to undertake part-time employment at this critical point in their studies. We also provide other support arrangements for students from

specific under-represented groups and our evaluation has shown that this is essential in enabling many of our students to fulfil their potential.

The financial and other support arrangements reported in this plan only apply to students at UCLan campuses. However, the majority of our partners operating through a subcontractual arrangement either have set their tuition fees below the maximum level or provide their own substantial levels of support for students.

Retention is an area of challenge for us; we are making progress in our work to address this and are embedding a new strategy to ensure we focus our activities on the things that are most effective. Our decision to extend the range of foundation year opportunities that we offer has impacted on our success in this area, with retention rates for students on these courses being lower than for those on our other undergraduate courses. However, we are committed to maintaining this important opportunity for those who would otherwise struggle to meet the entry requirements for higher education. We have invested heavily in work to understand the causes of this lower rate of retention and the most effective solutions to it. Our work has identified that there is no single simple solution, rather a multi-faceted approach is required. Activities that we have invested in includes enhanced support for staff engaged in learning and teaching; changing our curriculum and reviewing our assessment strategy; introducing comprehensive mentoring; Starfish, our student relationship management system; and a longitudinal study, with PhD students evaluating a range of different interventions and impacts on different student groups – for example, exploring reasons why commuting students struggle and what specific support we can put in place for them. As a result, internal figures show that progression from these courses into year 1 has now improved from 60% to 70%.

Graduate outcomes are a key area of focus. A significant proportion of our students originate within the local area and 74% of our graduates stay within the North West. Many of our students are the first in their family to participate in higher education and are firmly embedded within their communities, which means that a high proportion of graduates has much more restricted access to high quality employment opportunities than graduates in places like Manchester and London, 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. National research, most recently summarised in the Sutton Trust report on the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility (January 2017), has shown that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less successful in gaining access to the top professions: “less able, better-off kids are 35% more likely to become high earners than bright poor kids.”

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 and the number of these still active having survived at least three years – in 2014-15, we had 209 new graduate start-ups (placing us third in the country) and 551 still active from previous years – the highest figure in the UK. 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. 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.

Learning from our own experiences

The University is seeking to build on the learning from a range of national and regional research in order to shape our approach to access activity from 2019-20. The following learning and evidence has informed our approach: our previous institutional Access schemes; government report findings including the National Strategy for Access and Student Success and the Strategy for Social Mobility, *Schools that Work for Everyone, Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers*; the review of mature and part-time students by Universities UK; analysis by HEFCE of young participation data, giving more detail on participation rates across the English regions; the regional LEP Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2016-2021; institutional challenges around differences in performance and access to courses among certain under-represented groups; and NUS analysis through the *Pound In Your Pocket, Meet the Parents, Never Too Late to Learn* and *Beyond access: getting to university and succeeding there, Working in partnership: enabling social mobility in higher education* reports.

Further tailoring and refinement of our approaches are likely to result from our current programme of analysis and strategy development to ensure that we are focusing our resources and efforts effectively on the areas of greatest need. We will update on this in our next report.

Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

We monitor delivery through the University's operational and strategic reporting. Targets and milestones identified within this plan are monitored through reports to the University's Student Experience Committee, which is a sub-committee of Academic Board and is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development). The Students' Union is represented on this Committee. Overall responsibility for the Access and Participation Plan resides with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

The detailed work to develop our Access and Participation Plan and to coordinate evaluation of the impact of work through evaluation is undertaken by a working group, which is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). This group includes representatives of university services responsible for the operational delivery of the activities described and the Students' Union. We ensure continuous improvement through evaluation and are continuing to enhance our ability to monitor impacts at the more detailed level, 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, retention, attainment and progression by equality characteristics and other 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 effectively in fulfilling their full potential.
- We use the HEAT database to provide longitudinal tracking and enable us to assess the effectiveness and impact of our access and student success initiatives. To support this, we take a research approach to our evaluation and have appointed staff with this specific responsibility.

- We regularly collect feedback on the impact of individual initiatives and programmes of activity and take soundings from students on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the support arrangements we have established. We also work closely with the Students Union to ensure the Student Voice is represented within our review and evaluation processes.
- We are using the ‘closing the gap’ methodology developed for OFFA, to ensure that we understand the impact of our financial support arrangements on the success of those of our students who benefit. Following changes to our approach to financial support, we intend to monitor the impact of the new arrangements over the longer-term.
- We are exploring our institutional data in more detail to identify different aspects of under-representation within the access, success and progression remits to inform our approaches moving forward.
- We have moved toward using logic models/theory of change to plan our evaluation. We believe our current evaluation practice is OFFA Level 2 but we strive to move towards level 3. We plan to undertake quasi-experimental and randomised control trials (dependent on participation numbers) to assess our WP programmes. In addition, we will take best practice established by the NCOP Future U programme and look to implement similar frameworks within our own evaluation. We have been working in partnership with schools as part of SUN and we are looking toward establishing data-sharing agreements and working with schools to research how different interventions impact student outcomes.

Equality and Diversity

UCLan is strongly committed to its equality and diversity responsibilities across the full range of its activities as a provider of higher education. Throughout the student lifecycle we actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion by providing diverse entry routes to our degree courses and a suite of interventions and support tailored to ensure students achieve their full potential regardless of prior attainment. Our Access & Participation Plan is closely linked to our equality and diversity work: for example, we have expanded the suite of foundation entry year courses to provide non-standard access to all our undergraduate degrees. The study skills and learning support to smooth the transition to higher education embedded within the curriculum are designed to further strengthen, and ensure, student success. Our Access & Participation Plan and equality and diversity focus are both intended to fulfil our key commitment of providing equality of opportunity to all, supporting the rights and freedoms of our diverse community and fostering good relations and understanding between groups. We are meeting the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) and publishing a breadth of student and staff equality and diversity information at: www.uclan.ac.uk/equalityact2010

Our vision is strongly focused on achieving equality of outcomes. Our strategic equality and diversity objectives are as follows:

- Enriching our culture of valuing and engaging people – staff and students feel valued and engaged in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensuring fair processes and inclusion – enhancing UCLan’s working and study environment; increasing consistency and fairness in all that we do; ensuring our inclusion agenda is more prominent and broadly understood.
- Empowering people (protected groups) – empowering staff and students to succeed to the best of their abilities, irrespective of their characteristics.
- Embedding diversity, dignity and wellbeing – enhancing the way we embed diversity, dignity and wellbeing in all of our functions and services; ensuring everyone has a role to play in improving our environment, culture and behaviour.

In support of this, we continue to lead, participate and engage in a range of internal and external equality networks, activities and events to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. We also strive to achieve a range of external equality awards and accreditations, such as the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)'s Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter Marks. We currently hold an Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award and are working towards several other awards. We also hold Stonewall Champions and Mindful Employer accreditations and are a Disability Confident Level 1 employer. This work allows us to focus our attentions to specific protected groups, benefiting both students and staff. We further participate in ECU projects such as our "*Increasing Diversity: Recruiting students from under-representative groups*" project.

Our Students' Union is active in its support for equality, diversity and inclusion. The Students' Union has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and an action plan to improve EDI across the Students' Union and student-led groups. Representation of underrepresented groups is facilitated through student led forums such as BME forum, Disabled Students Forum and Student Parent Forum. The democratically elected Students' Council also includes part time officers focusing on the needs of BME, Trans, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual, Disabled and Women students. In The Union Plan 2016-2020, The Students' Union has also committed to 'Provide free membership and guaranteed help for student led groups supporting under represented or socially marginalised identities.'

We undertake regular monitoring, produce meaningful student equality and diversity information across the range of student lifecycle stages and make this available to staff to interrogate and inform their approaches. E&D Leads in Academic areas monitor performance, benchmark it and identify areas of under-representation or disparities in satisfaction, retention or attainment locally between groups of students due to protected characteristics and socio-economic background. Reports feed into Committee structures and periodic course reviews evaluate trends and discuss actions planned.

As noted above, institutionally we have identified that we have an ethnicity attainment gap between our UK-domiciled White and BME students, which we are committed to reducing. A University-wide working group is enabling us to take this work forward. By engaging closely with the sector and other HEIs we keep abreast of latest research and findings and share best practice with other HEIs in steps taken to address attainment differences. We are pleased to have been selected to participate in the ECU's *Increasing diversity: recruiting students from underrepresented groups* project, through which we are exploring opportunities to transfer methodologies used to increase Muslim student participation to other underrepresented groups. We continue to monitor closely and evaluate activities to consider the impact on protected equality groups to help inform our work and provide an evidence-base for future actions.

Student consultation and involvement

Student views are highly valued within UCLan and are proactively sought. There is a formal Partnership Agreement, between the University and Union which is reviewed annually and supported by leaders of both organisations. This ensures student representation in the University's decision-making processes and on all senior committees, such as Academic Board and its sub-committees, University Board, feedback committees at course and School level, co-chairing and membership of project boards and meetings between the Students' Union and the Senior Executive Team.

In compiling this Access and Participation Plan the University has, as with all previous Agreements, consulted with the Students' Union and has valued its membership of and contributions to the working group developing the Plan from the beginning of the process. SU representatives have actively engaged in discussions, contributed advice and learning, and helped shape this Plan as equal partners in the process. The Students' Union has also committed to facilitating regular

consultations with defined student groups i.e. mature/care leavers, through student-led forums and networks, with a view to using these groups as sounding boards for access initiatives linked directly to them. The University is also looking at ways to gain input from such students.

In order to increase the range of students involved in the development and implementation of this Plan, we have also consulted directly with students through an online survey to assess their attitudes and opinions about the inclusivity of our teaching approaches and facilities. We are using the findings of this survey as a basis to do more in-depth student consultation in 2018-19, which will help inform our future approach. We intend to ensure that mechanisms are in place to provide a range of opportunities for all student populations to influence the further development of activities and planning in this area.

Access, student success and progression measures

Our access, student success and progression activities all build on our research and experiences to date, as well as regional and national learning, as detailed above. Our approach centres on long-term engagement and continuous improvement with significant collaborative working with a range of stakeholders. This section provides an overview of our key activities in each area.

Access Activity

In 2017-18 we have trialled the School University Network (SUN), working in partnership with six secondary schools and their feeder primary schools to deliver a structured programme of multiple interventions. These schools were selected based on the geography, percentage of students eligible for pupil premium, recruitment from low-participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) and the level to which they are already served by the Future U (NCOP) programme. By creating a partnership model with schools with a structured programme of activity, we can significantly increase the chances of young people participating in activities several times throughout pre-16 education. We work alongside schools and colleges to monitor and ensure that the relevant target groups are appropriately represented in the activities.

To demonstrate pathways and signpost routes to the professions and future careers, programmes are targeted to address issues around under-representation, completion, progression and attainment. Our work here focuses on engaging parents and carers to remove cultural barriers around particular professions, highlight the benefits of a broad range of university courses and future careers, and provide greater support pre-entry to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to fulfil their potential. This approach is designed to complement our approach to student retention and success, ensuring students are engaged, motivated, confident and informed to succeed in their chosen course whilst at university.

A particular focus is Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) outreach. The award-winning Young Scientist Centre (YSC) is a collaboration between the University and the Royal Institution. It offers high-quality practical science experiences for pupils at key stages 2-5 within a dedicated laboratory space. The programme of activities covers areas of STEM and supports attainment, with all workshops providing an extension and enhancement to the curriculum and practical experiences which cannot be delivered in school/college. The YSC also works with Science and Technology teachers to develop resources that will support STEM attainment. Workshops are being delivered that support the teaching of GCSE required practicals and teacher CPD to aid the teaching of STEM in primary schools. Literacy and numeracy attainment is often an issue for our local schools and colleges and, therefore, activities will be developed to support this agenda and will be trialled among students in local primary schools.

We are developing and trialling a targeted programme of work engaging young people from under-represented groups including those with experience of being in care, those with disabilities, refugees and young carers. The University has also embarked on new initiatives to engage with the GRT community and young men from low-SES backgrounds. To further build on this targeted work, we will engage young people from military families through our College for Military Veterans and Emergency Services. Through our links with the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers and the Virtual Heads within Local Authorities, we have organised bespoke University Experience days for local looked-after young people to get a taster of higher education and raise aspirations

Public and Social Engagement

Our flagship public and social engagement event, the award-winning Lancashire Science Festival, is an inspirational celebration of STEM. Now in its seventh year, the Festival attracts 13,000 visitors, with a core audience of primary school children, and families with young children aged 5-14 years. The Festival is delivered in collaboration with other educational providers and regional employers, demonstrating potential career routes and directly addressing the STEM skills gap in our region and is in this sense aspiration-raising. Visitor feedback also highlighted that this was an initial point of contact with the University that many under-represented groups would not otherwise have had. At least 439 families who visited on the 2017 family day were from low-HE participation areas (POLAR3, Quintile 1-2) and SUN schools are provided with travel bursaries to cover transport costs.

The University is also actively engaged in local civic and cultural events, such as the Lancashire Encounter arts festival, the Ribble Valley Jazz and Blues Festival, Preston City Mela, Caribbean Carnival and Armed Forces Day. We work in partnership with two youth organisations and run regular interactive activities focused on University subjects and careers. We are also working in partnership with housing associations that have housing in low-HE participation neighbourhoods, to deliver a programme of activity. Students make a core contribution to many of our current outreach activities and are encouraged to contribute to engagement events in a variety of ways.

Research staff can apply to become 'engagement catalysts', with support to develop projects which engage new audiences and address issues of aspiration and participation. Recent initiatives include supporting a creative writing workshop for refugees, developing plays around local history with primary schools and academics and students delivering school workshops around their disciplines. Our engagement work is supported by the Creative Communities Network of alumni, honorary fellows, business leaders, staff and students, who put on a range of activities designed to engage our local community with the knowledge, expertise and facilities of the University.

We have a whole-institution approach to widening participation and all staff are encouraged to contribute to our regional community through volunteering or professional duties, such as board membership or work as a trustee. The 'Time to Shine' scheme offers all staff an additional day of leave per annum to engage in activities that generate a positive impact in the community. Ad hoc outreach and engagement projects are also encouraged and supported and recent successes have included the development of an online comic book to engage primary school children with engineering, a series of Royal Institution Computing Masterclasses, stargazing evenings and a community choir.

Our Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership (CVCL) is an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) accredited centre, which supports our students to become effective leaders within the community, as well as providing grassroots organisations with the opportunity to 'grow their own' community leaders for the future. CVCL is noted for its work in promoting community cohesion and active citizenship projects. The student-led Global Youth Solutions project promotes active citizenship through peer education and leadership locally, nationally, and internationally.

We continue to engage with communities around our campuses in Preston, Burnley, Whitehaven and Cyprus. We have an ongoing sponsorship arrangement with West Lakes Academy in Whitehaven and we work to address cultural, educational and social issues alongside multiple partner agencies, examining the role of poverty and gathering qualitative data on increasing social equality and raising aspirations in this area. In addition, the University will engage with the Blackpool opportunity area to ensure we are contributing to aspiration and attainment-raising work taking place within the region.

To address the decline in numbers of part-time mature learners we have developed a programme of bitesize taster courses, informed by academic and employer input. These sessions are designed to break down barriers, upskill and develop confidence, and provide information, advice and guidance to these students, with a further goal to tackle inequality where it exists in particular subject areas. The programme will be delivered in the community, removing perceived barriers to participation.

Our comprehensive programme of foundation entry years has proven popular and will continue for 2019-20, providing opportunities to students who would otherwise struggle to gain the necessary entry qualifications to engage with higher education.

Social media and call centre activities are designed to engage students with the University prior to their entry. They provide a forum for prospective students to ask questions and discuss concerns with existing students and their peers in an informal and supportive environment. Supported by student mentors and peer-to-peer mentors, these activities include welcome contacts and follow up to ensure that students' journeys into higher education are as smooth as possible. These particularly help provide reassurance and advice to students from low participation areas or with low levels of family experience in higher education. Activities are arranged in subject groups, so that students can start to create learning networks and communities of practice prior to entry to their course.

Raising attainment in schools

For 2018-19, we have developed a more outcomes focused approach to our work on raising GCSE attainment. Building on our highly successful STEM outreach, we will deliver a programme of workshops utilising the specialist equipment in our Young Scientist Centre. Based on GCSE STEM practicals, these workshops will complement and enrich the teaching that year 10/11 students from our targeted backgrounds (based on IMD, POLAR4, first in family, pupil premium, under-represented ethnicities, care leavers, young carers and other relevant criteria) receive in school. The pilot programme in 2018-19 will be measured using tests based on the GCSE curriculum before and after workshop attendance and with a control group. We aim to see improvements in test outcomes as a result of participating in the workshops and, subject to evaluation findings, will develop more specific targets for increased attainment for a broader programme from 2019-20 onwards.

Collaboration

In addition to our active role in NCOP, we will:

- Work with other HEIs to offer institutional activity outside of NCOP. For example conferences, workshops and events, delivered in collaboration with service providers, will focus on ensuring that young people are well equipped with the right information and guidance to support their next steps into higher education.
- Promote collaboration through regional CPD workshops for practitioners and stakeholders with an involvement or interest in widening participation and social mobility.

- Continue to provide a web presence for schools on all activity within the region to ensure schools and students know how to access the range of activities available to them

Student success

We offer a range of support services and financial packages that are specifically tailored for students from under-represented groups including care leavers, students who are estranged from their families, transgender students, students who find themselves homeless, student carers, student parents, disabled students, students with mental health difficulties, those with household incomes below £20,000, and others experiencing difficulties during their studies. The following services are specific to our Preston and Burnley campuses, but most Partners offer their own tailored packages, or charge reduced fees.

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 the <i> (our Student Information Centre). We are cognisant of the profile of our student body and therefore 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 in to higher education. We have a supportive network of Academic Advisors who work closely with Student Services to design activities that maximise engagement during the critical first year of study.

Leavers from Care: All UK Home students who are enrolled on a full-time, undergraduate UCLan programme, defined as in care for at least 13 weeks, spanning their 16th birthday and under 25 on the first day of the academic year of commencement of course of study are eligible for a range of targeted support arrangements including:

- 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
- 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
- Waivers on deposits for University-owned accommodation / year-round accommodation contracts for students who may not have alternative accommodation during vacations
- Access to internships and other employment opportunities whilst at UCLan, to assist with finances
- Financial support 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.

Students who are estranged from their families may face severe financial and wellbeing challenges, as they may not qualify for Local Authority support, but may be in greater need of a personal support network. This group of students is therefore prioritised for financial support and has 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 enhancing 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 have responded to the Equality Challenge Unit guidance on **transgender students**, who, alongside LGB students, represent a growing number of estranged students on campus. A range of support mechanisms has been developed across the institution with this in mind – see https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/support/transgender_students.php. We work with local homelessness charities, so together we can offer support to young people who may have become estranged from their families during transition periods.

We support **students who find themselves homeless**. In addition to the 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.

Support for Student Carers: the University has also 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, as follows:

- The inclusion of Young Carers as part of our widening participation outreach work, to raise aspirations and provide encouragement to enter higher education
- 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>.
- Tracking the progress of these students and evaluating the support given, to assess impact.
- Support from the Students' Union to develop a network and/or forum.

Student Parents: We offer a bursary of £250 to students from a low-income background with dependent children. 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. Details are available at

https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/money/additional_funding.php

Disabled students: 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 by the time 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 through Starfish (our student relationship system). We also provide adapted accommodation, extensive assistive technology (free of charge) through the UCLan network, Interpreters, Library support and a range of other services such as mobility support, campus orientation, captioning of media content, through our Inclusive Support Co-ordination team. We have a close working relationship with the Disabled Student Society, who provide improvement suggestions for the estate, including the recent implementation of lecture capture facilities in all teaching rooms and our Careers Service provides specialist careers advice for students with disabilities.

Like many other HEIs, we have seen a significant increase in numbers of **students with mental health difficulties**. Students with a diagnosed mental health condition receive the same support as our disabled students and have a named Inclusive Support Adviser with a speciality in mental health. However, not all students 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, which provides practical tips for settling in, making friends and seeking help. We have a drop-in zone, which operates during the day, evenings and Saturdays, for students to informally seek advice on their mental health and/or wellbeing, together with a Well@UCLan programme, which offers practical support on topics such as Managing Anxiety and Sleeping Properly. We have a team of Mental Health Advisors, Counsellors and Wellbeing Advisors, who offer individual support and referral to specialist NHS services. We also provide training to academic and support staff on how to manage students with mental health conditions and work closely with our Students' Union on campaigns such as "Stressed Out Students (S.O.S)". Our Student Services team operate from 8am to 11pm and our Security Team cover the remaining hours, with an on-call Student Services emergency rota.

Support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities builds on research outcomes from UCLan's EU funded PEER action research programme with 550 Roma children and young people across 9 EU countries (<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BysCNXs0-rj6NnNVRDNoSHR1MFU>), which 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. Activities include annual community engagement events hosted at the University, GRT open days, panels of advisers from the GRT community to develop support, publicity and mentoring for students with peers and staff development to support inclusive learning.

We work with children from military families through the College for Military Veterans, but are exploring opportunities to do more in this area, once we have established our current baseline position. We have recently signed the Armed Forces Covenant and submitted a silver application to the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), which acknowledges employers who have provided exceptional support to the armed forces community and defence by going above and beyond their covenant pledges.

Support for Refugees/Displaced People: 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 the displaced community, including via:

- Financial support in the form of an annual 'Sanctuary Scholarship', plus additional financial assistance towards key learning materials and travel – we have sponsored a number of students directly, covering fees and full living costs
- Dedicated academic and wellbeing support
- Hosting and sourcing of professional placements and projects
- Hosting of professional and personal development sessions, on subjects including language tuition, further education and careers advice and readiness.

Low income households: In 2019/20, the UCLan Bursary will provide £2,000-worth of financial support for all full time undergraduate students at our Preston and Burnley Campuses paying the maximum £9,250 fee from households with residual incomes of less than £20,000 (with the exception of students already in receipt of support, such as Dentistry students). Funds are payable in instalments over the duration of the course (two per year, payable in the third and sixth month of study, usually November and February), with an initial allocation of £500 in Year 1, followed by

£750 in both Year 2 and Year 3 (and Year 4, if applicable). Those studying at other locations should check with their course provider for details of applicable arrangements.

We currently offer an additional ‘top-up’ bursary for students who complete a foundation year with us of an annual payment of £500 for each year of their degree programme (ie years 1-3). Levels of uptake and expenditure are currently being assessed and it is likely that the scheme will continue in future academic years. A decision will be made in due course, following investigation and consideration of the effect of this scheme on student retention and progression. In 2018/19 we introduce a travel bursary for foundation year students. If this impacts positively on student retention and progression, it is likely that the scheme will continue in future academic years. Details will be at: https://www.uclan.ac.uk/study_here/fees_and_finance/uclan_financial_bursary.php

Our Harris Bursary Fund also provides financial support to students in need, at appropriate points throughout the student lifecycle. Our experience of administering the Harris Bursary Fund is that quite small amounts of support – provided in the form of, for example, food vouchers, book tokens and essential IT equipment – can make a substantial difference to students at different times of the year. We have used the funds available to 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. Through the enhancement of the funds available we also direct support to students who would find it difficult on financial grounds to access work experience and global experience opportunities. Priority groups targeted via Hardship Funding are: students with children (especially lone parents); 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 HEFCE Access to Learning Fund, we set aside a similar amount on an ongoing basis (c£700k) 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: meeting specific course and living costs which are not already met from other sources; 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 new travel bursary of £500 cash for UK students on the foundation year of their degree course. We are also creating a heavily subsidised bus scheme from key regional hubs, which is intended to support the creation of ‘home study groups’ to increase peer support. The level of funding has not yet been set for the 2019/20 academic year. Eligibility criteria can be found at:

https://www.uclan.ac.uk/study_here/fees_and_finance/uclan_financial_bursary.php

Our work to tackle our retention challenge has seen us investing heavily in a range of areas, which includes changing our curriculum and reviewing our assessment strategy to reduce the number of assessment points and ensure a focus on assessment for learning. We are actively using Starfish, a student relationship management system, which enables us to track our students’ progress and

make early interventions to support students at risk of poor attainment/non-continuation. We are also developing communities of learners, intended to build up networks to support resilience and increase course identity and community.

Our work to address our BME attainment gap has included focused action within six Schools where the gap was most prominent, with briefing and development sessions for key staff and support to develop action plans that specifically address the issues in their subject areas. These action plans are now being implemented. We have funded a professional doctorate to research this issue further at UCLan. We have also: developed an inclusivity checklist for course teams to consider whether their curriculum is inclusive; made anonymised marking mandatory, wherever possible; piloted a race specific session for academic staff, considering race in the curriculum, which we intend to deliver more widely; and URP chairs have had specific training on inclusivity in the curriculum so that they are cognisant of this issue when considering validation events.

We are expanding our previous mentoring programme to include a consolidated approach from pre-entry, throughout students' studies and then into the workplace to create a full chain of support for our students to enhance their success and progression at different stages of their journey. We piloted Peer Assisted Study Sessions (the PASS scheme) in 2017/18, providing 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. The scheme also enables immediate feedback to teaching teams and responsive curriculum delivery, thereby enhancing the student experience. As a result of the positive impact the scheme is being phased in across the University and will be fully embedded by 2020/21. Wellbeing Mentors in Student Services also provide 1 to 1 peer support for those who need help with things like settling in, finding friends and getting around campus.

We have found that those 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. The Residence Officers are now part of the Student Services function and are therefore able to provide immediate, proactive support for students, or quickly refer them to specialist services.

Progression into employment and/or further study

Ultimately, we want to see our students progress from excellent degree results to strong professional careers and/or further study. In order to mitigate the challenges provided by our local and regional context, we have a range of initiatives and programmes designed to enhance our students' opportunities for progression following completion of their courses. Opportunities for placements, internships and other forms of work experience and volunteering are embedded in all courses. Our Careers Service offers a series of dedicated subject-based careers events designed to engage all students with careers support and provide them with access to a wide range of employers. A year-long programme of activities complement the events with 1 to 1 support for CV writing/job interviews; group workshops targeted at specific professions/subject areas; enhanced career support for specific student groups e.g. disabled students, estranged students, care leavers and carers; and interface between employers and our academic Schools to, amongst other things, generate structured work experience opportunities for our undergraduates. We have also adopted the HEAR, the Higher Education Achievement Report, which is designed to encourage a more sophisticated approach to recording student achievement, enabling students to showcase more

effectively the full range of opportunities they have taken advantage of during their time at the University.

We provide an extensive range of student employment opportunities on campus and with local employers. For example, over 150 students are recruited each year to the University's Student Ambassador Scheme to support university events and programmes across a range of audiences and hours that are flexible to fit in with their studies. Students are all DBS checked and are provided with robust and detailed training across a wide range of topics to enable them to succeed within the role. The varied skills, behaviours, networks and knowledge gained from working in these roles is very effective for enhancing students' CVs and helping with their successful progression upon graduation. The Students' Union also employs over 150 student staff in a variety of roles through the year, providing wages amounting to £430,000. The Union is an active member of the National Association of Student Employment Services and five student staff have been shortlisted for national student employment awards in the last four years. In the Union Plan for 2016-20, there is a commitment to working with the University and local employers to develop a Code of Good Practice on the skills development of student staff.

Recognising the importance of work experience in assisting graduates in gaining professional employment, 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 Project Management, Leadership and other qualifications, alongside employability and enterprise workshops, to boost their career prospects. Approximately 100 students take up this opportunity every year and our data shows that many participants in the scheme have been supported through the programme into permanent full time graduate employment.

Employers are also key in our mentoring around access to the professions. We are working with local employers on a new online mentoring scheme for final year students. 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. Students are also enabled to develop entrepreneurial skills and we provide support for student start-up businesses, including business mentoring, incubation space and seed-corn funding programmes.

Students are encouraged to consider postgraduate study through exposure to live research projects and can complete an extended, paid, research internship over summer as part of the Undergraduate Research Internship Scheme. UCLan led the development of the British Conference for Undergraduate Research and was also the first university to send undergraduate students to the National Conference of Undergraduate Research, held annually in the USA. 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 to increase engagement with study at this level.

If our current programme of analysis and strategy development indicates that changes to these measures are required to ensure we are addressing our key challenges, we will update our approach accordingly, but we will do this in a considered way to ensure that students commencing study with us in 2019/20 are not disadvantaged by such changes.

Investment

Indicative investment for 2019/20 is highlighted below both in cash terms and a proportion of higher fee income separated into Access, Success, Progression and Financial Support. Our continued

commitment to hardship payments and financial support is almost entirely focused on supporting student retention and success. This approach has been informed by discussions with key representatives of our Students' Union in terms of the impact of such support and the timing of payments for when our students most need financial assistance.

| 2019/20 Investment Summary | Total Investment | APP investment | APP as a % (HFI) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Access Investment | £1,621,319 | £1,123,495 | 2.8 |
| Success Investment | £6,447,747 | £3,566,856 | 8.8 |
| Progression investment | £2,771,219 | £1,699,180 | 4.2 |
| Investment in Financial Support | £5,802,892 | £4,090,860 | 10.1 |
| TOTAL | £16,643,177 | £10,480,391 | 26.0 |

In addition to the expenditure identified above and described throughout this plan, we also invest in a range of activities which complement and contextualise our access and participation work. These include a broad ranging programme on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; programmes of subject-based work with schools and colleges which are delivered through our academic Schools and via our Partner Colleges; hardship funds; and broad study support/student support activities which extend the reach of targeted initiatives to reduce the likelihood of students who access such support experiencing negative labelling or stigma.

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. The University is compliant with the consumer law requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), having undertaken an in-depth, cross-university project in response to sector-wide advice published by the CMA in March 2015. 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 fees 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 (MBBS);
- 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.

* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

We are committed to not increasing the fees for 2019-20 entrants in subsequent years.

| Full-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
|---|---|--------------------|
| First degree | Bachelor of Laws with Honours Senior Status | £6,750 |
| First degree | | £9,250 |
| Foundation degree | | £9,250 |
| Foundation year / Year 0 | | £5,500 |
| HNC / HND | | £9,250 |
| CertHE / DipHE | | £9,250 |
| Postgraduate ITT | | £9,250 |
| Accelerated degree | | £11,100 |
| Sandwich year | | £1,000 |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | | £1,385 |
| Other | | £9,250 |
| Franchise full-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
| Foundation year / Year 0 | Burnley College 10001000 | £6,000 |
| First degree | Burnley College 10001000 | £9,000 |
| Foundation degree | Burnley College 10001000 | £9,000 |
| Foundation year / Year 0 | Preston College 10005200 | £6,000 |
| Foundation degree | Preston College 10005200 | £6,000 |
| Foundation year / Year 0 | Runshaw College 10005575 | £5,500 |
| First degree | Runshaw College 10005575 | £9,250 |
| Foundation degree | Runshaw College 10005575 | £9,250 |
| Postgraduate ITT | Runshaw College 10005575 | £9,250 |
| HNC / HND | Runshaw College 10005575 | £9,250 |
| Foundation year / Year 0 | School of Electronic Music (Manchester MIDI) 10011174 | £5,995 |
| First degree | Lancaster and Morecambe College 10003768 | £9,250 |
| First degree | School of Sound Recording 10010457 | £9,250 |
| First degree | School of Sound Recording 10010457 - BSc Hons Music Business & Creative Industries | £6,165 |
| Foundation degree | School of Sound Recording 10010457 | £9,250 |
| HNC / HND | School of Sound Recording 10010457 | £9,250 |
| Foundation degree | City and Islington College 10007455 | £9,250 |
| First degree | City and Islington College 10007455 | £9,250 |
| Foundation degree | Huddersfield New College 10003188 | £5,995 |
| CertHE / DipHE | | * |
| Accelerated degree | | * |
| Sandwich year | | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | | * |
| Other | | * |
| Part-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
| First degree | - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |
| First degree | - The fee for distance learning is £1,090 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £4,905 |
| First degree | - LLB Hons Senior Status - the fee is £1,125 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £5,062 |
| First degree | Furness College 10002599 - The fee is £1,075 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £4,837 |
| First degree | Runshaw College 10005575 - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |
| First degree | School of Sound Recording 10010457 - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits with the exception of BSc Hons Music Business and Creative Industries where the fee per 20 credits would be £1,027. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |
| First degree | - The fee for students on the Bachelor of Dental Surgery course and the Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy course repeating individual modules is £2,000 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 60 credits part time. | £6,000 |
| Foundation degree | - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |
| Foundation degree | - The fee for distance learning is £1,090 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £4,905 |
| Foundation degree | Furness College 10002599 - The fee is £1,075 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £4,837 |
| Foundation degree | Runshaw College 10005575 - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |
| Foundation degree | School of Sound Recording 10010457 - The fee is £1,540 per 20 credits. A student will study no more than 90 credits part time. | £6,930 |

Table 8a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

| Reference number | Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu) | Main target type (drop-down menu) | Target type (drop-down menu) | Description (500 characters maximum) | Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu) | Baseline year (drop-down menu) | Baseline data | Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text) | | | | | Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum) |
|------------------|---|--|---|--|--|---|---------------|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| | | | | | | | | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | |
| T16a_01 | Access | Socio-economic | HESA T1a - NS-SEC classes 4-7 (Young, full-time, first degree entrants) | To remain above benchmark for the recruitment of full time students from low social classes. Because of data fluctuations, the baseline used is an average over the past three years (2011/12-2013/14). | No | Other (please give details in Description column) | 42.3% | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | HESA has discontinued this metric because reliable data is no longer available |
| T16a_02 | Access | Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) | HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants) | To remain above benchmark for the recruitment of full time students from low participation neighbourhood. Because of data fluctuations, the baseline used is an average over the past three years (2011/12-2013/14). | No | Other (please give details in Description column) | 17.4% | 19.5% | 20% | | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020, so we have not yet set targets beyond this period. It is likely that our focus will move away from this specific target, having reached high access standards, and focus more on student success and progression. |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|-----------------|---|--|---|----|---|-------|--------|--------|-------|--|--|--|---|
| T16a_03 | Student success | Attainment raising | HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants) | To achieve year on year increases in the percentage of students expected to complete their degree. Because of data fluctuations, the baseline used is an average over the past three years (2011/12-2013/14). | No | Other (please give details in Description column) | 77.3% | 82% | 83% | | | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020, so we will extend the series of targets in due course |
| T16a_04 | Student success | Attainment raising | Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column) | To reduce the attainment gap between BME and White students (baseline 2010/11 qualifiers) | No | Other (please give details in Description column) | 16.3% | max 9% | max 8% | | | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020, so we will extend the series of targets in due course |
| T16a_05 | Progression | Other (please give details in Description column) | Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column) | To increase the proportion of full-time first degree leavers in employment/further studies (HESA PI E1a). Baseline 2014/15 leavers (published in 2016). | No | 2014-15 | 92.2% | 94.2% | 94.7% | 95.2% | | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020. Whilst this set of targets was developed more recently and is therefore over a slightly longer timeframe than the others, we do not plan to extend the series of targets further until a more over-arching strategic review is undertaken |

| Reference Number | Select stage of the lifecycle | Main target type (drop-down menu) | Target type (drop-down menu) | Description (500 characters maximum) | Is this a collaborative target? | Baseline year | Baseline data | Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text) | | | | | Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum) |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| | | | | | | | | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | |
| T16b_01 | Access | Multiple | Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column) | To engage high school students through a range of outreach activity aimed at increasing engagement with and aspirations for higher education | Yes | 2011-12 | 50 students | 800 | 900 | 1000 | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020. Whilst this set of targets was developed more recently and is therefore over a slightly longer timeframe than the others, we do not plan to extend the series of targets further until a more over-arching strategic review is undertaken |
| T16b_02 | Access | Multiple | Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column) | To work in collaboration with FE partners to strengthen the progression of students living in low HE-participation neighbourhoods, into HE | Yes | 2011-12 | 0 students | 400 | 500 | 600 | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020. Whilst this set of targets was developed more recently and is therefore over a slightly longer timeframe than the others, we do not plan to extend the series of targets further until a more over-arching strategic review is undertaken |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------------------|---|--|-----|---------|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| T16b_03 | Access | Multiple | Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column) | To engage primary school pupils through a range of outreach activity aimed at increasing engagement with and aspirations for higher education | Yes | 2015-16 | 0 students | 300 | 350 | 400 | | | Our current strategic plan extends to 2020. Whilst this set of targets was developed more recently and is therefore over a slightly longer timeframe than the others, we do not plan to extend the series of targets further until a more over-arching strategic review is undertaken |
| T16b_04 | Access | Attainment raising | Other (please give details in Description column) | To raise attainment in schools by running 6 subject based conferences inviting all teachers across Lancashire and Cumbria to develop subject expertise and best practice in raising attainment (attendees 280) | Yes | 2016-17 | 0 conferences | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | We are replacing this with a more outcome-focused target for raising attainment (see below) so have not established a longer time series of targets for the current approach (we had a target of six conferences for 2017-18). |
| T16b_05 | Access | Attainment raising | Other (please give details in Description column) | To improve school students' (years 10/11) performance in STEM practical assessments based on GCSE assessments | Yes | 2018-19 | to be gathered | increase in attainment post workshops | TBC following pilot | TBC following pilot | TBC following pilot | TBC following pilot | We aim to see an increase in attainment measures relating to GCSE required practical exam questions. We will deliver workshops aligned to the GCSE curriculum for year 10/11 students who meet our access criteria (under-represented groups, as described elsewhere). Increases in attainment will be measured through GCSE-based tests conducted before and after the workshops and with a control group. We will pilot the programme in 2018-19 and develop methodology and more specific targets for subsequent cohorts, based on evaluation of pilot outcomes |