

Gloucestershire College: Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Gloucestershire College predominantly attracts HE learners from within the county (over 90% of HE learners live within 30 miles of the college) and enrolments are closely linked to the demographics locally. Over one quarter of our new HE learners each year have progressed directly from our FE level 3 cohort. The actual number of full time HE learners at the college has been declining from 2016/7, which reflects the demographic changes in the county. Whilst total numbers of new enrolments have declined, as per the demographic changes, the college has remained committed to increasing percentages of internal progression rates from our level 3 learners and percentages of underrepresented groups progressing to HE (both our own HE courses and other organisations). With a small cohort, any fluctuations in numbers may impact upon percentage changes significantly.

The college has a **significant proportion** of HE learners who are from underrepresented groups/ disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the overall number of HE learners is small and therefore the percentage changes year on year, for underrepresented groups and the associated intersections, numbers are skewed significantly by a small number of learners.

Table 1: Percentage of HE learners from underrepresented groups (as defined by OFS) those who fall into one or more of the following: POLAR4 low participation (Q1-2) young learners – quintiles 1 and 2; IMD high deprivation – quintile 1; Minority ethnicity (ABMO); Learning difficulty and/or disability.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All learners	260	222	208	232	178	141
Disadvantaged	111	102	95	98	86	72
% of total	43%	46%	46%	42%	48%	51%

The following analysis uses datasets provided by OfS unless specified. Due to the narrow mix of qualifications offered, the analysis relates to the 'All undergraduate' group. For attainment, we have utilised data from our internal individual learning records/returns as the data set does not provide the detail required for analysis due to the numbers of learners.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

In terms of our full time HE student population 25% are from Polar Q1 and 10% from Polar Q5 and 13% IMD Q1 and 23% IMDQ5.

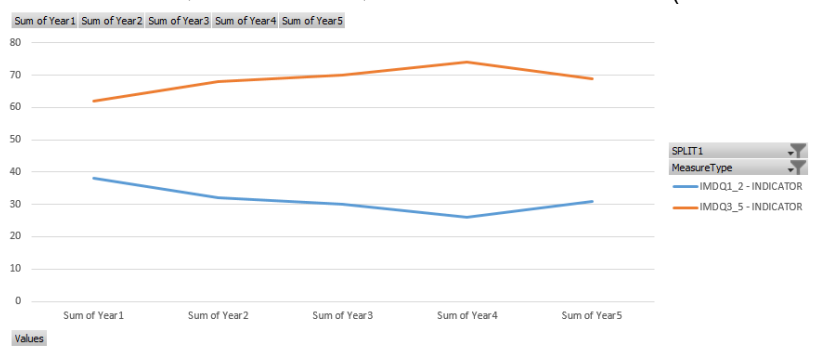
1.1.1 Access

POLAR4: We have seen an elimination of the gap between our Polar 4 Q1-2 and Q3-5 access across all our undergraduate learners, however, there is a gap between Q1 and Q5 but this is as Q5 has declined **as Q1 has increased**. Whilst we had narrowed the gap between Q1+Q2 and Q3-Q5 in year 2016/7 this has reversed slightly in 2017/8. **This represents that we have a higher and increasing percentage of learners from Polar 4 Q1.** The percentage of POLAR4 Q1 full time learners at Gloucestershire College has remained significantly higher than the percentage of POLAR4 Q1 full time learners across **all English HE providers** (25% versus 12%). The percentage of POLAR4 Q1-2 white learners is 41% compared to 20.8% across all **English HE providers**.

There have been increases in POLAR4 Q1, Q3 and Q4 but declines in Q2 (decline of 7% yr.16/18 to yr. 17/18) and Q5 (decline of 5%).

IMD: Whilst there has been a small percentage increase in learners from IMD Q1 and 2 (26% to 31% and the gap has been closing) there is a gap in the percentage of learners from Q1-2 and those from IMD Q3-5. There has been a 6% increase in the percentage of learners from Q2 but this has not been significant enough to close the gap.

Table 2: IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 access of all learners (Yr1 – 2013/4 to Yr 5 – 2017/8)



Over the five-year period we have identified IMD Q1 has been the lowest percentage of learners and declining, Q2 has been low but improving. Internal data shows that there are no particular course areas with significantly low proportions of Q1 and 2 learners although the proportions are lower on our early year's course. The lowest proportion of IMD Q1 and Q2 learners are from the Forest of Dean wards compared to the proportions from our other main catchment areas. Within this the female Q1 and Q2 learners from the Forest of Dean that are the lowest proportion of our HE learner population, however numbers are small. **There is a 10% gap between Q1 learners (13%) and Q5 (23%) which forms the basis of target reference PTA1.**

1.1.2 Success

Non-continuation: POLAR 4

The continuation rates for 2016/7 were 90% (rounded), which have increased each year since 2013/4. There have been continuation improvements each year for all POLAR4 quintiles with the exception of a slight decline between 2015/6 and 2016/7 for Q3 and Q5. Our continuation rates for POLAR 4 Q1-2 and IMD Q1-2 are on a par with the **rates of all English HE providers.**

Table 3: POLAR4 continuation rates by quintile.

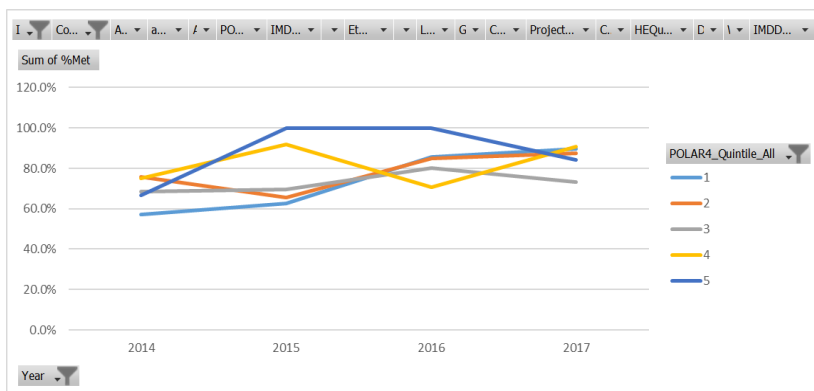


Table 4: POLAR 4 Q1-2 v Q3-5 continuation rates

POLAR 4 Continuation data (Young Learners). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (12/13)	Year2 (13/14)	Year3 (14/15)	Year4 (15/16)	Year5 (16/17)	CHANGE Year1_TO Year5	CHANGE Year4_TO Year5
% continuation	POLAR4Q1_2	90	60	75	90	90	0	0
	POLAR4Q3_5	0	85	75	85	90	0	10
GAP	POLAR4Q1_2 & POLAR4Q3_5	0	25	5	-5	5	0	10

The continuation rates for POLAR4 Q1-2 students have improved year on year since 2013/4. The **rounded 5% gap** between POLAR 4 Q1-2 and Q3-5 in 2016/7 is not statistically significant but **we will monitor these annually and are committed to reduce any gaps however small.**

IMD: There has been an improving continuation trend over last three years with no statistically significant difference between Q1-2 and Q3-5 in last three years.

Table 5: IMD continuation rates Q1-2 v Q3-5

IMD Continuation data. Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (12/13)	Year2 (13/14)	Year3 (14/15)	Year4 (15/16)	Year5 (16/17)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE Year4_TO _Year5
DENOMINATOR	IMDQ1_2	0	40	30	40	40	0	0
	IMDQ3_5	50	70	70	90	110	50	20
NUMERATOR	IMDQ1_2	0	30	20	30	30	0	0
	IMDQ3_5	50	60	50	70	90	40	20
INDICATOR	IMDQ1_2	0	65	70	85	85	0	-5
	IMDQ3_5	90	80	70	81	86	-5	5
GAP	IMDQ1_2 & IMDQ3_5	0	20	0	-5	5	0	10

Denominator – number of learners; Numerator – number of learners continued; Indicator - %s

Table 6: IMD continuation rates by quintile (internal data)

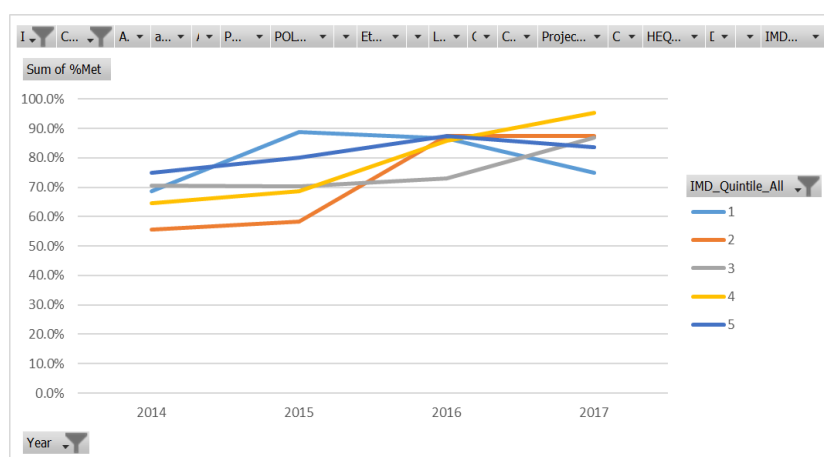


Table 7: IMD continuation data Q1 v Q5 (internal data)

IMD Continuation data (All Ages). Source: GC Internal data			
Row Labels	Q1	Q5	Gap
2013/14	69%	75%	6%
2014/15	89%	80%	-9%
2015/16	87%	88%	1%
2016/17	75%	84%	9%

The gap has, however, widened between IMD Q1 and Q5 in 2016/7 (start year) this is predominantly because of the retention on our computing HE course, a subject area where we have put in place specific action plans for improvement. **This is a significant gap and forms the basis of target reference PTS1.**

Attainment (INTERNAL DATA):

POLAR 4

The decline in attainment for POLAR4 is most marked with those full time learners in Q1 between 2016/7 and 2017/8 and the attainment gap between Q1 to Q5 has widened

Table 8: Attainment POLAR4 by quintile

POLAR 4 YOUNG	quintiles					GAP 1 v 5
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	
2014	75%	85%	77%	75%	86%	-11%
2015	88%	75%	75%	73%	100%	-13%
2016	100%	95%	87%	83%	100%	0%
2017	93%	91%	100%	100%	86%	8%
2018	79%	89%	93%	88%	93%	-14%

Table 9: attainment POLAR4 Q1-2 v Q3-5

POLAR 4	high participation	low participation	
Row Labels	Q3-5	Q1 and 2	Gap Q1-2 to Q3-5
2014	78%	79%	1%
2015	78%	80%	2%
2016	89%	97%	8%
2017	97%	92%	-5%
2018	91%	85%	-6%

There is an attainment difference between learners from POLAR4 low Q1-2 and high participation Q3-5 areas, which widened in 2016/7 and increased further in 2017/8. These rates are still higher than the attainment rates across all **English HE providers (70.4%)** but **this is a significant gap for the college and the gap between POLAR 4 Q1 v Q5 forms the basis of target reference PTS 2.**

IMD: the gap between the attainment of IMD Q1 and Q5 has widened slightly in 2017/8 again this is a direct result of **mature** full time learners as younger learners from Q1 have **100% attainment (12% higher than Q5 young learners at 87.5%)**. There is no such attainment gap for mature part time learners with Q1 learners at 100% attainment.

Table 10: attainment IMD quintiles: Full time, all ages

IMD Quintiles (all)	Quintiles					
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	GAP Q1 v Q5
2014	76%	67%	81%	60%	82%	-6%
2015	89%	50%	76%	83%	77%	13%
2016	100%	100%	78%	100%	92%	8%
2017	89%	91%	93%	90%	93%	-4%
2018	79%	75%	79%	89%	84%	-5%

Table 11: attainment IMD quintiles: **Mature** learners full time – **this is reflected in target PTS5: mature learner attainment.**

IMD quintiles Mature	Quintiles					
Row Labels	1	2	3	4	5	GAP Q1 v Q5
2014	75%	60%	88%	50%	60%	15%
2015	83%	67%	71%	75%	83%	0%
2016	100%	100%	50%	100%	100%	0%
2017	75%	92%	90%	89%	86%	-11%
2018	56%	88%	56%	80%	79%	-23%

1.1.3 Progression to employment or further study

There are improving progression outcomes ranging from 65-75% (in highly skilled employment and/or higher study six months after leaving) for all POLAR 4 Quintile groups and no significant gaps.

Table 12: Progression data by POLAR 4 quintile groupings

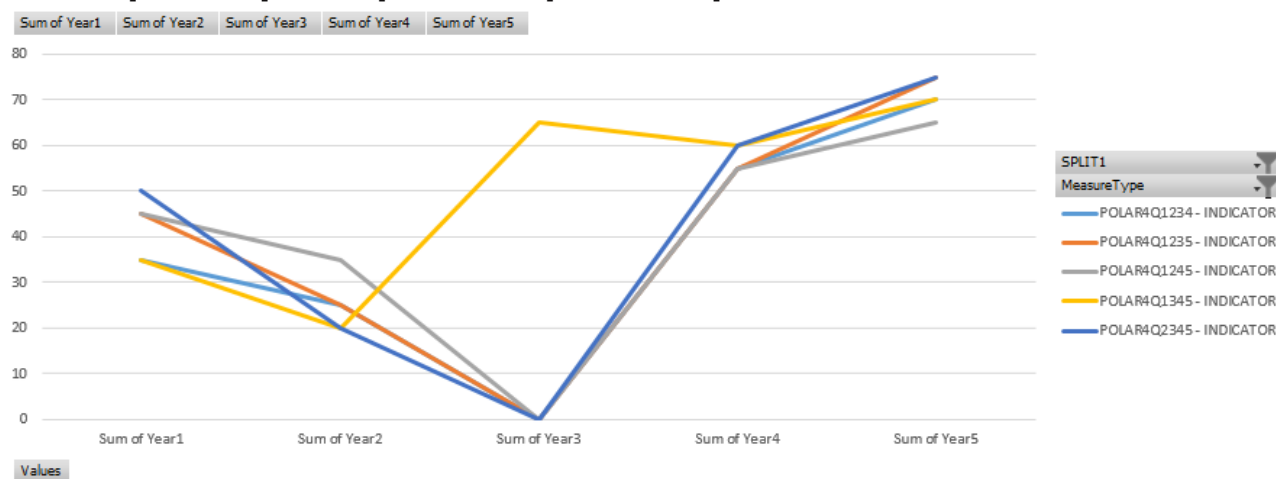


Table 13: Progression data by POLAR 4 quintile groupings

	POLAR4Q1234	POLAR4Q1235	POLAR4Q1245	POLAR4Q1345	POLAR4Q2345
years	INDICATOR	INDICATOR	INDICATOR	INDICATOR	INDICATOR
2012/3	35	45	45	35	50
2013/4	25	25	35	20	20
2014/5	0	0	0	65	0
2015/6	55	55	55	60	60
2016/7	70	75	65	70	75

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

1.2.1 Access – BAME access rates positively compare to providers in similar geographical areas. BAME access rates at GC positively compares to young BAME population locally

The college HE population is 88% white and 12 % BAME in 2017/18 (this is based upon fewer than 20 learners) and this has ranged between 10 % (2016/17) to 14% (2014/5 and 2015/6), so relatively stable. Our **POLAR 4 Q1-2 BAME** access percentage rates are on a par with **all English HE providers** at 7%.

The most significant proportion of our BAME (ABMO) HE entrants are Black / African / Caribbean / Black British and are enrolled onto a range of HNC programmes. Whilst we recognise that our proportions are in the bottom half of the sector for Asian and Black students and the bottom quarter for mixed/other students, we have assessed this in relation to our catchment area. 90% of our higher education learners are local learners (within 30-mile radius); we have a local provider emphasis. As such, we have benchmarked our learners against our local BME population statistics (below). The county has a young BAME population of 7.6% so our current enrolments compare positively with our catchment area and hence we have not identified this as a specific target area, **although we are committed to maintain these rates and we will monitor the data annually.**

Table 14: population by ethnic group by age in Gloucestershire¹

	% of age group		
	0-19	20-64	65+
White Total	92.4	95.6	98.6
White British	89.4	91.0	96.1
White Irish	0.2	0.6	1.2
White Gypsy or Other	0.2	0.1	0.0
White Other	2.6	3.9	1.2
Black and Minority Ethnic Group Total	7.6	4.4	1.4
Mixed/multiple ethnic group	3.6	1.0	0.2
Asian/Asian British	2.8	2.3	0.7
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1.0	0.9	0.5
Other ethnic group	0.2	0.2	0.1

The lowest proportion of BAME learners are Asian learners and this is where we have seen the biggest decline over five-year period from 7% (2014/15) to 3% (2017/18) but the percentages are skewed by such small numbers of learners and still reflective of the local Asian population as outlined above. We have seen a slight improvement of 3% year 2016/7 and 2017/8 in the number of 'mixed' learners. Again, local population is low for these groups, making targeted increases more difficult.

We have a **commitment to maintain these rates (12-14%)** as these compare **positively** to the percentage of the young BAME population locally (our catchment area for our HE provision) and compares positively to the access data of those institutions in a similar geographical area.

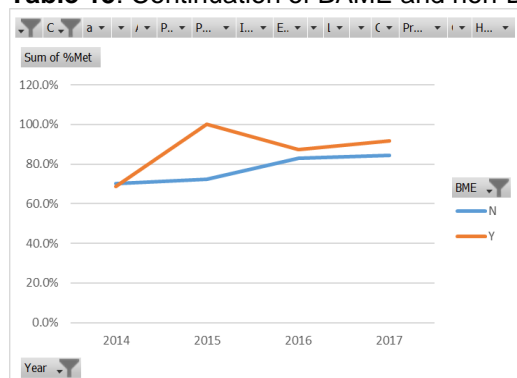
¹ Gloucestershire County Council population profile 2019

1.2.2 Success

Non-continuation (INTERNAL DATA)

The continuation rates of BAME learners continue to be higher than white learners and have been since 2014/5.

Table 15: Continuation of BAME and non-BAME learners



The continuation rates of Black learners are 1.2 % lower than white learners, there has been an improvement for mixed and stable and high continuation rates for Asian learners. These rates are based on small numbers of BAME learners and **as such do not form a specific target, although we will monitor the data annually.**

Table 16: Continuation rates of Asian, Black, Mixed and white learners (internal data as APP data suppressed)

years	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White
2014	71.4%	50.0%	80.0%		70.2%
2015	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		72.3%
2016	100.0%	85.7%	66.7%	100.0%	82.9%
2017	100.0%	83.3%	100.0%		84.5%

Attainment (INTERNAL DATA)

There are no significant attainment gaps between BAME and white full time learners over the last two years, although we have seen a steeper decline in attainment of BAME learners. There have been 100% attainment rates for young BAME learners over the last four years. There has been a decline in the % attainment of Asian mature learners in 2017/8 and Black mature learners over the last two years but these are very small numbers of learners, which skew the percentage rates. There are no gaps for BAME full time/part time mature learners. The attainment rates of mixed learners have been maintained at 100% over the last 4 years. We have, thus, identified a steep decline in attainment amongst **mature** BAME full time learners, **which is significant and forms the basis of target PTS3.**

Table 17: Attainment rates of BAME and non-BAME learners (all ages)

BAME Attainment data (All Ages). Source: GC Internal data

Row Labels	Non BAME	BAME	Gap
2014	77%	73%	-4%
2015	74%	100%	26%
2016	91%	100%	9%
2017	91%	93%	2%
2018	82%	80%	-2%

Table 18: Attainment rates of BAME and non-BAME learners (**mature**)

BAME Attainment data (Mature). Source: GC Internal data

Row Labels	Non BAME	BAME	Gap
2014	77%	57%	-20%
2015	65%	100%	35%
2016	86%	100%	14%
2017	85%	91%	6%
2018	72%	57%	-15%

The attainment rates of BAME (all ages) are higher than the rates of all English HE providers (68.8%) but the mature rates are low.

1.2.3 Progression to employment or further study

There is no reliable data for any differentials/ trends for other underrepresented groups due to response rates. Internal data captures learner destinations, but these are not based on DLHE definitions of highly skilled employment/higher study. We are working on this in 18/19 and 19/20 with an improved destination capture process as outlined in our aims and objectives below.

1.3 Mature students

1.3.1 Access

Most of our HE full time learners are under 21 (62%). The number of mature full time learners has declined by 7% between 2016/7 in 2017/8 but over the last five years has typically remained around 33-38%. **This is higher than the mature learner access rates in all HE English providers that are currently 27.8%.**

The 21-25 age group has declined the most significantly with a slight reduction of 26-30 year olds. 70% of our part time HE learners are mature learners; this has been between 50-60 learners each year over last five years so the percentage increase has been because of fewer part time learners under the age of 21 years.

Whilst we have seen a decline in the number of mature HE learners enrolled on to our programmes, we do have a buoyant and successful Access to HE provision at the college. These learners are predominantly mature learners and approximately 80% of these learners over last 5 years have been female. Our pass rates are typically 100%, with success rates (achievement of all starts) above 90% and 90%+ apply and enrol on HE courses around the county and country. These mature learners predominantly progress on to humanities and Health related (nursing/midwifery) degrees and these are not areas we offer or would look to offer HE courses.

1.3.2. Success

Non-continuation.

The continuation rates of full time mature learners are lower than young learners as outlined on table below and the gap is widening particularly for those 51+ (1-2 learners) and 26-30 year olds (5 learners). Whilst our continuation rates are improving for mature learners our rates are 7.8% below the rates of all English HE providers. **This is a significant gap and forms the target PTS4.**

Table 19: Continuation rates for Mature and Young learners on full time HE courses.

Age Group Continuation data. Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (12/13)	Year2 (13/14)	Year3 (14/15)	Year4 (15/16)	Year5 (16/17)	CHANGE Year1_TO Year5	CHANGE_ Year4_TO Year5
DENOMINATOR	Young_Under21	50	70	70	80	80	30	0
	Mature_Age21andOver	0	40	30	40	60	0	20
NUMERATOR	Young_Under21	40	50	50	70	70	30	0
	Mature_Age21andOver	0	30	20	30	50	0	20
INDICATOR	Young_Under21	90	76	75	86	90	0	4
	Mature_Age21andOver	0	70	60	75	77	0	0
GAP	Young_Under21 and							
	Mature_Age21andOver	0	5	15	10	13	0	0

Attainment (INTERNAL DATA)

The decline in attainment is more significant with mature full time learners (46 learners) and the impact of computing, early years and health and social care results are significant here. The attainment has declined in both young and mature learners in computing and health and social care whereas in business and early years there has been a decline in attainment of mature learners only. The attainment has declined of those aged 21-25 and 31-40 (also 51+ but this is very small numbers). The percentage rates are skewed by the numbers of learners but **this is a significant attainment gap (as identified in the table below) and forms the target PTS5.**

The attainment of mature learners from IMD Q1 and Q3 (as identified in table 11) have a significant impact on the overall attainment of mature full time learners.

Table 20: Attainment rates of mature and young full time learners.

Age group Attainment data. Source: GC Internal data				
Year	Mature	Young	Total	Gap
2014	73%	79%	77%	-6%
2015	77%	79%	78%	-2%
2016	90%	93%	92%	-4%
2017	87%	94%	91%	-7%
2018	70%	89%	82%	-19%

The attainment rates for mature learners are on a par with the rates of all English HE providers (70%).

Whilst there was a gap in 2017/8 between young and mature part time learner's attainment the attainment rates for mature learners have been above 90% since 2014/5 and hence does not form a target, however, we will monitor this annually.

Table 21: Attainment rates of part time learners mature and young.

Sum of %Met	Column Labels		
Row Labels	Mature	Young	Grand Total
2014	88.2%	#DIV/0!	88.2%
2015	92.2%	87.5%	90.4%
2016	100.0%	96.6%	98.7%
2017	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2018	93.3%	100.0%	95.6%
Grand Total	95.7%	95.3%	95.5%

1.3.3 Progression to employment or further study

There had been a significant gap in year 1 (2012/3) between young learners and mature learners but we have seen steadily improved outcomes for Under 21 with 70% in 2016/7 in highly skilled employment and/or higher study six months after leaving (30 responses). In 2012/3, there was a high rate of progression for mature learners, which has declined in 2013/4 and 2016/7 with a gap of 15% in 2016/7. **This is a significant progression gap (as identified in the table below) and forms the target PTP2**

Table 22: progression data mature v young

	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5	2015/6	2016/7
Young_Under21	45	25	65	55	70
Mature_Age21andOver	90	60	no response	no response	55
Gap	-45	35	n/a	n/a	15

1.4 Disabled students

1.4.1 Access: Around a quarter of our full time learners and 10-15% of part time learners have a declared disability. This increased in 17/18 to the highest over the 5 years included in the analysis. The college has seen a particular increase in the percentage of learners with cognitive and learning difficulties and those with declared mental health issues. **This compares positively with all English HE providers with access rates for disabled full time learners at 14.6% compared to 27% at the college.**

Table 23 percentage of learners with declared disability v no known disability a) full time and b) part time

Disability Access data (Full Time). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE _Year4_T O_Year5
INDICATOR	Disabled	20	17	23	15	27	7	12
	NoKnownDisability	80	83	77	85	73	-7	-12

Disability Access data (Part Time). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE _Year4_T O_Year5
INDICATOR	Disabled	4	9	9	4	15	11	12
	NoKnownDisability	96	91	91	96	85	-11	-12

Table 24: Percentage of HE learners with a declared disability by type.

Disability Type Access data (Full Time). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE _Year4_T O_Year5
INDICATOR	NoKnownDisabilityType	80	83	77	85	73	-7	-12
	CognitiveAndLearning	10	8	8	6	13	3	6
	MentalHealth	0	0	6	2	6	0	4
	MultipleImpairments	7	5	0	0	0	0	0
	SensoryMedicalAndPhysical	3	2	6	5	5	2	-1
	SocialAndCommunication	0	0	3	2	3	0	1

1.4.2 Success

Non-continuation

The APP continuation data is outlined below – there was a 5% gap identified in 15/6 though not considered statistically significant but suppressed numbers in other years does not provide rates or gaps. As non-continuation data relates to very small learner numbers we will monitor this annually and **we are committed to maintain no gap between those with declared disability and those with no known disability.**

Table 25: Continuation rates for those with and without a declared disability

Disability Continuation data (full Time). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (12/13)	Year2 (13/14)	Year3 (14/15)	Year4 (15/16)	Year5 (16/17)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE _Year4_TO _Year5
DENOMINATOR	Disabled	0	0	0	30	0	0	0
	NoKnownDisability	0	90	90	90	120	0	30
NUMERATOR	Disabled	0	0	0	20	0	0	0
	NoKnownDisability	0	70	60	80	100	0	30
INDICATOR	Disabled	0	0	0	80	0	0	0
	NoKnownDisability	0	73	72	83	86	0	3
GAP	NoKnownDisability	0	0	0	5	0	0	0

The continuation rates for those with cognitive and learning difficulties and those with declared mental health difficulties have improved significantly but there has been a significant decline in continuation rates for those with a social or communication impairment but these are very small numbers of learners that skew the data.

Attainment (INTERNAL DATA)

There are no significant attainment differences between disabled learners and those with no declared disability in 2017/8, including amongst our mature learners. The attainment gap has been narrowing but the college has seen an overall decline in attainment across all full time learners. Although the numbers are very small we have maintained a 100% attainment with learners with a declared mental health difficulty and have seen improved attainment rates for those with a social or communication impairment.

Table 26: Attainment rates of those full time learners with declared disability and no declared disability.

Disability			
Row Labels	no known disability	declared disability	Gap
2014	76.6%	77.3%	0.6%
2015	77.9%	81.8%	3.9%
2016	93.9%	85.7%	-8.2%
2017	92.5%	87.5%	-5.0%
2018	81.4%	82.1%	0.7%

1.4.3 Progression to employment or further study

There is no reliable data for any differentials/ trends for other underrepresented groups due to response rates. We are working on this in 18/19 and 19/20 with an improved destination capture process as outlined in our aims and objectives below and in **target PTP1.**

1.5 Care leavers

Access, Success and Progression

The research identifies that students who have been in care are significantly disadvantaged and underrepresented in higher education. Data from the Department for Education (2017-18) shows that around 6 per cent of all care leavers between the ages of 19-21 were in higher education in 2018.

Research published by the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers suggests that 12 per cent of care leavers had entered higher education by the age of 23. (Among other young people, 42 percent enter higher education). We recognise the key barriers to higher education for care leavers, particularly relating to low prior attainment, low aspirations and financial concerns and we offer focused tutorial support to our FE looked after learners to help raise their aspirations and provide information on the financial support they may access.

The numbers of care leavers enrolled on our HE courses are very small and not all may be identified. We are committed to increase rates of disclosure so we have meaningful data that we can use to review how we might best increase care leaver access and support in their success and progression. Improving the collection of data on care leavers was identified as a key target for 2019/20. We can track data on identified care leavers progressing internally from our FE courses to HE courses but did not necessarily have information on those entering the college directly on to HE courses.

For 2019/20 enrolment we have added the question to our enrolment learning agreements and this will be highlighted at the enrolment events by the admissions team and course leaders in relation to support that may be available (such as local authority bursaries). We have identified ways for course leaders to share any relevant information disclosed by care leavers throughout the course at interim exam boards that may allow us to offer personalised support.

The research also identifies that a high proportion of care leavers do not complete their course, our strategy of individualised action plans and support for HE learners would help in relation to continuation and success but our initial commitment is to increase levels of disclosure/ improve our knowledge of those who are care leavers. Whilst the numbers are very small we have identified in exam boards the success of identifiable care leavers as a direct result of support interventions, particular in relation to the access bursary and adaptation of assessment methods to help develop confidence in achieving learning outcomes. **Our commitments are identified in the aims and objectives section.**

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

There are very small numbers of learners when considering any intersections, which can skew any trend data. Whilst we acknowledge that some groups of learners may be affected by intersections, the small numbers involved mean that focusing access and participation activities purely on these groups would mean targeting effort and investment on a very narrow proportion of the college's HE provision. This would not be the best use of the limited resource available, as it may detract from outcomes that could benefit a larger volume of learners. Because of this, the targets set aim to improve access and participation for the wider cohorts of learners that these groups are also part of. By making improvements for the wider population, it is anticipated that this will also positively affect these groups; however, the college will continue to monitor these intersections closely to ensure that this is the case. This analysis will be completed on **annual basis** and if/when numbers increase we will revisit whether specific targets can be developed throughout the lifecycle.

There are very few intersections that are identified as requiring improvement as outlined below.

Access IMD and gender: The access gap is widening between male and female for IMD Q1-2, with increases for males but reduction for females. Males in IMD Q3-5 have also increased whereas females have again reduced (6% Y4 to Y5). There are, however, small numbers Q1-2 females.

IMD and Gender Access data (full Time). Source: OFS Published data								
MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE_ Year4_TO_ Year5
NUMERATOR	IMDQ12_Female	20	20	20	20	10	-10	-10
	IMDQ12_Male	30	30	20	20	20	-10	0
	IMDQ345_Female	40	40	40	50	30	-10	-20
	IMDQ345_Male	50	60	60	70	50	0	-20
INDICATOR	IMDQ12_Female	13	12	15	13	12	-2	-1
	IMDQ12_Male	25	20	15	13	19	-6	6
	IMDQ345_Female	26	25	28	31	25	-1	-6
	IMDQ345_Male	35	43	42	43	44	9	1

Access IMD and ethnicity: Q3-5 white are highest proportion and biggest increase over time, but reduction seen Y4 to Y5. Biggest increase in white Q1-2. BAME has remained fairly static with small/no increases.

IMD and Ethnicity Access data (full Time). Source: OFS Published data

MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE_ Year4_TO Year5
NUMERATOR	IMDQ12_ABMO	10	10	10	10	10	0	0
	IMDQ12_White	40	30	30	30	30	-20	0
	IMDQ345_ABMO	10	10	10	10	10	0	0
	IMDQ345_White	80	90	80	110	70	-10	-40
INDICATOR	IMDQ12_ABMO	6	9	8	6	5	0	-1
	IMDQ12_White	32	23	22	19	25	-7	6
	IMDQ345_ABMO	7	5	6	4	6	0	2
	IMDQ345_White	55	63	64	70	63	8	-7

Access POLAR4 and gender: Reduction in proportions of females compared to males across both groups. Q1-Q2 reduction for females more significant than Q3-5 though similar (8% vs 6% Y4 to Y5). Male increase more significant Q3-Q5 but still increase in Q1-2. There are, however, small numbers.

POLAR4 and Gender Access data (full Time). Source: OFS Published data

MeasureType	SPLIT1	Year1 (13/14)	Year2 (14/15)	Year3 (15/16)	Year4 (16/17)	Year5 (17/18)	CHANGE Year1_TO _Year5	CHANGE_ Year4_TO Year5
NUMERATOR	POLAR4Q12_Female	10	20	20	20	10	0	-10
	POLAR4Q12_Male	30	30	20	20	20	-10	0
	POLAR4Q345_Female	20	20	20	20	10	-10	-10
	POLAR4Q345_Male	30	40	30	20	20	0	0
INDICATOR	POLAR4Q12_Female	13	17	20	24	16	3	-8
	POLAR4Q12_Male	32	27	28	27	32	0	5
	POLAR4Q345_Female	24	17	18	24	17	-6	-6
	POLAR4Q345_Male	31	40	34	25	35	4	10

Attainment Age and Ethnicity: There has been a decline in the % attainment of Asian mature learners in 2017/8 and Black mature learners over the last two years but these are very small numbers of learners, which skew the percentage rates.

Attainment rates for MATURE BAME learners (with numbers of learners)

Sum of %Met	Mature learners	Asian	Black	Mixed	White		
Row Labels	Asian	no. of learners	Black	no. of learners	Mixed	no. of learners	White
2014	50.0%	2	33.3%	3	100.0%	2	76.9%
2015	100.0%	5			100.0%	4	64.7%
2016	100.0%	3	100.0%	2	100.0%	2	86.4%
2017	100.0%	4	85.7%	7			85.3%
2018	50.0%	2	60.0%	5			71.8%

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Nationally it is recognised that there are particular equality gaps and support needs for carers, people estranged from their families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, refugees and children of military families. Whilst the size of our student population is small, we do recognise that these groups may experience barriers so, where these characteristics are identified within our FE students, we are able to target support, advice, and guidance in relation to progression towards these learners.

We also monitor and track those who were entitled to free school meals when attending our FE courses. The college has a significant number of FE learners who are entitled to free school meals and we track their progression closely.

Our commitment here is to improve the ways we identify these groups at point of enrolment. In relation to continuation and success, our strategy has been to take an individualised approach in relation to support HE learners may require. Attendance, assignment achievements, learner experience feedback are monitored via interim exam boards, performance reviews, student tracking system and at team meetings and this close monitoring results in individual action plans to support learners. **This supports the continuation and succession of these groups who may experience barriers.**

The college is currently involved in a 5-6 year refugee settlement project where we work with a range of agencies to provide education and training to Syrian refugees. Within this project, we provide language training and advice and guidance on progression opportunities, including (where relevant) HE options.

2 Strategic aims and objectives

Whilst we are not a higher-tariff provider we are committed to widening participation and eliminating the gaps in entry rates between the most and least represented groups as recognised in the OFS KPMs. The College has few gaps in terms of non-continuation between most and least represented groups but we seek to maintain and, where outlined, improve these measures. Our HE provision is predominantly HNC/D and FD and, as such, we do not contribute to the degree outcome performance measures but we are committed to **continual improvements in relation to success and progression measures for learners from underrepresented groups.**

2.1 Target groups and aims and objectives

These targets arise from our assessment of performance and cover the areas where we have identified the biggest gaps and where we can have the greatest impact within our context as a FE college in the South West of England.

Target Group: Socio-economic - IMD Q1 learners

Lifecycle stage: access

Target reference: PTA1

Aim: To reduce the gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 learners by 2025

Objective: To reduce the **10% gap** between IMD Q1 (13%) and Q5 learners (23%) **by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: *To eliminate the gap in entry rates at **higher-tariff providers** between the most and least represented groups*

Target Group: Socio-economic - IMD Q1 full time learners

Lifecycle stage: continuation

Target reference: PTS 1

Aims: to address the lower continuation rates of IMD Q1 full time learners

Objectives: reduce the continuation gap between IMD Q1 full time and IMD Q5 learners from **9% to 0% by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: *To eliminate the unexplained gap in non-continuation between most and least represented groups*

Target Group: POLAR 4 low participation Q1 rates

Lifecycle stage: attainment

Target reference: PTS 2

Aims: Increase the attainment rates of full time POLAR4 Q1 learners across all ages

Objectives: Reduce the attainment gap between POLAR 4 Q1 and Q5 from **14% to 0% by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: not directly related to KPM but an attainment gap between most and least represented groups identified as significant by the college.

Target Group: Multiple: Ethnicity/ BAME and Mature

Lifecycle stage: attainment

Target reference: PTS 3

Aims: Improve attainment rates of **mature BAME** full time learners

Objectives: Reduce the attainment gap between mature BAME full time learners and mature non-BAME learners from **15% to 0% by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: *To eliminate the unexplained gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white students and black students (although the majority of our attainments are not degree outcomes such as 1sts or 2:1s as they are pass, merit, distinction HNC/Ds)*

Target Group: Mature learners

Lifecycle stage: continuation

Target reference: PTS 4

Aims: Improve continuation rates of **mature** full time learners

Objectives: Reduce the continuation rate gap between Mature and Young learners from **13% to 0% by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: *To eliminate the unexplained gap in non-continuation between most and least represented groups*

Target Group: Mature learners

Lifecycle stage: attainment

Target reference: PTS 5

Aims: Increase the attainment rates of full time Mature learners (in particular IMD Q1)

Objectives: Reduce the attainment gap between mature and young learners from **19% to 0% by 2025**

Relates to OFS KPM: not directly related to KPM but an attainment gap between most and least represented groups identified as significant by the college.

Target Group: Mature learners

Lifecycle stage: progression

Target reference: PTP2

Aims: Increase the progression rates of full time Mature learners

Objectives: Reduce the progression gap between mature and young learners from **15% to 0% by 2025**

Other commitments in this plan:

Our analysis has also identified **gaps in our knowledge** about the characteristics or outcomes for some learner groups due to data capture. Therefore, the college will also seek to increase recording and monitoring of the following:

Target Group: Care Leavers

Lifecycle stage: access

Target reference: PTA 2

Aims: To develop our data source for the monitoring of Care Leavers

Objectives: To develop our data source for the monitoring of Care Leavers and use this data to develop relevant targets that are monitored and reviewed annually.

Our commitments:

Increase disclosure:

2019/20: learner agreements have been redesigned and questions added to encourage disclosure.

Admissions team and course leaders have been trained to encourage and support completion of this section focusing upon support that may be available.

2019/20: mechanisms to record information from course leaders throughout the year at interim exam boards if learners disclose in year. Information shared via tracking system about care leavers progressing from FE provision.

2020: review data and analyse percentages of FE care leavers progressing to HE: set targets and objectives where required

Increase care leaver access:

2019/20 Promote the local Authority HE bursary available for care leavers, particularly with our FE level 3 care leavers.

2019/20 Focused tutorial support for FE care leavers to help raise their aspirations and provide information on the financial support they may access.

Increase care leaver continuation and attainment: whilst we are improving our data collection we will continue to take an individualised approach to support continuation and success with all learners.

Target Group: All underrepresented groups

Lifecycle stage: progression

Target reference: PTP 1

Aims: To develop our data source relating to progression

Objectives: To improve the capture and analysis of our progression data in order to monitor information on promotion/salary increases/successful career changes for our part time learners that were employed whilst studying. Our key objective is to **improve the information** received and gather this information from **more** of our progressing HE learners. Improved data collection will allow us to analyse the progression information between all underrepresented groups and various intersections, even where numbers are small, and to compare the progression data between the most and least represented groups. We hope to continue to demonstrate that learners from underrepresented groups progress into positive destinations.

Time frames:

2019/20 develop web-app to ease capture of more detailed progression information

2019/20: pilot enhanced capture through incentive schemes and follow up calls to improve data collection

2019/20: analyse data and identify any significant gaps to target – set objectives if required

2020 onwards: continue to develop and review process and review data annually – set targets and objectives as required.

The analysis conducted has highlighted some variation in access and outcomes for intersections of learners, however the small number involved mean that targets set aim to improve access and participation for the wider cohorts of learners that these groups are also part of. By making improvements for the wider population, it is anticipated that this will also positively affect these groups; however, the college will continue to monitor these intersections closely to ensure that this is the case. **Therefore, whilst not explicitly setting targets for these groups, we will also seek to:**

- Increase access for IMD Q1 and Q2 female learners from the Forest of Dean
- Improve attainment rates of Asian learners
- Improve continuation rates of Black learners

We also commit to:

- Maintain access rates for BAME learners
- Maintain no continuation gaps between disabled learners and those without a declared disability

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

The College's vision for higher education is grounded within our **strategic vision and mission, objectives and values**. This is outlined in the College's five-year Strategic Plan.

3.1.1 Vision: We guide **any** ambitious and motivated person on their journey through education and into their careers, by providing the right environment for **each and every one**, which encourages and nurtures their **individual** talents and prepares them to be **successful in the workplace** and their life ahead.

3.1.2 Objectives:

- The learning experience at the college is **personalised** to ensure that learners are not left behind but have every opportunity to succeed.
- High quality teaching and learning is built on high aspirations and leads to outstanding outcomes, including **destinations** into careers, which develops a reputation that is aligned with the articulated proposition.
- A range of relevant activities and approaches are embedded within students' programmes, which prepare them for **the work place** and their future lives.

- **College structures, systems and ethos** are designed to provide learners with progression and destination pathways that match their aspirations

3.1.3 Collaboration:

The College has a formal bi-lateral alliance with the University of Gloucestershire to deliver a coherent higher and professional study offer. Other higher education partners include Birmingham City University, the University of the West of England and Pearson. The partnership with UWE is focusing upon the development of Cyber programmes both full time and degree level apprenticeships that support further progression routes for our FE learners.

The college is part of a collaborative IoT project with university, FE and employer partners to develop STEM based provision and widen participation in STEM based courses.

We work as a collaborative partner in the GROWS consortium administering the Gloucestershire Aspiration Programme (GAP) – an OFS funded UniConnect collaborative project to raise awareness and aspirations with this target group. The project has detailed targets and evaluation process. Moving forward we will be monitoring closely the impact of this activity. We need to monitor and evaluate the proportions of our FE learners from underrepresented groups enrolling on Higher Education courses recognising that this activity may not always result in these learners attending our own HE courses but may increase participation nationally.

3.1.4 Overview

The Executive team, with support from the governing body, has overall strategic ownership of the college's approach to widening participation and addressing social disadvantage, including the access and participation plan. The Access and Participation plan is **aligned** to our Strategic Plan and vision as outlined above.

As stated in the college's vision and objectives we operate around a **culture of inclusivity** supporting learners from foundation (high needs learners) entry level through to level 7. The college works successfully with learners from a wide range of backgrounds with a vast range of entry criteria and support needs. Supporting those from underrepresented groups, closing gaps in achievement where they exist, and facilitating social mobility/positive progression are central objectives. The learning experience at the college is **personalised** to ensure that learners are not left behind but have every opportunity to succeed, which is led by the Executive team through the college management team and academic and professional teams.

The principles of widening participation and inclusivity (supporting the development of the access and participation plan) are **developed and embedded** across the organisation through:

- **Executive team meetings** – work with the Governors and staff to develop the strategic vision, objectives and values
- **College Managers briefings** – half termly meetings to discuss and agree priorities and targets against agreed principles.
- **HE Strategy Group** – half termly meetings - this group reviews the progress of the HE action plan and monitors progress of the access and participation plan. The group develops strategies to improve access, success and progression and reviews the quality of the HE provision.
- **Staff meetings** – the Executive meet with each staff team to discuss and outline the priorities and targets. These are supported by fortnightly team meetings with team managers to make sure there is clarity of the objectives

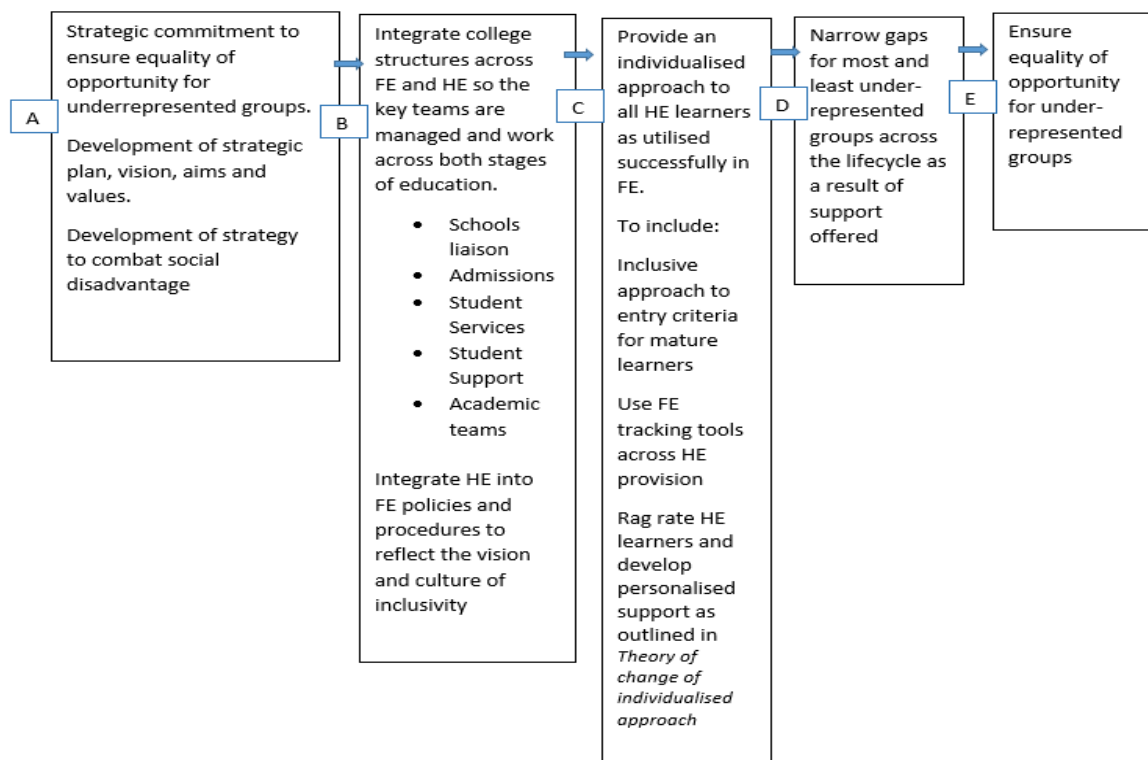
Through all stages of the student lifecycle, we have key teams (school's liaison, admissions, student services, student support, academic teams etc.) that operate within our strategic vision of **inclusivity**.

Overarching theory of change: Our key strategy has been to apply lessons learned and good practice from our approach FE into our HE provision, extending our approach through the stages of the student lifecycle and integrating policies, procedures, tracking, monitoring and ways of working into our approach to HE. We are utilising what we have learnt from **our FE success in terms of widening participation and improving attainment** and using this in the HE environment to meet our aims and objectives.

Part of this process has been to integrate college structures so that all of the processes (school's liaison, admissions, student services, student support, academic teams etc.) are managed across FE and HE by the same managers and teams in order to maximise consistency of good practice and transition of learners from FE to HE. This supports the access, success and progression objectives.

In relation to continuation and attainment this works around the premise of the **individualised** approach to learners, reviewing and implementing action plans to provide appropriate support to help retain learners and support them to achieve. **This process was started in 2018/9 and will be developed further in 2019/20, thereafter being reviewed annually and refined/developed as required.**

Overarching theory of change: Strategic



3.1.5 Alignment with other strategies

All of the colleges policies, strategies and procedures are aligned to the strategic vision (above) and our HE provision has been **aligned and incorporated** into each of those policies.

Equality, diversity and inclusion: The College has an established HE strategy group where the access agreement is monitored. This group includes representation from the Safeguarding and Inclusion Group to ensure that there is a good fit between the access and Equality and Diversity strategies. The College complies with the Equality Act 2010 and this is overseen by the Safeguarding and Inclusion Group lead by Vice Principal for Students. Minutes from the HE strategy groups are submitted to the VP Students. The HE Strategy group, with guidance from the Safeguarding and Inclusion Group, systematically assess the likely equality impact of an activity. There is a focus on assessing the impact on people with protected characteristics. This involves anticipating the consequences of activities on these groups and making sure that, as far as possible, any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised and opportunities for promoting equality are maximised.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment: The College has a 'Learner first teaching and learning policy', which has been extended from our FE delivery into the HE courses; the expectations are the same. This policy applies to all staff who teach, train, and support or assess on an FE or HE programme at Gloucestershire College and all aspects of learning and assessment. Our primary focus is to ensure our teaching promotes exceptional learning, encourages curiosity, versatility, develops resilient learners for the world of work, and encourages them to achieve their full potential in life by embracing high aspirations. The policy operates through a wide range of supportive observation activities and utilises coaching and sharing good practice techniques to drive forward improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.

Employability: The College has employability embedded within the strategic vision and mission, objectives and values, as outlined above. The key objectives relate to the embedding of work related activities and the development of transferable skills, valued by employers, that prepare the learners for their future in the workplace. These objectives and values are embedded throughout our FE and HE provision. Our HE

provision is focused upon professional and technical skills with a close focus upon the application of skills responding to live briefs and employer led workshops.

3.1.6 Strategic measures

The College is committed to widening access and participation in higher education, and ensuring equality of success and outcomes for underrepresented groups. The College focuses on initiatives to remove barriers and provide continuous support through to successful completion of study and onward progression to further study or employment, in line with students' aspirations.

3.1.6a Objective: PTA 1 Access: increase the percentage of IMD Q1 learners and narrow the gap between Q1 and Q5 by 2025

The strategic measures we are taking to achieve our **access** aims and targets can be divided into those aimed at internally progressing learners and those aimed at external audiences.

ACCESS: Internally progressing learners: increase the percentage of IMD Q1 learners and narrow the gap between Q1 and Q5 by 2025

The College's catchment is characterised as having low prior attainment and c50% of FE students come from the top 5 bands indicating the **most deprived areas**, including the Forest of Dean, which is an area of low attainment, high deprivation and with a low percentage of participation at HE. The majority of the wards in the Forest of Dean have young participation rates of between 23-29%. The College's recruitment is largely from the most deprived areas of the region, by focusing activities with **these sub-groups** within our FE population we will support the objective to **narrow the Q1 and Q5 gap**.

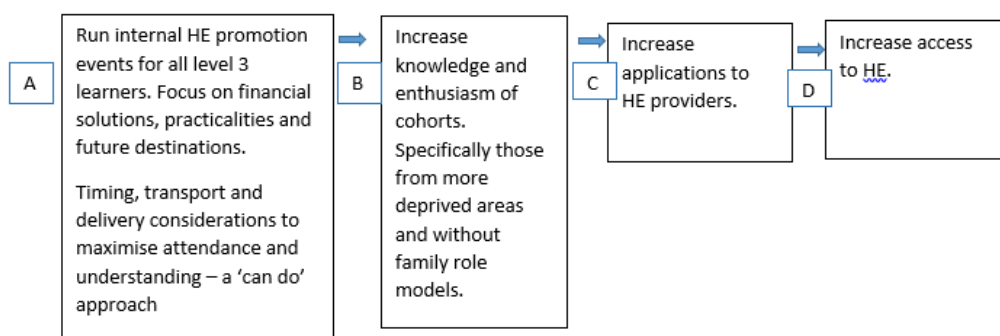
Our strategy is to work as a partner in the GROWS consortium administering the Gloucestershire Aspiration Programme (GAP) – an OFS funded UniConnect collaborative project to raise awareness and aspirations with this target group. The project has detailed targets and evaluation process focused upon underrepresented groups and access to HE. Within this project, one activity has focused upon progression activity with a group of learners from our forest campus, supporting **specifically the IMD Q1 objective**.

EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: schools outreach

Alongside the GAP project the college continues to develop a range of activities that specifically **target those from low participation areas (POLAR 4 Q1-2 and IMD Q1-2)**, particularly by working to encourage internal progression from our further education learners. These activities have been developed in 2018/9 and have been evaluated and refined for 2019/20. These activities will be evaluated annually as per our evaluation strategy of ongoing cycle of review, evaluate and adapt; reflecting on the impact on this target by 2025.

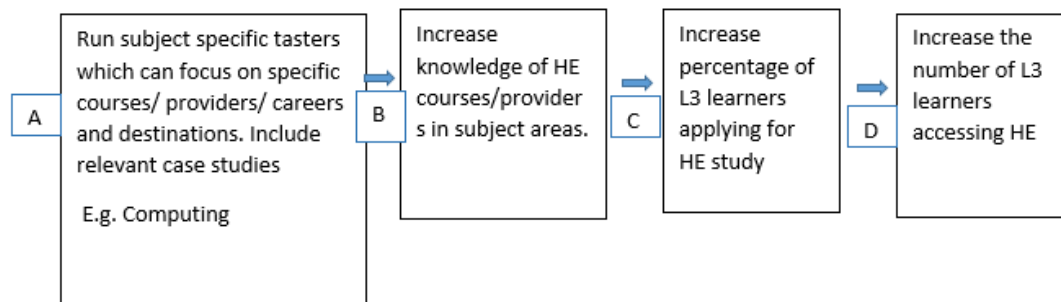
1) **HE festival and taster sessions:** This event, that runs every March, is specifically aimed at our current level 3 learners in order to encourage them to consider progressing to higher levels of study. Each cohort attends a central promotional event about the benefits of higher education and the support available for those wishing to progress. Throughout the course of this identified week, these learners have targeted taster sessions where they can meet the HE course leaders and engage in a taster session in a range of subject areas. There is a specific focus on the attendance and engagement of those **students from IMD Q1** and transport was provided to support attendance of those from **low participation areas (Q1-2)**.

Theory of change for the HE promotional event:



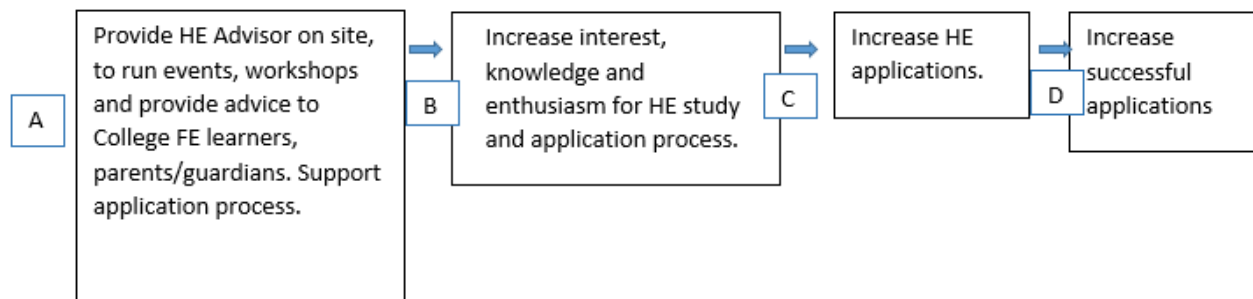
EVIDENCE BASE: Low HE participation, household income and socio economic status – OFS and UCAS reports.

Theory of change for specific taster events:



2) **HE advisor** - we employ an HE advisor to work throughout the year with our further education students. Her role encompasses working with learners to encourage them to consider higher level options and supporting learners, **particularly from IMD Q1, POLAR4 low participation areas Q1-2 and first generation HE applicants**, through the application and finance processes. The HE advisor also organises evenings for parents of further education learners, particularly those who would be the first in their families applying for higher education. **The investment of this work is £5000 with 20% (£1000) assumed as APP-countable**, as her work would reach many learners from underrepresented groups (20% being a conservative estimate). **EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: FE to HE transition**

The HE advisor works with the student mentor team on the progression launch ('This time next year') in January and a variety of progression tutorials and tasters are timetabled between Jan-March. For level 3 learners there are specific higher education tutorials relating to the benefits of higher education and challenging the myths associated with finances. This is supported with parental events to reinforce these messages. We also provide free transport to UCAS events for our learners, **particularly those from low participation areas (POLAR4 Q1-2 and IMD Q1-2)**. The success of these will be monitored through tracking of progression/destination of those who attended. The investment of this work is focused upon the event management and the progression booklets and **is £3400 estimated as £680 APP-countable**



EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: schools outreach

These ACCESS strategies for internal candidates starting in **September 2020** are planned in **June/July 2019** and implemented throughout **2019/2020 academic year**. They will be reviewed and evaluated after each event and developed, if required, for the following academic year.

3) Access payment for progressing learners

We have identified that increasingly our further education learners are reviewing the costs associated with studying at higher levels. This is reflected in progressing learners who may want to stay close to home but also in **learners from POLAR4 Q1-2 areas** who may view the costs associated with HE negatively. Whilst the college does not implement any specific form of financial support for access, students (existing or previous learners) that are progressing from a Gloucestershire College qualification achieved at the college to a full-time, level 4 HE course at the College are offered a bursary of **£1000** in their first year of HE study at the college. This includes progression onto all HNCs and foundation degrees. For some subject areas, a proportion of the bursary is specified to fund the purchase of equipment/materials for use throughout the course. GC propose that this would continue annually, although we will complete an evaluation of the eligibility criteria as outlined in evaluation strategy section.

This is a **global support mechanism** as the eligibility relates to progressing from our further education courses (this can be immediate progression or prior learners). A significant proportion of our FE learners are

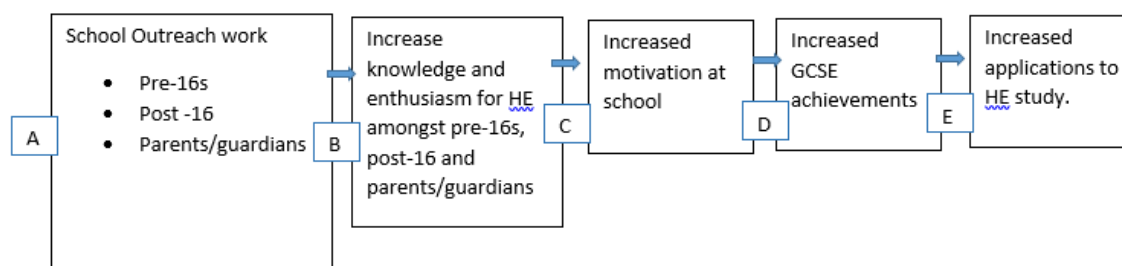
from areas of deprivation within the county with approximately 50% of students coming from the top five bands of high deprivation. This global access payment supports internal progression and **hence positively impacts upon those from low deprivation postcodes and low income households - IMD Q1-2.** [How we evaluate financial support is outlined in the evaluation section of this plan.]

ACCESS: External candidates increase the percentage of IMD Q1 learners and narrow the gap between Q1-2 and Q3-5 **by 2025.** The outreach work is evaluated and developed annually.

Alongside our partnership work with GAPS/GROWS project:

1) **Schools outreach:** We have two schools outreach advisors who work with over 30 schools across the county, the **majority within the POLAR 4 Q1-2 and IMD Q1-2 postcode areas.** Their work covers school visits, working with particular groups of learners on progression activities, raising aspirations, developing subject links between the schools and the college and arranging tasters. **The investment of this outreach work specifically focused upon Higher Education is £12,944 with £2588 (20%) being APP-countable, this is divided between pre-16 and post-16.**

EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: schools outreach



2) **HE leads:** We have also appointed three HE leads. These are HE course-leaders who have remitted 170 hours each from their teaching commitments to focus upon the promotion of the benefits of professional and technical HE courses. These activities include school talks, tasters and work across college with our current FE students. They are focused upon promoting the benefits of HE to those learners who may not have considered progression including mature learners. **The investment of this work would be the cost of the remitted hours £21322 (with half focused upon access) with £2132 (20%) as APP-countable.**

EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: schools outreach

3) **FE mentors:** We have developed this year, in **collaboration** with another college, FE mentors. Our learners had to complete a mentor training programme before working with young people in Gloucestershire schools. They work with school children, mainly year 9's and 10's, helping them to think about their progression routes and how they can develop and improve their own skills for their futures. Our ambition is to develop and growth this programme further. The mentors are linked with learners from **low participation areas (POLAR 4 Q1-2)** to develop their knowledge of higher education and encourage aspirations.

EVIDENCE BASE: NCOP Outreach resource pool: schools outreach

4) **Inclusive approach to admissions:** each HE course has clearly stated entry criteria 'a minimum tariff of 48 UCAS points from prior learning. Mature students (over 21) are welcome and encouraged to apply. Any **mature applicants** that do not meet the UCAS point requirement will be assessed in terms of appropriate experience, knowledge, or industry-based qualifications. We will consider prior learning, life experience and/or work experience but also explore alternative options with you to set you on your path to your goal'.

EVIDENCE BASE: OFS briefing paper on Mature and part time learners.

5) **Flexible provision and timetables:** the college offers degree apprenticeships, blended learning options on some provision and timetables are organised, wherever possible, to best suit the student demographic. For instance the Early Years HE programme is offered via blended learning supported by evening workshops and study weekends to support the learners work and/or work placements in early years settings – these learners are predominantly **mature learners.** **EVIDENCE BASE: OFS briefing paper on Mature and part time learners.**

Other activities to increase access generally include: **Open Evenings** and **Specific marketing campaigns** (These are used at school events, open evenings and through social media to targeted audiences as learners respond and relate to learners from their **previous school or area**), **Apprenticeship promotional event** (This annual event promotes apprenticeship routes and pathways with an increased emphasis on

Higher Apprenticeships. The apprenticeship team also attend level 3 tutorials to specifically promote the degree apprenticeships available to learners).

3.1.6b To meet our success objectives – non-continuation and attainment (linked to PTS 1, PTS 2, PTS 3, PTS 4, PTS5) by 2025

The curriculum, pedagogic and student support

The HE groups are relatively small cohorts each with a dedicated course leader timetabled with the group throughout the days they are in college. Students from under-represented groups are highlighted to the course leader so they are aware of their student profiles at the **outset of the academic year**. Success activities are evaluated through performance review cycle and interim exam boards. These represent a detailed monitoring process of retention, achievement and outcomes predictions in year. Learners are rag rated and any support needs identified. Here the activities outlined in the plan to support success are evaluated in terms of student engagement and the impact it is having on their potential success. The activities can then be expanded, adapted or changed in order to support our ambitions and targets.

The measures to support continuation and attainment are linked to our strategic objective: 'The learning experience at the college is **personalised** to ensure that learners are not left behind but have every opportunity to succeed'. Our HE numbers allow us to take a student by student approach – signposting learners rag rated by staff to a range of support options, **with a particular focus on those learners from our target groups: IMD Q1-2, POLAR4 Q1-2, mature learners and BAME mature learners. The impact of this individualised support for these particular groups is monitored and evaluated closely through interim exam boards and performance reviews.**

We introduced the rag rating process in 2018/9 and were able to monitor and review the initial impact through each of the interim exam boards (these were reported and discussed at the HE Strategy Group). The reports from the final exam board allowed the team to evaluate the impact of the strategies used; good practice will be shared at the outset of **2019/20**. The support available has been adapted for 2019/20 because of this evaluation and will continue to be reviewed, refined and new strategies introduced (if required) in 2021 and throughout the course of this plan.

These options include:

1) HE Study Support sessions: We have identified that those progressing from vocational routes and those who are returning to education as **mature learners** often find the research and referencing involved at HE difficult and require specific help to support their success. Whilst these aspects are covered on course and via supportive online materials (e.g. HN Global), some learners do require more individual face to face support. There is a named HE study support mentor based in the learning resource centre who runs sessions with groups and individuals to support their academic study skills. These are sessions on request according to the subject needs of **the group or individual** and recommended as an action from interim exam boards and focus groups. Course leaders particularly encourage **mature learners** to meet with the study support mentor and those with groups with a significant number of **mature learners** arrange the study mentor to attend a session/ or sessions early in the academic year. **EVIDENCE BASE: OFS briefing paper on Mature and part time learners.**

2) Access to Learning support - HE learners have access to learning support from onsite specialists. This includes advice on coping strategies and help with completing DSA claims. These learners get access to assisted technology provision through this team. There are study mentors on each campus who provide support on a drop in basis, to include time management skills, English and maths skills and using assisted technology. The study support from HE mentor and study mentors and associated admin costs **£26,000**.

3) Counselling support –From 2018/9 18 years+ learners have been able to access an on-site counselling service to support with their mental wellbeing whilst studying at college. This service will be reviewed in relation to the impact upon the retention and success of learners. This bookable service is positioned in the entrance of the HE zone. This will allow the college to review data in relation to numbers of learners seeking support for their mental wellbeing year on year. This service is offered to learners with **declared difficulties** but is offered to all learners who feel they could benefit from the range of support the service offers. We estimate the costs of this support will be **£3000**. **EVIDENCE BASE: Universities UK Step Change Framework.**

4) Extra mentoring support. Students from underrepresented backgrounds need extra mentoring support to succeed in higher education. The College delivers mentoring support to all students, but there are extra one-to-one sessions arranged for students to improve retention, achievement and employability for specific

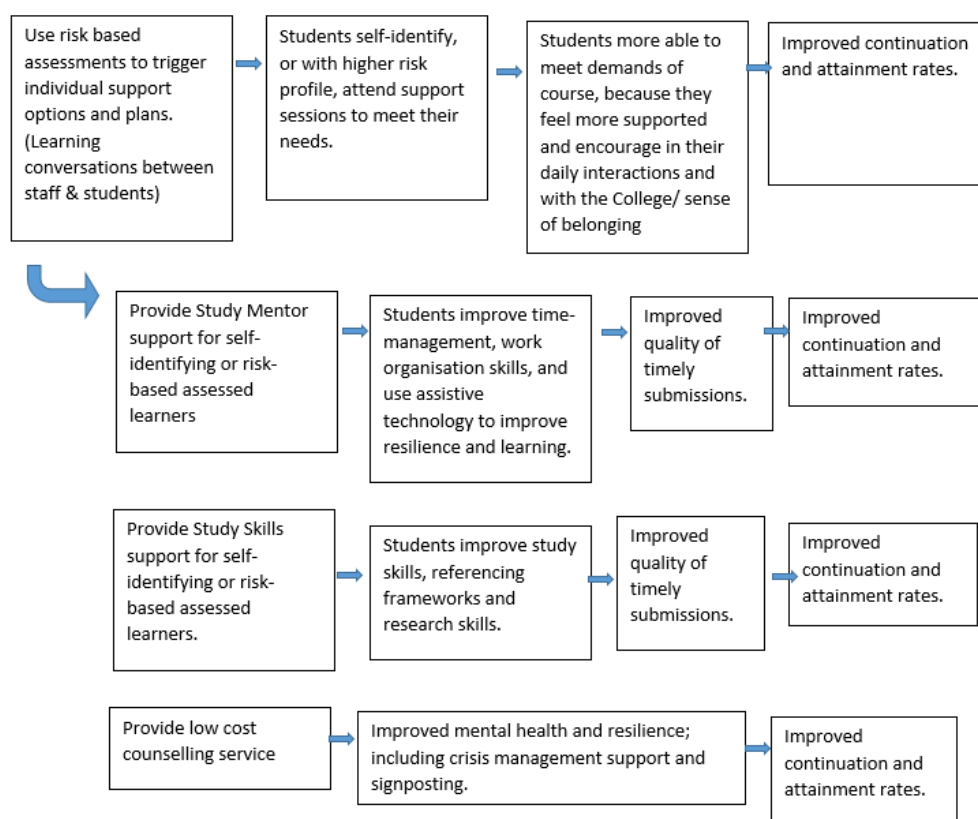
student groups who are from underrepresented groups, **particularly mature learners, those from POLAR 4 Q1-2, IMD Q1-2 and BAME mature learners.** The course tutor, Head of School, study mentor or counselling service depending upon the need of the individual, may provide this mentoring. **EVIDENCE BASE: Raising Awareness, Raising Aspiration (RARA)**

Theory of change of individualised approach

EVIDENCE BASE²:

- **Raising Awareness, Raising Aspiration (RARA)**
- **DRIVER is a partnership project between four colleges and four universities to address barriers to student success.**

Both of these research projects support our theory of change relating to the importance of taking an individualised approach to learner support to improve the success of learners, particularly those from underrepresented groups.



Other activities include:

The Student Opportunities Fund: This fund is available from Gloucestershire College for Higher Education students who are experiencing additional hardship. Learners from **disadvantaged and under-represented** backgrounds are able to apply for support. The total amount we have for this fund is £10000; a full time learner is entitled to a **maximum of £1,000** and a part time learner is entitled to a **maximum of £500**. This money is used for a range of supportive activities e.g. transport, trips, events, on site counselling and assistance towards the cost of diagnostic tests for DSA. Student services are represented at each HE enrolment session and provide advice and guidance of support available to all learners. Awards are based on **individual circumstances**, taking into account the type of support the student needs. In order to be eligible to apply the learners must have applied for and taken out a loan or grant from Student Finance England and be enrolled onto a Gloucestershire College HE programme (learners enrolled onto partner

² <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/continuation-and-attainment-gaps/>

university courses are directed to partner university regarding their own hardship fund). Feedback from learners via course leaders has been positive about the support received and how this has supported continuation.

Progression bursary: All existing full-time level 4 students that progress to their second year of full-time study at level 5 with the college will receive a bursary of £500. This supports the retention of our progressing learners (**hence those with low deprivation postcodes and low income POLAR 4 Q1-2 and IMD Q1-2**) and provides the learners with some financial support to aid achievement/success. Focus groups with learners identify that the learners use this bursary to purchase materials that support their assignment completion.

Digital and Study skills: Mature learners often require support with digital and study skills in order to be successful on their courses. All HE learners complete a digital and study skills assessment at induction and the college uses this information to target support from the HE study support mentor or digital learning team.

Activities to improve the continuation and attainment of mature learners and related intersections by 2025

In order to develop further specific activities to enhance and improve the outcomes of **mature learners/ BAME mature learners** the college will complete research with mature HE learners in order to fully engage them in the development of activities. This will include:

- a) Focus group across range of delivery – establish in 19/20. First aim to establish content of survey. Widen consultation over time period.
 - Survey mature non-continuers from last 3 years and report/review findings **Jan 2020**.
 - **EVIDENCE BASE:** Potential areas for improvements (e.g. Disparities in Student Attainment DiSA project and OFS topic briefing on mature and part time students March 2018):
 - Sense of belonging
 - Bridging provision
 - Digital support
 - Risk rating.
- b) Agreed to identify mature learners as at risk as default at outset of course and track specifically at interim exam boards and performance reviews.
- c) Establish support programme based on research findings. **March 2020**. Establish targets.

Activities to improve the continuation rates of IMD learners specifically related to computing by 2025

The gap widened between IMD Q1 and Q5 in 2016/7 (start year) this is predominantly because of the retention on our computing HE course, a subject area where we have put in place specific action plans for improvement in 2018/9.

The strategic measures include:

- a) appointment of new Head of Department with specific targets relating to student experience and feedback **July 2018**
- b) appointment of new course leader with specific targets relating to improving student experience and student tracking **Aug 2019**
- c) extra monitoring of the course by Quality Improvement manager through performance reviews and interim exam boards **Throughout 2019/2020**
- d) enhanced monitoring and coaching support from Head of teaching and learning and HE learning coach to support new staff to improve learner experience **Throughout 2019/2020**
- e) further focus groups with the computing learners with the Director of Student Experience, the Quality Improvement Officer, new Head of Department and HE co-ordinator to monitor student experience. **Throughout 2019/2020**

3.1.6c Progression measures (target PTP 1 and PTP2) improve data collection and analysis; reduce progression gap for mature learners by 2025

As part of the College's Business Information Project we will improve our access to, and analysis of, progression data in order to monitor more closely the progression of underrepresented groups. We also aim to track and report successful career changes, promotions or salary increases for our part time learners who combine study and employment.

Whilst our progression data to employment is good we need to further develop the analysis of this data so we can monitor more closely the progression of particular underrepresented groups. **We have a**

commitment to analyse data, identify any significant gaps and set further targets and objectives as required.

The majority of our part time HE learners are already in employment whilst studying with us. These learners are either studying to support, or achieve, a promotion. A strategic aim is to evaluate whether these learners identify that their studies are having or had a positive impact within their current employment. This will be evaluated through focus groups and intended destination data forms.

Time frames:

- 2019/20 develop web-app to ease capture of more detailed progression information
- 2019/20: pilot enhanced capture through incentive schemes and follow up calls to improve data collection
- 2019/20: analyse data and identify any significant gaps to target – set objectives if required
- 2020 onwards: continue to develop and review process and review data annually – set targets and objectives as required.

In order to support learner progression, the college has a number of measures in place:

1) Employer links/ employability: Our HE provision is focused upon professional and technical skills linked to employability. Course leaders have extensive industry experience and industry links, which is commented upon in student focus groups. Learners have access to industry masterclasses, guest speakers, site/industry visits and live briefs (assignments set by external clients), which develop their employability skills and allow them to develop their network of employer links. Graphics students, for example, run a design agency, media learners have access to an extensive range of masterclasses and work placement opportunities and construction students have a range of site visits and projects built into schemes of work. **These opportunities enhance and support their progression into employment.** Each department has employer forums and links, which are utilised to enhance the curriculum offer. **EVIDENCE BASE: OFS Employability (A-Z of effective practice); Universities UK: Routes to high-level skills Report 8 October 2018**

2) Student hub: There is a student hub on each college campus. This is a very visible drop-in area with a focus upon careers, work placements and employment coaching. Job and work placement opportunities are displayed and learners can access support from professional development coaches and employment coaches. There are specific HE focused staffed drop in slots available for HE learners, where they can get advice and guidance. **These opportunities enhance and support their progression into employment.**

3) Careers: The College is committed to the implementation of the Department for Education's Career Strategy (2017). The college has outlined an action plan to use the Gatsby Benchmarks to assess and improve careers provision. An assessment identifies that our current careers provision aligns to the benchmarks, which include supporting graduates into skilled employment. Qualified careers advisors, a careers lead and support staff within the college are available to advise learners about their next steps. The college also works closely with external agencies (National careers Service; Careers and Enterprise Company) to enhance the advice that learners can access. **These opportunities enhance and support their progression into employment.**

The college will be committed to encourage all learners to access and engage with these opportunities but will particularly focus upon mature learners (and any other groups if improved data analysis identifies any further progression gaps).

3.1.7 Collaboration

NCOP: We work as a partner and recipient in the GROWS consortium administering the Gloucestershire Aspiration Programme (GAP) - an OFS funded UniConnect collaborative project to raise awareness and aspirations with this target group. At the end of the funding period for NCOP we are committed to delivering a collaborative legacy outreach programme through a **regional outreach hub**. The culmination of current learning and the next two years of projects and activities will inform the offer beyond funding. Collaboration between institutions in the area has existed since before NCOP and is likely to continue, however, discussions regarding how this might be structured are ongoing due to uncertainty with regards to the possible changes within the FE/HE sectors, specifically linked to the tuition fees review. Collaborative work is valued and has many benefits both to the institution and for the learners of the area, especially where institutions are able to collaborate for particular groups of learners and to ensure a geographical spread across the region. With a focus on pre-16 learners within targeted schools where populations of Polar 4 Q1

and 2 learners attend, it is hoped a range of activities will be offered. This is both through institutional activity and as a partnership.

Institute of Technology: The College is working collaboratively with other FE providers, a University and key employers on the delivery of a successful IOT bid. The IOT is focused specifically on STEM related provision with a widening participation remit (targets to be confirmed)

Cyber/STEM: The College is also collaborating with UWE to develop a cyber-centre to offer level 6 progression opportunities (full time and higher apprenticeships) to our learners. This will also support STEM widening participation remit (as above)

Secondary schools: Alongside our general work with our feeder school, we have also developed staff mentoring opportunities with a local secondary school with a high proportion of pupil premium students. Subject specialist lecturing staff run group and 121 sessions with learners helping them to aspire to progress to higher level courses. Other activities include the Chefs Forum, masterclass events aimed at secondary school pupils. These are primarily to raise aspirations about opportunities in the hospitality and catering industries but showcase managerial positions and higher level programmes.

Strategic Alliance and bilateral agreements: The College has a compact agreement with the University of Gloucestershire and Hereford College of the Arts, which offers bursary support to our FE learners progressing to these institutions. These arrangements enhance the awareness of progression opportunities amongst our learners, particularly through specific workshops and outreach events.

3.1.8 Alignment with other work and funding sources

Raising attainment GCSE English and maths: In order to support the access and success of our progressing learners we are focused upon improving literacy and numeracy skills whilst they are further education students. We have a series of projects in order to improve these skills and are ultimately focused upon improving the grade 9-4 achievements at GCSE English and maths with 17 and 18 year olds who have not achieved at school.

Financial support (where applicable). Whilst the college does not implement any specific form of financial support bursary for access, students (existing or previous learners) that are progressing from a Gloucestershire College qualification achieved at the college to a full-time, level 4 HE course at the College are offered a bursary of £1000 in their first year of HE study at the college. **Evidence base:** the research conducted in 2015³ stated that 'financial support is not the most significant determinant in either the decision to apply to higher education or in the choice between institutions. However, from the institutional findings it appears that there is a sizeable minority of students that feel that financial support does impact on their decision to enter higher education and in choice of destination'. Our Student focus groups have identified the importance of this financial support in relation to access and success. **How we evaluate financial support is outlined in the evaluation section of this plan.**

3.2 Student consultation

In relation to HE the access and participation plan we consult and involve the current HE learners but also involve our further education learners particularly in relation to our access work.

The HE course reps and HE students have been consulted through a series of **focus groups** that have explored aspects of the HE lifecycle and the key aspects outlined in our access and participation plan. The use of focus groups across **all subject areas and subject groups mean that feedback is gathered from learners from a range of backgrounds, covering a range of ages, experiences and social groups.** The specific areas covered related to **access** (the taster sessions available in advance of HE applications, promotional events and the work of the HE advisor); **success** (the support available in terms of the progression payment and opportunities fund, study support, counselling etc.) and **progression** (employer links and careers information available).

The feedback from a range of learners has been taken into account in the development plan and will continue to feature in the engagement activities listed below. Throughout the course of this plan, we will

³ What do we know about the impact of financial support on access and student success?

Review of the research and evaluation of the impact of institutional financial support on access and student success. Report to the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) by Nursaw Associates (March 2015).

continue to involve students through further review meetings with HE reps and student groups with the Director of Student Experience, the Quality Improvement Officer and HE co-ordinator to monitor progress against the plan and gather further feedback about the support in place for underrepresented groups.

The key areas of feedback raised by the learners and taken into account in the plan related to:

- the importance of the access/progression money for progressing learners to support with their study materials.
- making sure that the support available (as outlined in the individualised approach) is highly visible and accessible to all learners at different times.
- consider a range of ways of accessing the hardship support for the onsite counselling and further advertise this support.
- continuing to consider their circumstances when developing timetables.
- Further promote the student hardship fund from point of application (included in offer letter 2019/20 and shared again at enrolment)
- learners recognised that their achievements had been supported through the individualised approach, especially in music technology where the team had adapted assessment methods to support their achievements

The main feedback from the learners supported the approach the college is taking in relation to the plan, in particularly the aspects relating to continuation and attainment.

The college has a series of formal student engagement activities that focus upon access and participation. There are mechanisms for students to engage in meaningful way via the course leader/focus groups/ internal surveys.

Student experience group. Focus groups with students on level 3 courses are held to determine the success of the progression bursaries in influencing behaviour. All students complete questionnaires with questions relating to their awareness of additional support measures and their view on the success of those measures. The Heads of School run focus groups with their learners in October, December, March and May, which include their HE cohorts. The feedback is reviewed at termly customer feedback meetings, performance reviews and HE Strategy Group. The focus groups provide a forum to consult with learners and examine their experiences/support needs and review our support plans. There is also a well-publicised Talkback (complaints and compliments) process that learners can use to formalise any feedback.

Internal HE survey. We complete a shadow NSS survey with **all** of our first year HE learners to evaluate their experience (this allows us to gather information from students from a **range of backgrounds, age groups and subject areas**). This information is evaluated and action plans formulated to work with the learners to further enhance their HE experience.

Student representatives. Each cohort has a student representative who Heads of School, Quality Manager and Higher Education Coordinator can consult with in relation to a range of issues. There is HE student Governor representation opportunities at the Curriculum and Quality governing board, where progress against the plan will be monitored. Drafts of this plan are circulated to this group for comments and feedback. The student governor receives 121 training from the Clerk of Governors and Vice Principal.

Student as co-creators – this is where learners work with course teams to choose and adapt units and assessment methods. This is actively encouraged with the academic teams.

How aim to improve student engagement:

- Sharing good practice relating to students as co-creators from those areas where most successful (particularly arts and media) to all areas across college through the HE practitioners group – July 2020
- Enhancing the training provided to student representatives and increasing opportunities to engage in decision making panels – July 2021
- Further development of our HE 'student association' that focuses upon student representatives and student voice – July 2020

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Whilst we do evaluate our activities and research informs the design of these activities and programmes we recognise that **research and evaluation are areas for development and this is reflected in the investment outline**. The college has a well-managed business intelligence (BI) strategy that supports tracking and analysis but this needs to be supported by an evaluation strategy that results in further quantitative and qualitative data being collected for analysis. We are committed to the improvement of our evaluation methods as outlined below.

Our self-assessment classifies the college as 'emerging' across all aspects of evaluation. Our evaluation is predominantly 'narrative based' - we have a **coherent explanation** of what we do and why and our claims are **research-based** (either internal evidence base or through national research findings). We need to develop an evaluation strategy that is **proportionate** to our HE provision.

Development of our evaluation work

We recognise that we need to develop our evaluation work further and see this developing through the course of the plan as below:

- Develop and implement an **evaluation plan** to involve all staff involved in widening participation (implemented at outset of 2020)- this would provide clarity to all on our objectives, programme design and the ongoing cycle of evaluation (outlined below) – initial stages of the plan (2020-2021).
- Develop the strategic **context of evaluation** (as outlined in 3.3.1) – further developing the use of research/evidence base and reviewing where activities have had impact elsewhere. Developing the knowledge and understanding of evaluation through staff training- initial stages of plan (2020-2021).
- Review and refine strategic measures and activities using the review cycle and the improved collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data through enhanced analytical reports (2021-2025)

How we will learn from evaluation

The college utilises an ongoing cycle of review, evaluate/identify root causes and adapt in order to learn. This will be used throughout the course of the plan.



Our investment in evaluation will be used to:

- a) Partially fund a second HE advisor, which will provide more capacity within the team to develop the evaluation of their widening participation activities.
- b) Fund the development of a web application to support collection of progression data
- c) Fund BI analysis in terms of developing further HE analytical reports and evaluation reports
- d) Train widening participation team in developing evaluation techniques

3.3.1 Strategic context – emerging. The HE Strategy group provides a forum to evaluate our widening participation activities but the importance of evaluation across the team is an element that is developing. There are mechanisms for data collection but we recognise that this is something that we need to develop further. The ability to analyse the data is a strength through the BI strategy.

In order to develop the strategic context of evaluation we need to further develop the culture of evaluation with all of those engaged in widening participation activities. Whilst the HE Strategy group provides the forum to evaluate activities, this needs to be developed through:

- Creation of working group that incorporates all of those involved in widening participation (**Jan 2020**)
- Review the evidence base of planned activities (**Jan 2020**)
- Full review of activities after each event (**Jan 2020 and onwards**)
- Training of team in the importance of evaluation of activities to be implemented fully by **Sept 2020**
- Development of more robust data collection from specific activities that can be analysed over short and long term (where relevant) **July 2020**

3.3.2 Programme design and Evaluation design – emerging. Our programmes are underpinned with clear objectives and, increasingly, informed by research and evidence. These are reviewed and developed to deliver the best outcomes. Access activities, particularly with school pupils, are evaluated for short term outcomes (attitudinal) and long term outcomes (tracking of progression through to HE enrolments). The College is applying theory of change logic to the design of programmes appropriate to the activity and proportionate to the HE provision at the organisation as outlined in Strategic Measures.

3.3.3 Programme Design and Evaluation examples: description of how we have used evidence and evaluation to inform and develop programme design

HE Promotion Event

Evidence base: Low HE participation, household income and socio economic status – OFS and UCAS reports.

Target outcomes: Close IMD gap over 5-year period. Close Female/Forest of Dean access gap (free transport etc.). Increase % of L3 learners applying for HE study.

Current evaluations: Numbers attending sessions – individual tracking of attendance and UCAS applications.

Area for development to evaluate impact: Attitudes to HE study before and after (A v B) forms and whether increased likelihood of applying. Number of applications (C) from IMD Q1 and Q2 year on year. Number of successful applications.

How we have used evidence and evaluation to inform and develop programme design: we identified that the attendance was too generalised (students who were interested in HE were selecting to attend, whereas FE learners who perhaps had not considered the option were not attending in as high numbers). We developed the concept of the event so that it was a compulsory aspect of FE tutorial provision and invested in transport from all campuses to attend the event. This allowed us to target IMD Q1-2 and learners from Forest of Dean in particular.

Specific Subject Taster Activities:

Evidence base: internal research

Target outcome: Executive team set targets over period of time for particular subject areas. In 2018/9 this was to increase computing applications by 10%.

Current evaluation of impact: % of L3 applications in each subject areas after events.

Area for development to evaluate impact: Attitudes before and after events. Track attendees. In 2018/9 we completed extra specific computing taster activities and meet the lecturer for our level 3 learners and our HE applications 2019/20 for computing are 135% in comparison to 2018/9 computing applications.

Individualised approach to learner support, rag rating and tracking learners:

Evidence base: DiSA project explanatory factors, Raising Awareness, Raising Aspiration programme findings.

Target Outcomes: Improve attainment rates of POLAR 4 low participation, mature full time and Asian and Black mature full time learners

Current evaluation: student feedback, improved attainment rates, success of action plans evaluated through HE strategy board.

How we have used evidence and evaluation to inform and develop programme design: The reports from the final exam board allowed the team to evaluate the impact of the strategies used; good practice will be shared at the outset of **2019/20**. The support available has been adapted for 2019/20 as a result of this evaluation and will continue to be reviewed, refined and new strategies introduced (if required) in 2021 and throughout the course of this plan.

3.3.4 Evaluation implementation – emerging. The college has **reliable data sources** for tracking individual students and cohorts, which comply with requirements of data collection and sharing. We can and

do track the progression of learners who have **engaged in activities**. We do need to assess and review the resources required in order to develop the data collection to input into these sources.

3.3.5 Learning to shape improvements – emerging. (See how we will learn from evaluation above)

Sharing findings internally: The College has mechanisms in place to share the findings internally and uses the HE Strategy groups to review the programmes and activities employed to meet our aims and objectives.

Sharing finding externally: The College will share any findings within our southwest peer network – this is a group of FE colleges that we work closely with on matters relating to quality improvement and teaching, learning and assessment. We utilise our NCOP GAPS/GROWS partnership to access their evaluation expertise and share findings from the activities completed as part of the project. We will communicate any relevant findings through attendance at relevant external events relating to widening participation.

3.3.6 Evaluation of financial support

We invest heavily in the financial support through the progression bursary and the opportunities fund – **so this will be a particular focus of our evaluation:**

Our Student focus groups have identified the importance of this financial support in relation to access and success. We have adapted the toolkit questions developed through the Sheffield Hallam⁴ research project (2016) and use these in the focus groups to explore **how and why** this financial support affects outcomes. The context and size of our provision has meant that we have utilised a focus group evaluation of our bursary. The questions focused upon whether the progression bursary had any impact upon applying for our HE courses, how the learners utilised the money and whether this had an impact upon their achievements. The feedback from the learners has been that this was necessary for them to access and succeed on their courses, particularly those on courses that require materials and filming budgets.

We will continue to review this with the learners, particularly those from underrepresented groups, on an **annual basis** through the focus groups and will explore adding questions relating to financial support into the **internal HE survey**. This will enable us to **review and evaluate** how we might explore more focused financial support for learners from underrepresented groups that are not progressing students. We plan to consider this in readiness for **2021 entry**.

3.3.7 Further evaluations used: Data relating to actual spend and participation in access and outreach activities is considered to evaluate success and value for money. Data relating to spend on bursaries is considered with, for example, data on retention and achievement. **The HE strategy group is the main arena where the college monitors the impacts of the activities outlined in the plan.** This group, in consultation with both FE and HE learners, reviews existing activity in relation to the impacts upon access, success and participation.

Access activities are evaluated in relation to attendance, evaluations related to ratings on how likely the event would influence behaviours and final enrolments and/or analysis of progression data in terms of numbers of learners moving on to HE courses at college and other organisations (tracking student progression to HE)

Progression is evaluated as part of the College's Business Information Strategy as stated, we will improve our access to, and analysis of progression data in order to monitor more closely the progression of underrepresented groups. We also aim to track and report successful career changes, promotions or salary increases for our part time learners who combine study and employment. Once our data sources are more robust, through the collection application, the HE strategy group will develop relevant activities in relation to specific progression targets. These will be monitored for impact against targets set.

3.3.8 ACTIONS TO IMPROVE over the duration of the plan (investment outlined in appendices):

Our evaluations will review the impact of our activities against the aims and objectives, influence future practice and be resourced proportionately to the activity being evaluated.

⁴ Closing the gap: understanding the impact of institutional financial support on student success: Final Project Report for the Office for Fair Access December 2016

Our actions will include:

- Appointment of second HE advisor with focus upon evaluation, surveys and analysis - **Oct 2019**
- Develop progression application in order to allow further evaluation of data. **March 2020**
- Further develop the use of pre and post activity evaluations to assess impact – **July 2020**
- Share initial findings from evaluations within our college peer network and via GAPs/GROWs project – **July 2020**
- Train wider teams involved in widening participation to utilise more research into the evidence base when developing activities – to be implemented fully by **Sept 2020**
- Further develop our empirical enquiry via the BI team, measuring changes against a counter-factual through a suite of HE analytical reports– **December 2020**
- Develop impact evaluation reports and focus upon research design limitations **Sept 2021**

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

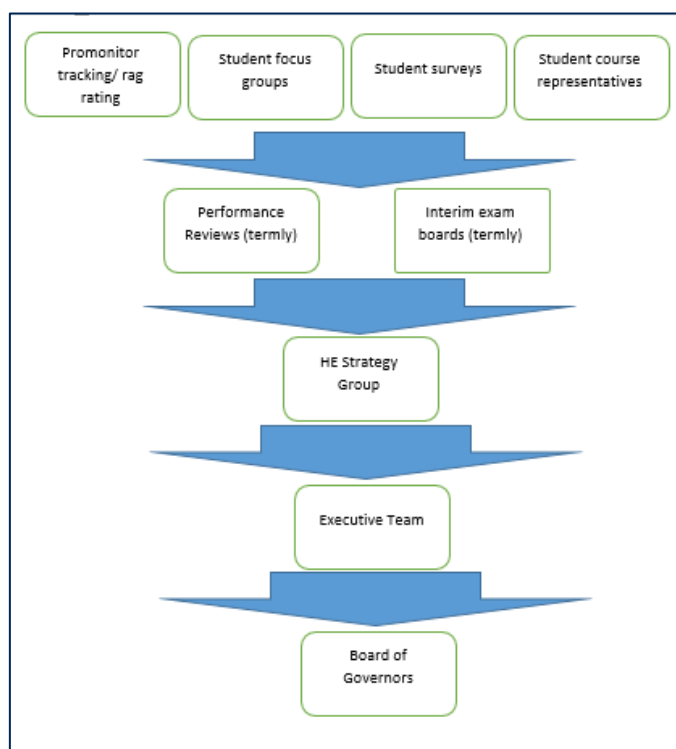
Access and participation plan. The monitoring of this access plan is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, Vice Principal and Heads of School. These managers also have formal responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the plan. The plan is also monitored through the Governing Body as progress against the plan and associated targets are reported to the Governing Body's curriculum and quality committee on a termly basis, through the HE updated report.

Progress against the targets are rag rated in this report and in year data and feedback from interim exam boards are monitored. If any aspects are identified as not making progress or worsening root causes would be identified and actions developed in order to intervene and make the necessary improvements.

Student Body: focus groups and surveys – formalised discussions with Heads of Schools with HE learners will continue to review and monitor the plan. Internal surveys will assess student experience, how they rate the support they receive and seek the areas they feel we could develop further.

Throughout the course of this plan we will continue to involve students through further review meetings with HE reps and student groups with the Director of Student Experience, the Quality Improvement Officer and HE co-ordinator to monitor progress against the plan and gather further feedback about the support in place for underrepresented groups.

The structure of how and where the plan is monitored is outlined below:



The College is committed to continuous improvement and will focus upon achieving this through the following priorities:

Process to monitor performance. There is a detailed schedule in place to monitor, review and evaluate in year performance. These arrangements are outlined below and provide an opportunity to review, predict and implement interventions to support learner outcomes.

Performance reviews. Each subject area has four formal reviews throughout the academic year (November, December, March and May). These focus upon attendance, retention and predicted achievement for each cohort. In year interventions are identified and reviewed at each consecutive review.

Promonitor. The college uses student tracking software to closely monitor in year achievement, attendance and record risk ratings of the learner (red, amber, green). This is explored at team meetings and performance reviews and individual **action plans and interventions** are implemented to support learners.

HE strategy group. This group meets every six weeks throughout the academic year and consists of the Heads of School (managers) of each subject area with HE provision, admissions, student services and marketing. This group reviews the progress of the HE action plan and monitors progress of the access and participation plan. **The group develops strategies to improve access, success and progression and reviews the quality of the HE provision.**

Interim exam boards. For Pearson these take place in February each academic year and are chaired by the Quality Improvement Manager and Higher Education Coordinator (Quality and Student Experience). University partner interim boards are run according to university requirements. The Heads of School and course leaders for each subject area review attendance, retention, achievement and student feedback to date. The exam boards would provide an overview of learner grades achieved at point of board, numbers of extenuating circumstances applied for and any issues with plagiarism and action plans would be formed where required. **An overview of the minutes are submitted to Curriculum and Quality Governing board.**

Annual Monitoring reports. Annual monitoring reports for each programme are completed by course leaders and submitted to the quality team in July. This would include an action plan for the following academic year that reflects **upon areas for development in relation to retention, success and student experience.**

Self-Evaluation Document [SED]. The SED is structured to cover, not only the expectations of the UK Quality Code, but also the recently introduced regulatory frameworks (details for some are still emerging). The SED 2018/9 will provide an external assessment of our HE provision as it will be by a QAA independent reviewer. This will provide judgements on our provision and identify areas for improvement.

4. Provision of information to students

Prospective and current students receive information on fees and financial support at open evenings, by email communications and from the student services team on each campus.

The College is committed to publishing clear and accessible information for prospective students, parents and employers via the College website, the College printed prospectus and other publications produced in conjunction with HE partners. The College also runs a series of open days and evenings for prospective students at all levels and a number of specific HE events throughout the year.

The course fees and any associated material fees are confirmed on the college curriculum planner and published against each course on the college website. These are clearly indicated as per year fees. Those commencing on a two or three-year programme will not be subject to fee increases in the second year of their course. The course fees identified for 2020/21 entrants will remain at the same amount for the length of the programme. This commitment for the continuation of the same fees charged in year one for full term of the programme is implemented each start year.

The bursary and support funds information are published on the college website. Information on financial support for HE learners is shared at HE enrolment sessions. The information on these documents explains the eligibility criteria as outlined in the **strategic measure section of this plan (on pages 19 and 21)**

A link to the access and participation plan is published on the HE pages of the website.

The plan will be shared at the HE practitioners' group, so tutors are able to direct learners to copies of the plan.

Appendix A: Plan to address the new priorities.

Priority A: Accessibility of access and participation plans

A summary of this plan has been written and uploaded. This will be shared with all new HE learners who enrol at the college.

Priority B: Develop, enhance and expand their partnerships with schools and other local and national organisations to help raise the pre-16 attainment of young people from under-represented groups

Whilst we do not have more than 2,000 full time higher education students, we will continue to collaborate with our feeder schools to support in raising aspiration and, in turn, attainment. (Our Schools Outreach is outlined on page 20 of this plan). We are developing links between our re-sit GCSE English and maths team with their equivalents in some of our feeder schools to share good practice and support raising attainment in this area. The college is also part of the Centre of Excellence for Maths programme; this is an action research project where practitioners trial new ideas to work with improving maths attainment across colleges. **Each of these projects are focused upon raising attainment of pre-16 young people and the attainment of those 16–17-year-olds who have not achieved GCSE grade 4, predominantly from underrepresented groups.**

The college is part of a collaborative IoT project with university, FE and employer partners to develop STEM based provision and widen participation in STEM based courses. In relation to this project the computing team have been successful in being part of the CyberFirst Schools Recognition Scheme. This scheme is to recognise, promote and support best practice in schools delivering computer science and cyber security related education and, as such, we will be supporting developing/raising digital attainment in secondary and primary schools in the area.

The College works in partnership with a local secondary school in the Forest of Dean to provide an A Level offer as part of a longer-term ambition to raise aspirations and attainment in that area. There has been a history of low attainment in this area and most wards in the Forest of Dean have young participation rates of between 23-29%. This partnership was developed to support in raising aspirations at age 11 and support in raising attainment locally.

Working through our Uni Connect partnership we will research and explore collaborative evidence-based opportunities for attainment raising within the region throughout 2022/23. The partnership will await the output from OfS funded national tender which will support partnerships by providing advice and information around pre-16 attainment raising and use this guidance to build a regional approach to help raise pre-16 attainment. Targeted schools will be approached and offered an embedded and effective relationship to help support their current attainment raising activity. Gloucestershire College will be a partner in these activities.

These are the activities that outline how the college will support priority B.

Priority C: Set out how access to HE for students from underrepresented groups leads to successful participation on high quality courses and good graduate outcomes

How we ensure that our students are supported from underrepresented groups are supported to participate and achieve is outlined in detail in the current plan (pages 21-23). In relation to continuation and attainment this works around the premise of the **individualised** approach to learners, reviewing and implementing action plans to provide appropriate support to help retain learners and support them to achieve.

The HE groups are relatively small cohorts each with a dedicated course leader timetabled with the group throughout the days they are in college. Students from under-represented groups are highlighted to the course leader so they are aware of their student profiles at the **outset of the academic year**. Success activities are evaluated through performance review cycle and interim exam boards. These represent a detailed monitoring process of retention, achievement and outcomes predictions in year. Learners are rag

rated and any support needs identified and implemented. This is underpinned by the Student Hub area where learners can access pastoral and wellbeing support.

These are the activities that outline how the college supports priority C.

Priority D: Seek to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education through the expansion of flexible level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships

The college already offers a range of level 4 and 5 provision, with 'step-off' points at HNC and HND levels alongside progression 'top-ups' at level 6 both delivered at the college and through confirmed pathways with partner universities. The college also offers foundation degrees that have traditionally attracted mature students.

We have already developed a degree apprenticeship offer specialising in Engineering and Cyber, with new pathways developed or in development. These are offered as day release or block delivery based on employer needs. The college also offers a range of level 4 and 5 apprenticeships across a range of sectors.

The provision and timetables are organised, wherever possible, to best suit the student demographic. This includes blended delivery (business and early years) and part time (construction, engineering).

There are plans to develop this more flexible offer of level 4, 5 and higher apprenticeships further, alongside a phased introduction of Higher technical Qualifications; starting with computing in 2022. **These plans, and our existing offer, supports this priority.**

**Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21**

Provider name: Gloucestershire College

Provider UKPRN: 10002696

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

We do not intend to raise fees annually

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£7,700
Foundation degree		£7,700
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	All except Business	£6,700
HNC/HND	Business Only	£6,000
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	Teacher Training	£7,700
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	All except Engineering and Business	£3,350
HNC/HND	Business Only	£3,000
HNC/HND	Engineering Only	£2,750
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	Teacher Training	£3,850

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

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

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Gloucestershire College

Provider UKPRN: 10002696

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£32,005.00	£32,005.00	£32,005.00	£32,005.00	£32,005.00
Access (pre-16)	£8,543.04	£8,543.04	£8,543.04	£8,543.04	£8,543.04
Access (post-16)	£4,400.96	£4,400.96	£4,400.96	£4,400.96	£4,400.96
Access (adults and the community)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Access (other)	£19,061.00	£19,061.00	£19,061.00	£19,061.00	£19,061.00
Financial support (£)	£96,400.00	£96,400.00	£96,400.00	£96,400.00	£96,400.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£9,000.00	£6,200.00	£6,200.00	£6,200.00	£6,200.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HF1%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HF1)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HF1)	£142,800.00	£142,800.00	£142,800.00	£142,800.00	£142,800.00
Access investment	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%
Financial support	19.1%	19.1%	19.1%	19.1%	19.1%
Research and evaluation	1.3%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Total investment (as %HF1)	24.8%	24.5%	24.5%	24.5%	24.5%

