Gloucestershire College UKPRN: 10002696
Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and strategic aim

Gloucestershire College is a general further education college in the South-West. We offer a broad range of programmes encompassing full time programmes for 16–18-year-olds, a large adult provision, and a significant apprenticeship provision (including higher apprenticeships) as well as other workplace learning. The offer is inclusive and responds to all types of learners, such as those with learning difficulties or disabilities, provision for the unemployed, education and training, and Higher Education (HE).

The focus of our provision is principally to provide technical education and training, considering local skills strategies and needs, particularly those identified by local and regional skills strategies.

Equality of opportunity is embedded into our mission and objectives outlined in our strategic plan; we exist for all learners to give them skills to be successful in their future lives and careers, with a focus on developing practical, professional, and technical skills. Social mobility is a key ambition, and we particularly work with learners who:

- have been less academically successful at school
- are from disadvantaged backgrounds
- may have not achieved grade 4/C in English and maths at school
- have special educational needs

Our overarching approach to addressing equality of opportunity can be found in the 'Whole Provider Context' section. Our Access and Participation Plan underpins our strategy to support all our HE learners to access and succeed in higher education. Our course entry criteria and approach to HE in FE encourages those with lower grades, mature learners without traditional qualifications and those who may not consider a university experience as being 'for them'. 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'.

Our HE offer is predominantly Pearson Higher Nationals/HTQs but we also deliver Higher Apprenticeships, Foundation Degrees (in partnership with University of Gloucestershire) and level 6 'top-ups' (in partnership with UWE). There were 292 new entrants who enrolled on HE provision at the college in 2023/24 (146 full time new entrants; 78 on degree apprenticeships and 68 on part time courses).

There has been a significant shift in our full time/part time split of learners since 20/21, with a significant decline in part time HE learners in this time frame. This results from a shift from learners studying part time courses to degree apprenticeships and a change in our curriculum offer with a closure of CELTA, ACCA and leadership and management programmes. Our current part time offer is predominantly for learners who are employed and sponsored by their employers. Here we have less influence over access and participation; hence our analysis and APP focuses predominantly on fulltime undergraduate learners (who now are our biggest proportion of HE learners), unless specifically stated.

The College predominantly attracts HE learners from within the county (over 90% of HE learners live within 30 miles of their campus) and enrolments are closely linked to the demographics locally. 47% of our new HE learners have progressed directly from our FE level 3 cohort. The majority of HE learners progressed with BTEC qualifications. In 23/24 19% of our FT HE learners have a declared disability; 40% are from IMDQ1; 60% Polar4 Q1-Q2; 58% TUNDRA Q1-Q2.

Over the last couple of years, we have proactively developed partnerships with those working within harder to reach communities across the country to offer specific HE courses to student groups from underrepresented groups (Mature, Asian, IMD Q1) from a base in London. The enrolment of these cohorts does, however, vary each year which impacts upon our data each year. For instance, in 21/22 34% (20% Asian; 11% Black; 4% mixed/multiple ethnic group) and in 202/23 32% of our HE cohort were from ethnic minority groups (19% Asian; 8% Black; 5% mixed/multiple ethnic group); in 23/24 this has dropped to 10% but set to rise again in 24/25 due to targeted partnership work. Our current enrolments from ethnic minority groups (10%; 3% Asian; 2% Black; 5% mixed/multiple ethnic group) compare favourably with our catchment area[1], but we continue to work with these partners to widen participation within these communities.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Gloucestershire College has assessed our performance to identify the most significant indicators of risk to equality of opportunity for our learners and prospective learners. We have used the OFS data as our primary data source but have supplemented this with data from our internal data sources and data collected via, HE exam boards and learner forums.

As outlined above there has been a significant shift in our full time/part time split of learners since 20/21, with a significant decline in **part time** HE learners in this time frame, which is not reflected in the OFS data dashboard. **As such our analysis and APP focuses predominantly on fulltime undergraduate learners (who now are our biggest proportion of HE learners), unless specifically stated.**

After detailed analysis of OFS data at each stage of the student lifecycle (see annex A) and the use of the EORR we have identified groups of full-time learners who are showing indicators of risk to equality of opportunity. We have identified 7 areas of key risk that we will address in our plan.

- **Risk 2.1 [access]** Lower proportions of those eligible for free school meals (FSM) access full time higher education courses at Gloucestershire College (GC). Our research and evidence suggest this is a result of gaps in prior knowledge and skills and perceptions of higher education, particularly related to finances/financial support.
- **Risk 2.2 [continuation]** Full time learners who are eligible for free school meals are less likely to continue their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support and cost pressures
- **Risk 2.3 [continuation]** Full time learners from more deprived socio-economic backgrounds (using the IMD measure) are less likely to continue their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support and cost pressures resulting in the need to take on more paid work hours or drop out of college.
- **Risk 2.4 [continuation]** Full time learners with a declared disability are less likely to continue their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support, mental wellbeing and cost pressures
- **Risk 2.5 [continuation]** Full time young learners (under 21) are less likely to continue their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support, mental wellbeing and cost pressures. These learners, predominantly progressing from our level 3 courses, outline that they find the step-up challenging in terms of increased research skills required and the difference between the pastoral support between FE and HE.
- **Risk 2.6 [completion]** Full time learners from more deprived socio-economic backgrounds (using the IMD measure) are less likely to complete their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support, mental wellbeing and cost pressures. There are also some improvements that can be made in assessment methods to aid the completion of our London based learners.

[1] 93.1% White; 29% Asian; 2.2% Mixed; 1.2% Black; 0.7% other. Gloucesteshire census 2021

- **Risk 2.7 [completion]** Mature learners (aged 21 or over at outset of their course) are less likely to complete their studies at GC. Our research and evidence suggest this relates to access to personal and academic support, mental wellbeing and cost pressures.

Other identified risks:

As outlined in Annex A our analysis recognises that the data may show indicators of risk to opportunity for other student groups and/or intersections between these groups. There are also different parts of the lifecycle, where some indications of risk may be evident. GC is, however, a small HE provider and we have chosen to concentrate on indicators where most students are affected or where we believe we can make the biggest difference. We will, however, continue to identify and monitor any gaps on an annual basis and consider further activity if required.
These include:

Intersectional data (highlighted in Annex A)

The small number of learners at intersectional points can distort trend data. While we recognize that certain groups may be impacted by intersections, targeting access and participation activities solely on these groups would concentrate resources on a very narrow segment of the college's HE provision. This is not the most effective use of limited resources, as it could detract from outcomes that benefit a larger number of learners. Therefore, our targets aim to enhance access and participation for broader learner cohorts, which include these specific groups. By improving conditions for the wider population, we expect these groups will also benefit. However, the college will continue to closely monitor these intersections to ensure this is achieved.

ABCS Quintile continuation: As outlined in annex A our ABCS quintile 1 data compares favourably with all HE providers across access and continuation. Our 2-year aggregated data is slightly lower for completion [GC at 70.8% compared to all provider at 72.5%], however our intervention strategies to narrow the completion gap for IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 should positively impact on the learners in the lower ABCS quintiles

Other student groups: Nationally, it is acknowledged that there are equality gaps and support needs for various groups, including carers, individuals estranged from their families, members of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities, refugees, and children of military families. Although our student population is small, we recognize that these groups may face unique challenges. When these characteristics are identified, we can provide targeted support, advice, and guidance to help these learners progress.

The numbers of care leavers enrolled on our HE courses are very small and not all may be identified. In our previous access and participation plan we outlined how we improved capturing information about care leavers at point of enrolment and through our interim exam boards. We will continue to promote the local Authority (GCC) HE bursary available for care leavers and have introduced our own care leavers bursary. The research also identifies that, nationally, 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 completion. Whilst the numbers are very small, we have identified in exam boards the success of care leavers as a direct result of support interventions, and we will continue with this and monitor rather than set a particular target.

Progression:

As outlined in Annex A our analysis recognises that the data may show some small, yet, narrowing progression gaps. GC is, however, a small HE provider delivering vocational and technical HE courses (HNC/HND/HTQ), which are skills focused but may not always lead directly to management or professional roles. We provide learners with employer led workshops and live employability-focused assessment briefs to develop their employability skills. Our part time HE

learners are already employed and sponsored by employers to complete HNC qualifications. Our HE programmes are designed to support onward progression in line with learners' aspirations.

As a result of the limited data and small numbers skewing headline figures (overall numbers are so small that it is difficult to draw conclusions across the different indicators) we will continue to support employability rather than present a target in this area.

Objectives

Objective 3.1 [access] Gloucestershire College will increase the percentage of learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) FSM enrolling on fulltime HE courses from 14% to 19% by 2029. This will be achieved through working in partnership with targeted schools, Uniconnect collaboration, provision of targeted 'why HE' tutorials with our FE cohorts, financial support, parent/carer engagement and HE taster events.

Objective 3.2 [continuation] Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of FSM learners by increasing rates from 75% to 88% by 2029. This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans and enhanced study support.

Objective 3.3 [continuation] Gloucestershire College will eliminate the continuation gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 from 12ppt to 0ppt by 2029. This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans and enhanced study support.

Objective 3.4 [continuation] Gloucestershire College will eliminate the continuation gap between those with a disability and those without from 29ppt to 0ppt by 2029. This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans, signposting to mental wellbeing support and access to specialised support and 'tech-ability'.

Objective 3.5 [continuation] Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of young learners from 79% to 92% by 2029. This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans and enhanced study support.

Objective 3.6 [completion] Gloucestershire College will eliminate the completion gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 learners by 2029 from 3.7ppt to 0ppt. This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans and enhanced study support. This includes sharing good practice and the training of staff in effective assessment methods at our sub-site in London.

Objective 3.7 [completion] Gloucestershire College will eliminate the completion gap between mature and young FT learners by 2029 from 6.8ppt to 0ppt This will be achieved through financial support/interventions, increased pastoral support, individualised support plans and enhanced study support.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes: outlined in tables below

INTERVENTION STRATEGY 1:

Objectives and targets: PTA_1 Gloucestershire College will increase the numbers of learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) FSM enrolling on fulltime HE courses from 14% to 19% by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR 1 knowledge and skills; EORR 2 Information and guidance; EORR 3 Perception of higher education.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS?
Why HE? Seminar **16+**	**[Existing activity]** Aspiration raising intervention/ supported to see HE as a route for them. This is one of the non-negotiable exploring HE tutorials with all our level 2 and 3 further education (FE) learners, embedded into the tutorial programme. To include the different ways that you can study HE (in FE, at university, as an apprenticeship), how the funding works, and what kinds of careers it can lead onto – from which kinds of courses, so that they can see 'the point' and how it can enhance careers and other aspects of their lives	Staff hours: Student mentors 1 hour per group x 125 groups	Increased % of FSM learners enrolling on to HE courses Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways Increased positive perception of HE	n
Student Finance talks **16+**	**[Existing activity]** Information and guidance/ perception of higher education. Talks aimed at learners and parents/carer to provide a more detailed understanding of student finance.	Staff costs: Careers and UCAS co-ordinator	Increased access. Increased knowledge and understanding of student finance Increased positive perception of HE	n

Futures Fair event 16+	**[Existing activity]** Aspiration raising intervention/ supported to see HE as a route for them. These are central open events in the FE college induction period which include seminars on Why HE?, Student Finance & Personal Statement writing for our 16-18 year old learners	Staff costs: 10 x Student Mentors for 3 days	Increased access. Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways. Increased positive perception of HE	n
Financial support: Bursaries	NEW: targeted bursaries A) Gloucestershire low-income household bursary (will support FSM) £500 non-repayable annual bursary where eligibility is a household income below £25k B) Care leaver bursary (will support FSM) £1000 non-repayable annual bursary for care leavers (eligibility: care leavers)	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in learners from low-income households/ eligible for FSM enrolling on to HE courses Increase in care leavers applying to HE courses (at GC or at other HE providers) Decreased financial concerns for learners	y
UniConnect: GROWS. **Collaboration Pre 16 and 16+**	**[Existing activity]** University of Gloucestershire-led partnership to encourage young people from targeted postcodes to explore the possibility of progressing to higher education (university-level study). **This includes attainment raising activity with pre-16s**. GC provides minimum of 1 intervention with schools, a minimum of 1 intervention with FE learners plus a range of events to raise aspirations of school pupils	Staff costs: hours to run projects Management support hours for projects	Increase in local students from underrepresented groups accessing HE Increased positive perception of HE	n

Parental/ carer engagement	**NEW:** A variety of **parental/carer engagement** activities (evidence suggests that this is key for underrepresented learners' successful progression) These include: • Online parent/carer HE **information evening** • Regular HE **newsletters** • Twilight session for parents at Futures Fair	STAFF COSTS: Careers and UCAS co-ordinator APP HE mentor	Increased number of parents/carers attending HE engagement events Increased understanding of HE options	n
Marketing activity **Pre 16** **16+**	**NEW:** Marketing activity aimed at students from low-income families likely to have been eligible for FSM	Proportion of marketing budget	Increased access Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways	n
School outreach **Pre-16**	**[Existing activity]** Aspiration raising intervention/ supported to see HE as a route for them. **Targeted at our top feeder schools with high proportions of learners from** low-income families likely to have been eligible for FSM	Staff costs: School Outreach and Engagement Partners	Increased access Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways	n

HE awareness raising events/ tasters	**[Expansion of existing activity]** Subject specific events promoting HE courses to internal and external customers, through a range of events and activities. The school of Art ran a highly successful HE day this academic year, in which students from across their school and feeder schools got to try 'tasters' of other classes within the school and also hear talks on topics like student finance and applying through UCAS, to 'demystify' the process a bit – this will be rolled out across other subject areas.	Staff costs: APP HE mentor HE course leaders x 10 – each 7 hours / 70 hours total p.a HE leads - 28 hours p.a	Increased access Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways Increased understanding of HE student finance	n
Programme development **Collaboration with UWE**	**[Expansion of existing activity]** Programmes broken down into shorter qualifications so learners can achieve annually – HNCs across all offer Top ups level 6 – one year top-up programmes in computing and games with University of West of England (UWE) as partner – provides local option for computing learners to achieve level 4, 5 and then 6 at the college Degree apprenticeships – increased offer so learners can learn and earn Blocked timetables – central approach to timetabling to block sessions across fewer days to provide learners with opportunity to take part time work without impacting upon their studies	No additional costs	Increased access	y

Progression campaign **16+**	‘This time next year’ – progression booklets **The Careers and UCAS co-ordinator 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 with current FE learners**	STAFF COSTS: Careers and UCAS co-ordinator Printing costs	Increased knowledge and understanding of benefits of HE and the different pathways	n
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’.**	No additional costs	Increased access	n
Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £157000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)				

Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, evaluation from Uniconnect and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

Whilst there may be limitations to 'aspiration raising' activities (TASO toolkit) it is important that such underrepresented groups are supported to see that HE is a route for them. Our activities are devised around explaining the options available to the target group. Our research demonstrates that parental/carer engagement is also an important factor when those from low-income households/ eligible for free school meals are considering HE. The provision of information, through a range of different activities (tutorials, tasters, events, booklets, campaigns), is key, particularly around, HE finances to demystify perceptions of the costs associated with HE. Feedback from parents has resulted in the development of parental/carer activities, with a balance of face to face and online engagement activities.

Increased flexibility can particularly impact on students from lower economic backgrounds, the commitment to blocked timetables has been welcomed by the learners in the forums.

Whilst TASO toolkit identifies that we do not have enough evidence to make claims about which forms of financial support (bursaries/grants/fee-waivers/scholarships) are most effective in the UK, overall, the international evidence base suggests that providers should include financial support as part of their approach to boosting participation among students from low-income backgrounds. The feedback from our eligible learners resulted in our change to targeted bursaries, as cost pressures and and bursaries were identified as an important factor.

Further detail in Annex B

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- **Monitoring enquiry, application and enrolment rates of those eligible for FSM (Type 2)**
- **Attendance at events/activities (Type 1)**
- **Changing perceptions towards HE at events/activities - attitudinal (Type 1)**
- **Evaluation of feedback from FE and HE learners (Type 1)**
- **OFS financial Support evaluation toolkit**

NB: UniConnect work is formally evaluated by the partnership (Type 2)

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 2

Objectives and targets: PTS-1: Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of FSM learners by increasing rates from 75% to 88% by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross IS?
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support This role will support HE learners to manage any welfare or study issues that are barriers to learning. Mentor HE learners to seek solutions to these barriers and help them develop resilience. • Ensure that 'at risk' HE learners receive relevant support to enable them to achieve successful HE outcomes • Support careers and progression by signposting learners to internal and external advice	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of support available to them Increase in learners accessing support where required	Y
Individual action plans	**[Existing activity]** Our interventions work 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	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor	Increase in continuation	Y

	started in 2018/9 and has been reviewed annually and refined/developed as required. All HE learners are tracked via central tracking system. The learners are rag rated each term (red, amber, green) against shared criteria. Learners who are 'red flagged' at risk of non-continuation or non-completion are shared at the two HE interim exam boards and individualised actions are developed for each learner. This may include signposting to specific support available both in and out of college.	Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support		
HE Study Support sessions	**[Existing activity]** Named Learning advisors based in the learning resource centres who run 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.	Staff costs: Learning advisors	Increase in continuation Improved study skills	Y
Access to Learning support	**[Existing activity – new post]** 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 advisors on each campus who provide support on a drop-in basis, to include time management skills, English and maths skills and using assisted technology	Staff Costs: SEND ADVISOR 0.5	Increase in continuation Improved study skills	Y

Financial support: Bursary	NEW: targeted bursaries A) Gloucestershire low-income household bursary (will support FSM) £500 non-repayable annual bursary where eligibility is a household income below £25k B) Care leaver bursary (will support FSM) £1000 non-repayable annual bursary for care leavers (eligibility: care leavers)	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund	Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund **Eligibility and application** • Students will need to complete an application • Students can only apply if they have applied for and taken out a loan or grant from Student Finance England • Students studying a course provided by a partner university are not eligible to apply for the Gloucestershire College fund; the partner university will provide information regarding their own hardship fund. The maximum amount that can be awarded per student **per year** is: ○ Full time - £1,000 ○ Part time - £500	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y

	Payments can be made for emergencies or exceptional circumstances e.g., household bills, rent, travel, and food. Awards will be based on individual circumstances, considering the type of support the student needs, their income/expenditure, and the intensity of their course.			
HE learner community teams site	**NEW:** Online HE learner community site. As a small HE provider within FE it can be difficult to foster a HE community. We have developed an online site for HE learners, where we can share cross college information, answer questions etc to help underpin the communities develop at a course level.	No additional costs	Increase in continuation Learners report an increased sense of belonging to HE community	Y
Extra mentoring support	**[Existing activity/ new post]** 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. Either the course lead, Head of School or HE mentor will deliver extra mentoring depending on the individual's need.	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of support available to them	Y
Learner forums	**[Expansion of existing activity]** Student consultation is key in supporting continuation and completion. There are three forum ‘windows’ embedded into the calendar, where learner feedback (what went well/ even better if) is collected from each learner cohort and shared at HE strategy	Staff costs: Director of Student Employment and Experience Higher Education Coordinator Heads of School HE leads	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of how we have acted upon their feedback	Y

	meeting. Plans are developed from the even better if.			

Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £121000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)

Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

We introduced the individualised approach of action plans for red flagged HE learners in 2018/9 after seeing the positive impact this approach had with our retention of FE learners. As the red flagged learners are identified at interim exam boards by the course teams and the learners and their action plans are monitored through these termly meetings, we can track the impact of this activity on a learner by learner basis each year; clearly outlining who has been identified, why they have been identified, the individual support offered, the engagement in this support and the outcome for the learner. Whilst this is possible due to the small, HE numbers in each cohort this activity is based upon the principles of 'learner analytics' (TASO toolkit) without the complexities of data analytics.

In preparation for the APP and as part of our annual review of HE we asked all HE learners (current and those who withdrew in-year) the key improvement we could make to improve their experience. Most of the learners identified the addition of a pastoral mentor to supplement the coaching and mentoring received from the academic and support teams. They identified the importance of a named person who could support and signpost them to appropriate pastoral support. This was supported by the feedback from the HE course leaders.

Study Skills: We have identified that those progressing from vocational routes 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. This reflects findings from project within OFS ABSS programme(see Annex B)

Sense of belonging and creating a sense of identity (Hughes and Spanner 2019). Academic and pastoral support relationships can minimise academic stress

Further detail in Annex B

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-continuation rates and reasons for non-continuation TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the types of support and impact (inductive approach) (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)
- OFS financial Support evaluation toolkit

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 3

Objectives and targets: PTS_2: Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % continuation gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 from 12% to 0% by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support As per IS2	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	As per IS2	Y

Individual action plans	**[Existing activity]** Our interventions work 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. As per IS2	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support	Increase in continuation	Y
HE Study Support sessions	**[Existing activity]** Named Learning advisors based in the learning resource centres who run 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.	Staff costs: Learning advisors	Increase in continuation Improved study skills	Y
Financial support: Bursary	**NEW:** targeted bursaries As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund	As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation	Y

			Decreased financial concerns for learners	
Mental Wellbeing triage and support	NEW: Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead Support with the identification of students at risk of, or showing signs of, mental ill health by triaging, assessment, therapeutic support as well as developing Individual Action Plans and signposting to appropriate organisations internally and externally. · Lead provision for supporting students who present with mental health difficulties · create and maintain a high quality and comprehensive range of information for students, such as self-help materials, on-line resources and a range of tutorials based on mental health that students will access through college portal	Staff Costs Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Increased continuation Learners have a better understanding of how to support their own well being Learners have a better understanding of how to access support when required	y
Safeguarding wellbeing campaigns	NEW: College wide safeguarding/ wellbeing campaigns centrally displayed, and materials cascaded to teaching teams and available on HE learning community.	No additional costs	Learners have a better understanding of how to support their own well being	y

Extra mentoring support	**[Existing activity/ new post]** 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. Either the course lead, Head of School or HE mentor will deliver extra mentoring depending on the individual's need.	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of support available to them	Y
Guest speakers/ live briefs	**[Existing activity]** A key objective for the college is 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. Each course leader makes sure that employers/stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the curriculum, to include guest speakers and/or live briefs	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders	Increase in continuation Learners develop critical work skills	
HE learner community teams site	**NEW:** Online HE learner community site. As a small HE provider within FE it can be difficult to foster a HE community. We have developed an online site for HE learners, where we can share cross college information, answer questions etc to help underpin the communities develop at a course level.	No additional costs	Increase in continuation Learners report an increased sense of belonging to HE community	Y

Learner forums	**[Expansion of existing activity]** Student consultation is key in supporting continuation and completion. There are three forum 'windows' embedded into the calendar, where learner feedback (what went well/ even better if) is collected from each learner cohort and shared at HE strategy meeting. Plans are developed from the even better if	Staff costs: Director of Student Employment and Experience Higher Education Coordinator Heads of School HE leads	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of how we have acted upon their feedback	Y
Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £107000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)				
Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, TASO mental health toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort. The rationale for some activities is identified in IS2. Learner/staff feedback identify that cost pressures, lack of study skills and mental wellbeing concerns are key factors in learners not continuing. Feedback from HE interim boards – mental wellbeing identified as having biggest impact upon the learners (TASO mental health toolkit) Guest speakers from industry/live briefs: Learners and course leaders have identified that they are more likely to continue with their studies if they can see they are developing technical skills and employability skills which will help them secure employment. Whilst the TASO toolkit/evidence outlines that no causal evidence has been identified on this type of intervention, feedback from course leaders and research into careers education outline the value of employer engagement and how it can motivate study.[2]				

[2] Anthony Mann, Jordan Rehill and Elnaz T. Kashefpakdel (2018) *Employer engagement in education: Insights from international evidence for effective practice and future research* January 2018 commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-continuation rates and reasons for non-continuation TYPE 2
- Tracking data of numbers signposted to external support TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the wellbeing campaigns (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)
- Termly evaluation of impact of new roles (type 1)
- OFS financial Support evaluation toolkit

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 4

Objectives and targets: PTS_3: Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % continuation gap between those with a disability and those without from 29% to 0% by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
SEND advisor support	**[Existing activity – new post]** HE learners have access to learning support from onsite specialists. This includes advice on coping strategies and help	Staff costs: SEND ADVISOR	Increase in continuation	y

	with completing DSA claims. These learners get access to assisted technology provision through this team. There are advisors on each campus who provide support on a drop-in basis, to include time management skills, English and maths skills and using assisted technology		Learners report better understanding of support available to them Improved wider skills Improved assessment outcomes	
Mental Wellbeing triage and support	NEW: Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead As per IS3	Staff Costs Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead		y
Mental Wellbeing training for staff	NEW: Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead will develop and deliver training/awareness resources on mental health and wellbeing for staff to support their learners. To ensure that training and communications relating to mental health and wellbeing are up to date and relevant to local/national themes and issues.	Staff Costs Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Staff have a better understanding of how to recognise learners who may need support Learners have a better understanding of how to access support when required	y
Safeguarding wellbeing campaigns	NEW: College wide safeguarding/ wellbeing campaigns centrally displayed, and materials cascaded to teaching teams and available on HE learning community.	No additional costs	Learners have a better understanding of how to support their own well being	y
EHCP day	NEW: EHCP day has been embedded into enrolment. This is a day where staff have access	Staff costs:	Staff have an increased understanding of effective	

	to EHCPs/declared disability information on each of their new learners. This will increase staff awareness of their learners and identify specific teaching/support strategies that may support the learners Supported by learning support team • Learning Support available for queries and support • SEND Review Leads bookable to join teams • SEND Intervention Mentor drop-in workshops (assistive software, strategies to support independence and normal way of working)	Send Review Leads	teaching, learning and assessment strategies Improved understanding of the barriers learners can face Improved continuation	
DSA processes	Training for relevant staff so they can support learners with the process Raise HE staff awareness of DSA so they can share this with learners Promotion of DSA processes with FE learners who have applied for HE courses	No additional costs	Increase in early DSA applications Staff have an increased knowledge of DSA Staff have increased confidence in supporting learners to apply for DSA	
Staff training SEND strategies	Podcasts and TLA materials and coaching available to staff on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) teaching strategies so staff develop their understanding on the teaching	Staff costs: Teaching and learning team	Staff have an increased understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies	

	strategies that work for learners with declared disabilities		Improved understanding of the barriers learners can face Improved continuation	
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support As per IS2	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	As per IS2	Y
Individual action plans	Our interventions work 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. As per IS2	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support	Increase in continuation	Y
Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £113000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)				
Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, TASO mental health toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort. The rationale for some activities is identified in IS2. Staff identify that learners require more tailored support to support with their declared and undeclared disabilities and this is impacting upon continuation rates. Mental wellbeing concerns is also a key factor in learners not continuing. Learners and staff have outlined a limited				

understanding of the DSA process and would welcome more support for learners. They have identified that onsite specialist support would have a positive impact in terms of developing learners coping and learning strategies.

Feedback from HE interim boards – mental wellbeing identified as having biggest impact upon the learners (TASO mental health toolkit)

Through our observations of teaching and learning sessions we have identified that some staff could benefit from further training on effective teaching and learning strategies, so they are able to tailor the support for learners.

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-continuation rates and reasons for non-continuation TYPE 2
- Evaluation of data of numbers accessing SEND support and assistive technology TYPE 2
- Evaluation of staff understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies and increased confidence using the strategies - qualitative TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the support provided (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)
- Termly evaluation of impact of new roles (type 1)
- Evaluation of the impact of teaching, learning and assessments strategies (type 2)

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 5

Objectives and targets: PT_4 Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of young learners from 79% to 92% by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support • As per IS2	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of support available to them Increase in learners accessing support where required	Y
Individual action plans	**[Existing activity]** Our interventions work 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. As per IS2	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support	Increase in continuation	Y

HE Study Support sessions	**[Existing activity]** Named Learning advisors based in the learning resource centres who run 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.	Staff costs: Learning advisors	Increase in continuation Improved study skills	Y
Financial support: Bursary	**NEW:** targeted bursaries As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund	As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in continuation Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Extra mentoring support	**[Existing activity/ new post]** 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. Either the course lead, Head of School or HE mentor will deliver extra mentoring depending on the individual's need.	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School	Increase in continuation Learners report better understanding of support available to them	Y

Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £66000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)

Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, TASO mental health toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

The rationale for many of the activities is identified in IS2.

Learner/staff feedback identify that cost pressures, lack of study skills and mental wellbeing concerns are key factors in learners not continuing.

Feedback from staff and learners identifies that the step up from level 3 to HE within an organisation is still a significant transition. Learners identify that access to pastoral support is different at HE and this can impact on their continuation.

Evaluation:

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-continuation rates and reasons for non-continuation TYPE 2
- Annual assessment of pastoral role against identified key performance indicators TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the pastoral support provided (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 6

Objectives and targets: PTS_5 Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % completion gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 learners by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support As per IS2	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	Increase in completion Learners report better understanding of support available to them Increase in learners accessing support where required	Y
Individual action plans	**[Existing activity]** Our interventions work 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. As per IS2	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support	Increase in completion	Y

Staff training: TLA and assessment methods	Training for HE academic teams on effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies so they can review and update assessment methods that will support learners to achieve	Staff costs HE LEADs TLA team	Staff have an increased understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies Improved understanding of the barriers learners can face Improved completion	Y
Sharing good practice/ training	Specific assessment method and verification training with the delivery team in London to make sure they are supporting the learners to achieve best outcomes	Staff costs Improvement support coordinator	Staff have an increased understanding of effective assessment strategies	
HE Study Support sessions	**[Existing activity]** Named Learning advisors based in the learning resource centres who run 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.	Staff costs: Learning advisors	Increase in completion Improved study skills	Y
Financial support: Bursary	**NEW:** targeted bursaries As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in completion Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y

Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund	As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in completion Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Learner forums	**[Expansion of existing activity]** Student consultation is key in supporting continuation and completion. There are three forum 'windows' embedded into the calendar, where learner feedback (what went well/ even better if) is collected from each learner cohort and shared at HE strategy meeting. Plans are developed from the even better if.	Staff costs: Director of Student Employment and Experience Higher Education Coordinator Heads of School HE leads	Increase in completion Learners report better understanding of how we have acted upon their feedback	Y
Staff training: TLA and assessment methods	Training for HE academic teams on effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies so they can review and update assessment methods that will support learners to achieve	Staff costs HE LEADs TLA team	Staff have an increased understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies. Improved understanding of the barriers learners can face Improved completion	
HE Study Support sessions	**[Existing activity]** Named Learning advisors based in the learning resource centres who run sessions with groups and individuals to support their academic study skills. These are sessions on request according to the subject needs of the group	Staff costs: Learning advisors	Increase in completion Improved study skills	Y

	or individual and recommended as an action from interim exam boards and focus groups.			

Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £126000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)

Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, TASO mental health toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

The rationale for many of the activities is identified in the other intervention strategies.

Learner/staff feedback identify that cost pressures, lack of study skills and mental wellbeing concerns are key factors in learners not completing.

Analysis of the completion date for this group of learners demonstrated that the completion rates were impacted by our HNC business group in London. Evaluation of the teaching, learning and assessment identified that staff required further training on assessment strategies. The focus of our new role, improvement support co-ordinator, has helped us develop a training programme for this specific staff group.

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-completion rates and reasons for non-completion TYPE 2
- Evaluation of staff understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies and increased confidence using the strategies - qualitative TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the support provided (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)
- Evaluation of the impact of teaching, learning and assessments strategies (type 2)

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website.

Intervention Strategy 7

Objectives and targets: PTS_6: Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % completion gap between mature and young FT learners' by 2029

Risks to equality of opportunity: EORR6 Insufficient academic support; EORR 7 Insufficient pastoral support; EORR8 mental health issues, EORR 10 cost pressures

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Pastoral support	**NEW:** Dedicated HE pastoral support • As per IS2	Staff costs: APP HE MENTOR	Increase in completion Learners report better understanding of support available to them Increase in learners accessing support where required	Y
Individual action plans	**[Existing activity]** Our interventions work 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. As per IS2	Staff Costs: HE Course leaders APP HE Mentor Head of School Higher Education Coordinator Head of Improvement Support	Increase in completion	Y

Financial support: Bursary	**NEW:** targeted bursaries As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in completion Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Student Opportunities (Higher Education) fund	As per IS2	Bursary costs Staff costs: administrative costs	Increase in completion Decreased financial concerns for learners	Y
Mental Wellbeing training for staff	NEW: Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead will develop and deliver training/awareness resources on mental health and wellbeing for staff to support their learners. To ensure that training and communications relating to mental health and wellbeing are up to date and relevant to local/national themes and issues.	Staff Costs Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead	Staff have a better understanding of how to recognise learners who may need support Learners have a better understanding of how to access support when required	Y
Safeguarding wellbeing campaigns	NEW: College wide safeguarding/ wellbeing campaigns centrally displayed, and materials cascaded to teaching teams and available on HE learning community.	No additional costs	Learners have a better understanding of how to support their own well being	Y
Total Cost over 4-year cycle: £78000 (bursaries are costed separately in our Fees, Investments and Targets document)				

Evidence base and rationale: The rationale for these activities has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, TASO mental health toolkit and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

The rationale for many of the activities is identified in the other intervention strategies.

Learner/staff feedback identify that cost pressures, lack of study skills and mental wellbeing concerns are key factors in learners not completing.

Evaluation: We will evaluate each activity outlined in this IS to review the impact and assess whether they lead to the intended outcomes

Alongside this we will assess the impact of the IS by:

- Evaluation of data on red flagged learners from HE interim boards TYPE 2
- Monitoring non-completion rates and reasons for non-completion TYPE 2
- Evaluation of staff understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies and increased confidence using the strategies - qualitative TYPE 2
- Evaluation of feedback from HE learners on the support provided (Type 1)
- Evaluation of academic skills development (Type1)
- Evaluation of the impact of teaching, learning and assessments strategies (type 2)

Findings reported:

Internally and annually through HE strategy group, APP monitoring at Governors curriculum and quality meeting.

Externally: feedback to UniConnect partners. At end of plan we will review and share finding on website

Whole provider approach

Our Strategic Mission: To deliver learning that works.

To do this we:

- provide learners with the opportunities, experiences and skills to move into their intended career destinations
- promote social mobility
- enable employers to access the skills needed for Gloucestershire to be prosperous for all.

Our Strategic Plan is focused upon social mobility, and 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. There is a college wide commitment to access and participation. All college policies, strategies and procedures, including the access and participation plan, are aligned to the strategic vision of the college.

College structures and processes are managed across FE and HE by the same managers and, as such, through all the stages of the student lifecycle we have key teams (admissions, student services, student support, academic teams etc) that operate within our strategic vision of inclusivity.

Gloucestershire College is committed to demonstrating our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities. We are bound by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires us to publish our Equality Objectives. Our ambitious and achievable objectives have been developed in consultation with stakeholders and build on work already completed. The College affirms that eliminating attainment differences, celebrating and promoting diversity is a key element of the College's mission. The College also recognises that achieving these ambitions brings a range of benefits to the organisation including:

- Creating a positive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to value diversity and respect difference;
- Delivering excellent customer service by ensuring there is an inclusive ethos, responding to the needs of individuals;
- Achieving a representative workforce and student body;
- Promoting social cohesion through a greater knowledge and understanding of the diverse community we serve.

We will achieve our objectives by several different, but interlinked strategies, which are monitored through the Safeguarding and Equality Group.

The key strategies, outlined in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, are:

- Taking a whole college approach
- Sharing and celebrating practice
- Involving and participating
- Assessing consulting and monitoring

The EDI strategies are reviewed and reported through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report.

A representative from the Safeguarding and Equality Groups attends the HE Strategy Group making sure that our access and participation plan and intervention strategies.

The access and participation plan and progress against our APP targets are monitored at the Governors Curriculum and Quality Committee. Our seven intervention strategies reflect our commitment to widening participation, the culture of inclusivity and align to the objectives of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Student consultation

Due to the size of our HE population, the termly focus groups, the interim exam boards and key questions posed to all learners via a range of online and face to face methods, we have been able to ensure that **the majority of our** HE learners, representing a range of backgrounds, were involved in the development of this plan. We also involved our further education learners, 50% of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly in relation to our access work, gaining an insight into any perceived barriers to access to HE.

Each term throughout the academic year the Heads of School run focus groups with their HE learners. These are supplemented with a sample of focus groups each term lead by the Director of Student employment and experience, the HE Co-ordinator and Quality Improvement Officer. The focus groups provide a forum to consult with learners and examine their experiences/support needs and review our support plans.

These focus groups collect general information on ‘what went well’ (WWW) and ‘even better if’ (EBI) and a few standardised questions relating to the access and participation plan and intervention activities the learners have access to. This feedback, alongside feedback from student representatives and information from course leaders shared at the interim exam boards is evaluated at termly HE Strategy Group meetings. Within this group an inductive analysis of this qualitative data takes place as themes and categories are generated from their feedback, which supports ongoing evaluation of our intervention activities but also provides ideas for further interventions for the access and participation plan.

At the outset of each academic year new entrants are guided to the summary of the existing plan. This was used as the basis of conversations with students in the focus groups run by the Director about the progress made and any emerging gaps that formed the basis of our risks and objectives. This provided the learners with further opportunities to share their ideas about intervention activities. The overwhelming feedback from the learners was the importance of having more/different pastoral support – a designated person to signpost them to a range of support to help reduce barriers to learning. There was also recognition of the importance of mental wellbeing support.

The intervention strategies were then shared via the course leaders to their cohorts and the learners' thoughts were shared back to the HE strategy group.

The monitoring of the plan will continue to feature in the termly focus groups.

Learners are also invited to share their views through:

Internal HE survey: We complete a survey with all 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 experiences.

Learner representatives: Each cohort has a learner representative who Heads of School, Quality Manager and Higher Education Coordinator can consult with in relation to a range of issues.

HE online learning community: this is a teams site for all HE learners where we pose questions testing their experiences, and where they are encouraged to post comments/ ask questions.

Evaluation of the plan

The HE strategy group is the main arena where the college evaluates the impacts of the activities outlined in the plan. We have revisited the OFS self-evaluation toolkit used in the completion of our 2020-2024 plan and whilst our analysis outlines all five points of the framework remain as 'emerging' we have strengthened our evaluation since the last self-assessment through the work of the Evaluation Working Group.

Strategic context:

The college has a well-managed business intelligence (BI) strategy that supports evaluation and data analysis. Since the last plan we have identified a BI analyst from within the team to focus upon HE data alongside the Head of BI. Staff directly involved in the implementing intervention strategies are members of the evaluation working group and have developed evaluations of their key activities (quantitative and qualitative data) which feeds into our evaluation of intervention strategies.

There is a culture of self-evaluation, and reflective practices are embedded across the organisation. The Teaching, Learning and Assessment team evaluate HE practice utilising observations, action plans and review meetings to improve/share good practice. The team coach staff to utilise action research methods to develop good practice.

Evaluation is embedded across each of the academic schools through:

- Termly performance reviews, where they evaluate data and rag rating of learners
- Termly evaluation of progress against quality improvement plans (including actions relating to HE provision)
- Termly HE interim exam boards where they evaluate progress of each HE cohort.
- Annual self-evaluation document

Our evaluation practice is underpinned by our work with Uniconnect, where good evaluation practices and resources are shared.

Programme design:

Evaluation is considered for each activity across our intervention strategies using mainly type 1 and 2 evaluation. Each intervention activity is underpinned with clear objectives and informed by research and evidence. These are reviewed and developed to deliver the best outcomes. Examples of this are outlined against each intervention strategy in the plan. The College is applying theory of change logic to the design of strategies, with a focus on root cause analysis and triangulation of evidence at the outset of the design of a programme. We have utilised the TASO theory of change template as a basis for designing intervention strategies.

As a small HE provider we do not have a dedicated team of evaluation experts, but we will continue to train staff involved in our intervention strategies in the basics of theory of change logic and develop guidance and templates to support programme design. The intervention strategies will be monitored and evaluated through the HE Strategy Group.

Design Evaluation:

As a small provider most of our evaluation generates type 1 evidence although the focused support from the BI analyst has meant that there is more type 2 evidence supporting our evaluation (as outlined in each of intervention strategy tables). To support further development we will continue to use the OFS evaluation toolkit and the TASO Impact evaluation with small cohorts methodology guidance.

We are increasingly using a variety of research methods and triangulating our data (TASO)[3] to enhance our evaluation. We do, however, collect mostly qualitative data from our staff and learners and use general inductive approach to analysing this data. This provides us with themes and categories from the data and provides a simple approach for deriving findings in the context of focused evaluation questions[4].

We also track changes at an individual level. We introduced the individualised approach of action plans for red flagged HE learners in 2018/9 after seeing the positive impact this approach had with our retention of FE learners. As the red flagged learners are identified at interim exam boards by the course teams and the learners and their action plans are monitored through these termly meetings, we can track the impact of this activity on a learner by learner basis each year; clearly outlining who has been identified, why they have been identified, the individual support offered, the engagement in this support and the outcome for the learner. Whilst this is possible due to the small, HE numbers in each cohort this activity is based upon the principles of 'learner analytics' (TASO toolkit) without the complexities of data analytics.

Implementation: The college has reliable data sources for tracking individual students and cohorts, which comply with requirements of data collection and sharing.

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

Evaluation of financial support: We have adapted the toolkit questions developed through the Sheffield Hallam research project (2016)[5] 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. This annual analysis enabled us to review and evaluate how we might provide more focused financial support for learners from underrepresented groups, resulting in the planned introduction of targeted bursaries for low-income households (eligible for free school meals) and care leavers.

[3] https://cdn.taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO_-Report_Impact-evaluation-with-small-cohorts_methodology-guidance_Secured-1.pdf
[4] Bryman, A., & Burgess, R. G. (Eds.). (1994). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London: Routledge.
[5] Closing the gap: understanding the impact of institutional financial support on student success: Final Project Report for the Office for Fair Access December 2016

Monitoring the 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. This is closely monitored through the HE Strategy Group (termly) and through twice termly one-to-ones between the Vice Principal and the HE Co-ordinator.

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. Progress against the targets are rag rated 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 are identified, and actions developed to make the necessary improvements.

Provision of information to students

The College is committed to publishing clear and accessible information for prospective students, parents and employers via the College website, the College 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 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 or third year of their course. This commitment for the continuation of the same fees charged in year one for full term of the programme is implemented each start year.

Prospective students are advised of any potential additional costs (such as residentials, trips, equipment) during the admissions process.

The financial support and hardship 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. There are student support teams at each campus to provide further support, information and guidance. The eligibility criteria are also uploaded to the HE Learner Community Team site.

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

The plan and summary will also be shared on the HE Learner Community Team site.

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

Gloucestershire College has assessed our performance to identify the most significant indicators of risk to equality of opportunity for our learners and prospective learners. We have used the OFS data as our primary data source but have supplemented this with data from our internal data sources and data collected via HE exam boards and learner forums.

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. As such we have used EORR to consider how these risks may impact our learners.

There has been a significant shift in our full time/part time split of learners since 20/21, with a significant decline in part time HE learners in this time frame. This results from a shift from learners studying part time courses to degree apprenticeships and a change in our curriculum offer with a closure of CELTA, ACCA and leadership and management programmes. Our current part time offer is predominantly for learners who are employed and sponsored by their employers. Here we have less influence over access and participation; **hence our analysis and APP focuses predominantly on fulltime undergraduate learners (who now are our biggest proportion of HE learners), unless specifically stated.**

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.

LIFECYLE STAGE: ACCESS

ACCESS	Analysis	Objective/risk?
FSM	Percentage of FT learners with FSM has fluctuated between 11% (16/17) and 23% (19/20) 4% decrease between 20/21 and 21/22, at 14% compared to all provider 4-year aggregate of 19% (all undergraduate)	**Include as objective to:** Increase FSM learners enrolling on FT HE courses from 14% to 19% over course of APP

Ethnicity	Increase in % of Black and Asian learners on FT **and** PT courses due to targeted activity with partnership work 27% increase in non-white learners between 20/21 and 21/22	Have successfully completed targeted partnership work in London. Locally: Ethnicity access rates positively compare to providers in similar geographical areas. Ethnicity access rates at GC positively compares to population locally
POLAR 4	Q2 is consistently our highest participation area, and has increased to highest volume across the time period (16/17 to 21/22) to 40% in 21/22 50% of FT learners are from Q1/Q2 in 21/22 - **with no gap between Q1/Q2 and Q3-Q5** **No gap between Q1 and Q5** Q1 did drop 13% between 20/21 and 21/22. Internal data has seen this reversed over last 2 years with increase from 10% Q1 in 21/22 to 20% in 23/24 Aggregated data over 2 and 4 years show that over 50% of our FT learners are from Q1/Q2 Aggregated data over 2 years shows Q1 at 15% and over 4 years at 16.1%	APP dashboard: Q1 drop between 20/21 and 21/22. **Internal data** demonstrates that this has increased from 10% to 20% in 23/24 so we will not include this as an objective but monitor closely for any further fluctuations The target to support FSM applications is likely to positively impact on Q1/Q2 so no objective here, however, when monitoring for FSM impact on POLAR 4 will also be reviewed and further activity considered
Tundra	Highest participation is consistently from the lowest groups Q1/Q2 amongst FT learners. Q2 has traditionally been the highest, but this has shifted to Q1 in 23/24 *The aggregated gap for P/T learners has been closed to 0%*	The target to support FSM applications is likely to positively impact on Q1/Q2 so no objective here, however, when monitoring for FSM impact on TUNDRA will also be reviewed and further activity considered

IMD	Increases seen in Q1 and Q2 % in 21/22 for FT learners Gaps have closed significantly between 20/21 and 21/22. Internal data shows that this trend has continued in 23/24 with 58% of learners from Q1/Q2 **No gap between Q1 and Q5 for FT learners** *We note the Q1 v Q5 aggregated gap for P/T learners [26% 4 yrs and 23 % 2yrs] but due to the significant change in learner proportions etc we are focused upon FT learners*	The target to support FSM applications is likely to positively impact on Q1/Q2 so no objective here, however, when monitoring for FSM impact on IMD will also be reviewed and further activity considered
Disability	There have been fluctuations in the proportions of learners with declared disabilities in the period 16/17 to 21/22. These range from 14% in 21/22 to 31% in 19/20 We note the decrease of 6% between 20/21 and 21/22. We note that the main LDD group that has seen a reduction across the time period is 'sensory, medical or physical impairment' but we are confident in our accessibility arrangements and the support available for this group, against the risks outlined in EORR We have seen increases in leaners with social or communication impairment and mental health conditions in last two years.	We are not identifying this as a risk because: a) Internal data for 22/23 and 23/24 shows further increases in the proportions of LDD up to 19% b) There have been fluctuations over the time period mostly due to small numbers having significant impact on % swings rather than a structural block to access c) Our aggregated data is in line with the all provider %s We will, however, continue to monitor and considered further activity if required

Gender	The proportions of females reduced in 21/22 for FT programmes, whereas most years (with exception of 17/18) the proportions of males and females have been balanced. Changes to the curriculum offer in these periods has affected the proportions. An increase in our computing HE offer has resulted in the proportional shift in 21/22. This remained in 22/23 but internal data has shown a rebalance in 23/24 to 49%/51% split female/male	We are not identifying this as a risk because: a) 21/22 saw some specific changes to the curriculum offer (new course and course closures) which affected the proportions b) Internal data for 23/24 shows a return to more balanced proportions – due to further curriculum changes and targeted marketing campaign increasing proportions of female learners in business and computing
Intersections	The small numbers make it difficult to make assumptions on trends in the intersectional data	

LIFECYCLE STAGE: CONTINUATION

data reflects full-time undergraduate unless specified

CONTINUATIONS	Analysis	Objective/risk?
FSM	There is no significant continuation rate difference for FSM FT learners. The aggregation over 2 years is 1.4% difference and over 4 years the continuation rates for FSM have been higher than non-FSM learners We note, however, the 5% decline between 19/20 and 20/21 and continuation rates of 75% for our FSM learners, which is below the 87% for all registered English HE providers (FT undergraduate all) and 78% for all registered	Improve continuation rates of FSM learners from 75% to 88% by 28/9

	English HE providers (FT undergraduate other) EORR recognised issue.	
Ethnicity	Continuation rates for ABMO learners are in line with/higher than for white counterparts.	
POLAR 4	Continuation rates for Q1_2 FT tend to be higher than Q3_5 in 19/20 and 20/21, with Q1_2 rates increasing in 20/21 by 4.9% Continuation rates of Q1 learners have improved significantly since a low of 50% in 17/18 and have been maintained at 91% in 19/20 and 20/21. Although note the 9% gap between Q1 and Q5 - [gaps are positive between Q1 and Q3 and between Q1 and Q4]	
Tundra	Continuation rates of Q1-2 FT have improved since 17/18 and in 19/20 and 20/21 have been higher than the rates for Q3-5. Although we note the 11% gap between Q1 and Q5 in 20/21 the rate for Q1 is 89% against 100% for Q5 [gaps are positive between Q1 and Q3 and between Q1 and Q4] which is on par with all registered English HE providers FT all undergraduate 4 year aggregates and above 4 year aggregates for FT other undergraduates	
IMD	No significant negative gaps between continuation rates of	Our ambition is to close this gap completely and we have

	Q1 compared to Q5 in 19/20 and 20/21 Note: 4 year aggregate gap of 8.1% between Q1 and Q5 FT Some fluctuation between the quintile groups, with neither consistently having higher rates than the other. In the final year of the time period this shifts again with Q1_2 dropping off 14.5% and a gap between Q1-2 and Q3-5 with gap of 12% in 20/21 *We note the aggregate gaps for PT learners [4 yr 17%; 2 yr 16%], whilst we will not set a specific target for PT learners, for reasons outlined, we will, however, utilise the same interventions across FT and PT delivery and will monitor the impact*	set an objective for this in our plan Reduce the % continuation gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 from 12% to 0% during the course of the APP
Disability	Small numbers can affect the rates quite significantly year on year and may be a factor in why there is quite so much fluctuation for disabled learner rates. We have, however, seen a decline in the last two years to the lowest reported at 60% for FT learners. Conversely the rates for learners without a disability have increased, widening the gap between the two. In 20/21 we have seen a low continuation rates for those with Cognitive or Learning Difficulties, multiple	Our ambition is to close this gap completely and we have set an objective for this in our plan Reduce the % continuation gap between those with a disability and those without from 29% to 0% during the course of the APP

	impairments and social or communication impairments *We note the aggregate gaps for PT learners [4 yr 9.8%; 2 yr 7.5%], whilst we will not set a specific target for PT learners, for reasons outlined, we will utilise the same interventions across FT and PT delivery and will monitor the impact*	
Gender	Except for 18/19 there are no significant continuation gaps between male and females in FT or PT programmes	No risk identified
AGE	We have seen an improvement in the continuation rates of Mature FT learners to above 86% in 19/20 and 20/21 (above rates for all providers at 82% for all mature FT undergraduates) - this was a focus of our previous Access and participation plan. Alongside this we have seen a decline in our continuation rates for FT young (under 21 learners) to 79.2% in 20/21. This has resulted in a –7.6% gap between young v mature FT learners in 20/21 and aggregate gaps of –3.2 for 4 yr; -6.7 for 2 yr. The risk is the decline in continuation rates for young FT learners which is below the 4 year aggregate rates for all providers at 92% (all) and 82% (other)	Improve continuation rates of young learners from 79% to 92% by 28/9

	This data is impacted by the larger U21 cohorts in games, computing and graphics	
Intersections	The small numbers make it difficult to make assumptions on trends in the intersectional data IMD and Gender: We note the decline in continuation rates for Q1_2 males in 20/21 but due to numbers do not identify this as a significant risk. We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all intersections.	

LIFECYCLE STAGE: COMPLETION

Completion	Analysis	Objective/risk?
FSM	There are no aggregated completion rate gaps for FSM FT learners Completion rates remain above that of 'all HE providers' Since 15/16 the completion rates for our FSM has remained higher than those not eligible The aggregated gap identified on the OFS dashboard is a positive gap (-5.9%)	No gap/risk identified We will, however, continue to monitor and considered activity if required We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.
Ethnicity	There are no aggregated completion rate gaps for any ethnic minority group of FT learners. Black learners have lower completion rates than Asian and Mixed ethnic groups (aggregated over 4 years) but these are 88% and higher than white learner Small numbers make it difficult to draw conclusions on this data, but completion	No gap/risk identified We will, however, continue to monitor and considered activity if required We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.

	rates for ethnic minority groups are consistently high.	
POLAR 4	The gap between quintile groupings (Q1/2 and Q3-5) has fluctuated across the time period. Outcomes for Q1_2 were higher than 3_5 in years 4 and 5, but this has reversed in year 6 (17/18). The 4-year aggregated gap between Q1 and Q5 was 16.9% which has narrowed to 6.6% aggregated 2 years Our GC data from 18/19 shows that these gaps continue to narrow/are reversed	We are not identifying this as a risk because: a) Our internal data demonstrates a positive % gap between Q1-2 and Q3-5 learners each year since 18/19 b) No Polar 4 gaps identified on OFS dashboard We will, however, continue to monitor and considered activity if required We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.
Tundra	We note the 13.8% aggregated 4-year gap between Q1 and Q5 FT learners – this narrowed to –0.3% aggregated over 2 years. Our GC data from 18/19 shows that these gaps continue to narrow/are reversed	We are not identifying this as a risk because: A) Our internal data demonstrates a positive % gap between Q1-2 and Q3-5 learners each year since 18/19 B) Aggregated gaps have significantly narrowed between 4 year and 2 year [OFS] C) Completion rates for Q1 learners has remained above 90% each year between 18/19 and 21/22 [GC data]

		We will, however, continue to monitor and considered activity if required We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.
IMD	The gaps between Q1 and Q5 and Q1-2 v Q3-5 FT learners have widened over time. The aggregated data demonstrates this with 4 year gap at between Q1 and Q5 at 5.1% and 2 year gap at 9.3% Whilst GC data shows that the Q1 v Q5 gap has narrowed since 18/19 there remains a gap between Q1-2 v Q3-5 Impacted by Business (CLC), Computing (CLC) and Graphics (GC) *We note the aggregate gaps for PT learners [4 yr 10.1%; 2 yr 7.3%], whilst we will not set a specific target for PT learners, for reasons outlined, we will utilise the same interventions across FT and PT delivery and will monitor the impact*	Eliminate gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 completion rates
Disability	Historically the completion rates for learners with a disability tended to be lower than for learners without. This shifted in the final year of the time period, reversing the gap between the two. This is down to a 8% increase in completion rates for disabled learners vs a 1% reduction for those without known disability.	We are not identifying this as a risk because: A) Our internal data demonstrates improved completion rates for learners with disabilities at a rate of 10% per year (83% in 21/22) with no completion gaps in 21/22

	Our GC data shows rates for learners with disabilities dropped off significantly in 19/20 (Covid year), but picked back up and improved at a rate of 10% per year with no completion gaps in 21/22 *We note the aggregate gaps for PT learners [4 yr 5%; 2 yr 10%], whilst we will not set a specific target for PT learners, for reasons outlined, we will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.*	B) Aggregated gaps on OFS data dasboard have significantly narrowed between 4 year (6.4%) and 2 year (-1.2%)[OFS] We will, however, continue to monitor and considered activity if required We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.
Gender	Completion rates for males are fairly consistently below females between 12/13 and 17/18 The 20% gap seen in 17/18 has reduced over time, and in 21/22 the gap has been eradicated.	No risk identified
AGE	There is a completion rate gap between Mature FT learners and Young FT learners, with the completion rates of mature FT learners 15% lower than young learners (aggregated over 2 years) Whilst the gap has narrowed between 17/18 and 21/22 (GC data) it remains at 7%	Eliminate gap between mature and young FT learners completion rates

	We note the aggregate gaps for PT learners [4 yr 1.4%; 2 yr 9.4%], whilst we will not set a specific target for PT learners, for reasons outlined, we will utilise the same interventions across FT and PT delivery and will monitor the impact	
Intersections	The small numbers make it difficult to make assumptions on trends in the intersectional data IMDQ12_Male have consistently lower completion rates than IMDQ12 females POLAR4Q12_Male completion rate aggregated gaps against POLAR4Q12_female have widened We will utilise our 'red flag' interventions for all learners and monitor the impact across all groups and intersections.	

ABCS QUINTILE data

GC data compared to all HE providers (grey)

Our ABCS quintile 1 data compares favourably with all HE providers across access and continuation. Our 2-year aggregated data is slightly lower for completion [GC at 70.8% compared to all provider at 72.5%], however our intervention strategies to narrow the completion gap for IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 should positively impact on the learners in the lower ABCS quintiles

LIFECYCLE_STAGE	SPLIT_IND_COMBINATION	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	AGGLAST2YRS	AGGLAST4YRS	CHANGE YEAR5 TO YEAR6	YEAR6	AGGLAST2YRS	AGGLAST4YRS
Access	ABCSQ1	10.6	10.3	24.2	21.9	17.5	15.3	16.2	18.9	-2.2	7.1	7.3	7.6
	ABCSQ2	23.4	41	42.4	25	37.5	35.6	36.4	35.4	-1.9	14.1	14.2	14.3
	ABCSQ3	38.3	30.8	15.2	28.1	20	27.1	24.2	23.2	7.1	19.2	19.3	19.4
	ABCSQ4	17	2.6	6.1	9.4	12.5	11.9	12.1	10.4	-0.6	24.7	24.8	24.8
	ABCSQ5	10.6	15.4	12.1	15.6	12.5	10.2	11.1	12.2	-2.3	34.9	34.5	34
	ABCSQ2_3	61.7	71.8	57.6	53.1	57.5	62.7	60.6	58.5	5.2	33.3	33.4	33.6
	ABCSQ4_5	27.7	17.9	18.2	25	25	22	23.2	22.6	-3	59.6	59.3	58.8
Continuation	ABCSQ1	71.4	73.3	73.3	75.0	90	91.67	90.9	82.2	1.7	80.2	81.8	81.6
	ABCSQ2	80.4	80.5	74.4	87.5	78.4	72.2	75.3	77.2	-6.2	85.4	86.7	86.6
	ABCSQ3	84.6	72.4	75.0	94.4	81.5	89.3	85.5	85.4	7.8	89.1	90.4	90.3
	ABCSQ4	87.0	94.4	75	80	100	87.5	90.9	85.5	-12.5	93.1	93.8	93.7
	ABCSQ5	75	85.71	100		100	100	87.5	86.4	0.0	95	95.5	95.4
	ABCSQ2_3	81.8	77.1	74.5	90.5	79.7	79.7	79.7	80.4	0.0	87.1	88.4	88.3
	ABCSQ4_5	85.2	92.0	80.0	80.0	100.0	88.0	91.4	86.7	-12	94	94.6	94.5
Completion	ABCSQ1	76.5	54.8	58.6	72.4	61.9	77.8	70.8	67.9	15.9	72.2	72.5	72.8
	ABCSQ2	79.2	65.9	70.0	80.0	73.2	71	72.2	74.1	-2.2	82.9	83.1	83.3
	ABCSQ3	66.7	93.8	65.0	80.0	86.4	75	81.6	76.9	-11.4	88.3	88.7	88.8
	ABCSQ4	87.5	88.9	92.9	93.8	86.7	80	85.0	90.0	-6.7	92.4	92.6	92.7
	ABCSQ5	100.0	100	100	60	66.7	100	76.9	76.2	33.3	95.9	96	96
	ABCSQ2_3	76.7	73.7	68	80	77.8	72.3	75.5	75.1	-5.4	85.4	85.7	85.9
	ABCSQ4_5	90.0	90.9	94.1	85.7	79.2	88.9	81.8	85.9	9.7	94.2	94.3	94.3

LIFECYCLE STAGE: ATTAINMENT: This refers to the number of learners achieving a degree classification of 2:1 or above.

Gloucestershire College FT HE students predominantly study HNC/HND/HTQ Pearson programmes and are not awarded degree classifications. At our HE exam boards we do, however, monitor grade profiles [P, M, D] across student groups and there are no significant trends or risks in this stage of the lifecycle.

As we increase our degree apprenticeship offer, we will monitor the degree classifications achieved once learners reach the end of their programmes.

LIFECYCLE STAGE: PROGRESSION:

Whilst there are small gaps identified in the aggregated data for

A) Young v mature progression rates = 4.4 % gap in 4 year aggregated data and 1.4% in 2 year aggregated data
B) Those with no disability v those with a declared disability = 5.3 % gap in 4 year aggregated data and 5% in 2 year aggregated data
C) POLAR4 Q1_2 v POLAR4 Q3_5 = 12.6 % gap in 4 year aggregated data and 11.5% in 2 year aggregated data

The gaps have narrowed. The data is, however, limited and skewed significantly by the small numbers and as such we have not set a specific target for progression.

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

Each of our intervention strategies and activities were based around a review of the research and our own qualitative research with our learners and staff.

The rationale for our intervention strategies has been influenced by type 1 evidence from review of the literature, the use of the TASO toolkit, OFS effective practice projects, evaluation from Uniconnect and feedback from current HE learners and potential HE learners in our FE cohort.

Examples of research and literature that informed some of our specific interventions:

1) **Raising aspirations and information and guidance activities – Tasters, tutorials, talks, progression campaign, parent and carer engagement, work with UniConnect, Schools outreach**

Whilst there may be limitations to ‘aspiration raising’ activities (TASO toolkit) it is important that such underrepresented groups are supported to see that HE is a route for them. Our activities are devised around explaining the options available to the target group.

Our internal research demonstrates that parental/carer engagement is also a crucial factor when those from low-income households/ eligible for free school meals are considering HE. As outlined in the Futurequest parental engagement report supported by UWE - ‘The values which parent-carers transmit regarding higher education opportunities, coupled with the expectations they have for their children’s potential futures, are considered significant factors for determining a child’s

perception of their possible selves' (Mulcahy and Baars, 2018). This is supported by research by Schmid, E., & Garrels, V. (2021).

The provision of information, through a range of different activities (tutorials, tasters, events, booklets, campaigns), is key, particularly around, HE finances to demystify perceptions of the costs associated with HE. There are a handful of robust research studies on the impact of light-touch forms of IAG (for example, text messages, in-school presentations). These studies show that IAG can have a small positive effect on attitudes/aspirations and on HE participation. (TASO toolkit) e.g. Peter, F., Spiess, C., & Zambre, V. (2018).

2) **Targeted financial support (bursaries and student hardship fund)**

Whilst TASO toolkit identifies that we do not have enough evidence to make claims about which forms of financial support (bursaries/grants/fee-waivers/scholarships) are most effective in the UK, overall, the international evidence base suggests that providers should include financial support as part of their approach to boosting participation among students from low-income backgrounds. The feedback from our eligible learners resulted in our change to targeted bursaries, as cost pressures and and bursaries were identified as an important factor.

Some studies do show a positive correlation between financial support and student retention, particularly for students from low-income backgrounds (Office for Students, 2020; TASO, 2023; Herbaut and Geven, 2020; Moores and Burgess, 2023). Financial support reduces the pressures on disadvantaged students to work extensive hours which can negatively impact upon attainment and academic achievement (Zhang and Yang, 2020; Broton, Goldrick-Rab and Benson, 2016 – cited in TASO toolkit).

3) **Pastoral Support/ Extra mentoring**

Feedback from staff and learners identifies that the step up from level 3 to HE within an organisation is still a significant transition. Learners identify that access to pastoral support is different at HE and this can impact on their continuation.
In preparation for the APP and as part of our annual review of HE we asked all HE learners (current and those who withdrew in-year) the key improvement we could make to improve their experience. Most of the learners identified the addition of a pastoral mentor to supplement the coaching and mentoring received from the academic and support teams. They identified the importance of a named person who could support and signpost them to appropriate pastoral support. This was supported by the feedback from the HE course leaders

4) **Study support/ Specialised SEND support**

Askew (2019) in the case study from New College Durham identified that the introduction of HE Academic Support Tutors who provide a positive study skills support experience raises students' confidence and resilience.

5) **Specialised SEND support**

Our Staff identify that learners require more tailored support to support with their declared and undeclared disabilities and this is impacting upon continuation rates. They had identified that onsite specialist support would have a positive impact in terms of developing learners coping and learning

strategies. The specific strategies outlined for students with a declared disability are underpinned by the finding of the TASO report 2023 What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students

6) Individualised action plans/red flagged learners

We introduced the individualised approach of action plans for red flagged HE learners in 2018/9 after seeing the positive impact this approach had with our retention of FE learners. As the red flagged learners are identified at interim exam boards by the course teams and the learners and their action plans are monitored through these termly meetings, we can track the impact of this activity on a learner by learner basis each year; clearly outlining who has been identified, why they have been identified, the individual support offered, the engagement in this support and the outcome for the learner. Whilst this is possible due to the small, HE numbers in each cohort this activity is based upon the **principles** of 'learner analytics' (TASO toolkit) without the complexities of data analytics.

Our own evaluation of the success of this individualised approach is underpinned by the DiSA (2015), which discussed how individual or targeted support for learners can positively impact upon continuation and completion, especially where the interventions sought to address specific individual needs of students.

7) HE learning community

Research, for example Thomas, L. (2012) has clearly demonstrated that belonging and social integration are important, not just for student wellbeing, but also for academic achievement and persistence to complete. As we are not a traditional university but a small number of HE learners within an FE environment, it has been difficult to generate a 'HE community' on campus – the cohort identity is strong, but we have had only limited success in developing cross-cohort communities. Learners have identified that an online environment may foster a community feel as we develop an online forum to share, HE information, activities and encourage peer conversations.

8) Mental wellbeing – support though designated role, campaigns, and staff training

We have utilised evidence and effective practice outlined in the TASO mental health toolkit, the OFS meeting the mental health needs of students and the University Mental Health Charter framework to develop our interventions in this area.

This includes:

Mental Health and wellbeing lead onsite: to provide someone to initially to talk to/ to provide a triage and signpost to specific support (TASO toolkit)

Increasing mental wellbeing awareness through safeguarding and wellbeing campaigns and Training for staff so they can identify signs underpinned by:

> University of East Anglia 2023 – Increasing mental health and wellbeing awareness in the university population

‘The presence of regular, highly visible awareness raising can be an important part of establishing an open culture which supports positive change and can help individuals identify the most appropriate ways forward for them’ is outlined in the University Mental Health Charter framework

9) **Guest Speakers, live briefs and employability development**

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: Anthony Mann, Jordan Rehill and Elnaz T. Kashefpakdel (2018)

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/addressing-barriers-to-student-success-programme/

Anthony Mann, Jordan Rehill and Elnaz T. Kashefpakdel (2018) Employer engagement in education: Insights from international evidence for effective practice and future research January 2018 commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

https://www.futurequest.org.uk/media/transfer/doc/future_quest_parental_engagement_research_report_aug_2021.pdf last accessed June 1st 2024

Elisabeth Moores & Adrian P. Burgess (2022): Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, Studies in Higher Education Available at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950#abstract

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https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/effective-practice/case-study-new-college-durham/ Last accessed May 24th, 2024

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/5521/whole-institution-approach-implementation-and-evaluation-toolkit.pdf last accessed July 24th 2024

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https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/2922/using-standards-of-evidence-to-evaluate-impact-of-outreach.pdf last accessed July 24th 2024

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Office for Students

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Gloucestershire College

Provider UKPRN: 10002696

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for new entrants
Subject to the maximum fee limits set out in Regulations we may choose to increase fees each year using RPI-X but learners will continue to pay the fees charged at the year of entry for the duration of their programme.

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation degree		N/A	7700
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	Business and Engineering HNC/D fees may be lower than other HNC/Ds due to market forces locally	N/A	7400
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation degree		N/A	3850
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	Business and Engineering HNC/D fees may be lower than other HNC/Ds due to market forces locally	N/A	3700
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

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

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

Office for Students

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Gloucestershire College

Provider UKPRN: 10002696

Investment summary

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

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):
"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.
"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£95,000	£95,000	£95,000	£95,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£17,000	£17,000	£17,000	£17,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£16,000	£16,000	£16,000	£16,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£40,000**	**£40,000**	**£40,000**	**£40,000**
Access activity investment	***Total access investment (as % of HFI)***	**12.3%**	**12.3%**	**12.3%**	**12.3%**
Access activity investment	***Total access investment funded from HFI (£)***	**£40,000**	**£40,000**	**£40,000**	**£40,000**
Access activity investment	***Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)***	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£95,000**	**£95,000**	**£95,000**	**£95,000**
Financial support investment	***Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)***	**29.2%**	**29.2%**	**29.2%**	**29.2%**
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£17,000	£17,000	£17,000	£17,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%

Office for Students

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Gloucestershire College

Provider UKPRN: 10002696

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Gloucestershire College will increase the percentage of learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) FSM enrolling on fulltime HE courses from 14% to 19% by 2029.	PTA_1	Access	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible			Yes	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	14%	16%	17%	18%	19%
	PTA_2														
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of FSM learners by increasing rates from 75% to 88% by 2029.	PTS_1	Continuation	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible	N/A		No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	75	78	82	84	88
Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % continuation gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 from 12% to 0% by 2029.	PTS_2	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5		No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	12	8	6	3	0
Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % continuation gap between those with a disability and those without from 29% to 0% by 2029.	PTS_3	Continuation	Other	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	Between those with a declared disability and those without	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	29	20	12	6	0
Gloucestershire College will increase continuation rates of young learners from 79% to 92% by 2029.	PTS_4	Continuation	Age	Young (under 21)	N/A		No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage	79	84	87	90	92
Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % completion gap between IMD Q1-2 and IMD Q3-5 learners by 2029.	PTS_5	Completion	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5		No	The access and participation dashboard	2017-18	Percentage points	3.7	3	2	1	0
Gloucestershire College will eliminate the % completion gap between mature and young FT learners by 2029.	PTS_6	Completion	Age	Mature (over 21)	Young (under 21)		No	The access and participation dashboard	2017-18	Percentage points	6.8	5	4	2	0
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
	PTP_1														
	PTP_2														
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														

	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														