Sheffield Hallam University Access and participation plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

Across the student lifecycle, at both sector level and for Sheffield Hallam, there are persistent and sometimes large gaps between the outcomes of most student groups identified by the Office for Students (OfS) as underrepresented in higher education (HE). We have analysed our performance across the student lifecycle from outreach to graduation and beyond, focusing on the following groups and exploring intersectionality:

- Mature students
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME or ABMO) students (disaggregated to ethnicity type)
- Disabled students (disaggregated to disability type)
- Students from low-participation neighbourhoods (LPN), with reference to Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Free School Meals (FSM) data
- Care leavers (where data is available)

We have focused on pockets of inequality where we find the largest absolute gaps in performance and where gaps may be smaller but impact on larger number of students.

We are improving our capacity to monitor and analyse performance to include carers, estranged students, refugees and children from military families. We have routinely captured information on students' caring responsibilities at enrolment for the past three years and on estranged student status since 2017/18.

We are mindful of the Transparency Condition for providers regarding the development of standard measures and KPIs and as such, our assessment of performance primarily draws on the OfS dataset. We have used POLAR4 in our analysis and targets, as it is the most readily available measure of advantage, allowing us to monitor progress.

Unless stated otherwise, data shown is: All undergraduate, full-time and from the OfS dataset.

1. Our regional context

We are a university of, and for, our region. In 2017/18 half of entrants came from within 25 miles of the University. After graduation 42% of our graduates stay and are employed within the Sheffield City Region (SCR), an area where 40% of jobs are classified as professional or managerial, compared to a national average of 46%. 51% of graduates remain and are employed within the wider Yorkshire and Humber (Y&H) region.

We are committed to our region, yet the data tells a challenging story about the educational outcomes of, and the economic opportunities available to, our community and the context in which we operate. According to the Sutton Trust, 10 of the 14 South Yorkshire constituencies have very low or low social mobility[1].

Young people in South Yorkshire do not have the same opportunities as their peers across the country:

- Fewer pupils overall, and fewer deprived pupils, are in good or outstanding schools than the national average**. Educational outcomes** at all key stages from early years through to Key stage 5 are below the national average, and the gap between South Yorkshire and the national average widens as pupils get older.
- Y&H and more specifically South Yorkshire, have **lower rates of progression to HE** amongst young people than the national average, though entry rates are increasing. [2]
- Across the country **pupils from a disadvantaged background are less likely to progress to HE** than their peers and rates are even lower in Y&H still; 19% of 15 year old pupils with Free School Meals (FSM) status were estimated to enter HE by age 19 compared to 24% in England as a whole, and there was a 20 percentage point (pp) gap in participation rates based on FSM status in Y&H compared to 18 pp in England.[3]

In Sheffield city region (SCR)[4]:

- **fewer people are qualified to degree level or above:** 32.5% are qualified to degree level or above (NVQ 4+) compared to 38.6% across Great Britain (GB) and 33.0% in Y&H.
- **there are more workless households and more children living within them:** 18.5% of households are workless compared to 14.5% across GB and 15.8% across Y&H. This means that 16.5% of children are in workless households, compared to 10.7% in GB and 13.7% in Y&H.
- **fewer people are in professional employment**; 39.9% of people were in Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010 major group 1-3 compared to 46.1% in GB and 41.4% in Y&H.
- **fewer people are economically active**: 77.5% compared to 78.5% in GB and 77.0% in Y&H.

---

[1] Interactive Mobility Map, (2015) The Sutton Trust
[2] UCAS end of cycle 2018, (2018) UCAS
[3] Widening participation in higher education: 2017, (2017) Department for Education
[4] Official labour market statistics for Sheffield City Region, (2018) Office for National Statistics via Nomis

- **lower weekly pay**: £507.9 per week compared to £570.9 in GB and £520.8 in Y&H (full-time).

Using National Pupil Data available through HE Access Tracker (HEAT), we target schools with the highest proportions of disadvantaged students using economic measures (FSM, IDACI, Indices of Multiple Deprivation), to augment area-wide social and cultural (POLAR4) indicators of disadvantage.

Our long-standing partnerships with schools, colleges, local authorities, employers and voluntary organisations enable us to target and support under-represented groups to progress to HE. In 2017/18 we delivered 1,213 school, college and community activities, engaging 59,445 students at 508 schools and colleges. Of those for which data was collected (13,959 students), 73% came from low-participation neighbourhoods, 13% identified as the first in their family to progress to HE, 18% were in receipt of FSM, 22% were BAME and 7% declared a disability.

2. Access

In 2017/18 30,729 students were studying at Sheffield Hallam, making us the 10th largest university overall, and 12,722 entrants began their university studies with us.[5] We have an excellent and sustained track record of improving access to HE with increasing proportions of students from non-traditional backgrounds.

By measures of advantaged/disadvantage

In 2017/18 we again welcomed more young students from the **most disadvantaged** backgrounds in England than any other university, with more than 1,300 new students (21% of all) from POLAR1. This represented 3.6% of all entrants to HE from POLAR1 in the sector, demonstrating our contribution to the national key performance measure (KPM) to reduce the participation gap between the most and least disadvantaged students.

Numbers of the most disadvantaged students have been steadily increasing over the last 5 years. This year, for the first time, we succeeded in **eradicating the gap between the proportion of entrants from the least and most advantaged areas** [See Appendix A: Chart 1]. Of the five universities who accepted the largest numbers of the most disadvantaged students, we are unique in having closed the gap.

IMD data provides further evidence that we are closing the access gap; the gap between entrants from the **most deprived** (IMDQ1) and least deprived areas (IMDQ5) has narrowed to an absolute gap of 2.0pp in 2017/18, down from 8.9pp five years ago, and we look on course to close this within 2-3 years.

The experimental OfS dataset shows that the proportion of our entrants in receipt of **FSM** increased to 18.3% in 2017/18, up by 2.3pp from the previous year but remaining around 2.5pp below sector. 1,110 (out of 6,060) entrants in 2017/18 were in receipt of FSM, the 5th largest population in the sector.[6]

The Social Market Foundation has identified Hallam as a top performer in the sector for widening participation (WP)[7], noting our role as one of ten institutions who collectively accounted for 32% of the total increase in disadvantaged students entering HE between 2009/10 and 2014/15. NEON has also highlighted our leading role, noting that we accepted more White LPN students than any other provider[8].

By disadvantage (POLAR) when intersected with ethnicity and sex

The proportion of entrants from the **most disadvantaged areas who are White** has increased by 2.0pp over the last five years to 34.5% of all entrants in 2017/18, whilst the proportion of the **most disadvantaged BAME** entrants has risen by 3.8pp over the same period to 9.7%, up from 5.9% in 2013/14.

Females and male entrants from the most disadvantaged areas have grown in five years with the most disadvantaged females increasing as a proportion by 3.0 pp up to 24.6% and the most disadvantaged males up by 2.8pp to 19.6% of all in 2017/18.

By disability

Hallam has seen a sharp upward trend in students with a **disability**; 17.6% of entrants in 2017/18 declared a disability compared to 14.6% in the sector. This represented more than 1,300 disabled entrants, up from 780 five years ago and meaning that we welcomed more students with a disability to study than any other provider.

The number of entrants who declared a **mental health condition** has quadrupled; from around 100 students in 2013/14 (1.5% of all entrants) to 400 students and 5.5% of all students in 2017/18. Numbers have risen across the sector but not to the same degree; increasing from 1.4% of students in 2013/14 to 3.5% in 2017/18.

[5] All students, HESA Standard Registration Population, HESA 2017/18
[6] Students studying at first degree level (not ALL UG as elsewhere). Of all providers with data. Access and Participation dataset, (2019) Office for Students.
[7] Widening participation, (March 2016) Social Market Foundation
[8] Working Class Heroes, (2019) A National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) report, Autherton and Mazhari

We have seen increasing proportion of students across all disability types except where the disability relates to **'cognitive and learning'** where the proportion of students has fallen over the last two years, in line with sector trends; 5.6% of students declared a 'cognitive and learning' related disability in 2017/18 (sector: 5.5%).

There has been an increase over the last year in entrants who declared a '**sensory, medical and physical**' related disability to 3.3%, though rates were previously steady. Five years ago, the proportion of entrants declaring **multiple impairments** was 0.5pp below sector (1.3% compared to 1.8%) but rates have risen steadily with 2.4% of all entrants in 2017/18 declaring multiple impairments (sector: 2.3%).

7.5% of entrants in 17/18 were in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA).[9]

By ethnicity

At sector level, students from a **BAME background**[10] represented 31.1% of entrants compared to 17.8% at Hallam. Our proportion of students from a BAME background has been steadily increasing, up from 13.5% in 2017/18, with 1,350 BAME students in 2017/18 compared to 900 in 2013/14.

The proportion of entrants from BAME background has increased at a faster rate, increasing by 5.9pp over 5-year period, compared to a sector increase of 2.8pp. The largest increase has been in students from an **Asian** background (up by 4.3pp to 8.5% of entrants in 2017/18) with other smaller increases observed for **Black** students (up by 0.6pp to 4.0% of entrants), entrants whose ethnicity is '**mixed**' (up by 0.4pp to 3.8%) and entrants who ethnicity is '**other**' (up by 0.5pp to 1.0% of entrants in 2017/18).

Our proportions of BAME students are roughly in line with the overall 18-year population and in line or above the local 18-year old population: 17.8% of entrants in 2017/18 were from a BAME background compared to 18.1% in Sheffield, 10.9% in SCR, 12.5% in South Yorkshire, and 14.2% in Y&H.[11]

Intersectional data shows that the increase in BAME numbers at Hallam over the last five years has been primarily driven by an increase in the numbers of **BAME students from areas with the lowest levels of participation;** there were 600 BAME entrants from this category in 2017/18, up from 320 in 2013/14. At the same time, BAME entrants from the least disadvantaged areas increased from 350 to 450.

The proportion of our **entrants who are Black** has increased slightly from 3.4% in 13/14 to 4.0% in 17/18. Our proportions of Black students sit broadly in line with rates in the 18-year old population in England and the local area; 4.1% in England, 3.8% in Sheffield, 2.5% in South Yorkshire and 2.2% in SCR. [12]

We under-recruit compared to the sector where 10.5% of students are Black, up from 8.6% in 2013/14, and we have ambitions to increase the number of Black students both applying to, and entering, study with us.

By age

Mature students represent a smaller proportion of entrants compared to sector with 17.9% in 2017/18 compared to 27.8% in the sector, a difference of 9.9pp. Mature entrants have increased as a proportion of the sector in the last five years, while at Hallam proportions have been steady, with a decline of 1.2 pp in the last year with numbers falling by 60 from 1,420 to 1,360 mature students in 2017/18. [See Appendix A: Chart 2]

Other groups of students

More than half (53%) of Hallam entrants in 2017/18 were the **first in their family** to attend HE, 97.0% were from **state schools or colleges**, (well above the HESA benchmark of 94.3%) and 21.2% were from low participation neighbourhoods (also well above the HESA benchmark of 13.4%).[13]

In 2018, there were 8,190 Looked After Children in Y&H, which equates to 71 per 10,000 children, the fourth highest rate in the country. Across the sector, 6% of 19-21-year-olds who are **care experienced** go on to HE and this has not improved over the last decade. At Hallam numbers are small but increasing. In 17/18, around 0.70% of entrants were care leavers, up from 0.55% in 16/17 and 0.28% in 13/14.[14] This appears to be increasing faster than the sector where care leavers represented 0.63% of students in 16/17, 0.60% in 15/16 and 0.59% in 14/15.[15]

The number of entrants who also have **caring responsibilities** has doubled over in the last five years though this largely reflects data improvements. 150 entrants were carers in 17/18, 1.86% of all students. We have routinely collected data on estranged students since 2017/18 with 106 entrants that year, 1.3% of all new students.

---

[9] UK-domiciled, full-time, first degree entrants, HESA Performance Indicators. Table T7, 2017/18

[10] ABMO = Asian, British, Mixed, Other. BAME: Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic. Interchangeable with BAME. BAME used within this paper.

[11] 18-19 year old population by ethnicity (2011 census, Office for Students, Nomis)

[12] 18-19 year old population by ethnicity (2011 census, Office for Students, Nomis)

[13] HESA Performance indicators, Table T1a 2017/18, HESA

[14] New year 1, Undergraduate only, UK domicile, FT/SW, excluding OSEAs funded students, HESA standard registration population

[15] 12 by 24, (May 2019) The Centre for Social Justice

Commuter students are more likely to be first generation in HE, work part-time, from a lower income background and have caring responsibilities.[16] In 2017/18, there were 3,264 UG entrants who were **'commuter students'**, 40% of entrants[17]. The proportion of students who are commuters is increasing; up by 7.0% points in five years (+580 students). In 2017/18, students who are **part-time, mature,** from a **BAME** background and the **most disadvantaged** were **more likely to be commuters**.

> **Conclusions:** *We have an excellent and sustained track record of improving access, with strength in attracting the most disadvantaged students and those with a disability.*
>
> *Based on this assessment, we will set a target to increase the proportion of our students who are Black. We also have an ambition to increase the number of entrants who are care leavers, carers, estranged students, refugees and children from military families, but will wait to set specific targets until we are better placed to monitor and report on these students. In the sector the proportion of mature students has increased whereas at Hallam proportions remained steady, with a decline in the last year. We will investigate the needs of mature students and explore potential barriers so that we can develop our provision to better cater to mature students.*

3. Continuation

The continuation rates of students have consistently been an area of strength for Hallam. On average, students are more likely to return to study HE in their second year than the sector, with 92.5% returning compared to 90.2% across the sector (2.3pp higher at Hallam). Whilst continuation rates vary for different groups, the gaps are smaller than for Attainment and Progression and rates for most student groups are above sector averages.

By sex and by age

Females are less likely to withdraw in their first year than **males** with a continuation gap by sex of 2.6pp in 2017/18 and 0.7pp in 2016/17. **Mature** students have a lower continuation rate compared to young students (91.1% compared to 92.7%; a gap of 1.6pp in 2017/18).

By disability

Continuation rates for **disabled students** have improved by 1.5pp in five years. In 2017/18 students with a disability were less likely to withdraw than those who did not declare a disability; 93.5% compared to 92.2%.

Disaggregating by disability type reveals that students who declared a disability of '**sensory medical and physical'** or **'cognitive and learning'** had higher continuation rates than those who did not declare a disability. The continuation rates for students who declared a disability relating to their **mental health** improved sharply in 14/15 and 15/16, from 82.0% in 13/14 to 91.0%, though this remained 1.2pp below rates for those without disability.

Data on our students with a disability relating to **social and communication** is more variable and is a small, but growing, group of students. Continuation rates in 2017/18 were below their peers; with 90.0% of these students continuing compared to 92.2% of students with no known disability in 2017/18, a gap of 2.2pp.

By ethnicity

Continuation rates for BAME students have been broadly in line with White students. Disaggregating by ethnicity shows that students who are **Asian** are the least likely to withdraw (92.9% in 2017/18) and rates for students who are **Black** or whose ethnicity is '**other**' are slightly below those for White students (92.0% compared to 92.9%). For the last four years, rates for all students from all ethnic backgrounds have consistently been above sector averages, underlining our strong performance in this area.

By measures of advantage/disadvantage (POLAR)

The most notable pattern of underperformance in continuation are observed for **disadvantaged students**, and this effect is amplified for **males who are the most disadvantaged**. Disadvantaged students at Hallam are more likely to return to study in their second year compared with sector. However, trend data shows a persistent (though variable) gap with a small downward trend over the 5-year period. As the largest recruiter of disadvantaged students in the sector with demonstrated strengths in this area for other student groups, we have identified this as a target area for us. [See Appendix A: Chart 3]

Other groups of students

Students who are also commuters were less likely to complete their course than other students (though we are not able to say if they continued in HE elsewhere); 7.7% of commuter students withdrew from their studies in 2017/18 compared to 5.6% of students who were not commuters.

---

[16] *Homeward Bound: Defining, understanding and 'aiding commuter students'* (HEPI 2018) and Learning from Futuretrack: studying and living at home

[17] Commuter = home postcode matches term-time postcode. *UK-domiciled Home/EU UG students, entrants = year 1, HESA standard registration,*

Sector analysis shows that care leavers are a third more likely to withdraw as well as being more likely to have delays and restarts within their studies[18]. Unfortunately, sufficient data is not available on the continuation rates of care leavers and other smaller groups such as refugees, estranged students and carers, however we can assume the picture at Hallam is similar to that nationally.

> **Conclusions:** *The continuation rates of our students have consistently been identified as an area of strength. Whilst these do vary for different student groups, the gaps here are smaller than in other stages of the lifecycle and rates for most student groups are above sector averages. An area of strength are our high continuation rates for students with a disability. The most notable pattern of underperformance is observed for disadvantaged students. This pattern is true at Hallam and within the sector and this has been identified as an OfS KPM. At Hallam this effect is amplified for the most disadvantaged males. Based on our assessment of performance we have identified* **males who are most disadvantaged** *as our key target group for continuation.*

4. Attainment

At Sheffield Hallam we refer to the degree attainment gap as the 'degree awarding gap' in recognition that many of the reasons for the gap are structural and moving the responsibility away from the student. However, in this assessment of performance we have used the OfS 'degree attainment' wording.[19]

By ethnicity

The largest absolute gaps in differential outcomes are found in degree attainment of students from different ethnic backgrounds, and most starkly between **White and Black students**. In 2017/18 Hallam had one of the highest gaps in the sector with a 32.0pp gap between White and Black students; 80.6% of White students were awarded a 1st class or 2:1 compared to 48.0% of Black students. Although trend data shows that the attainment of Black students is variable over time (as this represents a relatively small, though growing, number of students: 80 students in 2017/18), the gap remains persistent and large; ranging from 20.0pp in 14/15 to 56.0pp in 2015/16.

Looking at degree attainment for other groups by ethnic background reveals persistent gaps between White students and all other groups, though again, as these represent small groups of students, the gap is variable. The next largest gap can be found for **Asian students** whose degree attainment sits consistently below those for White students with 59% of Asian students gaining at 2:1 or 1st class degree in 2017/18 compared to 80.6% of White students (gap: 22.0pp). There was also a gap for student whose ethnicity was '**other**' or '**mixed**' though this was smaller in 17/18 with 75.0% gaining a 2:1 or 1st class degree (gap: 5.6pp). [See Appendix A: Chart 4]

By disadvantage

There was a gap of 8.9pp between the degree outcomes of the **least and most disadvantaged** students; in 17/18 73.0% of the least advantaged students were awarded a 1st or 2:1 compared to 81.9% of the most advantaged, and there has been no reduction in the gap over time. Performance is slightly better than sector this year (where the sector gap was 9.5pp in 17/18) though this has not consistently been the case over the 5-year period.

By disadvantage when intersected with ethnicity and sex

Degree attainment rates are lower still for **disadvantaged students from a BAME background**, with gaps that are not observed in the sector. This suggests that being from a BAME background compounds the degree attainment gap for disadvantaged students. In 2017/18 59.0% of the most disadvantaged BAME students achieved a 1st or 2:1 degree compared to 82.9% of the least disadvantaged White students (gap: 23.9pp). By comparison:

- 62.0% of BAME students at Hallam achieved a 1st or 2:1 when disadvantage or advantage is not taken into consideration, and the sector gap in 2017/18 was 14.9pp;
- 77.6% of the least disadvantaged White students achieved a 1st or 2:1 degree compared to 68.0% of the most disadvantaged White students (a gap of 9.6pp).

Large gaps are also observed for **male students from the most disadvantaged areas** with degree attainment rates of 70.0% in 2017/18 compared to 84.5% of females from the least disadvantaged groups, a gap of 14.5pp, (sector gap: 10.3pp). The gap is persistent over the 5-year period at sector level and for Hallam [See Appendix A: Chart 5].

By disability

OfS have identified the underperformance of **students who declare a disability** as a national KPM, with a gap of 2.8pp for the sector in 2017/18. The gap is narrower for Hallam at 2.0pp but trend data suggests the gap is persistent (if variable, ranging between 1.0-8.0pp) and representing a growing number of students.

---

[18] Moving on Up (Nov 2017) National Network for the Education of Care Leavers
[19] *What is the degree awarding gap and what are we doing about it? Narrowing the gap,* (2019), Sheffield Hallam University

There has been an increase in the proportion gaining a 1st or 2:1 amongst students with a disability relating to their **mental health.** Performance has improved from a low of 69.0% in 2014/15 to 78.0% in 2017/18 and now in line with performance for students with no declared disability [See Appendix A: Chart 6].

There has been a similar upward trend in the proportion of students who have declared '**multiple impairments'** gaining at 1st or 2:1 over the last four years, from a lower base of 63.0% in 14/15, to 75%.0 in 17/18, a gap of 3.pp.

For the last three years, students with a **'cognitive and learning'** related disability have consistently outperformed students with no disability, with 95% gaining a 1st or 2:1 class degree (so 2.8pp higher for these students in 17/18).

Rates for students with a **'sensory, medical and physical'** related disability are variable with rates last year broadly in line with those for students with no known disability (78.0% compared to 78.4%) and rates in 2017/18 falling sharply to 72.0% (well below 77.7% for non-disabled).

As for other stages of the lifecycle, our data for students with a **'social and communication'** related disability is patchy though available data shows that the degree attainment rates showed an upward trend in the last year - up from 70.0% to 75.0% in 2017/18 with a gap of 2.7pp remaining.

By age

Considering degree attainment rates by age shows that in 2013/14 the degree attainment rates for mature and young students were broadly equivalent, though since then **young students** have consistently outperformed **mature students**. The attainment gap by age at Hallam remains much smaller than that observed at sector level.

74.0% of mature students have been awarded a 2:1 or 1st class degree for the last three years, up slightly from 73.0% in 2014/15, whilst attainment rates for young students have been rising from 75.8% in 2014/15 to a high of 78.9% last year and then falling slightly to 78.2% in 2017/18. This means the gap has risen from 2.8pp in 2014/15 to 4.9pp last year and 4.2pp in 2017/18.

Other groups of students

Internal analysis shows that 72.2% of **'commuter students'** were awarded a first class or 2:1 degree in 2017/18 compared to 79.1% of students who were not commuters; a gap of 6.9pp. *Unfortunately, we are not yet able to examine how degree attainment varies for students who are carers, care leavers, refugees or estranged students.*

> **Conclusions:** *We have one of the highest attainment gaps in the sector between White and Black students and note the emphasis OfS have put on this as a sector KPM. We have therefore identified **Black students** as a key target group. We also recognise there are gaps between the most and least disadvantaged students, which is compounded further if students are male and/or from a BAME background. We have therefore identified **the most disadvantaged male students** and **the most disadvantaged BAME students** as target groups. The underperformance of students who declare a disability has been identified as a national KPM. Although our gap is narrower than the sector, the gap is persistent. **Students declaring a disability** are also a target group.*

5. Progression

As part of our mission to transform lives, Sheffield Hallam aims to help more students gain highly skilled (HS) employment. In 2017/18, 74% of full-time/sandwich 2016/17 graduates were in HS employment or further study within six months of graduating, a 3.0pp improvement on the previous year.

By age

The largest absolute gap between the proportions of students going into HS employment or higher level study can be observed between **students when grouped by age**, with small groups of older students outperforming young students; employment rates for those aged between 41-50 were 20.0pp above those of young students in 2017/18, though this represented a small number of students (around 50 in 2017/18).

The proportion of **mature students** going into HS employment or further higher-level study is higher at Hallam than the sector (82% in 2017/18 compared to 75.7% for sector). The gap between all mature students (aged over 21) and young students (under 21) was 11.0pp in 2017/18 compared to a sector level gap of 3.4 pp and this has been identified by OfS as statistically significant. This gap in employment outcomes is partly linked to differing previous employment experience and the differing subject profile of these students.

By ethnicity

Employment outcomes for **BAME** students are below rates for White students, with a larger gap (8.5pp) than the sector; 65.0% in 2017/18 for BAME students compared to 73.5% for White students [See Appendix A: Chart 7]. The gap was larger still for **Asian** students with an employment rate of 63.0% in 17/18 compared to 73.5% for White students; rates for Black students are much improved in recent years. There is an 11.0pp gap between the employment outcomes of Asian and White students in 17/18, notably larger than the sector gap of 3.8 pp.

By disability

Progression to employment rates for disabled students have been consistently below those for students without a disability, with a wider gap than the sector. This has been narrowing for the past four years as progression has steadily risen for both. There was a 6.0pp gap in 2014/15 when 58.0% of disabled students progressed to HS employment compared to 63.6% of students without a declared disability. This gap reduced to 4.0pp in 2017/18 when 69.0% progressed to HS employment compared to 73.2% of students without a declared disability.

Students who have declared a disability relating to '**cognitive and learning'** performed broadly in line with students without a declared disability, with a small gap in 2017/18 of 1.2pp. The gap is closing between students without a declared disability and those who declared a disability relating to their **mental health**; 17.7pp in 15/16, 13.2pp in 16/17 reducing to a gap of 4.2pp in 17/18, in line with the sector gap of 4.1pp. There is a persistent but variable gap for students who declare '**multiple impairments'** with a 6.2pp gap in 2017/18 compared to a much smaller gap for sector (1.5pp). A gap of 7.2pp emerged in 2017/18 for students who declared a disability relating to **'sensory, medical and physical'** although there was no gap in the previous year.

By disadvantage (POLAR) and by disadvantage intersected with ethnicity and sex

Graduates who are most disadvantaged are less likely to progress to HS employment than their more advantaged peers, and although this gap is less than the sector, it has widened in recent years. 69% of **most disadvantaged** students progressed to HS employment compared to 74% of the most advantaged. Whilst rates have improved for both, the gap has widened over time; from no gap at all in 2013/14 to 3.0pp in 14/15, 4.0pp in 15/16 and remaining steady at 5.0pp in 16/17 and 17/18 (compared to a sector gap of 6.0pp). [See Appendix A: Chart 8]

A 10.0 pp gap can be seen between the employment rates of **the most disadvantaged BAME** graduates in 2017/18 when compared with the least disadvantaged White graduates; a larger gap than the sector. Trend data shows that the gap has remained fairly persistent. Although there has been an increase of 15.0pp in the employment outcomes of the **most disadvantaged male students** over the last five years, a notable gap remains; there was a gap of 5.0pp in 2017/18 between females and males from the most disadvantaged areas, and a gap of 7.4pp from the least disadvantaged areas. There was an increase in the employment outcomes of **most disadvantaged females** in the last year, bringing employment rates closer to the rates seen for students from the least disadvantaged areas, while in the sector females from the most disadvantaged areas have the lowest rates of progression. The progression to employment rates for the most disadvantaged male students (around 400 students in 2017/18) is below the sector; 65.0% for Hallam compared to 70.8% in the sector.

Unfortunately, we are not yet able to examine how progression to HS employment or higher-level study varies for students from small underrepresented groups such as carers, care leavers, refugees or estranged students.

> **Conclusions:** *Progression to employment outcomes have been improving for all student groups, most notably for Black students. Reflecting similar patterns to attainment, the progression to employment rates for BAME students are below those for White students, with a larger gap observed than the sector, and rates for disabled students have been consistently below those for students without a declared disability, again with a wider gap than the sector. However, when ethnicity is disaggregated, the performance gap between Asian students and White students is most significant whilst the gap for Black students (where attainment is lower) is much improved in recent years. We have identified **Asian students** and **students declaring a disability** as our key target groups. Data shows that the most disadvantaged graduates are less likely to progress to HS employment than their more advantaged peers, and although this gap is smaller than observed in the sector, it has widened in recent years. As with degree attainment, gaps in progression to employment for disadvantaged students appear to be compounded further if students are male and/or from a BAME background. We have therefore identified **the most disadvantaged male students** and **the most disadvantaged BAME students** as target groups.*

6. Part-time students

Due to space constraints, our above analysis focuses on students studying full-time as 94% of new entrants were studying full-time in 2017/18. An analysis of part-time student performance can be found in Appendix B (page 25).

Overall, our part-time numbers have fallen by around one third over the last five years. We have falling proportions of part-time students who are female, young, BAME and disadvantaged. The largest gaps for part-time students in **continuation** are by age (gap: 18.0pp) and by sex (14.0pp). The largest gaps in **attainment** exists by age (34.0pp), by disability (20.0pp), by ethnicity (26.0pp) and by advantage (27.0pp). Looking at **progression** to HS employment, the largest gaps can be found by sex (10.0pp), by ethnicity (15.0pp) and by advantage (12.0pp).
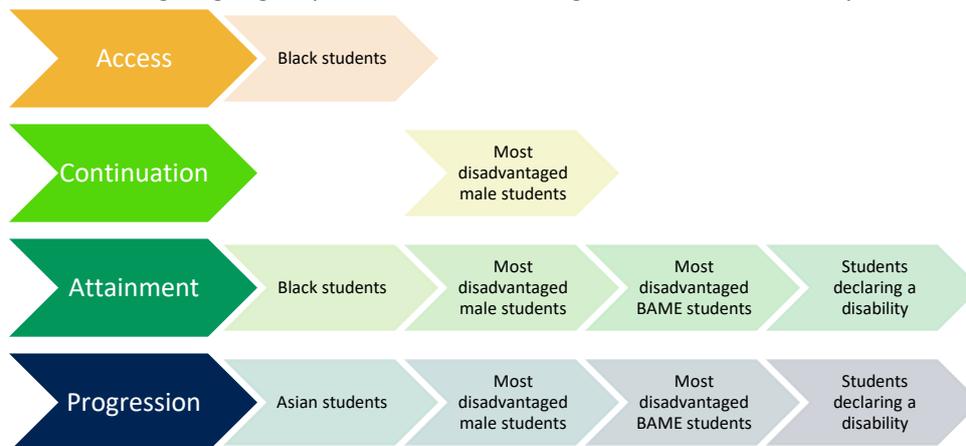
The strategic measures outlined below are aimed at all students, no matter their intensity of study, and have been designed to have a similarly positive impact on the experience and outcomes of both full-time and part-time

students. In response to the decline in part-time numbers at Hallam and in the sector in recent years and given that historically part-time students are more likely to be from underrepresented groups, measures to stimulate and improve part-time provision are part of a wider review of our portfolio currently being undertaken.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

i. Target groups

Based on our assessment of current performance and the underrepresented groups identified by the OfS we have identified the following target groups at the different stages of the student lifecycle.

Access	Black students			
Continuation		Most disadvantaged male students		
Attainment	Black students	Most disadvantaged male students	Most disadvantaged BAME students	Students declaring a disability
Progression	Asian students	Most disadvantaged male students	Most disadvantaged BAME students	Students declaring a disability

We recognise that **commuter students** face specific barriers and disadvantages and we will also pay particular attention to the experience of commuter students *across the whole lifecycle* to avoid the entrenching of disadvantage of underrepresented students who are also more likely to be commuters.

Through **South Yorkshire Futures**, our sector leading social mobility initiative, over the next year we will work with our partners to develop outcomes-focused targets to reflect Hallam's innovation, ambition and strategy in this area, and we look forward to adding these to the APP. These targets will demonstrate our commitment to ambitious transformation across the educational lifecycle, including through our new Research Nursery, the Children's University, a regional skills framework and the Sheffield City Region Talent Bank.

ii. Aims and objectives

Our mission is simple: **we transform lives**. We do this by shaping our students' futures and preparing them for whatever they choose to do, and by creating knowledge that provides practical solutions to real world challenges. We aim to deliver consistently outstanding outcomes for our students, moving from pockets of excellence to consistently high performance across the whole student lifecycle.

Sheffield Hallam is the 10th largest HE provider in the UK. Our success in recruiting students from a wide range of backgrounds, including many non-traditional learners, is indicative of the fact that WP is a core part of what we do. Our student body is becoming more diverse and more likely to be from a disadvantaged background. In 2017/18 we admitted the largest number of students from low-participation neighbourhoods in the sector and we have supported more than 5,800 LPN students into university over the last five years.

With around 30,000 students, our size and mission mean that we are at the forefront of sector developments in widening access and supporting success and progression within HE. As one of the largest universities, we make a big impact in our region and to the national picture. Our size also means there are inevitable challenges in ensuring consistency of performance and in implementing large-scale change.

Our mission is integral to supporting and enhancing social mobility and we are proud of our position at the heart of our city and region. We are committed to ensuring that students (whatever their background or experience) leave us as world-ready citizens. Our students are inspired and enthused by the transformative learning experience we provide and through the consistently excellent provision of an innovative and applied curriculum. Our teaching is designed to give students the skills to thrive in a rapidly changing world. We are inclusive, supporting students from a wide range of backgrounds and providing all students with the best opportunity to succeed during and after their time at Hallam.

Our strategic engagement is further demonstrated through our commitments to the **Social Mobility Pledge**, the **Care Leavers Covenant**, the **Armed Forces Covenant**, the **Stand-Alone Pledge** for estranged students and the **Time to Change** pledge on mental health. We are proud to be a **Working Families** employer, a **Disability Confident Leader**, a member of the **Race Equality Charter** and in receipt of **Athena Swan** bronze status.

Based on our assessment of current performance we have identified the following strategic aims and objectives:

	Strategic Aims	Measurable Objectives
Access	We will drive long-term improvements in the educational performance of our region by working with partners to improve aspiration and attainment levels from early years through to further and HE. We will work strategically and in partnership with other providers in our region to offer a targeted, progressive and impartial programme of outreach, which increases HE participation across the region and supports increased access for the most disadvantaged and least represented students. We will deliver a distinctive applied educational offer, underpinned by an ambitious and innovative approach to student recruitment, which focusses on widening access to HE amongst under-represented groups.	To improve the rates of participation in HE across the region, contributing to reducing the gap in attainment between South Yorkshire and the rest of UK.** To increase the proportion of new entrants who are Black by 40%, so that Black entrants represent 6% of all by 2024/25.
Continuation	We will cultivate an environment in which all our students are challenged, supported and encouraged to succeed through a student-centred and whole student lifecycle approach to academic support and the wider student support offer.	To improve the continuation rates of most disadvantaged male students eradicating all gaps by 2024-25.
Attainment	We will ensure all students, from all backgrounds, are supported to achieve strong academic outcomes and any barriers to success are removed	To improve the degree attainment of black students; disabled students; most disadvantaged males and most disadvantaged BAME students, eradicating all gaps by 2024-25.
Progression	We will ensure all students, from all backgrounds, are supported to achieve strong employment outcomes removing barriers to success where we are able.	To improve graduate outcomes for students who are: from an Asian background, disabled, most disadvantaged males and most disadvantaged BAME students, eradicating all gaps by 2029-30.

*** We acknowledge that our access targets are currently output focussed. We are working with our partners to develop meaningful outcomes focussed targets in this area.*

3. Whole provider strategic approach

We are committed to access and participation for all, and believe that all students can and should succeed, whatever their background or experience prior to entering study. Building on our strength and scale as the largest recruiters of disadvantaged students, and a significant recruiter of other underrepresented groups, we are extending our focus to ensuring these students continue and succeed at the same rates of more advantaged peers, thereby ensuring consistently excellent outcomes for all students.

We have set ourselves challenging targets. Achieving this transformational change will require a whole-lifecycle, whole-institution approach and in some cases will necessitate significant cultural and behavioural shifts. As such many of the measures outlined below involve far-reaching and broad institution-wide change and programmes of work which will improve the student experience for all, and especially for underrepresented groups.

At the same time, we know there is large variability in the demographic profile of, and the learning and teaching needs of students across our diverse subject portfolio. We have begun to develop department-level analyses of differential outcomes and this will inform the prioritisation of activity and investment at a more granular level. We are seeking to understand and put in place actions suitable to the local context, whilst ensuring that access and participation priorities are embedded across the whole institution. This will involve some small-scale targeted work where we identify our efforts will be most effective in improving outcomes for our target groups.

Many of our strategic measures are predicated on an inclusive, student-centred ethos and approach. We still have much to learn about our students, their experiences and what can impact on differential outcomes, so we have put in place strategic measures seeking to improve processes and provide us with better, more timely information and data, along with more effective techniques to intervene when students are struggling.

We will adopt a common sense and pragmatic approach following a clear plan of action but adapting our practice in line with emerging evaluation findings and expertise from what works, both internally, through TASO and through established links to expert practitioners and partners via NEON and NERUPI.

To ensure a whole-provider approach, we will embed access and participation at all levels of the organisation and will continue to make this a priority. This includes commitment at the highest level, from our Board of Governors, our senior leadership team and strategic board structures, to specialist WP practitioners and academics, through to our academics and professional services staff working across all departments and levels. As outlined below, there are clear links between our APP and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) goals and ambitions. In addition, we see a clear overlap with Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework, and our annual planning and quality processes, and we will endeavour to bring a joined-up approach across the whole university.

Responsibility for Access and Participation sits with our strategic board focused on the 'Shaping Futures' elements of our strategy, which has oversight of teaching, learning and the student experience. Through establishing clear accountability for the delivery of our strategic measures, we will ensure that there are clear links to our APP work.

We are committed to student engagement in our approach and will build on our existing mechanisms to develop more routes and opportunities for this. We will build on our strong history of collaboration and partnership across the lifecycle to ensure the maximum impact of our activities (see below).

4. Alignment with other strategies

i. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Sheffield Hallam is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, experience and outcome, ensuring that students and staff realise their full potential. This is reflected through our values of Integrity and Opportunity, with equality, diversity and inclusion acting as key enablers to the University Strategy.

Our APP and EDI strategies have a shared aim to create a more inclusive and diverse student body, to address the underrepresentation and disadvantage of specific groups and to reduce and then eradicate differential outcomes. EDI specialists sit on our APP Delivery Group to ensure join-up between these areas of work. The intersection between underrepresented groups and certain protected characteristics is key to our understanding of performance (e.g. estranged students are known to be more likely to be LGBT) and underpins our approach.

Several of the targets in this plan build on our existing Equality Objectives (which run until 2020), namely, to eradicate the attainment and progression gaps for BAME and students who declare a disability. These objectives focus on BAME attainment, progression to highly skilled employment for BAME students and students who declare a disability, widening access to STEM subjects and addressing gender imbalances at departmental level. We will align target-setting, reporting and monitoring with Access and Participation when we will refresh our Equality Objectives, and build on the gap analysis to include the outcomes and experience of LGBT+ students and students of different faiths and beliefs. In designing this plan, we have had due regard to equality in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty as per our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Equality analysis will be carried out for any new activity delivered as part of the implementation of this plan and where proportionate positive action will be used to address disparities.

5. Strategic measures

i. Partnership

South Yorkshire Futures – a social mobility partnership

Driving long-term improvements in the educational health and aspirations of our region is a Hallam priority. Working in partnership we will maintain our strong performance on access, whilst improving equality of opportunity more widely. We are investing significantly in **South Yorkshire Futures (SYF)**, a social mobility partnership led by Hallam and backed by the Department for Education (DfE), and have developed a sector-leading infrastructure which supports raising attainment, regional collaboration and improved co-ordination of locally tailored initiatives. We will continue to support SYF to achieve our APP strategic aims.

SYF is engaging strategically with schools, colleges, local authorities, employers, voluntary organisations and others to understand the local landscape of educational disadvantage, higher level skills needs and careers advice, whilst working to better streamline and shape regional approaches to these challenges.

The programme aims to provide an overall structure for coherent improvement through three strands of intervention: **Preparation (early years); Performance (primary and secondary) and Aspiration (FE, HE and work).** In recognition of the variety of factors that influence the attainment of academic and other skills needed for progression, the programme is adopting a holistic and multi layered approach, with projects to:

- support school leadership[20] e.g. School Governor Programme
- improve quality of teaching[21] and teacher retention[22] e.g. Early Years, Primary and Secondary CPD initiatives; supporting expansion of Trauma Informed Schools training
- enhance extra-curricular activities associated with increased attainment e.g. developing a South Yorkshire Children's University[23]; Reading Clubs[24]
- develop confidence resilience and other attitudes and behaviours[25] associated with increased attainment e.g. Regional Skills Framework, Coaching Project
- provide a regional skills framework, working with local providers across all education stages to improve skills provision with a strong emphasis on preparedness for future study and work. [26]
- Maximise employer engagement in inspiring young people into a range of careers e.g. Talent Bank schemes[27]

SYF ensures strategic alignment with partners such as Hepp and HeppSY+, as well as connecting with Doncaster Opportunity Area, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Partnerships

University support for **University Technical Colleges** (UTCs) have been identified as increasing the progression of young people in HE and supporting ambitions to raise aspirations and attainment in the region.[28] Hallam is a sponsor of two UTCs for 14-19-year-olds: UTC Sheffield City Centre and UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park. We will continue to support these colleges and, following a bid sponsored by the University, the Department for Education has recently approved the opening of a new UTC in Doncaster in September 2020.

Through our partnerships we work to maximise impact and avoid duplication of effort. We have a range of well-established access partnerships including with the University of Sheffield to build the **Higher Education Progression Partnership** (Hepp) as our own regional collaborative outreach partnership, and our close working with **HeppSY+** on delivery of the NCOP programme.

Since 2017 we have been refocusing Hepp to provide a more integrated framework for provision of **HE related information advice and guidance (IAG)** in the region. This includes a 'minimum offer' of impartial IAG for SCR schools, alongside face-to-face engagements with 11-16-year-old learners, and parent and teacher CPD activity.

The need for focused IAG for school pupils considering progression to HE is well evidenced, as are the benefits of engaging with key influencers of young people's educational choices such as parents and teachers.[29] Accessible, high quality advice from trained professionals is particularly important for underrepresented groups who face additional barriers in accessing HE information[30], and navigating the entry landscape[31]; it can also help support continuation by providing young people with improved knowledge of what to expect[32].

A national survey by UniTasterDays in collaboration with the HE Liaison Officers Association indicates Y&H remains a cold spot, with schools and colleges having the lowest self-reported rating of their university IAG provision (78.3%) and awareness of the HE elements of the Gatsby benchmarks (54.1%). To address this, HEPP's resources will support all SCR schools' to deliver IAG provision which meets Gatsby benchmark 7. This will be complemented by specialist and subject specific outreach programmes. We are working to ensure sustainability by positioning Hepp as the vehicle for continued local collaboration through our NCOP outreach hub.

Through HeppSY we support **local FE colleges** (FECs) in capacity building through funding for leadership time and associated costs (e.g. travel) and two HE engagement assistants in each college. This has enabled colleges to target the NCOP cohort, identify progression barriers and develop sustained programmes of activity to enhance HE progression. Senior leaders from three FECs are members of the HeppSY Board and there is a dedicated HeppSY Colleges Programme Manager and a HE Progression Adviser). HeppSY has secured a strong national reputation for this approach (delivery, capacity building, governance) and has contributed into OfS workshops and to other NCOPs who have struggled to engage their FECs.

---

[20] www.inspiringgovernance.org
[21] What makes great teaching? Review of the underpinning research. (October 2014) Coe R, Aloisi C, Higgins S et al; The Sutton Trust,
[22] Does teacher turnover affect young people's academic achievement? (2017) Gibbons, Steve & Scrutinio, Vincenzo & Telhaj, Shqiponja
[23] Sheffield Children's University: How does is make a difference? (2017) Hamshaw K; Sheffield Children's University
[24] Building an outstanding reading school: six strategies to make reading for pleasure work in your school (2017) Clements J; Oxford University Press
[25] Poorer children's educational attainment (2010) Gregg, Goodman, Chowdry, Crawford, Dearden, Joyce, Sibieta, Sylva & Washbrook; Joseph Rowntree Fdn.
[26] Skills for Social Progress the Power of Social and Emotional Skills (2015) OECD
[27] The impact of career development activities on PISA mathematics tests (2017). Elnaz T. Kashefpakdel & Matteo Schleicher; Education and Employers
[28] HE Sponsored Academies, UTCs and Free Schools, (2016) Report to HEFCE by York Consulting
[29] Aspirations and ambiguities – the need for focused IAG for school pupils considering progression to HE, (2019) David W. Thompson; Journal of FE and HE
[30] Who you know, what you know and knowing the ropes (2015) R Whitty, G., Hayton, A., & Tang, S; Review of Education
[31] Understanding the information needs of users of public information about HE: (2010) Renfrew, K., Davies, P., Baird, H., Hughes, A., Green, H., Mangan, J., & Slack, K; Report to HEFCE by Oakleigh Consulting and Staffordshire University; HEFCE
[32] As recommended in: On course for success: student retention at University (2017) Social Market Foundation and UPP

We have over 1,700 learners studying 50 different awards through **33 educational partnerships with 12 UK partners** (6 in the SCR) providing education and skills to a wider range of learners in a local context. In 2018/19:

- 66% were from low participation backgrounds (POLAR12) compared to 41% from elsewhere.
- Learners have a different entry qualification profile; 28% have A levels compared with 65% from elsewhere.
- 38% of learners are mature, compared with 14% from elsewhere.

Our college partnerships enable us to:

- design **progression opportunities** for learners, for example by delivering Foundation degrees in the local college context with an opportunity for learners to top up to a full degree at Hallam.
- work proactively with other providers to understand and address **specific education and skills needs**, including innovative models for delivery of apprenticeships.
- work across regional/national networks to **collaboratively coordinate the delivery of training and education**
- provide opportunities and progression pathways to HE and employment for people who may require **a more local educational solution**. This can be from Level 2/3 to a foundation degree, or from a foundation degree on to a top up degree, or for further progression to Hallam for a postgraduate qualification.

ii. Supporting access to HE from underrepresented groups

Our outreach activities strive to narrow the gaps for entrants from the most deprived/lowest participation areas. Through our successful and long-standing partnerships with schools and colleges we will continue to deliver:

- impartial HE awareness sessions plus subject-specific activities, masterclasses and interactive roadshows
- access to ambassadors and a range of role models
- activity for teachers, advisers and other influencers

We will share our expertise and experience with DfE and the sector, driving improvements at a national level.

Black entrants

We have set-up a task-and-finish group to analyse data and put interventions in place. Working with Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions, we are reviewing processes and policies to identify where we can embed positive action, mirroring the approach we are taking to increase BAME staff levels. We are also seeking to mitigate the risk of bias through the whole student lifecycle including interviews, for instance. This work is being overseen by the Race Equality Charter Steering group and the University Pro Vice-Chancellor and Race Champion.

Care leavers

We have a long-standing commitment to care leavers and adopt best practice approaches to support this vulnerable group[34]. Our formal pledged commitments, found in the **Care Leavers Covenant**, incorporate the recent DfE good practice guidelines on improving care leavers access and participation in HE.[35]

We continuously review and improve our pre- and post-entry pastoral and financial support and continue to raise awareness of this. This includes collaboratively delivered outreach events for care experienced young people and their supporters; our application, accommodation and transition support which is enhanced by our partnership with the Unite Foundation to provide scholarships of three years free, year-round accommodation; ongoing support through named contacts in student wellbeing, and priority access to careers programmes; and financial support including a specific Care Leaver Bursary of £1.5K for each year of study, priority access to other financial support schemes and assistance with graduation, placement and interview costs.

That participation and continuation rates for care leavers are considerably lower than for other underrepresented groups[36], despite these established practices, has informed our renewed focus on increasing our care leaver numbers. The persistence of these inequalities drives our commitment to increase sector knowledge and understanding of their support needs and to explore ambitious and innovative approaches to improve outcomes. We are leading a national consortium, commissioned by the Unite Foundation, to examine care leaver and estranged student experiences to understand opportunities for positive action and SYF is working in partnership to support practitioners from early years through to HE to develop trauma and mental health informed practice.

Mature entrants

Mature students have been a target group for many years, receiving priority access to HE information, advice and guidance, mentoring and buddying schemes and application and transition support, as well as being the focus for

---

[33] Partners that have been *approved* have been through our QA processes to deliver Hallam awards- typically as franchise/external validation arrangement.

[34] The Caring University in 2016, (2016) Rawson, Action on Access; Localised approaches to supporting care leavers, (2017) Robey, Aylward and Pickles

[35] Principles to guide HE providers on improving care leavers access and participation in HE (2019) Department for Education

[36] Ibid

community-based outreach activities such as Adult Learning Cafés. We have worked hard to provide accessible routes into HE to support adult learners, expanding our portfolio of integrated foundation year courses and growing our higher degree apprenticeship offer as well as partnerships with 12 FE colleges which provide a range of top up progression routes. However, our performance compared to sector shows these measures alone are not sufficient. We will therefore seek mature student and community input in order to understand the issues and perceived barriers facing adult learners in our region. Through this holistic assessment we will test assumptions and work to better understand where there is the greatest potential to address these issues.

Other underrepresented groups

We will enhance our offer of targeted support to other underrepresented groups. Using the model for care leavers as a benchmark, we will build on the **targeted outreach initiatives and personalised pastoral and financial support** already provided to carers, estranged students, refugees and asylum seekers, embedding recent developments such as our award winning Estranged Student Transition Fund[37] and our Sanctuary Scholarships for asylum seekers. We will explore the targeted support we can provide to members of the Armed Forces Community, having signed the **Armed Forces Covenant** and engaging with the South Yorkshire Armed Forces Covenant group, whilst building on HE engagement activity with young people from our local **Roma** community.

iii. Whole university inclusive, student-centred approach

Student support - *A new approach to student support*

In 2019 we implemented **a new student support model** to ensure students sit at the centre of our approach, to give greater consistency to all students and to create an environment in which all students are challenged, supported and encouraged to succeed. This makes it easier for students to access high quality support and provides greater choice about how they do this. Students are supported by a **'student support triangle'** comprised of an academic advisor, student support advisor and employability advisor, with a new CRM system enabling case management and communication. We are working towards **inclusive support** through proactive and pre-emptive interventions and preventative welfare interventions.

Our previous model provided excellent targeted support either based on disadvantage or as a result of locally determined learner analytics. Such students were very visible to us; they were closely monitored and had high levels of contact with support staff. We were able to improve outcomes for some whilst also safeguarding some of our most vulnerable students. However, there remained a **largely invisible population** who were not typically self-referring to support services and not benefitting from the same level of contact, potentially contributing to gaps in continuation and student success. We believe male students are over-represented within this group.

Research indicates that underrepresented groups are less likely to access student support; for example Stuart et al (2011)[38] found that BAME students displayed a lack of awareness of, or sense of entitlement to, additional support, struggled to learn the rules of the HE game and 'bore the risks of study entirely by themselves".

By providing a **whole population support model** which recognises and responds to the diverse needs of our students and which is not remedial, we will ensure all students are visible and valued members of the University community. We will support more students to access support, and this will positively impact retention and success rates. We will support this with new whole-institutional strategies which improve the student experience such as the Hallam Welcome framework and the Student Wellbeing Programme.

Hallam Welcome

From 19/20 we are introducing a framework for pre-arrival, welcome week and ongoing induction activities for new students. The *'Hallam Welcome'* will ensure delivery of a **consistently excellent student experience across all courses that is appropriate and adaptable to the needs of different students**. We will ensure that we consistently prepare and inform students of the available opportunities, encourage a sense of belonging to Hallam and their course, support them in this transition and to take full advantage of their University experience.

Inclusion is a key priority; the new Hallam Framework notes that 'welcome events should incorporate activities that are inclusive and do not inadvertently discourage some'. We will continue to offer an enhanced welcome offer for specific groups of students to support their transition into university, including the pre-arrival Study Ready events for disabled students and a breakfast for commuters organised by the Students' Union.

Students moving into university-allocated accommodation have a mandatory requirement as part of their tenancy to complete *SHUstart*, a pre-arrival portal offering wellbeing support, advice and information in readiness for their arrival in Sheffield and experience of living away from home.

---

[37] Stand Alone Awards for Excellence and Innovation 2018
[38] As cited in *Causes of differences in student outcomes* (July 2015) Mountford-Zimdars, Sabri, Moore, Sanders, Jones, and Higham, HEFCE

By working in **partnership** between academic and professional services teams, we will ensure that student welfare and support, and support for employability are embedded into student experience from day 1. Evidence shows that a student's experience during pre-arrival and the first weeks has an impact on their ability to succeed and can positively impact on retention[39]. This will improve the student experience by ensuring communications are joined-up and facilitate the forming of communities (both academic and social) to create a sense of belonging. HEFCE highlighted the role of "Belonging as a key cause of differential progression" and What Works? report highlighted the importance of building early and good social relationships with students and staff.[40]

Timetabling - developing a community and inclusion

We recognise the importance of the timetable to enhancing a students' learning experience. Our core principles are to avoid students having to travel in for a single hour and no more than four consecutive hours of teaching. These principles are particularly important for students who are commuting into the university and for those with caring responsibilities. We keep Wednesday afternoons free for participation in Students' Union activities. When this is not possible students may be able to request a more suitable alternative session via Hallam Help.

We are working on improving zoning of the timetable, co-locating teaching activities for cohorts of students to supports community building between groups and with academic tutors. This will help all students but will be particularly important for commuter students who may not get this community/sense of belonging from friendships made in halls of residences.

Healthy Hallam, Healthy Future – our student wellbeing programme

We have well-established student wellbeing support in place that has been instrumental in supporting student continuation and attainment. However, there is a strong and expanding evidence base that HE students are a high-risk population for psychological distress and mental disorders; internal evidence includes the rising number of students requiring an 'enhanced' level of support from Student Wellbeing services and referrals to our 'Cause for Concern Group'. We know that in addition to the rising number who declare mental health as a disability, many more will experience mental health problems; 67% of those surveyed reported experience of mental health problems, whether current or previous, diagnosed or undiagnosed.[41]

In response to this rising demand for wellbeing support, and as part of our work to address the differential outcomes of different student groups, we are developing a **more strategic approach** for promoting and embedding health and welling to ensure an **institutional culture where everyone feels safe and supported**.

An audit against demonstrated good practice suggests that we have the right foundations and organisational culture to build on. We will develop this further by focussing on:

- fostering engaging curricula and learning experiences;
- cultivating supportive social, physical and digital environments;
- strengthening University community awareness and actions;
- developing students' mental health knowledge and self-regulatory skills;
- ensuring access to effective services; and
- sport and physical activity through the integrated delivery of the University's sport and physical activity plan.

This will allow us to support students to develop the skills and attributes which enables them **to achieve their potential and 'flourish'** with a positive impact on retention, degree attainment and employability[42].

We will align this to staff wellbeing work as part of a **whole university approach**. Common elements are improving mental health literacy to promote a supportive culture, encouraging disclosure and improving access to support for everybody working and studying at Hallam.

We anticipate the positive impact of our wellbeing programme will be especially true for underrepresented groups. UK Trendence Research (2019) into loneliness, student activities and mental wellbeing found: "Almost half of students say that their mental health is one of their top three concerns - a figure that varies significantly depending on the number of friends that they have." Over 15% said they felt lonely on a daily basis, and another third said they felt the same weekly. The figures were worse for disabled, BAME and international students.

We will continue to work in **strategic partnerships** with the University of Sheffield as well as the Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust, NHS CCG Clinical Commissioning Group and Sheffield City Council. **The city of Sheffield is seen as offering a model of good practice** in the sector and there have been benefits for our students. For

---

[39] Keenan, C 2010 & Foster et Al 2012 as cited in *Causes of differences in student outcomes* (2015) Mountford-Zimdars et al HEFCE

[40] As cited in *Causes of differences in student outcomes* (2015) Mountford-Zimdars et al HEFCE
Building student engagement and belonging in HE at a time of change: final report from What Works? Student Retention & Success (2012) Thomas, L.

[41] Internal 2017 *Being Well, Doing Well survey*

[42] What Works? AdvanceHE/Higher Education Academy final report (2017) HEA Academy

example, the Porter Brook GP practice, which serves a high proportion of our students has, through a partnership approach, been able to develop strategic links with the local NHS and IAPT (improving access to psychological therapies) services. This has produced bespoke IAPT delivery on campus and the services of a psychiatrist.

Student success

Learner analytics

We are investing in institutional learner analytics to sharpen our understanding of the individual profile of our students and **enable targeted support** and more **inclusive practices** with full implementation by September 2020. As a tool within the existing 'student support triangle', it will enable easier and earlier access to engagement and attainment data and will help to identify students at risk earlier and more accurately.

Research by Jisc suggests that learner analytics can play an important role in improving continuation rates and learning outcomes[43]. **Monitoring and early intervention**, supported by learning analytics, has been identified by the Social Market Foundation as a suggested activity to improve retention rates.[44] Expected outcomes are better support and interventions for students at risk, improving continuation and attainment, and students themselves will be supported to better understand and monitor their relative performance and progress towards goals. Over time we will improve student interventions through analysis of their impact, especially for target groups.

Support for academic writing

In 2018/19 we have rolled out an online service which offers students feedback on academic writing for structure, language choice, argument/idea development, referencing and spelling and grammar. It is anticipated that it will lead to improved student attainment and lower rates of withdrawal, particularly in the first year. 82% of respondents said that the service had a positive impact on their grade. Students who are mature, BAME and have a learning contract (requiring adjustments as a result of a disability) were more likely to use the service.

BAME attainment gap

We have been implementing an institution-wide approach to address the BAME attainment gap. This has included the delivery of 30 initiatives across teaching departments and four Hallam-wide initiatives: Decolonising the Curriculum, Supporting Academic Writing, Mentoring and Enabling Supportive Placements. We will continue to develop this, using the 'five steps to change' identified by the UUK and NUS (with input from Hallam)[45] to develop a robust action plan to reduce and then eradicate the BAME, and especially the Black degree awarding gap[46], within five years. We will adopt a range of strategic and operational approaches including (but not limited to):

1. **Evidencing strong leadership:** a clear strategic focus on anti-racist institutional culture which manifests itself in setting and monitoring institutional and departmental KPIs; equity checking all strategic new initiatives; building race equity objectives in all staff's annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs).

2. **Changing cultures:** continuing to offer structured CPD for all staff, including encouraging departmental and service area heads to deliver training to their teams; including race/ethnicity as a strategic priority in the University's communications plans to staff and students; continuing use our Hallam Guild to develop communities of practice designed to address the degree awarding gap.

3. **Supporting racially diverse and inclusive environments:** running an annual decolonising the curriculum event; including race equity activities in staff away days, team meetings and curriculum development processes; supporting the development of anti-racist practices.

4. **Getting evidence and analysing the data:** further developing our data dashboard to offer fine grained intelligence to inform action, and continuing to develop and maintain our *Narrowing the Gaps* website.

5. **Understanding 'what works':** drawing on and evidencing, best practice of 'What Works?' to frame initiatives and pilot projects; regularly monitoring work against progress so actions can be refined accordingly.

This programme of work reflects that there is no one solution and a **multi-faceted approach** will be required. By increasing the visibility of the issue through **leadership and staff development**, we will develop a shared understanding across all staff. We will use granular data dashboards to drive **the open, honest, and sometimes challenging, conversations** we know are required to drive cultural change and so staff recognise and accept where gaps exist. **Staff CPD** will improve awareness of positive initiatives and address fear of "doing the wrong thing" which is a significant barrier, supporting us to make the interventions required to bring about change and a

---

[43] Jisc briefing: Learning analytics and student success – assessing the evidence (2017), Jisc
[44] On course for success?; Student retention at University (2017) UPP and Social Market Foundation
[45] BAME Attainment at UK universities: Closing the gap (2019) Universities UK and NUS
[46] We refer to this as the 'degree awarding gap' recognising that many of the reasons for the gap are structural, moving away from a deficit mode approach.

cultural shift. Active engagement with best practice and emerging evidence will allow us to continuously improve the actions we are taking as will be required to make the large and important changes in outcomes required.

Increasing staff diversity

We are committed to increasing the **diversity of our workforce**, so we are more reflective of the surrounding community and our students. To support this, the University has a target to increase the proportion of its staff who are from a BAME background to 12.0%. By addressing low levels of diversity and representation we hope to positively impact BAME students' sense of belonging, an important element of differential attainment.

Curriculum design

Foundation year

Over the last two years we have grown our provision of degrees with a foundation year across a range of subject areas. This provides an **additional pathway** for underrepresented groups and those who might not otherwise progress to HE. Sector research identifies foundation year programmes as a route to support mature learners back into education[47] and students from a disadvantaged background.[48] Students on our foundation year pathways are more likely to be disadvantaged or from a BAME background compared to other provision: 51% were from POLAR12 compared to 44% of other learners and 32% were BAME compared to 16% of other learners.[49] We have identified that continuation rates for these foundation year students are lower than our degree cohorts and to support these students we have been exploring how the experience and learning on these pathways can be further enhanced. We will continue to work with these students to improve their experience and help remove barriers that may currently be preventing them from progressing.

The Hallam Model

Through a new initiative, the Hallam Model, we set out our commitments to ensure that that all taught undergraduate course provision delivers a distinctive, applied learning experience. This is designed to support our Access and Participation strategic aim of cultivating an environment in which all students are challenged, supported and encouraged to succeed during their time at Hallam. We will ensure consistency of provision and opportunity across all courses, ensuring inclusivity is embedded in the curriculum, and that all students:

Engage	*Learning engages with the world beyond University.* Engagement opportunities for all through work-based learning, placements, embedded digital capabilities and programmes which provide services to community. Every course engages students with local, national and global contexts.
Challenge	*Learning is intellectually stretching.* Embeds intellectual challenge by engaging students with real-world problems, at the cutting edge of research and practice both in UK and globally. Every course provides opportunities to generate, deploy and challenge research-based knowledge.
Collaborate	*Learning involves learning with, from and alongside others*. Embeds collaboration by ensuring that all courses provide opportunities for students to work in teams, to develop entrepreneurial capabilities, and to explore beyond disciplinary boundaries.
Thrive	*Learning enables students to thrive personally, culturally and professionally. A*ll students offered a curriculum which drives personal success through induction and transition activities, well-planned courses which build progressively on earlier achievement, with well-designed assessment.

Employability Promise

Increasing the HS employability of students from all backgrounds is a key strategic aim. We will continue to develop our offer, so it is innovative, impactful, consistent, and delivers an individual journey for every student tailored to their needs. We will bring about a cultural shift to recognise, value and embed employability into all that we do, as evidenced by our Employability Promise to students:

- **Better Prepared Students**: Every student will be prepared for HS employment or further study (e.g. access to careers guidance and employability advice, global opportunities, personal development planning, entrepreneurial opportunities etc.)
- **Innovative and Applied Curriculum**: Every course will have a distinctive employability pathway and link to the 3+3 Graduate Attribute framework (e.g. employability skills across all courses, development of graduate attributes, engage in work experience / work-related learning)

---

[47] Topic briefing on mature and part-time students, Office for Students
[48] Year 0: A foundation for widening participation? (2019) HESA
[49] UG only, FT/SW, UK domiciled, HESA student 2017/18 Standard registration population,

- **More and Better Jobs:** Every student will also have access to graduate opportunities, bespoke internships, work placement and work experience opportunities throughout their course (e.g. access to placements, part time and campus jobs, and specialist employer events)

This promise has been developed as a direct result of primary consultation with students, employers, academics and secondary research and includes the following curriculum components:

Work experience	We have an ambition for a minimum **of 20 credits of work experience at each level in every course.** By 21/22 every student will have credited work experience in every level of their course.
Digital skills	We will develop a **digital skills pathway** to support work experience to improve graduate preparedness. This will apply to all students, regardless of course. The includes a core offer as well as a tailored in-course Digital Skills 'Curriculum Commitment'. The Jisc Discovery Tool will be available to all students and used by staff to measure student 'digital' capability.
Career readiness	This provides student with a personalised programme, equipping them with the career management and employability skills to transition into HS employment. We encourage the widespread use of an online **career readiness questionnaire** to better understand and improve graduate preparedness for the working world and live data will drive career conversations.
Graduate attributes	The (3+3) Graduate Attributes model allows courses to revise, define and position their programme of learning with courses adopting three core graduate attributes and then select an additional three from an elective suite of attributes.

GradVantage

This is an established and impactful graduate support programme which provides a targeted, personalised and enhanced two-year Employability and Enterprise support offer. Graduates with protected characteristics and/or from underrepresented groups are prioritised. GradVantage has three core components: one on one coaching appointments with Employability Advisors; a wide range of 6-to-12-week paid internships or option to apply for the Hallam Graduate Start-up for graduates keen to set-up their own commercial or social enterprise ventures; and access to LinkedIn Learning and digital job search and career planning resources.

Supporting students from our target groups

As part of our Employability Promise we will support students from our target groups to access work experience and placement. Additional support includes:

- Employability advisors trained in professional interviewing skills and experienced in supporting students with additional needs to help with decision making and transition into employment.
- Help with placement searches that include identifying positive and inclusive employers.
- Support for needs described in a **Learning Contract** when preparing for work experience/placement.
- A specific referral processes through our **student support triangle** which provides a co-ordinated approach to meeting possible complex needs in relation to employability.

We recognise that some students may benefit from work experience 'in-house' or in supported environments and we will therefore ring-fence internal placements and those with trusted partners for such students.

Non-traditional learners may lack awareness of, or a sense of entitlement to additional support, and may have additional disadvantages in career decision making because of a lack of social capital[50]. The Student and Graduate Employability teams provide **training and support for academic colleagues** to design work experience and career readiness curriculum provision so that students that are most disadvantaged can access additional support.

We are also developing **financial support offered during placements** as placement experience can be impacted by high travel and/or accommodation costs. This offer will target students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities and will include pre-placement, on placement and hardship fund support.

The Hallam Award

Research[51] shows that work experience is an enabler of success in the graduate labour market and underrepresented groups are less likely to enter the graduate market with the same levels of work experience. Piggott and Houghton (2007) found disabled young people were disadvantaged due to lack of work experience. Research suggests that some disadvantaged groups are less likely to be prepared for employment.[52] Stuart et al (2008) identified differences in levels of participation in extra-curricular activities, with working class students less

---

[50] What can universities do to support all their students to progress successfully throughout their time at university? (2016) Mountford-Zimdars et al

[51] Mountford-Zimdars et al. highlight the work of Bennett et al., 2008; Edge and SCRE, 2011; Pennington et al., 2013; Moore et al.,2013)

[52] Mountford-Zimdars et al. reference Greenbank and Hepworth (2009), Tomlinson (2008) and Greenbank 2009)

likely to be involved in clubs/societies, councils/committees, volunteering and other hobbies. Other research has shown under-represented groups are less likely to participate in extra-curricular activities, leaving them in a weakened position because employers value such engagement.[53]

To address this and encourage all students to benefit from extra-curricular activity in 2018/19 we launched the Hallam Award. The award aims to improve student engagement, achievement and satisfaction through encouraging involvement in extra-curricular activities, and by providing an intellectually rigorous approach to reporting on impact evaluation and ultimately to improve employability and graduate outcomes. It enables students to map extra-curricular engagement and activities against the 3+3 Graduate Attribute Framework and to monitor their development. Working with our Students Union the award will be reinforced and widely promoted.

Financial support

We will continue to deliver the **Student Success Scholarship** to support disadvantaged and under-represented students, and the Hardship fund to support students experiencing financial hardship and deliver continuous improvements in response to student feedback and evaluation of impact.

From surveys we know that the largest impact of the Student Success Scholarship was on making basic living easier. Recipients were 7% less likely to have to undertake paid work than non-applicants with similar or identical characteristics, they reported feeling lower stress and having better mental health than non-applicants. Recipients also said they felt that it positively impacted on their academic results.

Research indicates that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are more worried about costs and often have less knowledge of student finance. Bursary and grant support, along with financial support, positively impacts the retention of recipients by reducing worry and stress, providing resources to improve living environment or purchase course materials, reducing need to work and feeling invested leading to greater confidence and effort, as well as providing more freedoms and choices to more fully engage in their studies and university life. [54]

6. Student consultation

Students are **active partners** in the design, delivery and evaluation of access and participation work, across the lifecycle. **Student Ambassadors** help to deliver outreach and aspiration-raising activity on-campus, in schools and colleges, and at community engagement events. **Student researchers** co-design institutional research projects with staff into experiences of specific groups, such as exploring the engagement of commuter students and belonging amongst BAME students. We have student representation at all levels of our **formal governance** structure to give the fullest opportunity for participation in decision-making. Some committees have positions for SU officers and/or student representatives. Student views are sought on the student experience and feedback is welcomed, considered and used to shape future development.

Unique to Hallam, **Listening Rooms** are key to our shift towards becoming a 'listening organisation'. Listening Rooms are about the authentic student voice and actively listening to student experiences and capture conversation between friends around: *Becoming, Belonging, Confidence, Happiness, Journey,* and *Success*, with implications for our understanding of engagement, attrition, poor attendance and low achievement.[55]

Student representatives were involved in the design of many of the strategic measures: via the Student Health and Wellbeing working group, the Student Finance Panel, working in graduate placements working on the BAME attainment gap and via two student focus groups on the Hallam Model. Recent graduates on our **graduate intern scheme** have inputted to focus group discussion and a graduate intern will soon join the team that coordinates the APP with a focus on embedding student engagement into monitoring and delivery of the plan.

The **Students' Union** (SU) continues to be involved in the development of our financial support offer and supports our financial support package for 2020/21. Students are represented on the Student Financial Support Panel which monitors our financial support offer and considers the outcomes of evaluation of this. The President of the SU is a member of the Delivery Group and directly inputs in the monitoring, development and delivery of the plan and inputted via his role on the Board of Governors. [see **Appendix C** for SU's response to this plan].

We have made specific changes during the development of the plan following student consultation:

- Following feedback, we identified that the **Black attainment gap** is our biggest issue and should be a significant focus for us and our targets should reflect this ambition. We removed several other Access targets, recognising our current overall success here to bring a tighter strategic focus to Black attainment. The next steps of the BAME attainment gap work will focus on Black students (see page 15).

---

[53] Mountford-Zimdars et al. reference Purcell et al., 2012; Pennington et al.,2013
[54] Impact of the student finance system on participation, experience and outcomes of disadvantaged young people, (May 2019) Department for Education
[55] Friendship as method: reflections on a new approach to understanding student experiences in HE, (2019) Heron, Emma, Journal of FE and HE

- The practical needs, and differential experiences, of **commuter students**, has been repeatedly identified by students as requiring attention. As students who are BAME, disadvantaged and mature are more likely to be commuters, we will ensure we consider their experience across the lifecycle.
- **Mental health** has been a key issue raised by students in recent years[1] including when feeding back on the Plan. This has informed our new strategic approach to student wellbeing, a key thread in our strategic measures (see page 14), and we also added the employment outcomes of disabled students as a target area.

7. Evaluation strategy

We are committed to our use of evidence and to supporting staff to develop their data confidence, capacity and capability for evaluation. Due to our size and the proportion of our students who benefit from access and participation work, programmes are being designed, implemented and evaluated by a large number of staff across the institution. One of our strengths is a centrally resourced team, the Directorate of Student Engagement, Evaluation and Research (STEER) who work alongside embedded roles linked to discrete activity.

The self-assessment confirms our strengths in strategic context and evaluation implementation and identifies priorities for development ('emerging') in evaluation design, programme design and learning from evaluation.

Our ambition: We will be at the forefront of **innovative practice** for widening access and improving success and participation for underrepresented groups. We are committed to a **culture of evidence-led practice** and we will use evidence-informed research to identify and inform the development and evaluation of effective practices that enhance our students' engagement and their experience. We will use evidence to understand progress towards our WP strategic aims, understand why and how differential outcomes occur, and to **share our learning**, leading to reduced differential outcomes and improved experiences and outcomes for all.

We will embed an **evaluation mindset** in our approach; it will be a core competency of staff and will drive objective setting, programme design and our teaching and learning. We will be joined-up, aligning evaluation with our work on TEF, equality objectives and privacy impact assessments, and avoiding duplication and repetition.

Our priorities for developments: We are firmly data driven, but recognise we need to further develop/enhance our theoretical reasoning for change (**moving from data driven to data enhanced**). Outside of STEER and specific WP roles, evaluation is a 'hidden resource'. We will work to embed an evaluative mindset, so evaluation is **visible, resourced and valued** in CPD, staff recruitment and workload management. Specifically, we will:

- Identify evaluative requirements, including responsibility (Sept 2019 onwards).
- Develop CPD for staff to develop capacity and capability (By 2020/21).
- Commit to 'what works': adoption/expansion of approaches that have impact at scale (Sept 2020).
- Provide greater visibility, awareness and take up of 'what works' in different contexts (Sept 2019 onwards).
- Develop the infrastructure to enable and foster learning amongst and between researchers and practitioners working across access, continuation, attainment and progression (Sept '19 onwards. Align with CPD by 2021)
- Design/implement a new process of ethical approval to allow evaluations to be shared externally (Oct 2019).
- Create an evaluation repository, with success criteria/protocols to be applied to local contexts (Sept 2020).
- Disseminate evaluative outputs/raise awareness of evaluative mindset. (Pilot March 2020, Due Sept 2020)
- Support staff working on strategic measure programmes with iterative and systematic evidence-informed programme design, providing briefings/CPD (by Dec 2019) and sharing good practice (March 2020 onwards).

Continuous improvement is embedded across Hallam with a dedicated service to support staff. We will continue to use the OfS **financial support evaluation** toolkit (developed by a team led by Hallam) to monitor the effectiveness of financial support, and ensure our financial support scheme is appropriately robust and focused.

8. Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

The Board of Governors, chaired by Lord Kerslake, has been briefed and consulted during the development of this plan and has approved the submission to the OfS. We will continue to seek the Board's challenge and strategic direction as we deliver the plan and will report progress to our Board of Governors twice a year.

Strategic oversight and monitoring of this plan will be the responsibility of our Deputy Vice Chancellor, supported by the Shaping Futures Board (which has a focus on learning and teaching and the student experience). This Board will receive quarterly reports on the delivery of the plan, progress against targets and emerging risks, and will be responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to ensure the delivery of the plan.

The day-to-day monitoring and delivery of the plan will be the responsibility of the Access and Participation Plan Delivery Group, chaired by the Director of Strategy, Planning and Insight with representation from practitioners

---

[1] Included in the Student Voice Report 2017/18 (January 2019) Sheffield Hallam Students' Union

and academics responsible for the delivery of the strategic measures. The Delivery Group meets each month basis and will monitor progress against targets and assess outcomes for disadvantaged and under-represented students across the lifecycle. It will receive updates on delivery, will monitor reports and evaluation produced, and ensure work is aligned with the EDI strategy and activity. If this group identifies that progress is worsening, it will adjust the action plan accordingly, and if needed, escalate to the Shaping Futures Board. The President of the Student's Union is a member of the Group and directly inputs to the plan's monitoring, development and delivery.

As noted above we will continue to develop our capacity to monitor and analyse performance at all levels. In particular, this means developing our capacity to monitor the performance of groups not in the OfS dataset, including care-leavers, carers, estranged students, refugees and children from military families. We will develop our capacity to monitor disadvantage by supplementing POLAR4 with other measures in line with best practice.

9. Provision of information to students

We will provide timely and accurate information to prospective students on tuition fees and the financial support available. Prospective students will be informed of fees in normal years of study and in optional sandwich placement year through dedicated fees and funding webpages and our online prospectus. Student terms and conditions, including fees regulations are published on our website and digital learning environment, MyHallam.

The University reviews tuition fees annually and reserves the right to increase fees for academic years subsequent to the student's first year of entry, up to the maximum amount allowed by law or government policy. Any fee increases will normally reflect inflationary changes in the costs for delivering courses and programmes and study and will normally be linked to RPI excluding mortgage interest.

All financial support schemes are promoted to current students through our website, MyHallam and during support interventions. Student Support Advisers promote schemes on a one-to-one basis and through group activities such as induction. This will be particularly important for underrepresented students. We prioritise promotion of our application-based schemes to priority groups to encourage take-up and maximise impact.

Our 2020/21 Access and Participation Plan will be published and publicly accessible on our website.

Financial support: eligibility and level of available support

Student success scholarship: Financial awards range from £200-£2,000. Part time students receive a proportion of the award based on their course intensity. This scholarship is open to full and part time UK students who are eligible for Home funding. Although eligible students can apply every year payments are awarded based on need evidenced at each separate application cycle and assessed each year against the total cohort of applications.

Our **priority groups** are: students on a high intensity or high cost course, or a course with a high cost placement, students with caring responsibilities, estranged students (under 25), parents (with more than one child), disabled students, transgender students, refugee students, care leavers and final year students paying the tuition fee of £9250. Household income is also factored into the eligibility as follows:

Residual Household Income	Number of priority groups the Student falls within	Eligibility?
£0-£42,875	0-9	Yes
£42,876-£62,143	1-9	Yes
£42,876-£62,143	0	No
Greater than £62,143	N/A	No

The **Hallam Hardship** fund is open to all undergraduates and prioritised for certain groups including care leavers, students with dependents, are carers, disabled or estranged, have refugee status or are transgender. It is available for emergency situations for non-priority students, for example in the case of domestic violence.

10. Investment

In 2020/21 we plan to invest £8.2 million or 12.4% of higher fee income in the strategic measures and through financial support and investment in research and evaluation, increasing to £9.1 million or 13.7% of higher fee income by 2024/25. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

Investment	£2020/21	£2021/22	£2022/23	£2023/24	£2024/25
Access investment	£2.22m	£2.29m	£2.35m	£2.41m	£2.47m
Financial support	£5.75m	£5.78m	£5.94m	£6.13m	£6.31m
Research and evaluation	£290k	£297k	£305k	£312k	£318k
Total	**£8.2m**	**£8.3m**	**£8.6m**	**£8.8m**	**£9.1m**

Appendix A

To better illustrate absolute gaps between groups, we have truncated chart axis, so these do not start at 0.

Chart 1: Access to HE by most and least disadvantaged groups (POLAR4), IMD and Eligibility for FSM 2013/14 - 2017/18
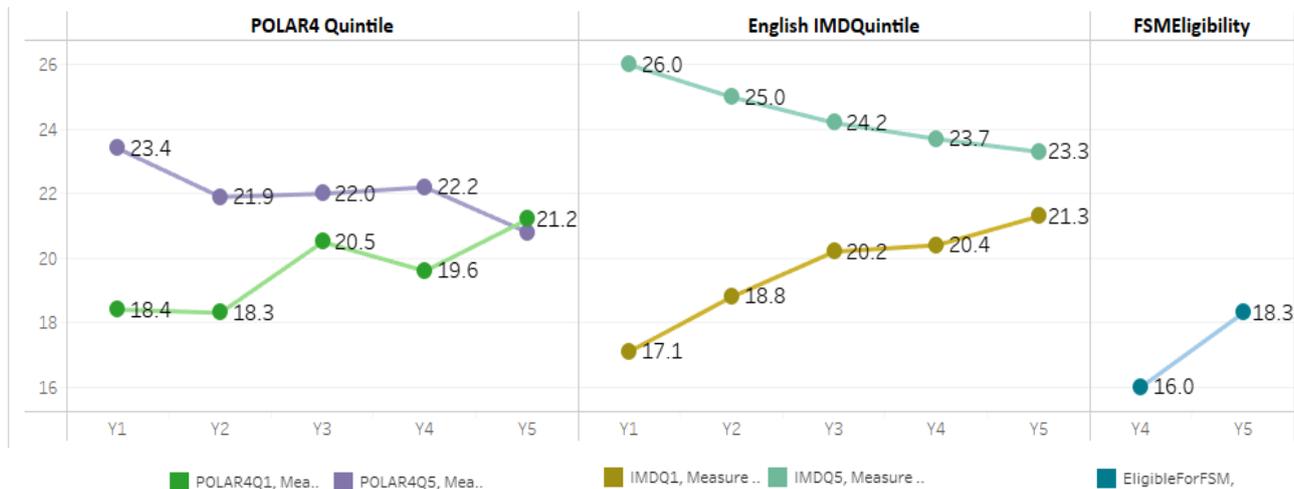

Chart 2: Proportions of entrants who are mature, 2013/14-2017/18
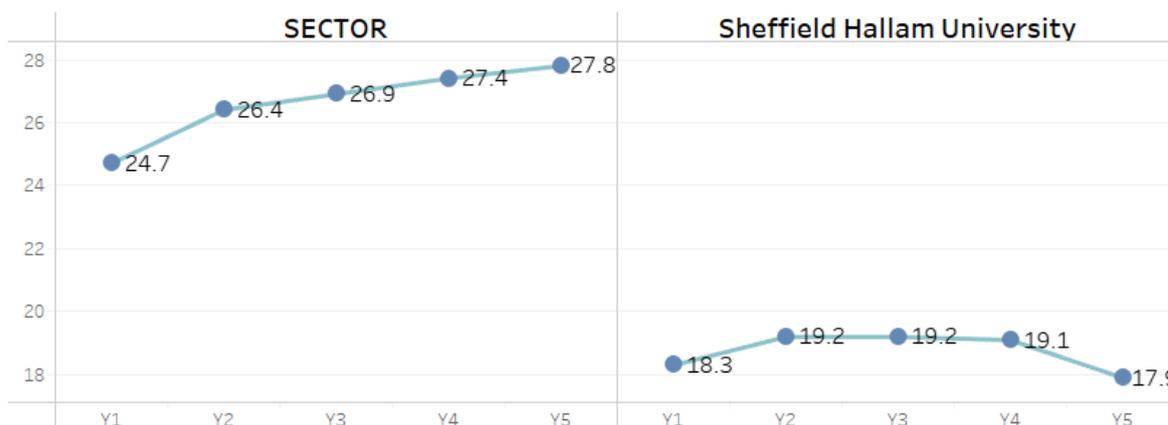

Chart 3: Continuation rates for most (POLARQ1) and least disadvantaged (POLARQ5), by intersection of POLAR with sex, and with ethnicity 2013/14 - 2017/18
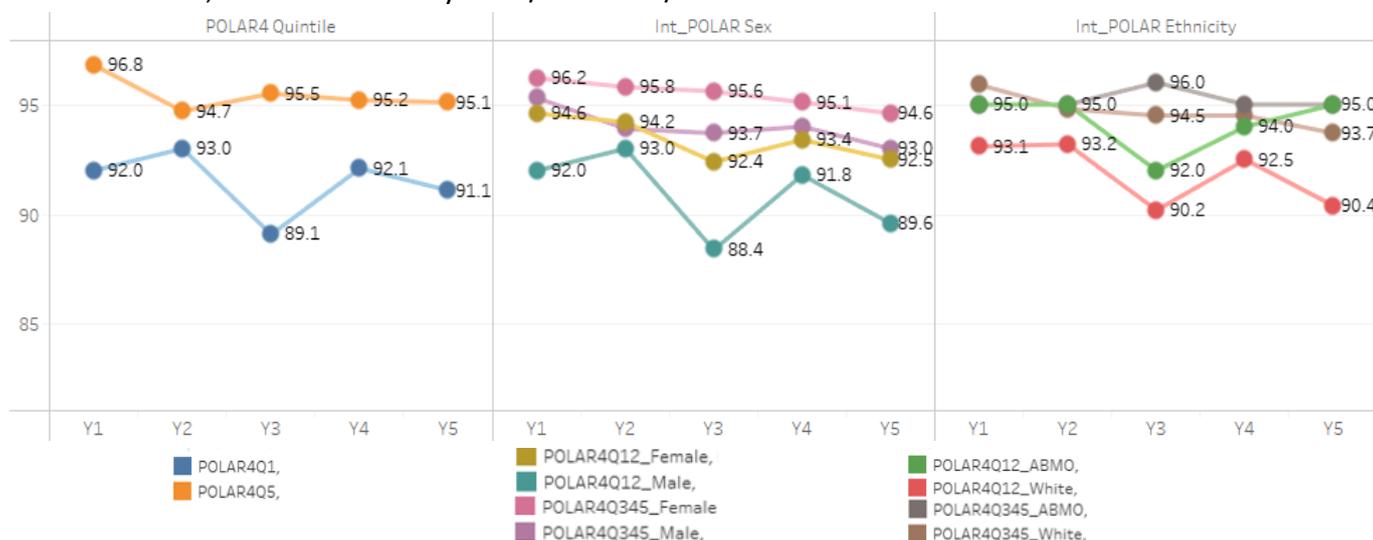
Chart 4: Attainment by ethnicity (BAME/ABMO, and disaggregated by ethnicity groups), 13/14 - 17/18
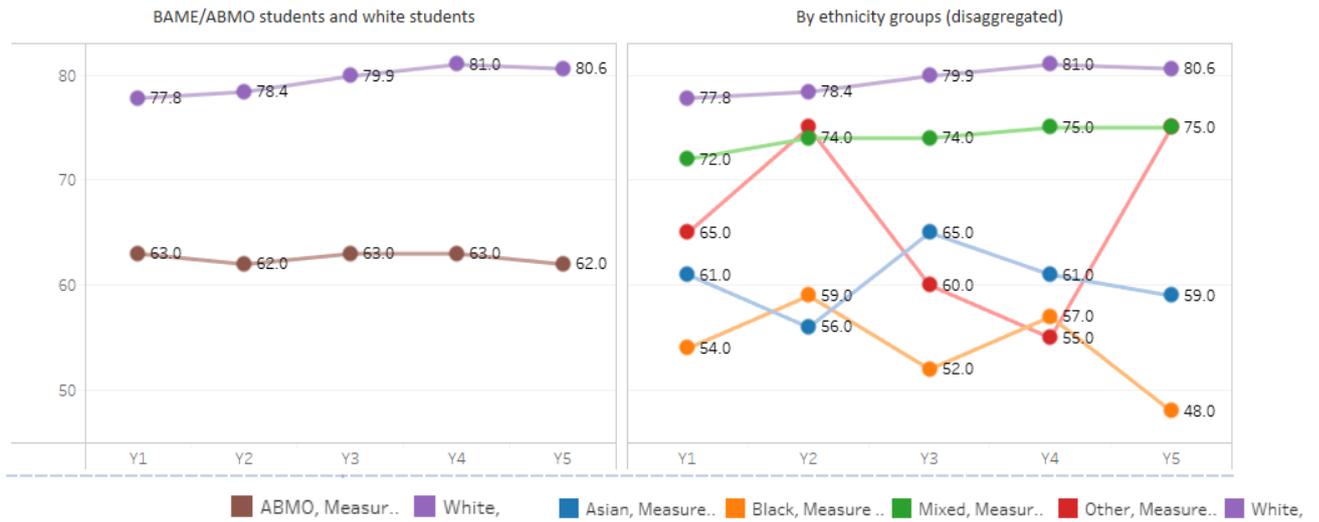
Chart 5: Attainment for female and male students who are most (POLARQ1) and least disadvantaged (POLARQ5) 13/14 - 17/18
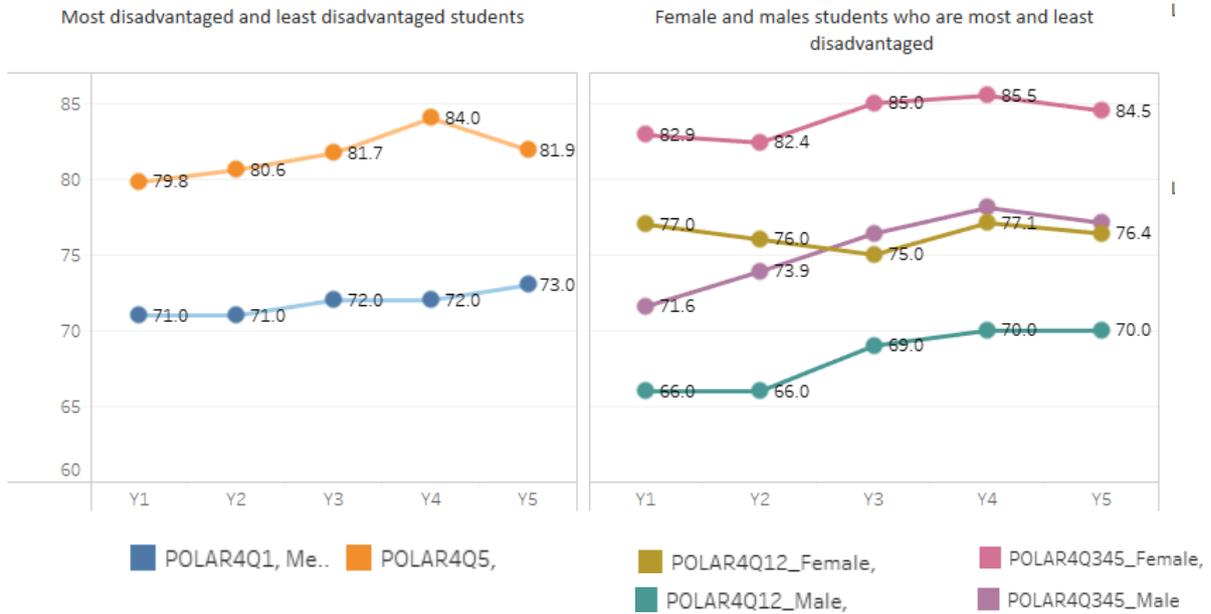
Chart 6: Degree attainment rates for disabled and non-disabled students, and by disability type 13/14 - 17/18

Chart 7: Progression to employment rates for BAME/ABMO and by ethnicity type, 13/14 - 17/18

Chart 8: Progression for most disadvantaged (POLAR Q1) and least disadvantaged (POLAR Q5), by intersection of POLAR with sex, and by intersection of POLAR with ethnicity 13/14 - 17/18

Appendix B: Assessment of performance: students studying part-time

Access

Overall our part-time numbers have fallen by around one third over the last five years, from 700 part-time entrants in 2013/14 to 480 in 2017/18.
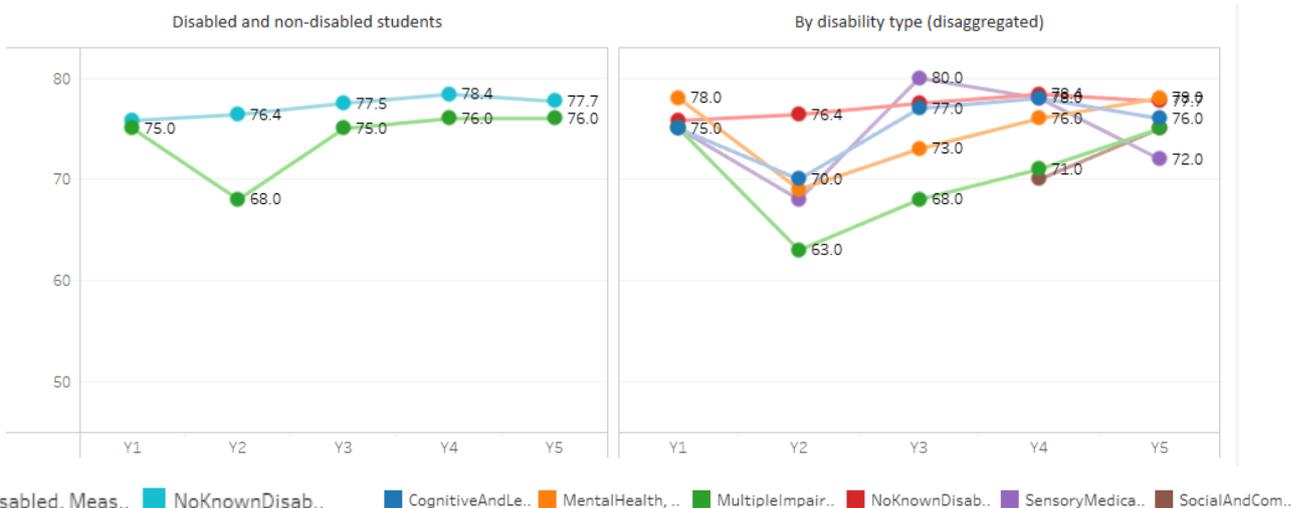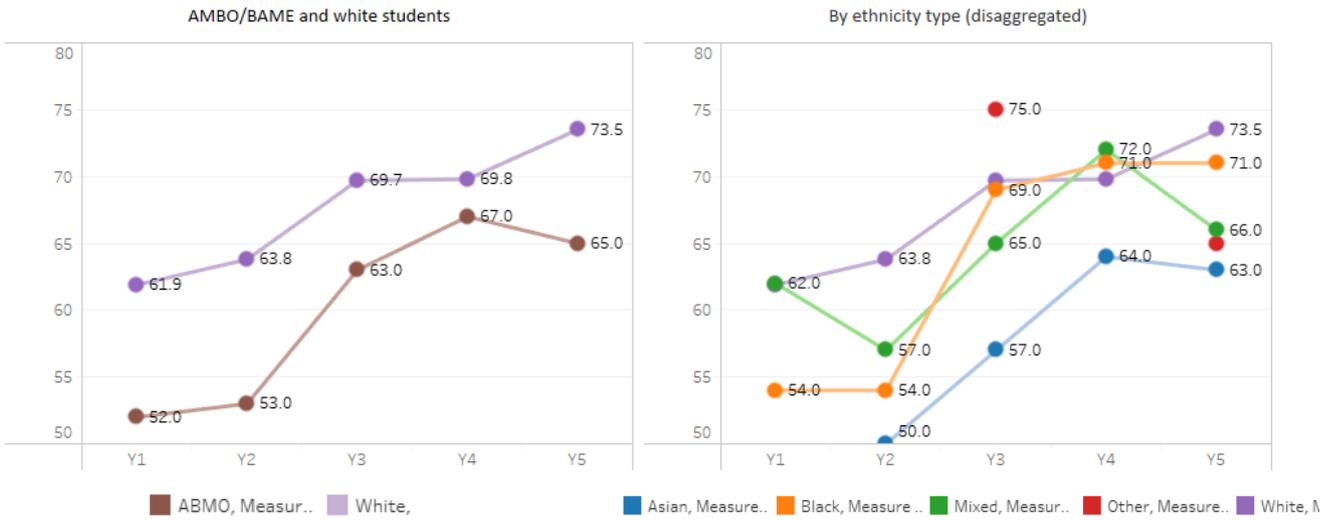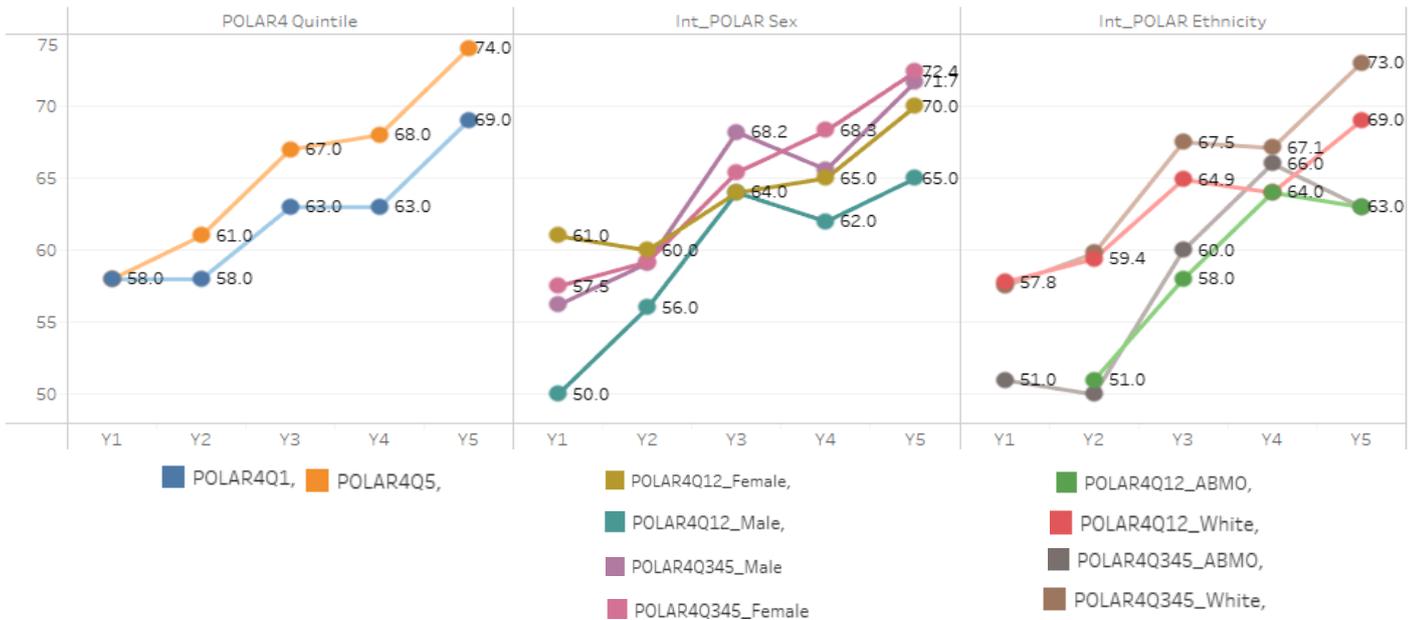
By disability: There has been a small decline in the proportion of part-time entrants who declare a disability; 8.2% in 2017/18, down from 8.6% in 2013/14 and compared to 14.8% in the sector. Disaggregating by disability type, in 2017/18, 5.0% of students declared a disability relating to cognitive and learning, 1.0% declared a mental health related disability and 1.0% declared a disability relating to sensory, medical and physical.

By sex: A growing majority of our part-time students are male, up by 15pp in 5 years, with 60.0% of students being male in 2013/14 rising to 75.0% in 2017/18. The numbers of females studying part-time have fallen at a faster rate than for male students, with numbers declining by over 50% in 5 years, with a small uplift last year. Numbers of male students have fallen by around 15% over the same time period.

By age: The age profile has also shifted, though to a smaller degree, with part-time entrants more likely to be mature; entrants who were mature accounted for 85.4% of entrants in 2017/18, up from 81.4% in 2013/14.

By ethnicity: We have seen a decline in BAME students studying part-time; 6.0% of part-time entrants were BAME in 2017/18 compared to 9.0% in 2013/14. Sector rates have also fallen but not to the same degree. Disaggregating by ethnicity type, in 2017/18 2.0% of students were Asian, 3.0% were from a mixed ethnic background and 1.0% were Black. The proportion of students who are Black or Asian have both fallen by 2.00 pp in the past two years, whilst the proportion of students whose ethnicity is mixed increased by 2.00 pp between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

By advantage: Our POLAR data is based on small numbers leading to variability over the 5-year period. Data suggests that over time our part-time entrants are less likely to be from a disadvantaged background (POLARQ1). This is borne out by IMD data where the proportion of students from IMD12 has fallen from 35% to 29% of entrants in 5 years.

By intersectionality: Intersectional data suggests that the proportion of entrants who are male and the most disadvantaged is broadly similar to the picture 5 years ago, whilst the proportion of entrants who are females and the most disadvantaged has fallen from 17.0% to 9.0% in 2017/18.

Continuation

By age: The continuation rates of mature part-time students declined from 77.5% in 2013/14 to 69.0% in 2016/17 before rising to 76% in 2017/18. This compares to continuation rates for young part-time students which rose from 86.0% in 2013/14 to 94.0% in 2017/18, meaning there was an 18.0pp gap in 2017/18.

By disability: Continuation rates have been variable but rose sharply between 2016/17 and 2017/18 for students with and without a disability so that only a 1pp gap remained with disabled students outperforming students with no known disability. Rates for both groups sit well above sector levels. *Data disaggregated by disability type is not available for further analysis.*

By sex: There has been a persistent gap between the continuation rates for male and female students studying part-time, with males consistently more likely to continue into their second year than females. The gap widened notably in the most recent year, with 87% of males continuing compared to 63.0% of females in 2017/18, a gap of 14.0pp.

By ethnicity: BAME continuation rates have risen from 60.0% in 2014/15 to 75.0% in 2016/17, reducing the gap with White students (74.0% in 16/17) to 1.0pp in that year. Rates then rose for White students, re-establishing a gap between White and BAME students of 6.0pp. *Data was not available to further disaggregate performance by ethnicity types to see how performance for students who are Black or Asian for example compared within this.*

By advantage: IMD data shows that the most disadvantaged students (IMDQ1) were less likely to continue with their studies in the second year with 79% continuing compared to 83.0% of their most advantaged peers (IMDQ5) students in 2017/18 (gap: 4.0pp).

By intersectionality: Continuation rates at Hallam for part-time student are above sector for all groupings when ethnicity is combined with IMD (POLAR data is not available). 75.0% of the most disadvantaged BAME students (IMD12) continued compared to 80.0% of the most advantaged White students (IMD345) and 84.0% of the most disadvantaged White students (IMDQ12). *Data for the most advantaged BAME students was not available.*

Combining IMD data with sex shows a variable picture with notable gaps emerging in the last year when with 58.0% of the most advantaged females (IMDQ345) continued in 2017/18 compared to 75.0% of the most disadvantaged females (IMDQ12), 86.0% of the most disadvantaged males (IMDQ12) and 87.0% of the most advantaged males (IMDQ12).

Attainment

By age – Mature students consistently outperform their young peers in terms of degree outcomes, with a 34.0pp gap in 2017/18 which is much wider than sector. 76.0% of mature students gained a 1st/2:1 compared to 42.0% of young students in 2017/18. Young students represent 15% of the continuation population.

By disability: In 2017/18 there was a 20.0pp gap between disabled students, 45.0% of whom gained a 2:1 or 1st degree compared to 65.0% of students with no disability. In the previous year, the gap was only 8.0pp.

By sex: The gap, which was 6.0pp in the previous year, grew to 13.0pp in 2017/18 with 67.0% of males getting a 1st/2:1 compared to 54.0% of females. This is the largest gap across the five-year period.

By ethnicity: Despite a narrowing in the past year and overall improvements for both groups over the last five years, there remained a large gap between the degree attainment of White students, 66.0% of whom gained a 1st or 2:1 in 2017/18, and BAME students where the rate was 40% (Gap: 26.0pp). Data is not available to disaggregate by ethnicity type due to small numbers.

The strategic measures we have put in place to address the BAME attainment gap apply to part-time and full-time students and will have a positive impact for both groups.

By advantage: The gap widened dramatically between the degree outcomes of the most (IMDQ12) and the last disadvantaged (IMDQ345) in 2017/18 to its widest point in five years and resulting in a 23.0 pp gap in 2017/18. 71.0% of the least advantaged students (IMDQ345) gained a 1st or 2:1 degree compared to 48.0% of the most disadvantaged students (IMDQ12) in 2017/18.

By intersectionality: Available data provides a patchy picture of performance when we consider IMD combined with ethnicity but suggests that the pattern seen in the sector of White students outperforming BAME students, and better performance seen for both groups when combined with a more advantaged background appears to also apply at Hallam. More data is needed to confirm this.

Data shows that there is a large gap in the continuation rates of the least advantaged female students (IMD12) with a rate of 45.0% in 2017/18 and the rates of the most advantaged male students, 75.0% of whom continued into their second year (gap: 30pp).

Progression

By age: The progression to HS employment rates of young PT students has risen sharply, up by 19 pp to 80.0% in 17/18, with a 9.0pp jump in the last year. Mature rates have also risen from 75.0% to 86.0% but not to the same degree, meaning that a gap remains in the performance of young and mature students (gap: 6.0pp).

By disability: There was a 4.0pp gap between progression rates of disabled (80.0%) and non-disabled students (84.0%) in 2017/18, though both rates sit higher than for the sector. There has been a narrowing of the gap in the past year. *Disaggregated data is patchy by disability type for part-time students.*

By sex: There has been a marked improvement in progression rates for both female and males over the last 5 years. In 2016/17 rates were very similar; with 82.0% of males progressing to HS employment compared to 81.0%

of females. In the past year we then saw a gap emerging in performance as male rates jumped by 5pp to 87.0% and female rates fall by 4.00pp to 77.0%, resulting in a gap of 10pp compare to 1.0pp in the previous year.

By ethnicity: There has been a consistently large gap in the progression to HS employment rates between White and BAME students, with 15pp between the 85.0% for White students and 70.0% for BAME students. Progression rates for both groups have improved over the last 5 years.

By advantage: The gap for disadvantaged and their more advantaged peers in progression to HS employment has been variable, and sat at 12.0pp in 2017/18, with 71% of the most disadvantaged students (IMDQ1) progressing compared to 83.0% of the most advantaged (IMDQ5).

By intersectionality: Available data suggests that BAME students, whether they are from the most or least disadvantaged groups (IMD), tend to consistently perform below the most and least disadvantaged White students studying part-time at Hallam. For example, 2017/18 data shows that 70.0% of the most disadvantaged BAME students progressed to HS employment compared to 88.0% of the most advantaged White students.

Following a sharp decline in the past two years, 66% of females from the most disadvantaged backgrounds progressed to HS employment in 2017/18 compared to 82.0% of similarly disadvantaged males, 85% of the most advantaged females and 89.0% of the most advantaged males.

Appendix C: Student Union Response to the University Access and Participation Plan

The assessment of performance clearly sets out the scale of the issues to be addressed around the groups identified as disadvantaged or under-represented. The Students' Union would like to work closely with the University on the action plans once the strategy has been agreed, with particular focus on student consultation which the University has identified as a key priority for development.

The Students' Union has to improve its support for disadvantaged students, and to do this it needs direct contact with the groups identified to understand their needs. Currently we can't access the data on the groups identified in the report which means we cannot target them directly with any communication/services. We would welcome a review of our data sharing agreement to facilitate this.

The strategic aims are admirable, but the Students' Union would like to see the pace of change be much quicker. The current work around the BAME attainment gap has been difficult to upscale and the impact has been minimal. It is difficult to imagine how momentum behind the need for change will be realised. However, we realise the scale of the work is significant, and any change has to be embedded and become the norm rather than just an initiative that can be forgotten form one year to the next. We would also support the University being as open/transparent as possible about the progress it makes with its objectives.

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

Provider name: Sheffield Hallam University

Provider UKPRN: 10005790

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	N/A	£6,935
Foundation degree	N/A	£4,625
Foundation year/Year 0	N/A	£4,625
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	N/A	£4,625
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Sheffield Hallam University

Provider UKPRN: 10005790

Investment summary

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

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£2,227,441.77	£2,291,756.11	£2,355,124.38	£2,417,051.67	£2,475,393.65
Access (pre-16)	£866,649.45	£889,833.49	£912,905.31	£935,600.36	£956,628.22
Access (post-16)	£1,231,165.33	£1,268,928.33	£1,305,849.25	£1,341,617.85	£1,375,981.25
Access (adults and the community)	£129,626.99	£132,994.29	£136,369.82	£139,833.46	£142,784.18
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£5,750,063.92	£5,782,534.32	£5,946,470.31	£6,136,547.32	£6,312,740.13
Research and evaluation (£)	£290,109.87	£297,811.32	£305,276.92	£312,110.90	£318,421.59

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£61,793,595.00	£61,735,465.00	£61,735,465.00	£61,735,465.00	£61,735,465.00
Access investment	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%
Financial support	9.3%	9.4%	9.6%	9.9%	10.2%
Research and evaluation	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Total investment (as %HFI)	12.3%	12.5%	12.9%	13.3%	13.7%

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Sheffield Hallam University

Provider UKPRN: 10005790

Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To increase the proportions of new entrants who are black	PTA_1	Ethnicity	To increase the percentage of new entrants whose ethnicity is black as a proportion of all from 4.0% to 6.0%, increasing our numbers by 40% and resulting in around 160 more black entrants each year by 2024/25.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	4.0%	4.36%	4.76%	5.15%	5.61%	6.08%	We plan for a steady increase of 30 additional entrants each year for the first 2 years, increasing to 35 additional entrants in the final 2 years, resulting in 160 additional entrants each year by 2024/25. The proportion of black entrants is currently broadly in line with the local 18-year population, and we predominantly recruit from the local area so this will be a challenging and ambitious target for us. This target sits within a wider target to increase the proportion of BAME entrants.
	PTA_2												
	PTA_3												
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To eradicate the non-continuation gap for disadvantaged male students	PTS_1	Multiple	Percentage difference in non-continuation rates between POLAR4 quintile 345 females and quintile 12 males	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	5.0pp	3.5pp	3.0pp	2.0pp	1.0pp	0.0pp	This contributes towards the national target set by OfS.
To eradicate the attainment gap for black students	PTS_2	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between white and black students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	32.0pp	27.0pp	22.0pp	17.0pp	11.0pp	5.0pp	We have set a target to address our largest gap. This contributes towards the national OfS target. We have ambitions to eradicate all gaps. However, we acknowledge the challenges inherent in eradicating the structural gap which exists once accounting for prior attainment, gender and age. Therefore, we are aiming to reduce the gap to account for the unexplained gap within the five-year plan. We anticipate that progress will be slower to start, as we work to understand the causes of the gap.
To eradicate the attainment gap for disadvantaged BAME students	PTS_3	Multiple	Percentage difference in attainment rates between POLAR4 quintile 345 white students and quintile 12 BAME students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	24.0pp	21.0pp	17.0pp	13.pp	9.0pp	5.0pp	This contributes towards the national OfS target. We have ambitions to eradicate all gaps. However, we acknowledge the challenges inherent in eradicating the structural gap which exists once accounting for prior attainment, gender and age. Therefore, we are aiming to reduce the gap to account for the unexplained gap within the five-year plan. We anticipate that progress will be slower to start, as we work to understand the causes of the gap.
To eradicate the attainment gap for disabled students	PTS_4	Disabled	Percentage difference in attainment rates between disabled and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	2.0pp	1.0pp	0.5pp	0.0pp	0.0pp	0.0pp	This contributes towards the national target set by OfS. Although the gap we are seeking to narrow is relatively small, it represents a large number of students so we anticipate that progress will be slower than in other target areas.
To eradicate the attainment gap for disadvantaged males	PTS_5	Multiple	Percentage difference in attainment rates between POLAR4 quintile 345 female students and quintile 12 male students	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	15.0pp	12.5pp	10.0pp	7.5pp	3.5pp	0.0pp	This contributes towards the national target set by OfS.
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the progression gap for Asian students	PTP_1	Ethnicity	Percentage difference in progression rates between Asian and White students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	11.0pp	10.0pp	9.0pp	8.0pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	We have an ambition to eradicate all gaps between groups in progression to employment, however we know that progress will be challenging and we are more limited in our potential to impact on this, compared with other stages of the lifecycle due to external factors. Therefore we have set ourselves targets to improve performance by 1 percentage point per year.
To reduce the progression gap for disadvantaged male students	PTP_2	Multiple	Percentage difference in progression rates between POLAR4 quintile 345 female students and quintile 12 male students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	8.0pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	5.0pp	4.0pp	3.0pp	As for PTP_1
To reduce the progression gap for disadvantaged BAME students	PTP_3	Multiple	Percentage difference in progression rates between POLAR4 quintile 345 white students and quintile 12 BAME students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	10.pp	9.0pp	8.0pp	7.0pp	6.0pp	5.0pp	As for PTP_1
To reduce the progression gap for disabled students	PTP_4	Disabled	Percentage difference in progression rates between disabled and non-disabled students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	4.0pp	3.0pp	2.0pp	1.0pp	0.0pp	0.0pp	As for PTP_1

	PTP_5										
	PTP_6										
	PTP_7										
	PTP_8										