Southampton Solent University
Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction and strategic aim

Solent University is a practice-oriented, industry- and employment-focused, open, lively and inclusive academic learning community. Our curricula, created in collaboration with industry employers, include strengths in maritime, engineering, law, architecture and interior design, allied health, and sports. We are proud to have been awarded triple gold – the highest accolade possible – in the latest Teaching Excellence Framework (2023) in recognition of our 'outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment.'

In 2020, the University launched *Strategy 2025: Ready for the Future* with inclusive, real-world learning, teaching and student success as central tenets. Strategy 2025 maps a route to ensure that whatever students' starting points, they benefit from excellent teaching, whether visiting our state-of-the-art campus, using our outstanding digitally enabled learning spaces or engaging with our online learning environments. We are currently developing our new strategy taking us to 2030 continuing our mission of enabling our learners to be work-ready, world-ready, and future-ready.

We are based on a modern, high-quality city-centre site bordered by urban parkland on one side, and on the other by St Mary's, the most deprived neighbourhood in Southampton, and one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the south of England (IMD 2019).

In 2021/22, our UK-domiciled student population numbered 6,933. Within this, our undergraduate (UG) community consists of c. 6,427 students, most of whom study full time (FT) on non-apprenticeship first degree courses (86%) across a rich range of subject areas. We also have a small population of Other UG (OUG) students in 2021/22 and nearly 500 UG Apprenticeships. Our part time (PT) students make up just 5% of our total UG population and are predominantly studying on OUG or apprenticeship courses.

We have a diverse UG population. In 2021/22 the demographic of our UK-domiciled undergraduate population was as follows:
- The proportion of ABMO students has slightly risen to 17.4%, from 16.8% in 2019/20. The most notable increase is among Asian students who have risen from 4.6% to 5.2% of our population across the same period. Additionally, we have seen an increase to 1.4% in the proportion of students from Other Ethnicities up from 1.0% in 2019/20.
- 33.8% of students come from more deprived areas (Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 and 2) up from 28.7% in 2019/20. This is 6% lower than the sector[1] in the latest published figures (2021/22).

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[1] https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/19-01-2023/sb265-higher-education-student-statistics/numbers

• 21.7% of students have a declared disability, and it is higher than the latest published national average of 20%. Our two largest populations of students with reported disabilities are those with mental health conditions (increased from 6.7% in 2019/20 to 7.6%) and those with specific learning difficulties (remained at 7.5% since 2019/20).

• The Solent population skews towards a slightly more male demographic: 48% female and 52% male, compared to the national average of 58% of HE students identifying as female.

• 66.4% of our students are aged 20 and under.

According to the 2021 census, 80.7% of people in Southampton identify their ethnic group within the "white" category. Of the remaining 19.3% of the population, Asian people are the largest racialised minority group, accounting for 10.6% of the population. As such, and reflective of the wider regional population trends, the largest proportion of Solent's core student population (Full-time, Undergraduate, UK domiciled) is made up of white students (80.5%) vs 72% across the sector. Of note, the percentage of 'young' students aged 20 and under is higher (66.4%) than sector average (50%).

When looking at the latest census data for 18-year-olds, Solent's proportion of students from ABMO ethnic backgrounds (17%) is 7 ppt below the local 18-year-old ABMO population (24%). Additionally, the Annual School census shows that 26.3% of school pupils in Southampton in 2020/21 were from ethnic groups other than white.[2]

Given the significantly local nature of our student population, we actively ensure that our work has the additional purpose of promoting social justice and creating economic and social benefits for the communities we serve. This transformational role is evidenced by our top 50 ranking in the Sutton Trust's Social Mobility Index 2021[3] and is celebrated in our Civic Charter[4] which reaffirms our commitments to supporting inclusive local learning, building a culturally enriched city and driving sustainable regional growth.

Impact is enabled through collaborative links with regional further education providers and industries. This role is manifested in our Institute of Technology (IoT) (£5.5M), which builds on regional partnerships with Isle of Wight College, South Hampshire College Group (Eastleigh, Fareham, Southampton), Havant and South Down's College, and Brockenhurst College to increase educational and employment opportunities across the maritime, engineering and digital sectors. The priority focus of this partnership activity is to support individuals from under-represented groups to form and foster valuable connections and access sustainable, well-paid careers. To further strengthen this approach, the Director of the IoT not only contributed to the staff consultation workshops shaping this plan but has developed a streamlined APP specifically for the IoT in partnership with Solent so we can maximise equality of opportunity for all learners.

We are also an established strategic partner of the Southampton Education Forum (SEF), supporting all 12 secondary schools and 5 colleges/sixth forms in the city. We collaborate with the SEF at both a strategic and operational level, supporting schools/colleges with priorities including attainment raising, careers activities and supporting disadvantaged learners, with input into annual SEF priorities. We further host the half termly SEF executive forum meetings, in addition to SEF events including teaching/learning and pastoral conferences.

Through our regional work, we continue to build strong partnerships with schools, colleges and community and third sector organisations. Together we are working to raise attainment, and

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[2] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics
[3] https://www.suttontrust.com/universities-and-social-mobility-data-explorer-rankings/
[4] https://www.solent.ac.uk/work-with-us/documents/civic-charter.pdf

actively expanding and promoting study pathways at Levels 4 and 5 (including higher technical qualifications) and at Levels 6 and 7 (including higher and degree apprenticeships).

One key example is our work as part of the Southern Universities Network (SUN); a collaborative partnership which provides pre-16 and post-16 outreach activities as part of the Uni Connect initiative. The collaborative nature of this work allows economies of scale and added value to be leveraged in our work with underrepresented groups. SUN's wide range of activities, often undertaken with local authorities and third-party providers, include school-based and university-hosted events, accredited teacher CPD programmes designed to support HE progression of underrepresented groups, and the well-established SUN FE programme within college members to ensure cohesive engagement between colleges and university partners.

Our multiple employer and industry partnerships further connect us to practice and place. This regional skills focus underpins our strategic commitment to continuation and progression ensuring our students are 'work-ready, world-ready and future-ready.' Solent University has been extremely successful in nurturing entrepreneurs, supported in part through institutional HEIF funding. We punch well above our weight given our size and resource base and are proud to be 11th nationally in the number of graduate business start-ups.

We see and position our Access and Participation Plan as a critical element of the whole institution and regional partnership commitments and approaches we have outlined here: to identify, redress, mitigate and eradicate inequality; build equality and inclusion for our diverse student population; and embed and promote social justice in our city and region.

Risks to equality of opportunity

Our Assessment of Performance draws on in-depth analysis of the following elements: the Office of Students Access and Participation dashboard, HESA data supply files, UCAS data, internal student record data, HESA Official Statistics, ONS Census data and the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). In addition, we have drawn on regional (e.g., Population census[5] and the Annual School Census[6]) and institutional data and insight, to further develop this work. The work was informed by a summary of the key characteristics of our student population, and how this compares to sector trends and local area demographics, where possible.

The latest data (2021/22 Academic Year) reveals:
- Our core Undergraduate Full time (UGFT) UK domiciled population as predominantly White (82%). This reflects the wider population of our city region (Southampton) where 81% of the population is White; well above the HE sector average of 70%.
- This population is also comparatively young, with 73% of our UGFT population aged 20 and under, compared to a HE sector average of 60%.
- 35% of our UGFT population comes from more deprived areas (Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile 1 and 2). This is lower than the HE sector average of 40%.

Methodology

With the shape of our UGFT population in mind, an institutional working group, comprising all Departments accountable for delivering the Access and Participation Plan, was engaged in identifying our risks to equality of opportunity across all stages of the student lifecycle (Access, Success, and Progression).

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[5] https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth?lad=E06000045
[6] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics

Firstly, we analysed the Access and Participation dataset to identify the range of values where our gaps fall, across all student groups and split combinations. This enabled us to define what a large gap looked like for our population. Our analysis using absolute values revealed that out of the 10,747 gaps in the Solent dataset, 57.3% (6,161) of our ga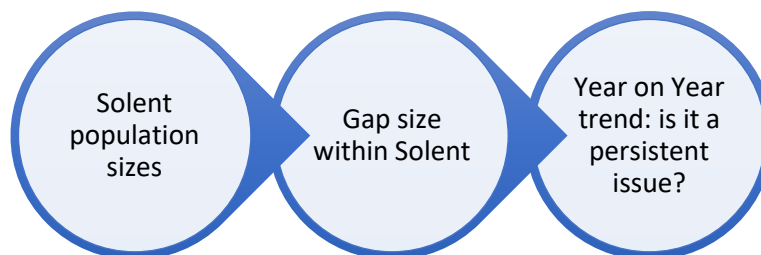ps were between zero and less than five percentage points whereas 42.7% (4,586) were at or above five percentage points.

Distribution Gap sizes within Solent

Category	Percentage
0	0.7%
>|0| - <|5|	56.6%
≥|5| - <|10|	25.0%
≥|10| - <|15|	8.9%
≥|15|	8.7%
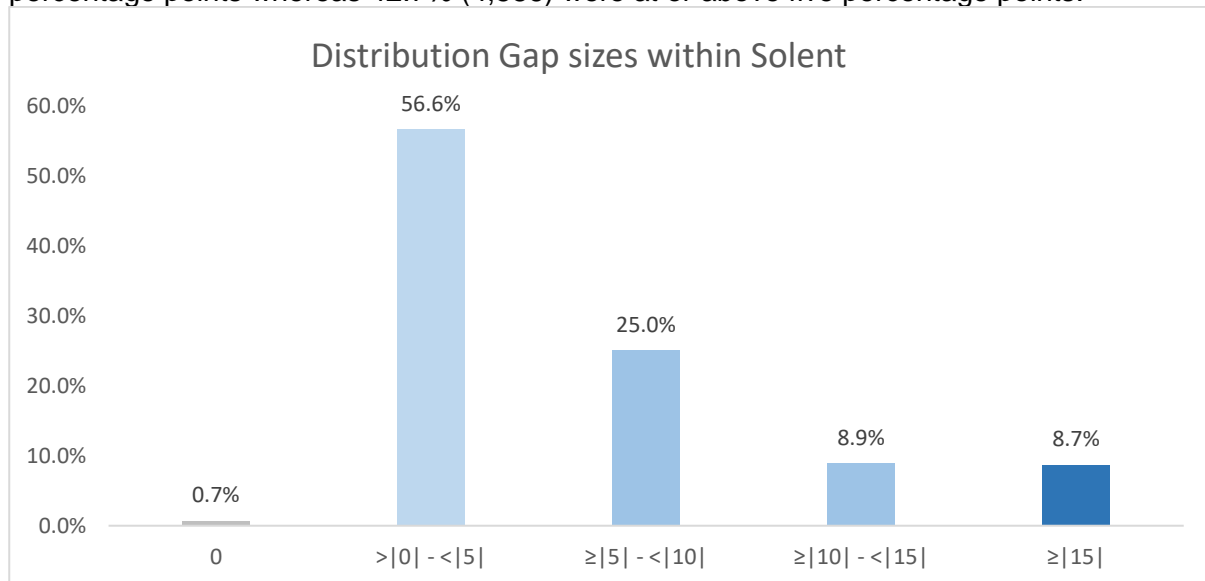
A selection process was developed to identify our main risks to be addressed in the Plan:

Solent population sizes → Gap size within Solent → Year on Year trend: is it a persistent issue?

1) **Population size:** our focus was on risks that are currently affecting large proportions of Solent's student population to ensure that our work can have as much reach and impact as possible.
2) **Gap size within Solent**: our focus was on the largest gaps affecting our population. After considering the range of values where our gaps fall, we decided to focus on gaps greater than or equal to 5 percentage points.
3) **Year on year trend:** we aimed to focus on gaps that have been persistently affecting our population. Since the Access and Participation dataset contains six years of data for Access and Success, we defined a persistent issue as a gap that has been observed in at least three of these six years. However, as the dataset only contains four years of data on Progression, a persistent issue was defined as a gap that has been observed in at least two of these four years.

Using these three criteria, our initial gaps were identified ready for further review and prioritisation in the three Access, Success and Participation sections of Annex A below. Following a brief prioritisation rationale for each lifecycle stage, the indication of risk (and associated target groups) that underpin our interventions are highlighted in bold text.

Before we explore this further, it is worth noting that over the period covered by the data, Solent has been investing in strategic institutional change activity with a priority focus on consolidating the

UGFT and Other UG (including part-time) portfolios. This work has the dual purpose, given our size and civic mission of ensuring that we use our resources in the most impactful way possible and can offer added (social and economic) value to our city region through 'bigger, fewer and better' courses. Our second tier of prioritisation therefore focuses on student groups related to our strategic priority areas of provision, where interventions can be applied and evaluated over the period of this plan.

The Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) in our analysis

The EORR has informed our assessment throughout. It has helped us to focus our analysis on particular areas where students might face risks to equality of opportunity. In addition to analysing the OfS's APP dataset, we have conducted a thorough analysis of multiple internal and external datasets to further assess the extent to which the risks outlined in the EORR manifest in our student population. However, we acknowledge that the absence of data supporting the risks does not mean these are not present across our student groups. This review included but was not limited to the following datasets:

Lifecycle stage	Risk	Additional datasets
Access	Risk 1: Knowledge and skills Risk 2: Information and guidance Risk 3: Perception of higher education Risk 4: Application success rates Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode	Progression to HE rate in Southampton* UCAS data
On course	**Risk 6: Insufficient academic support** Risk 7: Insufficient personal support **Risk 8: Mental health** Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus **Risk 10: Cost pressures** Risk 11: Capacity issues	NSS2023 Academic support NSS2023 Mental well-being (communication of services) Withdrawals data- financial reasons
Progression	**Risk 12: Progression from higher education**	NSS 2023 Careers

*Data retrieved from Widening participation in higher education national dataset[7]

Our indications of risk to equality of opportunity for each stage of the student lifecycle have been developed using a range of national, regional and institutional data sources. In addition, we have considered a series of practicalities such as size and resource envelope, and our overarching institutional mission and goals. Together these three elements – evidence, resource and mission - have informed our judgement about which risks to equality of opportunity and gaps in performance should be prioritised in our interventions. We have endeavoured to capture the key elements of this decision-making process in the narrative below.

Qualitative insights

In addition to assessing our risks based on the data, we have also conducted a series of workshops with students and staff to gather qualitative insights on our risks. The workshops focused on which of the risks might apply to our population and context, how these manifest and whether there might be other risks not currently included in the EORR.

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[7] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education

Participants in the focus groups reflected that Solent University has consistently provided high-quality teaching, well-maintained campus facilities, a harmonious and inviting learning environment, and sufficient student support services. Examples included prompt responses to academic inquiries, obliging staff and students, and effective mental health services.

On the other hand, students also highlighted barriers and suggested additional support to enhance their university experience and educational journey. They recommended personalized support, social events to foster an inclusive community, and mental health promotion. These opinions have been considered at various stages of intervention planning.

Our key risks

Risk 1: There is a persistently lower proportion of entrants from IMDQ12 (most deprived) at Solent compared to the sector average (FT First Degree).
Risk 2: There is a lower proportion of entrants from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to sector averages and the city region population.
Risk 3: There is a lower continuation rate of students from IMDQ12 when compared to IMDQ345.
Risk 4: There is a lower continuation rate of students from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to White students.
Risk 5: There are persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree ABMO students and those awarded to their white student counterparts, with ABMO students performing less well across a range of programmes.
Risk 6: There are persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree students from IMDQ12 areas and those from IMDQ345 areas, with IMDQ12 students performing less well across a range of programmes.
Risk 7: There are persistent differences between the progression outcomes of IMDQ12 graduates (most disadvantaged) and those from IMDQ345 (least disadvantaged).
Risk 8: There are persistent differences between the progression outcomes of graduates from ABMO ethnic backgrounds students when compared to their White counterparts.

Objectives

Through our assessment of performance, we have identified several indications of risk for our two target groups of ABMO and IMDQ12 students. Based on our data analysis and the identified gaps for both groups across all stages of the student lifecycle, we strongly believe that taking a holistic approach to the student journey for these student groups will achieve the best outcomes for them to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. We will therefore be supporting both student groups from pre-entry through to graduation to close the gaps and ensure that progress made in one area of their student journey is tracked through and results in positive outcomes for the other lifecycle stages as well.

Indication of risk 1: There is a persistently lower proportion of entrants from IMDQ12 (most deprived) at Solent compared to the sector average (FT First Degree). There is a lower proportion of entrants from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to sector averages and the city region population.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Knowledge and skills; Information and guidance; Perceptions of higher education; Application success rate; Ongoing impact of coronavirus; Cost pressures

Objective 1: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to access Higher Education by 2028/29.

Targets:
Solent University will increase the access proportion of ABMO full-time first degree entrants to 34.5% by 2028/9, in line with the sector average.
Solent University will increase the access proportion of IMDQ12 full-time first degree entrants to 44% by 2028/9, in line with the sector average.

Indication of risk 2: There is a lower continuation rate of students from IMDQ12 when compared to IMDQ345. There is a lower continuation rate of students from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to White students.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Insufficient academic support; Insufficient personal support; Mental health

Objective 2: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to continue and complete their degree by 2028/29.

Targets:
Solent University will reduce the continuation gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028/9.
Solent University will reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028/9.

Indication of risk 3: There are persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree ABMO students and those awarded to their white student counterparts, with ABMO students performing less well across a range of programmes. There are persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree students from IMDQ12 areas and those from IMDQ345 areas, with IMDQ12 students performing less well across a range of programmes.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Insufficient academic support; Insufficient personal support; Mental health

Objective 3: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to attain a degree award that reflects their academic capabilities by 2028/29.

Targets:
Solent University will reduce the attainment gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028/9.
Solent University will reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028/9.

Indication of risk 4: There are persistent differences between the progression outcomes of IMDQ12 graduates (most disadvantaged) and those from IMDQ345 (least disadvantaged).
There are persistent differences between the progression outcomes of graduates from ABMO ethnic backgrounds students when compared to their White counterparts.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.

Objective 4: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to progress from their studies to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience by 2028/29.

Targets:

Solent University will reduce the progression gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028/9.
Solent University will reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028/9.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: Access

Objectives and targets

Objective 1: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to access Higher Education by 2028/29.

PTA_1: Increase the access proportion of ABMO full-time first degree entrants to 34.5% by 2028/9, in line with the sector average.
PTA_2: Increase the access proportion of IMDQ12 full-time first degree entrants to 44% by 2028/9, in line with the sector average.

Risks to equality of opportunity

EORR risk 1 Knowledge and skills
EORR risk 2 Information and guidance
EORR risk 3 Perceptions of higher education
EORR risk 4 Application success rate
EORR risk 9 Ongoing impact of coronavirus
EORR risk 10 Cost pressures

Access

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
All	-	-	Greater rates (volume and proportion) of applicants and conversion from IMD Q12 and ABMO applicants to higher education or to/at Solent University	Yes
Contextual admission	An established programme. Based on applicant information received via UCAS and a self-declaration form, Solent reduces entry requirements (by up to 32 UCAS tariff points) for applicants meeting set criteria, with additional support provided in the form of specific contextual applicant transition events, parent/carer information events, teacher CPD events and £500 scholarship to support the cost of living. Targeted applicants and prospects from IMD Q1/2 areas (main focus) in addition to those from POLAR 4 Q1 areas, Care leavers/looked-after children, Disabled learners, young carers, refugees, GRT communities, military families, estranged learners, and those who attend low performing secondary schools (based on the Progress 8 score). To ensure that students admitted through contextual admission receive sufficient support, Solent will continuously track their university experiences, course attendance, student retention, and academic performance.	Solent Staff time (to administrate, deliver linked activities, and evaluate) x4 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges (who engage in events and support participants). Student's time to attend webinars and information sharing events. Student's time to complete UCAS applications and apply.	Improved (potential) applicants' prospect knowledge of Higher Education and confidence in receiving an offer successfully. Enhanced (potential) applicants' awareness of Solent's contextual admission and available options. Increased parent/carer knowledge of contextual admission and available support. Increased teacher and career advisers' knowledge of contextual admission, entry requirements, and scholarship.	Yes
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 1: Contextual Admission for more details			
Scholarship	An established programme awarding applicants, who meet set criteria, financial support including tuition fee discounts and funding to support with the cost of living.	Solent Staff time – x3 Widening Participation Team Members.	Increased higher education choices not limited by financial need.	Yes

Access

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	Any student is only eligible for one scholarship type in any single academic year. Current scholarships include the Contextual Offer Scholarship and the BAME Scholarship.	Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges.		
GRIT workshop: Young leaders	A new programme (Future Leaders) in collaboration with charity **Grit**, working with learners in years 10 to 13. This programme supports participants' educational journey and helps them in achieving their full potential, with a focus on transforming self-beliefs and highlighting opportunities within higher education. Predominantly targeted at 17 partner schools/colleges within the Southampton Education Forum and Hampshire/Dorset/Isle of Wight colleges/sixth forms, with a focus on Asian, Black, Mixed and Other students.	Solent Staff time (to administrate, deliver linked activities, and evaluate) x4 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges.	Enhanced self-esteem to recognize and value personal strengths and abilities. Improved prospect knowledge of Higher Education and Solent University.	Yes
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 2: GRIT workshop: Young Leaders (Pre-entry) for more details			
Step into Success Programme (Year 5-13)	An established programme, working with learners in years 5 to 13. This is a progressive multi-activity programme comprising of workshops, assemblies, campus visits, events and 1-1 careers guidance (CEIAG), all focussed around widening participation themes, careers/education progression and attainment raising. Also supports professionals and parents/carers via CPD and information events. Predominantly targeted at 14 partner schools within the Southampton Education Forum, with a focus on underrepresented groups (in particular IMD Q1/2 and ABMO communities).	Solent Staff time (to administrate and deliver linked activities) x3 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges.	Improved participant knowledge of Higher Education (specifically the benefits, opportunities available, UCAS application process and what it is like to study at university).	Supports Contextual Admissions Intervention Strategy

Access

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
More Maths Programme (Year 5-12)	An established programme, working with learners in years 5 to 11. This programme is a series of longitudinal small group maths tuition activities and revision events (on and off campus) aiming to raise GCSE attainment in Southampton. Content focusses on key GCSE topics and widening participation themes. Predominantly targeted at low performing secondary schools in Southampton, with a focus on underrepresented groups (in particular IMD Q1/2, ABMO communities and Looked After Children) and the Bevois ward. 300 annual participants.	Solent Staff time (to administrate and deliver linked activities) x3 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges.	Increased Maths knowledge. Enhanced academic self-efficacy in Maths. Improved Progress 8 attainment in partner schools for disadvantaged learners.	Supports Contextual Admissions Intervention Strategy.
Ready Readers Programme (Year 5-6)	An established programme, working with learners in years 5 to 6. This programme takes place over a 6-week period, where trained staff volunteers and education studies students (Book Buddies) read with learners in Southampton Primary Schools aiming to increase literacy levels. Predominantly targeted at 3 low performing primary schools in Southampton, with a focus on underrepresented groups (in particular IMD Q1/2 and ABMO communities). 50 annual participants.	Solent Staff time (to administrate, deliver linked activities, and evaluate) x3 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges.	Increased literacy (reading, writing, and use of vocabulary) levels in partner schools for disadvantaged learners.	Yes
Step into Solent Post-16 Programme (Year 12-13)	A developing programme, working with learners in years 12 to 13. Activities include large scale campus visits, a contextual offers programme (including contextual offer holder specific events and a scholarship), parent/carer events, transition events for applicants (focussed around widening participation themes), 1-1 careers guidance (CEIAG), Interview/Audition/Portfolio support and	Solent Staff time (to administrate, deliver linked activities, and evaluate) x4 Funding/finance to operate. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in	Improved participant knowledge of Higher Education (specifically the benefits, opportunities available, UCAS application process and what it is like to study at university).	Supports Contextual Admissions Intervention Strategy

Access

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	awarding of scholarships (contextual offer holders and ABMO students). Predominantly targeted at 5 partner colleges/sixth forms within the Southampton Education Forum and Hampshire/Dorset/Isle of Wight colleges/sixth forms, with a focus on underrepresented groups (in particular IMD Q1/2 and ABMO communities).	schools and colleges (who engage in events and support participants).		

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£751,000 total costs per year comprising £643,000 in staff costs £36,000 in operational costs per year and £72,000 evaluation costs. £3,143,000 total costs over four years.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

O'Sullivan et al. (2019) discuss how disadvantaged students on a Foundation course felt upon deciding to study at a university in the United Kingdom. Students shared a consensus that, as they were from educational establishments that were not 'challenging' enough, they would be automatically rejected from the university and felt a lack of guidance from their schools as to how the process moved forwards. This points to universities' responsibility to support prospective students in better understanding and accessing higher education and working with schools and parents and carers to achieve this.

Wilson (2022) highlights how targeted efforts can better support application rates, especially in addressing diversity and the impact of barriers. For example, this can be achieved by organizing experience weeks, where students from disadvantaged backgrounds are invited to explore and experience life at a university. These have been shown to improve both the application rates among these students and the success of their applications.

Dale-Harris (2019) shares the opinions of students across the United Kingdom in relation to higher education. Of all students who participated, seventy-two per cent of them thought that university admissions should consider a prospective student's personal background. Many of the students believed that growing up in a disadvantaged area meant that it may be harder to achieve 'good' A Levels – a thought which both advantaged and disadvantaged students shared. Considine and Zappalà (2002) have suggested that children from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to show poorer educational outcomes compared to their affluent peers, such as lower levels of literacy, numeracy, and comprehension, as well as lower

higher education participation rates. Parents in wealthier areas can afford more learning materials, recruit additional teachers for their children, and have more power to negotiate with schoolteachers and other decision-making bodies (Gorski, 2017).

Looking through the lens of ethnicity, McCabe et al. (2022) identify barriers and facilitators to university access. The authors suggest that disadvantaged students from ABMO and white backgrounds both reported similar reasons for applying to university such as getting a good qualification and career, as well as similar barriers such as financial issues. Cotton et al. (2015) found that students from minority ethnic groups tend to have higher extrinsic learning motivation, driven by factors such as family pressure and career stability, whereas White students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated by personal interest and development. This focus on external factors may indicate that students from ethnic minority backgrounds engage less deeply in their courses and adopt more surface-level approaches to their studies.

Given the above evidence, there is a wider gap in academic performance between economically disadvantaged students and their affluent peers. Therefore, reducing entry requirements for students from IMDQ12 backgrounds can mitigate the financial impact on these students and promote equality of opportunity. Additionally, Solent will conduct a series of activities to invite participants, primarily students from IMDQ12 backgrounds or minority ethnicities, to experience learning and developmental activities in university environments. This approach will enable Solent to provide learning support, application guidance, and enhance participants' knowledge of higher education. As a result, Solent anticipates higher application rates and improved application-to-enrolment conversion rates among these potential students.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
All	Rationales, Process and Implementation of intervention	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	See below
All	Greater rates (volume and proportion) of applicants and conversion from IMDQ12 and ABMO applicants to higher education or to/at Solent University	Type 1: Monitor the access rate of IMDQ12 students and the gap compared to the sector average	See below

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Contextual admission	1. Improved (potential) applicants' prospect knowledge of Higher Education and confidence in receiving an offer successfully 2. Enhanced (potential) applicants' awareness of Solent's contextual admission and available options 3. Increased parent/carer knowledge of contextual admission and available support 4. Increased teacher and career advisers' knowledge of contextual admission, entry requirements, and scholarship	Type 2: Pre and post activity surveys Type 1: Monitor the access rate of IMDQ12 students and the gap compared to the sector average Type 1/3: Ongoing tracking of continuation and attainment status of the entrants through contextual offers. Explore the possibility to analyse the data with propensity score matching and Regression Discontinuity Design	Publish evaluation report with two years of data in 2027 (Sept 2025 and 2026 entrants) and 2029 (Sept 2027 and 2028 entrants) via Solent University's website. The analysis of continuation status and academic performance will be updated once the data is available. Monitoring and reporting progress internally on an annual basis.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 1: Contextual Admission for more details		
GRIT workshop: Young leaders	1. Enhanced self-esteem 2. Improved prospect knowledge of Higher Education and Solent University	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure self-esteem and knowledge of higher education; Post survey to collect satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations Type 2: Monitor the number of attendees progressed into higher education by HEAT	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of next academic year via Solent University's website. However, if the sample size is too small, outcome analysis will be conducted after combining data from multiple years.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 2: GRIT workshop: Young Leaders (Pre-entry) for more details		
Step into Success Programme (Year 5-13)	1. Improved prospect knowledge of Higher Education	Type 2: Pre- and Post-surveys to measure knowledge about higher education, satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be attached to the contextual admission report.
More Maths Programme (Year 5-12)	1. Increased Maths knowledge 2. Enhanced academic self-efficacy in Maths	Type 2: Pre- and Post-surveys to measure academic self-efficacy in Maths; Post survey to collect satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be attached to the contextual admission report.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Step into Solent Post-16 Programme (Year 12-13)	1. Improved participant knowledge of Higher Education	Type 2: Pre- and Post-surveys to measure agreement on the knowledge about higher education; Post survey to collect satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be attached to the contextual admission report.

Intervention strategy 2: Continuation and Completion

Objectives and targets

Objective 2: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to continue and complete their degree by 2028/29.

PTS_1: Reduce the continuation gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028
PTS_2: Reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028

Risks to equality of opportunity

EORR Risk 6: Insufficient academic support
EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support
EORR Risk 8: Mental health

Continuation and Completion

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
All	-	-	Increased continuation and completion Reduced gaps in the continuation and completion rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 and ABMO vs White backgrounds	-
Peer mentoring	This new programme pairs first-year students (level 4 - mentee) with senior peers (level 5 - mentor) from similar backgrounds for mentorship. Following training and receiving session recommendations for both mentors and mentees, mentees are encouraged to discuss academic and personal challenges with their mentors. Participants will engage in a minimum of 4 conversation sessions, with attendance recorded using specialized software. Mentors will be offered equal compensation for their participation.	Solent Staff time (to administrate, promote, deliver, and evaluate) University funding for the project Operation and maintenance of online mentoring platform Training materials and workshop resources	Enhanced sense of belonging at Solent Enhanced connection with peers Increased engagement in other activities	Yes (Attainment)
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 3: Peer mentoring (Mentee - L4 & Mentor - L5) for more details			
GRIT workshop: Resilience	This is a new programme for first-degree course entrants studying in foundation year or year 1 (Year 0/ level 4). It supports participants in their educational journey and helps them develop appropriate coping strategies, with a focus on handling personal and academic challenges. Targeted participants include students from ABMO or IMDQ12 backgrounds, with priority given to those identified as having lower resilience.	University funding for the project Solent staff time (to administrate, promote, deliver, and evaluate) Collaboration with GRIT and Students' Union Suitable venue to hold sessions and catered lunch	Enhanced sense of community, sense of belonging, resilience skills, and connection with peers Increased awareness of support available	Yes
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 4: GRIT workshop: Resilience (L0/L4) for more details			

Continuation and Completion

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
GRIT workshop: Leadership	This is a developing programme for first-degree course students studying in second year (level 5). It supports participants in their educational journey and helps them develop leadership skills, with a focus on self-leadership for personal academic success and the ability to lead others. This training also aims to prepare participants to become mentors in the mentoring programme. Targeted participants include students from ABMO or IMDQ12 backgrounds.	University funding for the project Solent staff time (to administrate, promote, deliver, and evaluate) Collaboration with GRIT and Students' Union Suitable venue to hold sessions and catered lunch	Enhanced leadership skills to coach and support others	Yes (Attainment)
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 5: GRIT workshop: Leadership (L5) for more details			
Trailing modules	A data informed proactive activity which identifies and provides tailored and proactive support to students with trailing modules. All TM students receive contact from the Student Achievement Team (SAT) at the start of the year providing them with an explanation of their outstanding work and relevant IAG (including advertisement of targeted workshops). Academics are contacted by SAT to highlight students and encourage further engagement and support with studies. SAT offer TM workshops providing advice and guidance in an alternative format. Workshops focus on study planning, making good use of feedback and the benefits of engaging with support services. Target groups are prioritised for contact.	Data analysis resource Staff time to review and continuously improve resources and communication templates/scripts Staff time to design and deliver workshops Staff time to make personalised contact with students This forms part of BAU activities for the Student Achievement Team (no additional budget)	Increased percentage of students successfully contacted Improved percentage of students passing their trailing modules Reduced number of students who are withdrawn as a result/receive irretrievable deficits	Yes (Attainment)

Continuation and Completion

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Suspended Returners	A data informed proactive activity identifying and providing personalised and sustained support to students who will be returning from a period of suspension (interruption). Support process begins prior to return to studies and sustained contact is made throughout the academic year at key points. Students receive tailored IAG, signposting and referral to other relevant support services and are provided with a range of support resources. Target groups are prioritised for contact.	Data analysis resource Staff time to review and continuously improve resources and communication templates/scripts Staff time to make personalised contact with students This forms part of BAU activities for the Student Achievement Team (no additional budget)	Increased number of students that return from suspension and achieve pass/pass proceed/proceed with deficit results Improved attainment and continuation to next year rates for students returning following suspension of their studies	Yes (Attainment)
Academic Referral	This activity encourages academics and other staff in key departments to identify students who are at risk of not continuing or achieving due to circumstances affecting their study that do not come under other SAT initiatives. The circumstances identified will have led to a sudden drop in engagement, general poor engagement and/or not preparing or handing in assignments. Referrals provide an opportunity for proactive intervention to offer students tailored advice and support. Target groups are prioritised for contact.	Data analysis resource Staff time to review and continuously improve resources and communication templates/scripts Staff time to manage referrals Staff time to make personalised contact with students and appropriate referrals to other support services This forms part of BAU activities for the Student Achievement Team (no additional budget)	Improved number of students triaged for contact Improved continuation to next year rates for students successfully supported Improved retention and continuation to next year rates for those successfully contacted	Yes (Attainment)

Continuation and Completion

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Repeat Module	This activity aims to identify students who are at risk of under achieving and/or not proceeding at the end of their Repeat Module year. SAT support these students while promoting academic achievement and continuation. • Offer individual IAG to inform re-enrolment decisions. • Offer induction sessions in both semesters to highlight expectations and support available. • Offer re-engagement meetings (1:1's) as requested by students. • Send supportive emails throughout the year to offer support and advice. Target groups are prioritised for contact.	Data analysis resource Staff time to review and continuously improve resources and communication templates/scripts Staff time to make personalised contact with students Evaluation resource This forms part of BAU activities for the Student Achievement Team (no additional budget)	Improved percentage of level 3, 4 and 5 RM students eligible to progress Improved percentage of level 6 RM students achieving good honours Improved percentage of students retained	Yes (Attainment)

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£624,000 total costs per year comprising £35,000 in staff costs, £517,000 in operational costs per year and £72,000 evaluation costs. £2,538,000 total costs over four years.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Dropping out of university results from a comprehensive decision-making process involving several contributing factors. A combination of sociological and psychological models suggests that academic and social integration are the major contributors to student retention and academic achievement (Behr et al., 2020). Academic integration refers to students' grades and the internalization of academic norms and values. Due to differences in teaching and learning approaches between tertiary education and secondary school, students may withdraw from university if they are unable to detach from past associations and adapt to the values and norms in the new academic environment. On the other hand, social integration includes interactions with peers and participation in extracurricular activities. Poor experiences in social interactions within the university can lead to the development of insufficient psychosocial characteristics, such as a low sense of belonging, reduced learning motivation, and ineffective coping strategies. These negative psychosocial outcomes can impact student retention.

University students face several stressors during their academic journey, such as academic concerns. However, students from ABMO backgrounds often encounter a wider range of psychosocial stressors, including underrepresentation in programmes, social isolation, and racial discrimination (Olaniyan, 2021). Students from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to follow more traditional educational pathways compared to their peers from lower backgrounds (Muller & Schneider, 2013). Jensen (2010) pointed out that economically disadvantaged students encounter daily challenges that their affluent peers have never experienced, reflecting child poverty is a major threat to student mental health (Pariat et al., 2014). The transition to higher education has a more significant impact on students from socio-economically disadvantaged or minority ethnic backgrounds compared to their peers.

Masika and Jones (2016) suggested that universities can cultivate a sense of belonging through academic and extracurricular provisions. According to Kahu et al. (2022), this helps instil a sense in students that "university, their discipline, and course were "right" for them", which has positive effects on student retention rates. Takdir et al. (2020) found that having community groups around students that they feel they belong to can strengthen their self-efficacy. This has been echoed by many researchers, across many age groups and many countries. Wilcox et al. (2005) also suggested that making compatible friends was one of the most important aspects to UK university student retention.

Given the above evidence, there is a clear need to enhance students' sense of belonging by implementing interventions that facilitate social interaction and academic community building within the university. Velden et al. (2023) found that the best way to improve belonging among minority groups was to host a peer mentor programme with a focus on diversity and inclusion. Simultaneously, developing positive psychological characteristics related to academic integration, such as resilience and academic self-efficacy, can support students throughout their university journey. Furthermore, Solent will enhance the quality of existing business-as-usual approaches to help students progress into their second year of study.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
All	Rationales, Process and Implementation of intervention	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	See below
All	Increased continuation and completion rates Reduced gap in the continuation and completion rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 and ABMO vs White	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the continuation and completion rate. For peer mentoring and GRIT workshops, compare the continuation and completion status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released	See below
Peer mentoring	1. Enhanced sense of belonging at Solent 2. Enhanced connection with peers	Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales. Explore the possibility of employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	3. Increased engagement in other activities	Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need Type 2/3: Post intervention engagement record in other activities. Explore the possibility of employing Propensity score matching.	26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of continuation and completion data will be updated once the data is available in 27/28 and 30/31, respectively. These reports will be shared with relevant sector networks, and findings will be presented at the appropriate sector forums.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 3: Peer mentoring (Mentee - L4 & Mentor - L5) for more details		
GRIT workshop: Resilience	1. Enhanced sense of community 2. Enhanced sense of belonging 3. Enhanced resilience 4. Increased awareness of support available 5. Enhanced connection with peers	Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales. Explore the possibility of employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of continuation and completion data will be updated once the data is available in 27/28 and 30/31, respectively.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 4: GRIT workshop: Resilience (L0/L4) for more details		
GRIT workshop: Leadership	1. Enhanced leadership skills to coach and support others	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure leadership skills. Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need. The qualitative data collected from peer mentoring post-survey and focus group may also provide evidence to support the effectiveness of the leadership workshop.	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 5: GRIT workshop: Leadership (L5) for more details		
Trailing modules	1. Increased percentage of students successfully contacted 2. Improved percentage of students passing their trailing modules	Type 1: Number and percentage of students successfully contacted, passing trailing modules, and withdrawn, with a breakdown by ethnicity and IMD	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year via Solent University's website.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	3. Reduced number of students who are withdrawn as a result/receive irretrievable deficits.		
Suspended Returners	1. Increased number of students that return from suspension and achieve pass/pass proceed/proceed with deficit results 2. Improved attainment and progression to next year rates for students returning following suspension of their studies	Type 1: Number and percentage of targeted students successfully contacted, achieving a pass, and returning from suspension, with a breakdown by ethnicity and IMD	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year via Solent University's website.
Academic Referral	1. Improved number of students triaged for contact 2. Improved progression to next year rates for students successfully supported 3. Improved retention and progression to next year rates for those successfully contacted	Type 1: Number and percentage of targeted students referred, successfully contacted, progressing into the next academic year, and completing their studies, with a breakdown by ethnicity and IMD	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year via Solent University's website.
Repeat Module	1. Improved percentage of level 3, 4 and 5 RM students eligible to progress 2. Improved percentage of level 6 RM students achieving good honours 3. Improved percentage of students retained	Type 1: Number and percentage of targeted students studying repeat modules who are eligible to progress to the next academic year, achieve good honours, and complete their studies, with a breakdown by ethnicity and IMD	The data will be reported in the self-evaluation toolkit and will be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year via Solent University's website.

Intervention strategy 3: Attainment

Objectives and targets

Objective 3: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to attain a degree award that reflects their academic capabilities by 2028/29.

PTS_3: Reduce the attainment gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028
PTS_4: Reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028

Risks to equality of opportunity

EORR Risk 6: Insufficient academic support
EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support
EORR Risk 8: Mental health

Attainment

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
All	-	-	Increased attainment rates Reduced gap in the attainment rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 Reduced gap in the attainment rates of ABMO students vs White students	-
Peer mentoring	Refer to Continuation and Completion section	See Continuation and Completion section	Enhanced academic self-efficacy Increased course attendance Higher academic performance compared to non-participants	Yes (Continuation and Completion)
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 3: Peer mentoring (Mentee - L4 & Mentor - L5) for more details			
GRIT workshop: Leadership	Refer to Continuation and Completion section	See Continuation and Completion section	Enhanced self-leadership Increased sense of responsibility Enhanced academic self-efficacy Enhanced academic performance	Yes (Continuation and Completion)
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 5: GRIT workshop: Leadership (L5) for more details			
Culturally Sensitive Curriculum	This is an ongoing academic research project at Solent first piloted in 2023/24. Previous research studies have discovered the positive impact of culturally sensitive curriculum design on educational experiences and academic outcomes. The project will continue to provide	Leadership Course/ Module leaders' participation in the masterclass series	Increased awareness of causes of differences in student experiences and outcomes by teaching staff	Yes

Attainment

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Scales (CSCS)	further findings in the upcoming academic years, aiming to develop culturally sensitive curricula and promote a diverse and inclusive learning environment at Solent. The project includes annual data collection through the Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales (CSCS) to gather student perspectives on relevant aspects. Additionally, a masterclass series for teaching staff will be conducted to raise awareness of cultural issues and support them in developing skills and strategies to implement curriculum changes.	Participation of students to complete the CSCS survey to share their perspectives Data analysis of the data collected from CSCS Time to develop/deliver Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Masterclass Series	Teaching staff report increased agency to engage in conversations pertaining to educational justice Teaching staff develop skills, agency, knowledge and understanding to effect curricula changes to make them more culturally sensitive Enhanced engagement of ABMO students with the curriculum Culturally competent educators (those with the confidence and cultural intelligence to deliver advance social justice in their curriculum and pedagogical practices (especially White educators)) Curricula perceived as more culturally sensitive by all students (especially ABMO students)	
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 6: Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales for more details			

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£80,000 total costs per year comprising £8,000 in operational costs per year and £72,000 evaluation costs. £313,000 total costs over four years. The operational spend is lower for this intervention strategy compared to others as costs have already been accounted for in the other intervention strategies as we are taking a full student lifecycle approach to our interventions.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Robbins et al. (2004) conducted a meta-analysis and found that cognitive indicators account for only 25% of the variance in academic performance. It indicates that some non-cognitive factors could contribute to the remaining unexplained variance, such as motivation, self-efficacy, learning goals (Alhadabi & Karpinski, 2020), health behaviours, mental health (Peltzer & Pengpid, 2014), teaching support and curriculum design (Bovill et al., 2011).

Numerous research studies have identified socio-economic inequality as one of the key factors influencing academic achievement. Dustmann (2004) indicated a strong relationship between parental backgrounds and the educational journey of children in secondary school, influencing success in tertiary education. Jensen (2010) pointed out that economically disadvantaged students encounter daily challenges that their affluent peers have never experienced. To accept less-than-ideal situations, they have developed corresponding cognitive patterns and coping mechanisms. This fixed mindset serves as a setback to their academic achievement.

Cotton et al. (2015) conducted a focus group to understand the gender and ethnicity attainment gap in UK universities. The findings revealed that students from minority ethnic groups tend to have higher extrinsic motivation, driven by factors such as family pressure and career stability, whereas White students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated by personal interest and development. This focus on external factors may indicate that students from ethnic minority backgrounds engage less deeply in their courses and adopt more surface-level approaches to their studies, highlighting the need to enhance intrinsic learning motivation among these students. A growing body of research shows that if students perceive curricula as more culturally sensitive, they become more interested in the material and develop better relationships with their teachers (Thomas & Quinlan, 2023; 2021; Quinlan et al., 2024). This increased interest and improved student-teacher relationships can positively influence their educational experiences and outcomes. Existing literature suggests that such interest and relationships are predictors of academic attainment. Additionally, research indicates that supporting teachers in developing confidence and agency to engage in social justice education may improve educational experiences for racially diverse learners.

Given the above evidence, Solent University aims to cultivate an inclusive learning environment and a culturally sensitive curriculum by offering relevant training to teaching staff and annually assessing and improving curriculum design. Additionally, it is necessary to support non-cognitive factors to enhance the academic performance of targeted groups. This includes interventions to develop positive psychological characteristics, such as self-leadership skills and academic self-efficacy, and efforts to build an academic community to reduce the sense of social isolation.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
All	Rationales, Process and Implementation of intervention	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	See below
All	Increased attainment rates Reduced gap in the attainment rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 and ABMO vs White	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the attainment rate. For peer mentoring and GRIT workshops, compare the attainment status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released	See below
Peer mentoring	1. Enhanced academic self-efficacy 2. Increased course attendance 3. Higher academic performance compared to non-participants	Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales. Explore the possibility of employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need Type 2/3: Pre-post comparison utilizing course attendance data collected internally. Explore the possibility of utilizing Interrupted Time-series Design to analyze the longitudinal attendance data	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of attainment rates and status will be updated once the data is available in 27/28. These reports will be shared with relevant sector networks, and findings will be presented at the appropriate sector forums.
	*Refer to <u>Annex B, Workstream 3: Peer mentoring (Mentee - L4 & Mentor - L5)</u> for more details		
GRIT workshop: Leadership	1. Enhanced self-leadership 2. Increased sense of responsibility 3. Enhanced leadership skills 4. Enhanced academic self-efficacy 5. Enhanced academic performance	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences in the programmes if there is a need	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of attainment rates and status will be updated once the data is available in 27/28.
	*Refer to <u>Annex B, Workstream 5: GRIT workshop: Leadership (L5)</u> for more details		
Culturally Sensitive Curriculum	1. Increased awareness of causes of differences in student experiences and outcomes by teaching staff	Type 2: Pre-post surveys will be provided to the teaching staff in the masterclass series	The research was presented at the Advance HE Learning and Teaching Conference 2024. The academic lead of this project plans to share additional

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Scales (CSCS)	2. Teaching staff report increased agency to engage in conversations pertaining to educational justice 3. Teaching staff develop skills, agency, knowledge and understanding to effect curricula changes to make them more culturally sensitive 4. Enhanced engagement of ABMO students with the curriculum, specifically: a) enhanced ABMO student interest in curriculum, and b) enhanced relationships between ABMO students and teachers 5. Culturally competent educators (those with the confidence and cultural intelligence to deliver advance social justice in their curriculum and pedagogical practices (especially White educators)) 6. Curricula perceived as more culturally sensitive by all students (especially ABMO students)	Type 2/3: Annual CSCS surveys to the students. Explore the possibility of comparing the results collected from the adjusted curricula with the previous cohorts/ non-adjusted curricula. Type 2: Semi-structured interviews for Module/Course Leaders in the next academic year to facilitate a more in-depth exploration of their experiences with curriculum adjustments in the previous year and provide insights into their planned approaches for the upcoming academic year. Type 1 and 3: Monitor the attainment rate. Compare the attainment status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released.	findings following the data collection and analysis from the research methods outlined, which will be implemented in the upcoming academic years.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 6: Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales for more details		

Intervention strategy 4: Progression

Objectives and targets

Objective 4: To ensure ABMO and IMDQ12 students have equal opportunities to progress from their studies to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience by 2028/29.

PTP_1: Reduce the progression gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028
PTP_2: Reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028

Risks to equality of opportunity

EORR Risk 12: Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.

Progression

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
All	-	-	Increased progression rates (proportion of graduates going into high-skilled employment or further study) Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 and ABMO vs White backgrounds	-
Professional mentoring	This developing programme pairs final-year students (level 6 - mentee) with professionals working in their desired industry. Following introduction for both mentors and mentees, mentees are encouraged to contact their mentors actively, prepare questions relevant to their career targets, and lead the discussion with their mentors. To ensure continuous participation, meeting attendance will be recorded in a CRM system.	Solent Staff time (to administrate, promote, deliver, and evaluate) University funding for the project Operation and maintenance of online mentoring platform Training materials and workshop resources	Increased self-confidence Increased self-esteem Enhanced employability skills Enhanced likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursue opportunities for career advancement Increased engagement with Solent Careers Team	Yes
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 7: Professional mentoring (L6) for more details			
GRIT: Employability	This is a new programme for final-year first degree students (level 6) to support their career planning and preparation for graduation. The programme focuses on enhancing participants' career aspirations and conducting a needs assessment to better align their development of skills and goals with the job market.	Venue for the sessions to run Information and enrolment sessions for students Staff time to co-deliver, promote, and evaluate the programmes with GRIT and Students' Union Catering and lunch	Enhanced self-advocacy Enhanced employability skills Enhanced sense of purpose Enhanced likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs Improved connection with peers	Yes

Progression

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	Targeted participants include students from ABMO or IMDQ12 backgrounds, with priority given to those identified as demonstrating higher levels of uncertainty in their career targets.			
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 8: GRIT workshop: Employability (L6) for more details			
Guaranteed interview scheme	All students who apply for a university-based campus job, who fall within the target groups will be guaranteed an interview for that position. It will be offered to all ABMO and IMDQ12 students. This is a new initiative.	Line managers of campus jobs time to interview Solent Careers staff time to support applications and interview process Solent Careers staff time to eligibility check all students before interview	Improved graduate outcomes of target groups due to the support provided in a practise environment. Improved career readiness survey results year-on-year due to students increasing their confidence in an interview environment.	Yes
Financial support for placements	All target group students ABMO and IMDQ12 will receive a bursary when they go on a placement. This placement can be of any length. This is a new initiative.	Student Funding team to set up and process bursaries Solent Careers to highlight the offer of the bursary to students	More students going on placements which will increase their graduate outcomes as they will be more employable due to the experience of the relevant workplace.	Yes
Advice and support for placements	All ABMO and IMDQ12 students who are on a yearlong placement option will receive specialist advice from the Solent Careers team. The team will provide guidance on sourcing a placement and securing it through the application and interview process. This is a new initiative.	Solent Careers team – time needed to provide IAG	More students from target groups to complete yearlong placements	Yes
Living CV	This is an ongoing initiative launched to support students' work readiness and encourage students to translate their learning outcomes into CV	Time of Living CV Champions in each department (academic staff)	Improved understanding of using Living CV	Yes

Progression

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
	outputs so that their implicit learning becomes explicit to themselves and potential employers. It is rooted in the idea that there is often a divergence between the students' perception of their learning and skills required to succeed in the workplace.	Time of Course and Module Leaders to embed Living CV in course content Students' time to complete Living CV	Increased self-confidence in creating a high-quality CV	
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 9: Living CV for more details			

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

£143,000 total costs per year comprising £36,000 in operational costs and £35,000 in staff costs per year and £72,000 evaluation costs. £552,000 total costs over four years.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

Nickson et al. (2012) found through employer interviews that they generally prioritize basic skills and personal attributes over formal qualifications or specialized, advanced skills. Newton et al. (2005) conducted an extensive literature review and original research to examine what qualities employers seek when hiring from the unemployed and economically inactive populations. The results indicated that if a candidate demonstrates employability and possesses soft skills, such as interpersonal and communication abilities, employers may not require technical skills or job-specific qualifications unless there are legislated requirements for the position.

A study conducted by the Institute of Student Employers (ISE) identified the top five employability skills UK employers prioritize in new graduates: communication, problem-solving, teamwork, critical thinking, and leadership. Additionally, employers place significant emphasis on other essential skills in new graduates, including adaptability, digital literacy, self-management, resilience, and initiative (Lowden et al., 2011).

Daly et al. (2015) pointed out that obtaining a degree does not always result in improved prospects, especially for graduates from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Many students graduate from university with student loans, leading to financial insecurity and reduced purchasing power if they cannot secure well-paying and stable employment. This situation can perpetuate a cycle of poverty.

Graduates from ABMO backgrounds may also encounter challenges in achieving career success. Ossenkop et al. (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews on professional career experiences with employees from ABMO backgrounds. The results showed that these graduates are less likely to

attain equal levels of career success in terms of pay and career advancement, leading to their cumulative disadvantage in progressing into managerial and professional careers.

In addition to employability skills, researchers have found that some psychosocial characteristics contribute to occupational outcomes. For instance, individuals with high self-confidence are more inclined to engage in leadership positions, actively participate in meetings, and pursue opportunities for career advancement, thereby increasing their prospects for career success (Jones, 2024). Moreover, a research study has shown that higher levels of self-esteem and self-worth are associated with an increased likelihood of success in career advancement (Hamzah et al., 2022).

Given the above evidence, developing a blend of general and industry-specific competencies can better prepare students for entry into their chosen fields upon graduation. To achieve this goal, Solent University aims to offer interventions that facilitate interactions between students and professionals in their desired careers, enhance students' career aspirations, and assist them in designing appropriate skill development plans. Furthermore, fostering positive psychosocial characteristics will enable students to effectively present themselves during interviews and in the workplace, thereby increasing their chances of securing professional roles and advancing their careers.

Evaluation

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
All	Rationales, Process and Implementation of intervention	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	See below
All	Increased progression rates Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 and ABMO vs White backgrounds	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the progression rate. For professional mentoring and GRIT workshop, compare the graduates' activities and employment skill level with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the graduate outcomes survey and OfS's data have been released	See below
Professional mentoring	1. Increased general self-confidence 2. Increased self-esteem 3. Enhanced employability skills 4. Enhanced self-confidence of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales (if available). Type 2/3: Post-intervention engagement record in Solent Careers. Explore the possibility of comparing with students from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences in the programmes if there is a need	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of progression rates and graduates' activities will be updated once the data is available in 27/28.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
	5. Increased engagement with Solent Careers		
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 7: Professional mentoring (L6) for more details		
GRIT: Employability	1. Enhanced employability skills 2. Increased self-advocacy 3. Enhanced sense of purpose 4. Enhanced likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement 5. Increased engagement with Solent Careers upon the establishment of career goals	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure employability, self-advocacy, sense of purpose, and likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences in the programmes if there is a need Type 2/3: Pre-post intervention engagement record in Solent Careers. Explore the possibility of comparing with students from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test)	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of progression rates and graduates' activities will be updated once the data is available in 27/28.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 8: GRIT workshop: Employability (L6) for more details		
Living CV	Improved understanding of using Living CV Increased self-confidence in creating a high-quality CV	Type 2: Pre-post surveys with self-designed items to measure the outcomes	Evaluation reports are planned to be made publicly available by the end of the next academic year (starting from 26/27) via Solent University's website. The analysis of progression rates and graduates' activities will be updated once the data is available in 27/28.
	*Refer to Annex B, Workstream 9: Living CV for more details		

Whole provider approach

We are committed to a whole provider approach to ensure the effective delivery of our access and participation activities. From the outset, we have involved our staff and student community in the development of the intervention strategies set out above bringing together subject expertise across disciplines and ensuring a shared responsibility for delivering the plan. Oversight and monitoring of our Access and Participation Plan is embedded in our academic and corporate governance structure.

Governance structure

The Pro-Vice Chancellor Students & Governance is responsible for the strategic direction of the APP. The People & Culture Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Governors, receives regular updates of progress against targets as well as being kept informed of the development of the new plan. The Board receives progress updates at its meetings through the Vice Chancellor and the Chair of the People & Culture Committee. The APP receives final approval from the Vice Chancellor as Accountable Officer and the Board of Governors.

The institutional lead for the APP is the Head of Student Success who chairs the APP Steering Group comprising members from across academic departments and Professional Services as well as the Students' Union. The Steering Group has oversight of the operational delivery of the current plan ensuring key milestones and targets are met and has supported the development of the new plan. The Steering Group reports into the Education Committee as well as the Equality & Wellbeing Committee to provide regular progress updates. In turn, Education Committee reports into Academic Board, where regular updates are also presented at every meeting.

In addition to this formal reporting route, regular updates are also provided at the following committees and groups as well as at all staff briefings to ensure the wider staff community are kept informed of developments: Vice Chancellor's Group (VCG); Student Board [meeting of student representatives with senior University staff]; Joint Executive Committee [meeting between VCG and the Students' Union Executive Team]; Heads of Professional Services Group; Academic Leadership Forum [Heads of academic departments], and Scholarships, Bursaries, Grants and Fees Governance Group.

Corporate Governance

The **Board of Governors** determines the strategic direction of the University. It is charged with determining the educational character and mission of the University; overseeing its activities; monitoring effective and efficient use of resources; safeguarding the solvency and assets of the University; and approving annual estimates of income and expenditure. It receives regular reports from the Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor's Group

- Audit Committee
- Finance and Resources
- Governance Committee
- People and Culture Committee
- Remuneration Committee

BOARD OF GOVERNORS ↔ **Vice-Chancellor** ↔ **ACADEMIC BOARD**

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S GROUP

Academic Governance

- Academic Strategy and Curriculum Committee
- Education Committee *
- Honorary Degrees Committee
- Research and Innovation Committee *
- Research Ethics and Integrity Committee
- Student Board
- Departmental Academic Committee

Academic Board is the University's senior academic authority and advises the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Governors on the strategic direction of the University's academic activities, academic risks and the overall effectiveness of services in support of the academic endeavour.

*Additional sub-committees not shown

Executive Management

- Business Advancement Group
- Capital Investment Development Committee
- Data Executive Board
- Equality and Wellbeing Committee
- Gift Acceptance Group
- Health and Safety Committee
- Heads of Professional Services Group
- Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee
- Joint University and Students Union Executive Committee
- Academic Leadership Team
- Risk Management Group
- Scholarships, Bursaries, Grants, Fees Governance Group
- SFR Governance Board
- Solent Pathway Campus Board
- Solent Sustainability Group
- UKVI Working Group

The **Vice-Chancellor's Group** is the University's most senior leadership team. The Group, is responsible for managing the University, developing and delivering strategic and operational plans, agreeing policies and ensuring implementation. It works in conjunction with Academic Board and reports to the Board of Governors on relevant matters. It also receives reports and takes forward action remitted by the Board of Governors.

Our approach to the development of this plan

We are committed to a whole institutional approach to the development and delivery of this plan. From its inception, this plan has been a shared endeavour of academic staff, Professional Services staff at all levels as well as students and the Students' Union.

The underpinning principles and intervention strategies of this plan were developed over four phases, each of which built on the findings from the previous phase:

Phase 1: Open consultation with students and staff	• Student and staff consultation workshops were held to identify current areas of risks across access, success, and progression • Fore fronting the lived experience of students in the target groups • Workshops identified which EORR risks were most applicable to Solent students • Based on literature reviews and sector practice, brainstorming potential interventions and solutions
Phase 2: Theories of Change and Assessment of Performance	• Assessment of Performance undertaken by Business, Planning and Insights

	• Theory of Change workshops held for each high-level intervention strategy with representation from subject areas with greatest gaps, Professional Services Leads and the Students' Union
Phase 3: Confirmation of approach	• Proposed interventions tested with student representatives
Phase 4: Approval of principles	• Regular updates presented to VCG, Education Committee and Academic Board from December until June • Summary of plan presented to People and Culture Committee, sub-committee of Board of Governors in June • Regular updates to all staff in VCG briefings and cascaded through Senior Leadership Team • Students' Union updated through committee meetings and regular fortnightly meetings with Head of Student Success and PVC Students & Governance

Our commitment to Equality and Wellbeing

At Solent University, we are proud of our commitment to Equality and Wellbeing. Our vision for Equality and Wellbeing[8] is a strategic, university-wide approach that ensures everyone is supported to thrive, succeed and achieve their potential in a way that resonates with them. To achieve this, we have developed a clear statement of commitment toward Equality and Wellbeing which serves as the foundation for creating an inclusive and thriving University community. We are proud to hold a Race Equality Charter Bronze Award.

We recognise that true excellence flourishes in an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered. We want to create a university community that champions both Equality and Wellbeing, ensuring that everyone can thrive and contribute their unique perspectives.

We achieve this through our Six Pillars of Equality and Wellbeing which include interventions and targets set out in the Access and Participation Plan.

Our approach to supporting students

At Solent we take a whole lifecycle approach to access and participation as demonstrated in the interventions set out above.

Our Access and Widening Participation Team deliver a series of initiatives in collaboration with local schools and colleges as highlighted in Intervention Strategy 1. This is supported by targeted

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[8] https://www.solent.ac.uk/about/mission-and-strategy/equality-diversity-and-inclusion

activities from our Recruitment Team working in collaboration with our Student Success Team, for example by delivering transition events with our Disability Support Team to ensure students with disabilities are aware of the support available pre-enrolment and can set this up prior to their arrival.

In 2023/24, Solent introduced Personal Tutoring and we will further build on this over the next years to ensure a holistic support model across academic and professional services staff.

Our student support teams cover the following areas:

- Student Funding [Bursaries and grants – we award £500,000 each year in bursaries and hardship funds, money management advice]
- Faith [independent faith advice for all religions; programme of events]
- Mental Health and Wellbeing [same day triage; Single Session Therapy; Block Counselling; in-curriculum workshops]
- Safeguarding [Report + Support; support for domestic violence, harassment, hate crime etc.]
- Disability Support [121 advice; Support Plans; transition events for applicants]
- Student Hub [one-stop shop for students' queries, same day triage]
- Student Achievement [Academic Referral; Leadership programme; support for returning interrupted students]
- Solent Careers [121 careers guidance; Campus Jobs; CV and interview skill support; professional mentoring; in-curriculum workshops]
- Solent Creatives [in-house free lance agency providing students with real-world work experience]

We are proud that our students can access our services when they need them; there are no waiting times for appointments with our Mental Health & Wellbeing Team and students can also access our 24/7 Student Assistance Programme. Mental Health and Wellbeing is a key priority in our strategy, and we are currently in the award process for the University Mental Health Charter. We deliver a series of events throughout the academic year focused on physical and mental wellbeing including a Wellbeing Support Fair and activities as part of the BRIT Challenge and University Mental Health Day.

We believe in a model of proactive student support – we continuously track and review service data to assess which students are accessing our services, how and when they are accessing them and identify gaps to ensure our service model evolves meeting student need. All support teams deliver in-curriculum workshops for students to ensure students are aware of the services available as well as to equip them with the skills needed to succeed during their studies.

We are proud to have been working with Grit:Breakthrough programmes, an independent charity, since 2022/23 whose workshops allow students to confront the root causes of why they think, feel and act the way they do, coming to terms with any unhelpful thinking patterns and clearing the way for them to create new ways of operating as they enter a new phase of their life. The breakthroughs in thinking which occur mean that new goals become possible, resilience develops, and new pro-social bonds are formed.
Building on our current Leadership programme for students of colour, we are excited to have developed a new innovative programme of activities with Grit that will span the whole student journey from pre-entry to graduation. Students from our target groups (ABMO and IMDQ12) will

have the opportunity to participate in a Grit workshop at each level of their study focused on a different theme: Future Leaders (Access, pre-entry) [IS1]; Resilience (L0/4) [IS2]; Leadership (L5) [IS2,3]; Employability (L6) [IS4]. This will enable us to take a holistic approach to supporting and developing students from target groups, building on each year while also providing a growing Grit peer community for students participating in this programme.

Student consultation

Co-creation with students and the Students' Union sits at the heart of all our activities to ensure we not only consult students on projects and policies but work with them as active partners to develop and review these. From the outset, Students' Union Sabbatical Officers were contributing to the development of this plan through the formal governance structure as members of relevant working groups and committees (as highlighted in committee chart) as well as being active participants in all the student and staff workshops (Phase 1) and the Theories of Change workshops (Phase 2). We believe that we produce the best outcomes for students when involving them and their representatives throughout the process and as such student feedback was continuous throughout the development of the interventions taking an agile approach to responding to student feedback in workshops and meetings.

As set out above, we commenced the development of this plan with student focus groups facilitated by our Student Partners to explore the lived experiences of underrepresented student groups. Students in attendance at the focus groups were from target groups. The findings from these focus groups fed into the subsequent staff workshops.

Students had the opportunity to feedback on the principles of the plan and the proposed interventions through the workshops, focus groups and their student representatives. Following the Theory of Change workshops, we presented the proposed interventions back to the students who attended the original focus groups (Phase 1) as well as to members of our Student Board for approval.

Our Student Partners are current students who support several projects across the institution, for example reviewing curriculum content ensuring it is inclusive, developing content for key activities such as Welcome or facilitating focus groups for strategic initiatives such as the APP and University Mental Health Charter.

The Student Partners played a key role in the development of this plan and will continue to support its delivery. Following approval of this plan, we believe that it is essential that students continue to be involved in the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of agreed interventions and are remunerated for this. Responsibility for ensuring this requirement is met will sit with each intervention project lead who will be supported by a Student Partner.

To ensure a consistent approach and implementation of this requirement, we have established a RAG rating of all agreed interventions to indicate where students are co-creating and -delivering and any areas of risks. The RAG rating is based on Cathy Bovill's Ladder of student participation widely used in curriculum design (Bovill, 2011) and has been simplified into five categories for reporting and monitoring purposes which will be overseen by the APP Steering Committee which includes representatives from the Students' Union.

Evaluation of the plan

Where we are and where we want to get to

We are committed to understanding and demonstrating the impact of our interventions. Our experience of delivering evaluation for our previous APP has informed our approach to both our intervention strategies overall and to the design and delivery of our evaluation strategy. We have reviewed our existing approach and identified the learnings we want to take forward. Additionally, we have worked specifically to upskill the project team in the importance of evaluation, how to integrate it to the design phase of our interventions and activities via the development of an evaluation framework. We have continuously identified the needs of the project team and provide corresponding knowledge-sharing sessions to ensure that the team has a clear understanding of the evaluation approaches and that their questions can be answered promptly. We will further expand on this work through active commitment with OfS Evaluation Self-assessment tools which will be a key part of our 2024-25 activity.

The evaluation team has worked closely with project teams in the development of intervention specific Theories of Change (ToCs), ensuring evaluation is considered at all stages and that outcomes are clearly defined and measurable. As a provider with a relatively small population size, we face challenges in implementing a randomized control trial, which typically requires a large sample size. Instead, we aim to utilize quasi-experimental design, which is more suitable within our institutional context.

To enhance eligibility to build a comparison group for implementing type 3 (Causal) evaluations, we intend to conduct annual institutional surveys to continuously measure key factors or outcomes articulated in our Theories of Change (ToCs) that contribute to student retention, academic performance, and career success following a literature review. This survey will be administered at key points of the academic year, seeking to ensure high response rates. This not only serves our evaluation purposes but also enables us to identify students at risk and enhance data availability for understanding the reasons behind performance gaps between groups among protected characteristics. Consequently, this will enrich our interpretation for future APP submissions.

In addition to the data collected from annual surveys, we will also conduct pre-post surveys. This approach is to enhance the flexibility of evaluation methods. Since type 3 evaluation requires specific grouping methodologies, it is challenging to determine a precise method until we have the population or participant data. For instance, if we recruit a large number of applicants for the intervention, we can divide them into control and treatment groups using a matched design. If the number of applicants is small, we can create the control group from the annual survey data, utilizing Propensity Score Matching. We will also explore analysing behavioural or objective data, such as course attendance, academic performance, and individual status on APP measures. This analysis could be conducted using Time-series Design or Regression Discontinuity Design, in addition to survey data. If Type 3 evaluation is not feasible, we can still produce robust Type 2 (Empirical Enquiry) evaluations using an A-B-A design and continuously monitor measures of proposed outcomes through the annual surveys or internal data.

Additionally, we will include qualitative questions in the post surveys to gain insights into the advantages and limitations of our interventions. While quantitative research methods can demonstrate whether the intervention achieves its intended outcomes, they cannot offer further explanation for the results. Based on the survey results, if there is a need to gain a deeper

understanding of the experiences of students and staff who engage with the interventions on specific topics, we will also invite participants and staff to share their experiences and comments through qualitative methods. This will include semi-structured interviews and focus groups, conducted after considering the qualitative comments provided in the survey and developing a detailed session plan for these qualitative approaches.

In addition to evaluating the outcomes, we will also assess the process of the intervention. TASO has recently released an Implementation and Process Evaluation (IPE)[9] framework and guidance, which will help us determine if our proposed interventions are delivered as intended. We will design an evaluation toolkit to allow practitioners to report the rationales of the intervention design with the literature reviews, document the planned implementation, and record how the intervention is actually delivered. This will enable us to provide strong Type 1 (Narrative) evidence and evaluate the process, for instance, the number of planned and actual participants, attendance, and the recruitment process.

Alongside reporting the rationales and evaluating the process, we will continuously cooperate with the practitioners to conduct simple pre- and post-surveys to collect data on the interventions that have been successfully implemented previously and report this data in the evaluation toolkit. This will allow the evaluator to focus on new or costly interventions while maintaining continuous monitoring of the intervention delivery.

To support the ongoing enhancement of our evaluation activities, we plan to utilise Solent's wider SRS and data foundations programme to improve several of our supporting tools and resources and better enable monitoring of outcomes.

Measuring the outcomes of our interventions

To ensure the collection of high-quality data and the production of robust analysis, we aim to utilize validated scales with high reliability and validity by reviewing the validation processes and statistical results from the literature. This approach will promote accurate measurement, enhance our understanding of the concepts underlying each proposed outcome outlined in the Theory of Change (ToCs), and help us prepare better interventions focused on improving these outcomes.

We have sought to enhance our monitoring capabilities so that we are better able to track progress and analyse performance with a view to developing a more responsive approach to how we understand student behaviours and experiences and how we design and deliver interventions.

To support this, we have developed an early indicators system that uses our internal data to monitor performance across key performance metrics, such as continuation and attainment at different levels and for different student groups. This enables us to identify and address risks to equality of opportunity in a proactive way, prior to the publication on the Access and Participation dashboard and other official datasets.

Furthermore, we are in the process of developing effective data analytics tools that will enable us to monitor and report 'lead' indicators, such as eligibility to progress, to identify risks even before they manifest on the key performance metrics used across the sector. These comprehensive tools

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[9] https://taso.org.uk/evidence/evaluation-guidance-resources/implementation-and-process-evaluation/

will also allow us to track and measure the success of our interventions throughout the student journey.

The University is in the final stages of implementing a new Student Records System and alongside this has reset and enhanced its data architecture. This will enable the collection of specific data to better understand student groups highlighted in the EORR for being at greater risk, such as estranged/care experienced, Gypsy and Roma students and service children. It is expected that the novel approach will have greater functionality to enable us to enhance existing tools and resources as well as conduct more effective cohort tracking.

Through this investment in resources and capability, we will develop a more detailed understanding of the student journey, including their engagement with specific interventions to address the risks to equality of opportunity. This will also allow us to assess the effect of our interventions on students' outcomes and their overall experience.

Enhancing evaluation capability

We will continue to enhance our evaluation capability across the University. A key part of this will be the delivery of the tools and resources being developed to support our monitoring activities outlined above. Alongside this our engagement with the OfS self-assessment tool will enable us to identify further opportunities for improvement and support Solent's evaluation team to better embed and implement our evaluation strategy. The following graph illustrates the self-assessment scores for our current situation and the targets we aim to achieve with the new plan. We have also outlined the steps necessary to achieve these scores, which include, but are not limited to: ongoing training for our practitioners and evaluators, continuous review of literature for intervention design, integration of research components (such as effect size, sample representativeness, data normality, and scale validation) into the evaluation process, risk assessment, and reflection on limitations and future improvements.
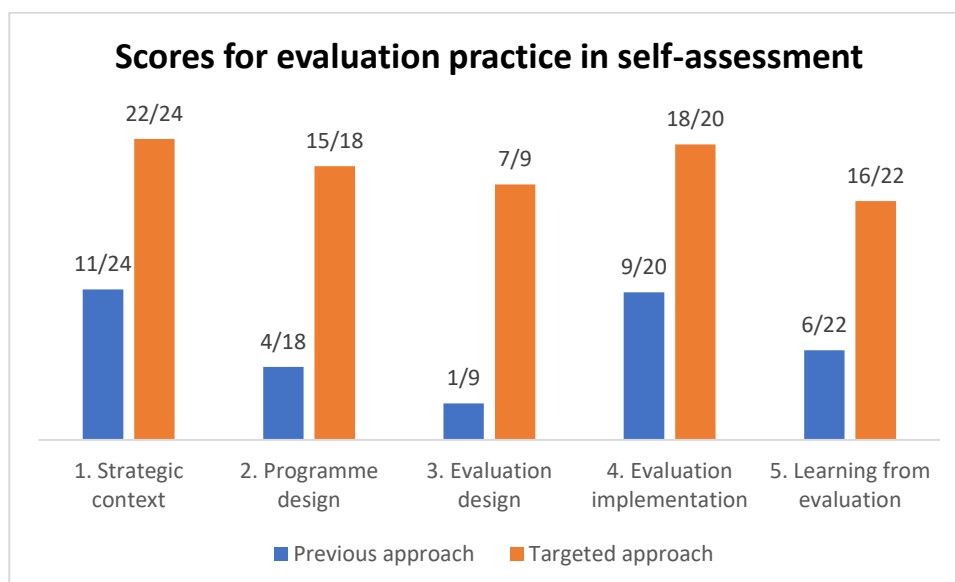
Solent's evaluation capability sits within the wider Business Planning & Insight team. This team has grown over the last two years and the University will consider strategic investments in this area as the number of interventions that will require robust evaluation increases. In addition, the Evaluation team will continue to actively participate in sector networks and relevant training opportunities to stay abreast of the latest developments in research and evaluation.

Provision of information to students

Prospective students can access information on fees and financial support on our website, and at events such as Open Days, and through school visits and other outreach activities.

Current students can also access information on fees and financial support on our website and receive tailored advice from our Student Funding team on available bursaries and grants. This information includes eligibility criteria, support levels and the method of assessment. Students in specific target groups receive tailored communications on financial support available and the Student Funding Team undertake course visits and are present during Welcome and other university-wide events to provide relevant information, advice and guidance.

We are committed to providing £481,000 in financial support to students prioritising students from the identified target groups.

Students can find information on bursaries and grants on our internal student portal page.

During the duration of the plan, we intend to streamline the number of bursaries and grants available to make these easier for students to navigate and move to a model where eligible students are automatically awarded relevant bursaries removing the onus of applying for these.

The following grants and bursaries are available to students:

Funding Type	Award	Eligibility Criteria	Frequency	Total Budget
Care Leavers Bursary	£1,500.00	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, aged under 25 on 1 of September of the first day of the course, have been assessed by Student Finance England as independent and have been looked after by any local authority for a period of 13 weeks between the age 14 and before your 18th birthday.	Annually	£35,000
Foyer Bursary	£1,500.00	A bursary is available to students who have lived in a Foyer Federation hostel or supported accommodation prior to the start of the course. To be eligible, students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full time undergraduate course, aged under 25 on 1 September of the first day of the academic year, have been assessed by SFE as independent, and have lived in a Foyer Federation hostel or supported accommodation.	Annually	£3,000
Estranged Student Bursary	£1,500.00	Students who are recognised as 'irreconcilably estranged' by Student Finance can apply to the University's estranged student's bursary for each year of their studies.	Annually	£60,000
GTRSB Bursary	£500.00	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, have disclosed GTRSB ethnicity on either the UCAS application or at enrolment, and have an SFE household income assessment of less than £25,000/receive the maximum maintenance loan.	Annually	£1,500
Carer's Bursary	£1,200.00	Eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, have received the maximum	Annually	£13,200

		maintenance loan that they are eligible for, and have significant caring responsibilities for a parent or immediate family member who they are either living with or living in close proximity to. The person you are caring for must be receiving PIP.		
Parent Bursary	£300.00	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, have received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for and receiving the Parents' Learning Allowance.	Annually	£30,600
Graduation Bursary	£50-£150	To be eligible, students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, and have received the maximum maintenance loan that that they are eligible for. Applications will be means tested based on the level of government maintenance loan received.	One-off	£15,000
Utilities Bursary	£175.00	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, have received the maximum maintenance loan, (indicating a parental/spousal income of under £25,000), living in the private rented sector, and have evidence of paying utility bills. Private halls of residence and Solent University halls of residence are excluded.	Annually	£27,050
Technology Bursary	£400.00	To be eligible, students must be new students, 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, have an SFE household income assessment of less than £25,000/receive the maximum maintenance loan.	One-off	£20,000
Accessible Needs Support Grant	£20 - £650	To be eligible, students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, and have received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for.	One-off	£14,000

Course Costs Support Grant	£50- £800	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course and have received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for.	Annually	£85,000
Financial Support Grant	£100 - £1,200	To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, and received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for (you must have received the first loan instalment before applying).	Annually	£123,000
Summer Financial Support Grant	£100 - £700	A grant is available to continuing students who receive state benefits or who are unable to work due to caring for dependants, or who have disability/medical or unforeseen circumstances (e.g. bereavement, sudden illness, repeat exams, etc).To be eligible students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full time undergraduate course, and have received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for.	Annually	£28,650
QAHE Financial Support Grant	£100- £1,200	To be eligible, students must have m fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, and receive the maximum maintenance loan they are eligible for. Students must have received the first loan instalment before applying.	Annually	£15,000
Unpaid Placement Support Grant	£50 - £600	Unpaid placements must be a minimum of 10 working days/100 course hours and up to 20 working days. To be eligible, students must be 'Home' fee status, be enrolled on a full-time undergraduate course, and have received the maximum maintenance loan that they are eligible for.	One-off	£10,000
Total				**£481,000**

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

Access

After applying the core selection criteria, a total of ten initial Access stage gaps were identified. The gaps were present across a range of modes and levels, with all of them being across the measures of disadvantage: IMD, POLAR4 and ABCS (see Annex A Table 1). After analysing the overlapping populations across the different measures of disadvantage, it was shown that IMD Q12 is the group that comprises most of the students in Q12 of the POLAR4 and ABCS measures.

With our recent portfolio changes in mind, three of the gaps were not deemed to be a priority focus and are therefore not included in this plan. In brief, our choice to exclude them relates to the fact that these gaps involve our smaller (Other UG) student population (see Annex A Table 2) and/or students on courses which are being taught out or are no longer running.

The remaining IMDQ345 vs IMDQ12 gaps relate to the overlapping FT All Undergraduate and FT First Degree populations. As almost all UG students at Solent are in the First-Degree group, we have chosen to focus on this population. We are confident given the population size that this is where we can have the greatest positive impact. The data shows that in the 2021/22 academic year our proportion of entrants from IMD Q12 (most deprived) areas was 5.8ppt lower than sector average. This is a persistent issue observed in the last 6 years (see Annex A Table 1).

Additionally, UCAS applicants from IMDQ12 areas have consistently had a lower application success rate compared to other quintiles across the years (see Annex A, Table 6). In the latest year (2023), the success rate for IMDQ1 applicants was 5.3 ppt lower than for IMDQ5 applicants, while the rate for IMDQ2 applicants was 4.4 ppt lower. These disparities have persisted since 2014, indicating that Solent has encountered EoRR Risk 4 regarding application success rates among applicants from different IMD quintiles.

Our first indication of risk to equality of opportunity is:
- **Indication of Risk 1: we have identified a persistently lower proportion of entrants from IMDQ12 (most deprived) at Solent compared to the sector average (FT First Degree**)

Annex A Table 1. Ten initial Access gaps (shown in percentage points)[10]

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
ABCSQuintile	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	7.5	8	7.8	8.3	6.4	6	
					First degree	7.5	7.9	7.9	8.7	6.7	6	
EnglishIMDQuintile_2019	IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Apprenticeship	All undergraduates	19.7	12.1	21.2	12.9	14	16.3	
				Full-time	All undergraduates	16.2	17	15.7	5.4	3.4	6.7	
					First degree	16.3	17	15.4	4.7	2.5	5.9	
					Other undergraduate	14.8	16.9	21	18.1	16.9	22.3	
				Part-time	Other undergraduate	20.7	25.9	25.8	18.2	17.2	23.4	
POLAR4Quintile	POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q1	POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q1	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.2	10.6	8.4	5.7	2.6	4.4	
					First degree	8.3	10.4	7.5	5.7	2.4	4.1	
					Other undergraduate	6.7	0	34.5	8.3	4.5	10.9	

Annex A Table 2. Access gaps target groups: population sizes (No. of students, FPE[11])

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	**Full-time**	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	280	290	270	240	210	190
			ABCSQ1	170	160	160	140	130	130
		First degree	ABCSQ5	270	280	260	240	200	190
			ABCSQ1	160	160	160	140	130	130
IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	**Apprenticeship**	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	20	30	60	60	30	70
			IMDQ1	10	20	20	30	10	30
	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	670	660	640	520	550	440
			IMDQ1	280	260	280	390	460	310
		First degree	IMDQ5	620	640	610	490	500	410
			IMDQ1	260	260	280	380	440	300
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ5	50	20	30	30	40	30
			IMDQ1	20	10	10	10	20	10
	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ5	70	60	70	40	20	20
			IMDQ1	20	10	10	10	10	0
POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q1	**Full-time**	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q5	500	490	470	380	340	310
			POLAR4Q1	340	280	320	290	300	250
		First degree	POLAR4Q5	490	490	450	370	320	300
			POLAR4Q1	330	280	310	280	290	250
		Other undergraduate	POLAR4Q5	20	10	20	10	10	10
			POLAR4Q1	10	0	0	10	10	10

Annex A Table 3. IMDQ12 Access gap

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	TREND
IMDQ12	Solent < Sector	Solent	Sector	Full-time	First degree	-8.9	-10.6	-9.8	-5.1	-1.3	-5.8	

Annex A Table 4. IMDQ12 Access target group: population sizes at Solent

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
Solent < Sector	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12	680	670	670	870	1020	690

Annex A Table 5. Access rates by key student demographics and population sizes (No. of students, FPE)

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[11] Full person equivalent.

FT All Ug	Indicator						Trend	Population						Trend
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Overall	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		2510	2420	2370	2520	2620	1940	
White	82	83	84.2	82.4	83.2	80.2		2050	1990	1990	2050	2130	1440	
ABMO	18	17	15.8	17.6	16.8	19.8		450	410	370	440	430	360	
Asian	4.3	3.7	4.7	4.7	4.9	5.5		110	90	110	120	130	100	
Black	7.7	6.7	5.7	5.7	5.5	6.3		190	160	130	140	140	110	
Mixed	5	5.2	4.5	5.9	4.4	5.7		120	120	110	150	110	100	
Other	1	1.5	0.9	1.3	2.1	2.3		30	40	20	30	50	40	
IMDQ12	30.4	29.1	30.7	36.4	41.2	37.1		740	680	710	890	1050	700	
IMDQ1	11.5	11.2	12.3	16	17.9	16.4		280	260	280	390	460	310	
IMDQ2	18.9	17.9	18.5	20.4	23.2	20.7		460	420	420	500	600	390	
IMDQ3	20.8	20.5	19.9	21.7	20.3	20.5		500	480	460	530	520	390	
IMDQ4	21.1	22.3	21.4	20.6	17.2	19.2		510	520	490	500	440	360	
IMDQ5	27.7	28.2	28	21.3	21.4	23.1		670	660	640	520	550	440	

Annex A Table 6. UCAS application success rate of UK-domiciled All UG applicants by IMD

Year	IMD Q1	IMD Q2	IMD Q3	IMD Q4	IMD Q5	IMD Q1 vs Q5	IMD Q2 vs Q5
2014	75.3%	79.9%	79.9%	79.9%	83.1%	-7.8%	-3.2%
2015	76.6%	76.4%	79.3%	79.8%	81.2%	-4.6%	-4.8%
2016	77.1%	81.7%	82.4%	84.4%	87.3%	-10.1%	-5.5%
2017	85.8%	84.8%	87.2%	86.6%	88.8%	-3.0%	-4.0%
2018	78.4%	78.1%	83.3%	83.7%	84.4%	-6.0%	-6.3%
2019	82.2%	84.5%	85.2%	86.8%	87.1%	-5.0%	-2.6%
2020	82.5%	80.9%	83.3%	83.4%	85.6%	-3.1%	-4.7%
2021	84.9%	85.5%	86.2%	87.1%	91.0%	-6.1%	-5.6%
2022	82.0%	81.2%	79.5%	83.5%	85.0%	-3.0%	-3.8%
2023	89.7%	90.1%	91.9%	93.4%	95.0%	-5.3%	-4.9%
Total	**79.1%**	**80.6%**	**82.0%**	**83.0%**	**85.0%**	**-5.9%**	**-4.4%**

When looking at the latest census data for 18-year-olds, Solent's proportion of entrants from ABMO ethnic backgrounds (18%) is 6 ppt below the local 18-year-old ABMO population (24%). Furthermore, the Annual School census shows that 26.3% of school pupils (aged 0-19yo) in Southampton in 2020/21 were from ethnic groups other than White[12]. According to widening participation in higher education data[13], the progression rate to higher education among age 19 state-funded pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in Southampton has fallen below the national average since 2009/10. The gap has been narrowing over the years, decreasing from 12.2 ppt in 2009/10 to 3.5 ppt in 2021/22. This trend indicates a need to further encourage students from minority ethnic backgrounds in the local Southampton community to pursue higher education.

Additionally, when looking at the proportion of ABMO entrants across the sector, Solent reports a gap of 13.6 ppt versus the sector average in the latest year. While we recognise that the proportion of ABMO entrants in the sector is higher than the proportion of ABMO 18-year-olds in the local population, we nevertheless decided to include a target to close our gap versus the sector as this fully aligns to our mission and our whole institution approach to equality of opportunity. In working towards closing this national gap, we will also continue to monitor our performance against the local population trends where possible, to identify when we reach a point where we better mirror the local population.

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[12] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics
[13] https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education

Furthermore, UCAS applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds have consistently had a lower application success rate compared to white applicants over the years (see Annex A, Table 9). Further analysis reveals that these gaps have persisted since 2014, particularly for applicants from Black and other ethnic backgrounds, indicating that Solent has encountered EoRR Risk 4 regarding application success rates among different ethnic groups.

Our second indication of risk to equality of opportunity is:
- **Indication of Risk 2: we have identified a lower proportion of entrants from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to sector averages and the city region population.**

Considering the access data on the intersection of ethnicity and IMD (see Annex A, Figure 1), it is evident that the largest gap occurs among students from IMDQ12 and ABMO backgrounds, with an 11.9 ppt difference compared to the sector average over a 4-year aggregated data period. This data provides further evidence suggesting a need to increase the access rate of students with these characteristics.

Annex A Table 7. ABMO Access gap

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
ABMO	Solent < Sector	Solent	Sector	Full-time	First degree	-11.2	-13.8	-15.6	-15.6	-15.8	-13.6	

Annex A Table 8. ABMO Access target group: population sizes at Solent

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
Solent < Sector	Full-time	First degree	ABMO	440	400	360	440	430	350

Annex A Table 9. UCAS application success rate of UK-domiciled All UG applicants by ethnicity

Year	White Offer rate	ABMO Offer rate	ABMO Gap vs White	Asian Offer rate	Asian Gap vs White	Black Offer rate	Black Gap vs White	Mixed Offer rate	Mixed Gap vs White	Other Offer rate	Other Gap vs White
2014	80.5%	78.3%	-2.2%	84.9%	4.4%	74.4%	-6.1%	78.8%	-1.7%	75.2%	-5.3%
2015	79.1%	78.2%	-0.9%	83.0%	3.9%	75.0%	-4.1%	78.9%	-0.1%	78.1%	-1.0%
2016	84.4%	79.4%	-5.1%	84.7%	0.2%	76.1%	-8.3%	80.2%	-4.3%	75.4%	-9.0%
2017	87.4%	84.4%	-3.0%	84.9%	-2.5%	82.9%	-4.5%	86.6%	-0.8%	81.6%	-5.8%
2018	83.1%	78.4%	-4.7%	81.7%	-1.4%	74.3%	-8.8%	81.0%	-2.1%	78.2%	-4.9%
2019	86.1%	83.4%	-2.7%	86.9%	0.9%	80.5%	-5.6%	83.5%	-2.6%	84.5%	-1.6%
2020	83.2%	83.9%	0.7%	88.7%	5.5%	80.8%	-2.4%	83.8%	0.6%	80.9%	-2.3%
2021	87.6%	86.9%	-0.6%	88.8%	1.2%	83.0%	-4.6%	89.4%	1.8%	90.6%	3.0%
2022	82.8%	80.6%	-2.3%	84.9%	2.0%	75.3%	-7.6%	81.9%	-0.9%	85.5%	2.6%
2023	93.5%	88.8%	-4.6%	91.2%	-2.3%	85.1%	-8.4%	93.0%	-0.5%	83.8%	-9.7%
Total	**82.8%**	**80.6%**	**-2.2%**	**84.9%**	**2.1%**	**77.2%**	**-5.6%**	**81.6%**	**-1.3%**	**79.8%**	**-3.1%**

Annex A Figure 1. 4-year aggregated access rate by intersection of ethnicity and IMD
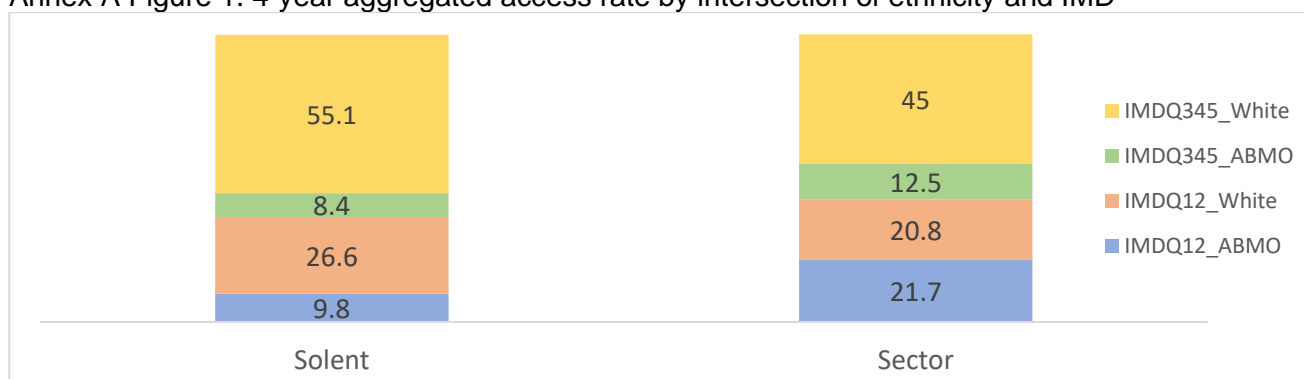
Success

Continuation

Continuation measures were included in the analysis and 27 gaps were identified. Importantly, some of these gaps fall predominantly within the provision affected by the previously mentioned portfolio changes, and our process for excluding them is outlined below.

Our third indication of risk to equality of opportunity is:
- **Indication of Risk 3: we have identified a lower continuation rate of students from IMDQ12 when compared to IMDQ345.**

Most of our continuation gaps identified across the FT All Undergraduate population were clustered around the measures of disadvantage: IMD Q12, ABCSQ123 and FSM eligible (See Annex A Table 11). Due to IMD being the measure with the highest overlap with other measures of disadvantage and, being the more accessible to track in our records, we have selected students from IMDQ12 as a target group.

Our fourth indication of risk to equality of opportunity is:
- **Indication of Risk 4: we have identified a lower continuation rate of students from ABMO ethnic backgrounds when compared to White students.**

It was also identified that students from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other (ABMO) ethnic groups report lower rates compared to their White counterparts (See Annex A Table 13). The analysis showed that students from these ethnic backgrounds experience a greater disadvantage when their ethnicity intersects with measures of disadvantage such as IMDQ12 (See Annex A Table 11). For these reasons, we have chosen to include ABMO students as a target group.

Continuation gaps were identified on the basis of age, where students aged 21-25 years old show lower continuation rates than their younger counterparts. Among those students who counted negatively towards the continuation measure, over 50% belong to either IMDQ12, ABMO, or both, in the past 4 years (See Annex A Table 10). Additionally, this population does not show low rates throughout the lifecycle stages. Thus, we have decided to focus on reducing the gaps in IMDQ12 and ABMO. We will also address this gap through our business-as-usual activities, where student support services provide advice and guidance to students at risks of not continuing.

Annex A Table 10. Ethnicity and IMD quintile among students aged 21-25 years old who counted negatively towards continuation indicator

Characteristic	2017	2018	2019	2020
Both IMDQ12 and ABMO	30.4%	22.9%	14.0%	18.1%
Either IMDQ12 or ABMO	37.0%	31.4%	38.6%	41.7%
Neither IMDQ12 nor ABMO	32.6%	45.7%	47.4%	40.3%

A number of gaps were identified based on the intersection of the characteristics mentioned above. However, due to our current size these tend to be smaller groups within our population. We have decided to address these gaps through our focus on the larger groups (IMDQ12 and ABMO) rather than on the smaller groups resulting from the intersection of these characteristics.

The gaps identified across the Part-time Other UG population were not deemed to be a priority focus and are therefore not included in this plan. These gaps relate to small groups within our student population (see Annex A Table 12) and/or students on courses which are being taught out or are no longer running.

Annex A Table 11. Continuation gaps[14]

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
ABCSQuintile	ABCSQ3 > ABCSQ12	ABCSQ3	ABCSQ1	Full-time	First degree	9.5	3.5	6.1	8.6	1.4	5.4	
	ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	7.9	3.3	7.3	10.3	5	9.9	
	ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4_5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.6	2.7	8.2	9.7	5.7	10.7	
					First degree	9.5	3.4	7.6	10.9	5.4	11.3	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	9.6	1.8	9.3	8.9	6.6	11.8	
					First degree	10.2	2.5	8.7	9.9	6.2	12.2	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	3.4	1.8	5.9	2.2	8.4	10.7	
					First degree	3.1	0.9	6.5	2.5	8.6	10.7	
AgeOnCommencement	Age21_25 < Age31_40	Age21_25	Age31_40	Full-time	First degree	-2.5	-6.3	-8.4	-4.1	-1.8	-5.5	
	Young_Under21 > Age21_25	Young_Under21	Age21_25	Full-time	All undergraduates	0.9	3.9	6.4	2.9	7.2	9.1	
	Young_Under21 > Mature_Age21andOver	Young_Under21	Mature_Age21andOver	Part-time	Other undergraduate	32.4	21.6	23.1	34.3	17.2	33.6	
CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
EnglishIMDQuintile_2019	IMDQ1234 | IMDQ5	IMDQ1234	IMDQ5	Part-time	Other undergraduate	1.6	-8.2	-14.1	3.7	-1.8	-7.3	
	IMDQ1235 | IMDQ4	IMDQ1235	IMDQ4	Part-time	Other undergraduate	1.6	2.5	-5.1	-7.3	0	7	
	IMDQ1245 | IMDQ3	IMDQ1245	IMDQ3	Part-time	Other undergraduate	-12.2	12.1	-1.9	3	-9.1	3.8	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	IMDQ4	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.5	-2.9	5.8	5.7	4.9	6	
					First degree	7	-2.4	5.2	6.3	4.2	6.3	
Int_IMDEthnicity	IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.3	-1	8.2	3.2	3.4	10.5	
					First degree	6.3	-0.8	8.3	3.7	3.5	11.7	
Int_IMDSex	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-7	2.1	-6	-5.3	-2.8	-5.8	
					First degree	-7.4	1.9	-5.9	-5.1	-2.7	-5.6	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-7	-3	-9.9	-6.3	-5.1	-11.2	
					First degree	-7.2	-3.7	-10.1	-5.9	-5.2	-11.2	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Male	Full-time	All undergraduates	-6.6	1.5	-5.5	-4	-5.1	-6.4	
					First degree	-6.8	1.2	-5.2	-5	-4.2	-7	
	IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	29.7	32.5	3.1	42.8	7.8	35.7	
Sex	Male > Female	Male	Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	36.9	34.9	25.4	38.1	16.9	33.8	
					Other undergraduate	36.7	32.4	28.6	39.4	18	33.1	

Annex A Table 12. Continuation gaps: population sizes

[14] Red bar: Split 1 underperforms; Blue bar: Split 2 underperforms

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
ABCSQ3 > ABCSQ12	Full-time	First degree	ABCSQ3	640	590	610	540	590	590
			ABCSQ1	210	160	190	200	270	370
ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4	740	620	610	570	480	450
			ABCSQ1	220	180	200	210	280	370
ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4_5	1280	1090	1050	990	850	730
			ABCSQ1	220	180	200	210	280	370
		First degree	ABCSQ4_5	1240	1030	1030	940	820	690
			ABCSQ1	210	160	190	200	270	370
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	540	470	440	420	380	290
			ABCSQ1	220	180	200	210	280	370
		First degree	ABCSQ5	530	450	430	400	370	280
			ABCSQ1	210	160	190	200	270	370
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	540	470	440	420	380	290
			ABCSQ2	590	520	460	520	690	800
		First degree	ABCSQ5	530	450	430	400	370	280
			ABCSQ2	550	460	440	490	640	740
Age21_25 < Age31_40	Full-time	First degree	Age21_25	340	300	280	270	360	390
			Age31_40	50	40	50	60	200	300
Young_Under21 > Age21_25	Full-time	All undergraduates	Young_Under21	2200	1910	1900	1820	1570	1460
			Age21_25	380	340	290	310	390	420
Young_Under21 > Mature_Age21andOver	Part-time	Other undergraduate	Young_Under21	50	90	50	40	40	30
			Mature_Age21andOver	180	180	190	150	170	140
IMDQ1234 | IMDQ5	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ1234	160	160	170	130	130	120
			IMDQ5	70	70	70	60	60	40
IMDQ1235 | IMDQ4	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ1235	180	180	180	140	150	110
			IMDQ4	50	50	60	40	50	40
IMDQ1245 | IMDQ3	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ1245	180	180	190	150	160	110
			IMDQ3	50	50	50	40	40	40
IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ4	580	500	510	480	490	420
			IMDQ1	330	270	250	270	380	450
		First degree	IMDQ4	550	460	490	440	450	400
			IMDQ1	320	250	250	270	370	430
IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	1620	1420	1420	1390	1310	1250
			IMDQ12_ABMO	270	210	200	200	210	220
	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ345_White	1540	1320	1380	1300	1220	1160
			IMDQ12_ABMO	260	210	200	190	210	210
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	460	410	350	360	410	480
			IMDQ12_Female	340	300	300	330	460	540
		First degree	IMDQ12_Male	440	380	340	330	390	450
			IMDQ12_Female	330	280	300	330	450	530
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	460	410	350	360	410	480
			IMDQ345_Female	740	690	710	690	680	670
		First degree	IMDQ12_Male	440	380	340	330	390	450
			IMDQ345_Female	740	650	700	680	670	660
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	460	410	350	360	410	480
			IMDQ345_Male	1130	940	900	870	840	780
		First degree	IMDQ12_Male	440	380	340	330	390	450
			IMDQ345_Male	1050	870	860	780	760	700

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	50	50	40	40	30	20
			IMDQ345_Female	80	70	60	50	70	60
Male > Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	Male	170	240	170	140	130	110
			Female	100	90	90	60	100	70
		Other undergraduate	Male	140	200	150	130	120	90
			Female	90	70	80	60	90	70

Annex A Table 13. Continuation rates by key student demographics and population sizes (No. of students, FPE)

FT All Ug	Indicator						Trend	Population						Trend
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Overall	90.3	89.6	89.2	89	89	86.1		2770	2430	2340	2310	2450	2530	
White	90.9	89.6	90	89	89.1	87.4		2240	2000	1940	1940	2010	2080	
ABMO	87.6	90	85.2	88.5	88.2	80.5		520	430	390	360	420	400	
Asian	85.6	94.1	86.7	89.9	88.4	82.8		130	100	80	110	110	120	
Black	87.1	90.8	82.5	85.4	89.1	76.2		230	180	150	130	140	130	
Mixed	91.4	86.6	87.8	88.6	88.6	83.8		130	120	120	110	140	110	
Other	84	83.3	84.8	[low]	81.3	79.2		30	20	30	[low]	30	50	
IMDQ12	87.6	88.6	85.9	87.3	86.9	82.9		800	710	650	690	860	1020	
IMDQ1	84.8	91.4	84.9	85.7	86.9	82.1		330	270	250	270	380	450	
IMDQ2	89.6	86.9	86.5	88.4	87	83.5		470	440	400	410	480	580	
IMDQ3	90.5	89.4	91.6	88	89.5	86.1		560	480	460	450	520	500	
IMDQ4	91.3	88.5	90.7	91.4	91.8	88.1		580	500	510	480	490	420	
IMDQ5	92.3	91.3	89.6	90	90.5	90.8		740	660	640	630	510	530	

Completion

A further potential 78 gaps were identified in relation to completion. The analysis showed that within the FT All Undergraduate population, groups such as disadvantaged students (across the IMD, FSM and ABCS measures of disadvantage) and students from ABMO ethnic backgrounds present lower completion rates than their counterparts.

Males and Young students (Aged Under 21 and 21-25 years old) also reported completion gaps compared to other groups. As these groups represent a large proportion of our total student population, it was decided that these gaps will be addressed through our institutional enhancement approach and BAU interventions, aimed to improve completion rates for all students.

A smaller proportion of the completion gaps were across the PT and OUG populations. Based on the rationales outlined above (i.e., relative population size – see Annex A Table 15) we have again decided that these gaps do not constitute a priority focus for us.

Given the lengthy duration of data releases for the 2025/26-2028/29 entry cohorts in the completion measure, we have opted not to set a specific target for completion in the Plan. Instead, we will continuously monitor the gap and the rate of progress to the next year of study using OfS data and our internal dashboard. This notwithstanding, we wish to highlight the positive tracking work for both continuation and completion undertaken at Solent on an annual basis, some of which will act as early indicators of success within several interventions included in this plan.

Annex A Table 14. Completion gaps[15]

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[15] Red bar: Split 1 underperforms; Blue bar: Split 2 underperforms

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
ABCSQuintile	ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	16.9	17.4	8.2	14	6	11.3	
					First degree	17.2	16.7	10.1	15.3	6.2	11.3	
	ABCSQ4> ABCSQ2	ABCSQ4	ABCSQ2	Full-time	First degree	7.5	7.2	8.3	3.3	1.4	6.3	
	ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4_5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	19.2	19	10	14.8	8.4	13.9	
					First degree	19.4	18.6	11.7	16	8.8	13.8	
	ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ2_3	ABCSQ4_5	ABCSQ2_3	Full-time	All undergraduates	7.2	7.1	5.2	2.1	3	7.9	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	22.5	21.4	12.7	16.3	12.2	17.6	
					First degree	22.8	21.4	13.8	17.1	12.9	17.4	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	12.8	11.8	10.7	5.3	7.8	12.9	
					First degree	13.1	11.9	12	5	8	12.5	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ3	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ3	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.3	6.9	4.9	1.6	5.5	10.2	
AgeOnCommencement	Age21_25 < Age26_30	Age21_25	Age26_30	Full-time	All undergraduates	-13.2	5.2	-6.9	-6.3	-12	-10.8	
	Age21_25 < Age31_40	Age21_25	Age31_40	Full-time	All undergraduates	-3.1	-7.2	-5.3	-1.1	-3.9	-9.9	
	Age26_30 > Age31_40	Age26_30	Age31_40	Full-time	All undergraduates	10.1	-12.5	1.6	5.2	8.1	0.8	
	Young_Under21 < Age21_25	Young_Under21	Age21_25	Full-time	Other undergraduate	-6.7	6.2	-2.7	-20.3	-2.3	0	
	Young_Under21 < Age26_30	Young_Under21	Age26_30	Full-time	All undergraduates	-6.5	12.5	-3.9	-5.6	-7.4	-5.3	
					First degree	-6.7	13.6	-3	-4.5	-5.4	-5	
	Young_Under21 < Mature_Age21andOver	Young_Under21	Mature_Age21andOver	Full-time	Other undergraduate	-12.7	5.2	-4.7	-18.6	-2.2	-6	
	Young_Under21 > Age21_25	Young_Under21	Age21_25	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.7	7.3	3	0.7	4.6	5.5	
					First degree	7	7.1	3.9	2	5.9	5.3	
	Young_Under21 > Mature_Age21andOver	Young_Under21	Mature_Age21andOver	Part-time	All undergraduates	15.1	18.7	20.1	-6.1	25.8	4.5	
					Other undergraduate	18.1	21.7	21.6	16.9	32.5	17.1	

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
EnglishIMDQuintile_2019	IMDQ1234 | IMDQ5	IMDQ1234	IMDQ5	Part-time	Other undergraduate	-3.1	2.4	-7.9	-13.4	4.9	-6.4	
	IMDQ1234 < IMDQ5	IMDQ1234	IMDQ5	Part-time	All undergraduates	-4.5	-1.2	-8.1	-15.5	0.9	-8.5	
	IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1	IMDQ2345	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.7	5.3	8.4	10.6	5.1	7.9	
					First degree	6.8	6.1	9.2	10.4	5.7	7.7	
	IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	IMDQ3_5	IMDQ1_2	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.4	6.7	6.1	7.9	6.7	6.2	
					First degree	6.9	7	7	7.9	7	6.3	
				Part-time	All undergraduates	5.3	4.1	3.2	6.9	3.2	6	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	IMDQ4	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.1	6.5	9	12.4	5.6	9.9	
					First degree	8.7	7.6	10.2	12.6	6.5	9.8	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ2	IMDQ4	IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.7	6.5	4.1	6.2	5.8	5.6	
					First degree	6.7	6.8	5.2	6.6	6.2	5.9	
	IMDQ5 | IMDQ1	IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Part-time	All undergraduates	14.5	-5.9	10.9	27.7	-3.4	14.1	
					Other undergraduate	13.8	-11.5	10.8	19.9	0	0	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.6	8.8	10.3	13.1	8.2	9.2	
					First degree	8.6	9.5	11	12.4	8.7	9.1	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	IMDQ5	IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.3	8.8	5.4	6.8	8.4	4.9	
					First degree	6.6	8.7	6	6.4	8.4	5.2	
Ethnicity	White > ABMO	White	ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.1	8.3	9.1	8.1	4.7	6.1	
					First degree	6.2	8.8	9	7.3	4.3	6.3	
Int_IMDEthnicity	IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	-7.4	-1.4	-5.6	-9.6	-6.8	-2.6	
					First degree	-7.4	-1.9	-6.2	-10.3	-6	-2.6	
	IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_White	IMDQ345_White	Full-time	All undergraduates	-4.9	-6.2	-4.1	-5.9	-5.7	-5.6	
					First degree	-5.4	-6.4	-5.2	-5.9	-6.4	-5.7	
	IMDQ12_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ12_White	IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.2	4.3	8.8	8.6	3.9	3.6	
					First degree	5.9	4.9	8.3	8.1	2.6	3.9	
	IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	11	10.5	13	14.5	9.6	9.2	
					First degree	11.2	11.3	13.5	14	9	9.6	
	IMDQ345_White > IMDQ345_ABMO	IMDQ345_White	IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	3.6	9.1	7.4	4.9	2.8	6.6	
					First degree	3.8	9.4	7.3	3.7	3	6.9	

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
FSMEligibility	NotEligibleForFSM > EligibleForFSM	NotEligibleForFSM	EligibleForFSM	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.6	3.4	7.4	8.2	8.3	6.9	
Int_IMDSex	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-11	-11.5	-8.6	-14	-1.2	-11.4	
					First degree	-10.7	-12.3	-9.7	-14.1	-1.8	-11.3	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-15.7	-15.7	-12.5	-15.4	-10.9	-16.4	
					First degree	-15.6	-16.2	-14	-15.6	-11.9	-16.8	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Male	Full-time	All undergraduates	-7.8	-7.8	-7.8	-12.9	-4.5	-7.6	
				Part-time	Other undergraduate	-5.3	-3.1	-2.2	6.2	-10.6	-13.1	
	IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ12_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	20.4	28.1	0	27	31.1	0	
					Other undergraduate	25	29.3	0	28.2	28.7	0	
	IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	20.5	32.2	40.8	10.7	31.3	22.7	
					Other undergraduate	25.5	34.8	46.7	16	28.1	22	
	IMDQ345_Male < IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-7.9	-7.9	-4.7	-2.5	-6.4	-8.8	
	IMDQ345_Male > IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ12_Female	Part-time	Other undergraduate	30.3	32.5	0	22	39.3	0	
	IMDQ345_Male > IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	Other undergraduate	30.8	37.9	48.8	9.7	38.7	35.1	
Int_POLAREthnicity	POLAR4Q12_White > POLAR4Q12_ABMO	POLAR4Q12_White	POLAR4Q12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	2.2	2.9	9.1	5.2	3.3	-5.1	
	POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q12_ABMO	POLAR4Q345_White	POLAR4Q12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	4.8	7.1	11.4	9.1	4.7	0.2	
					First degree	4.4	7.2	12	9.5	3.7	0.5	
	POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q345_ABMO	POLAR4Q345_White	POLAR4Q345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.6	4.6	8.5	
					First degree	8.6	8.1	8.8	7.4	3.7	8.4	
Int_POLARSex	POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q12_Female	POLAR4Q12_Male	POLAR4Q12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-9.6	-12.6	-5.9	-6.3	-1.9	-10.3	
	POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	POLAR4Q12_Male	POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-12	-13	-7.5	-8.9	-5.5	-13.6	
	POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q12_Female	POLAR4Q345_Male	POLAR4Q12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-8.7	-7.3	-3.3	-2.6	-2.5	-6.7	
	POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	POLAR4Q345_Male	POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-11.1	-7.8	-4.9	-5.2	-6.1	-10	
Sex	Male < Female	Male	Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-9.2	-9.3	-5.2	-5.6	-4.9	-9.6	
					First degree	-8.7	-9.6	-6	-5.9	-5.8	-9.8	
	Male > Female	Male	Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	23.9	33.4	40.7	13.1	36.4	32.7	
					Other undergraduate	27.9	33.2	45.7	12.8	36.3	30.4	

Annex A Table 15. Completion gaps: population sizes

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4	700	660	640	620	520	520
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ1	360	320	400	350	340	300

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COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
		First degree	ABCSQ4	680	630	600	600	500	520
		First degree	ABCSQ1	340	310	370	330	310	280
ABCSQ4> ABCSQ2	Full-time	First degree	ABCSQ4	680	630	600	600	500	520
		First degree	ABCSQ2	670	680	670	650	590	500
ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4_5	1180	1110	1080	980	850	900
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ1	360	320	400	350	340	300
		First degree	ABCSQ4_5	1150	1060	1020	950	820	890
		First degree	ABCSQ1	340	310	370	330	310	280
ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ2_3	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4_5	1180	1110	1080	980	850	900
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ2_3	1430	1440	1500	1380	1200	1080
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	480	450	440	360	330	370
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ1	360	320	400	350	340	300
		First degree	ABCSQ5	470	430	420	350	320	370
		First degree	ABCSQ1	340	310	370	330	310	280
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	480	450	440	360	330	370
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ2	730	760	780	720	670	520
		First degree	ABCSQ5	470	430	420	350	320	370
		First degree	ABCSQ2	670	680	670	650	590	500
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ3	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	480	450	440	360	330	370
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ3	700	680	730	660	530	550
Age21_25 < Age26_30	Full-time	All undergraduates	Age21_25	420	410	430	380	340	280
		All undergraduates	Age26_30	100	80	90	100	80	60
Age21_25 < Age31_40	Full-time	All undergraduates	Age21_25	420	410	430	380	340	280
		All undergraduates	Age31_40	70	70	80	60	60	60
Age26_30 > Age31_40	Full-time	All undergraduates	Age26_30	100	80	90	100	80	60
		All undergraduates	Age31_40	70	70	80	60	60	60
Young_Under21 < Age21_25	Full-time	Other undergraduate	Young_Under21	60	90	140	50	70	30
		Other undergraduate	Age21_25	30	50	60	40	50	0
Young_Under21 < Age26_30	Full-time	All undergraduates	Young_Under21	2330	2270	2340	2140	1870	1840
		All undergraduates	Age26_30	100	80	90	100	80	60
		First degree	Young_Under21	2270	2180	2200	2090	1800	1820
		First degree	Age26_30	80	60	60	80	60	50
Young_Under21 < Mature_Age21and Over	Full-time	Other undergraduate	Young_Under21	60	90	140	50	70	30
		Other undergraduate	Mature_Age21andOver	80	90	130	80	110	40
Young_Under21 > Age21_25	Full-time	All undergraduates	Young_Under21	2330	2270	2340	2140	1870	1840
		All undergraduates	Age21_25	420	410	430	380	340	280
		First degree	Young_Under21	2270	2180	2200	2090	1800	1820
		First degree	Age21_25	390	360	370	330	290	260
Young_Under21 > Mature_Age21and Over	Part-time	All undergraduates	Young_Under21	110	130	120	110	60	110
		All undergraduates	Mature_Age21andOver	290	230	200	260	210	220
		Other undergraduate	Young_Under21	110	120	120	70	50	90
		Other undergraduate	Mature_Age21andOver	230	200	180	220	170	180
IMDQ1234 | IMDQ5	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ1234	230	210	200	200	160	150
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ5	80	70	90	80	70	70
IMDQ1234 < IMDQ5	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ1234	260	240	210	250	180	190
		All undergraduates	IMDQ5	100	90	90	90	80	90
	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ2345	2560	2460	2580	2300	2030	1960

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	330	300	290	320	270	240
		First degree	IMDQ2345	2440	2310	2370	2190	1890	1900
		First degree	IMDQ1	310	290	260	300	250	230
IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ3_5	2020	1940	2030	1840	1590	1580
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1_2	870	820	840	770	700	620
		First degree	IMDQ3_5	1930	1810	1860	1750	1480	1530
		First degree	IMDQ1_2	830	790	770	740	650	610
	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ3_5	270	230	230	260	190	210
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1_2	90	100	70	90	70	70
IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ4	630	620	660	560	480	500
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	330	300	290	320	270	240
		First degree	IMDQ4	600	570	600	530	440	480
		First degree	IMDQ1	310	290	260	300	250	230
IMDQ4 > IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ4	630	620	660	560	480	500
		All undergraduates	IMDQ2	540	520	550	460	440	380
		First degree	IMDQ4	600	570	600	530	440	480
		First degree	IMDQ2	510	500	510	440	410	380
IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	100	90	90	90	80	90
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	40	40	30	30	20	20
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ5	80	70	90	80	70	70
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ1	30	40	30	20	0	0
IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	810	740	770	730	640	620
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	330	300	290	320	270	240
		First degree	IMDQ5	780	690	700	690	600	600
		First degree	IMDQ1	310	290	260	300	250	230
IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	810	740	770	730	640	620
		All undergraduates	IMDQ2	540	520	550	460	440	380
		First degree	IMDQ5	780	690	700	690	600	600
		First degree	IMDQ2	510	500	510	440	410	380
White > ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	White	2380	2320	2440	2210	1960	1890
		All undergraduates	ABMO	570	530	540	490	420	370
		First degree	White	2260	2150	2200	2090	1790	1830
		First degree	ABMO	550	520	520	470	400	360
IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	290	280	270	250	210	190
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_ABMO	270	240	260	240	200	170
		First degree	IMDQ12_ABMO	280	280	260	240	210	190
		First degree	IMDQ345_ABMO	260	240	250	230	190	160
IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_White	580	530	560	530	490	430
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	1730	1690	1770	1600	1390	1400
		First degree	IMDQ12_White	550	500	510	500	440	420
		First degree	IMDQ345_White	1650	1570	1610	1520	1290	1360
IMDQ12_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_White	580	530	560	530	490	430
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	290	280	270	250	210	190
		First degree	IMDQ12_White	550	500	510	500	440	420
		First degree	IMDQ12_ABMO	280	280	260	240	210	190
IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	1730	1690	1770	1600	1390	1400
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	290	280	270	250	210	190
		First degree	IMDQ345_White	1650	1570	1610	1520	1290	1360
		First degree	IMDQ12_ABMO	280	280	260	240	210	190

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
IMDQ345_White > IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	1730	1690	1770	1600	1390	1400
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_ABMO	270	240	260	240	200	170
		First degree	IMDQ345_White	1650	1570	1610	1520	1290	1360
		First degree	IMDQ345_ABMO	260	240	250	230	190	160
NotEligibleForFSM > EligibleForFSM	Full-time	All undergraduates	NotEligibleForFSM	960	1540	1760	1620	1370	1390
		All undergraduates	EligibleForFSM	130	190	270	290	260	230
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	500	510	490	440	410	330
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Female	370	310	340	330	300	290
		First degree	IMDQ12_Male	480	490	450	420	380	320
		First degree	IMDQ12_Female	350	310	320	330	270	290
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	500	510	490	440	410	330
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Female	850	790	820	730	680	690
		First degree	IMDQ12_Male	480	490	450	420	380	320
		First degree	IMDQ345_Female	810	770	790	730	640	690
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	500	510	490	440	410	330
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Male	1170	1150	1210	1110	920	880
	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ12_Male	50	70	50	30	40	40
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ345_Male	180	140	170	130	90	110
IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ12_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	60	70	60	50	40	50
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Female	30	30	0	40	30	0
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ12_Male	50	70	50	30	40	40
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ12_Female	20	30	0	30	20	0
IMDQ12_Male > IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Male	60	70	60	50	40	50
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Female	70	60	50	100	70	60
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ12_Male	50	70	50	30	40	40
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ345_Female	60	60	40	80	70	50
IMDQ345_Male < IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Male	1170	1150	1210	1110	920	880
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Female	850	790	820	730	680	690
IMDQ345_Male > IMDQ12_Female	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ345_Male	180	140	170	130	90	110
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ12_Female	20	30	0	30	20	0
IMDQ345_Male > IMDQ345_Female	Part-time	Other undergraduate	IMDQ345_Male	180	140	170	130	90	110
		Other undergraduate	IMDQ345_Female	60	60	40	80	70	50
POLAR4Q12_White > POLAR4Q12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_White	630	630	680	620	550	520
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_ABMO	130	120	120	120	90	100
POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_White	1250	1250	1260	1130	1000	1050
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_ABMO	130	120	120	120	90	100
		First degree	POLAR4Q345_White	1230	1190	1170	1100	960	1030
		First degree	POLAR4Q12_ABMO	130	110	110	120	90	100
POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_White	1250	1250	1260	1130	1000	1050
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_ABMO	310	280	280	270	220	170
		First degree	POLAR4Q345_White	1230	1190	1170	1100	960	1030

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR1	YEAR2	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
		First degree	POLAR4Q345_ABMO	300	270	270	260	220	170
POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_Male	420	430	460	410	370	330
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_Female	340	320	340	330	270	290
POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_Male	420	430	460	410	370	330
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_Female	660	630	640	590	530	540
POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q12_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_Male	910	900	910	820	690	680
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q12_Female	340	320	340	330	270	290
POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_Male	910	900	910	820	690	680
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q345_Female	660	630	640	590	530	540
Male < Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	Male	1720	1730	1770	1610	1370	1270
		All undergraduates	Female	1250	1130	1210	1100	1010	1000
		First degree	Male	1640	1580	1570	1490	1260	1200
		First degree	Female	1190	1110	1150	1090	940	990
Male > Female	Part-time	All undergraduates	Male	290	270	260	230	170	240
		All undergraduates	Female	110	90	70	140	100	90
		Other undergraduate	Male	250	230	240	180	130	200
		Other undergraduate	Female	90	90	60	110	90	70

Attainment

Following the application of the selection criteria, a total of 25 attainment gaps were identified, all across the FT First degree population. The gaps were clustered around: measures of disadvantage (IMDQ12, POLAR4Q2 and FSM); ABMO and Male attainment (with wider gaps when intersecting with other measures of disadvantage), and the large young population (Under 21 years old) vs. small 26–30-year-old population (see Annex A Table 17).

Due to the relatively large sizes of the Male and Young populations (see Annex A Table 18), it was decided that these groups could be well supported through our business-as-usual student support services instead of a specially designed and targeted intervention.

We have selected the ethnicity attainment gap (ABMO vs. White) and students from IMDQ12 as our priority target groups for this lifecycle stage. This not only provides continuity from our current APP, but additionally aligns to our institutional strategic plan, which identifies these target groups as a focus for our work.

According to the NSS 2023 (see Annex A Table 16), students from IMDQ12 reported lower agreement with the academic support scale compared to those from higher quintiles, particularly on the item regarding ease of contacting teaching staff. Compared to students from IMDQ5, students from IMDQ12 scored more than 5 ppt lower on this item. This indicates that Solent has encountered EoRR Risk 6 concerning academic support among students from different IMD quintiles.

Annex A Table 16. Positivity measure of NSS2023 academic support by IMD

By IMD (UK domiciled)	Solent Positivity Measure				
Scale	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Academic support	81.4	80.2	84.4	82.6	87.5
15. How easy was it to contact teaching staff when you needed to?	78.4	77.6	82.3	79.7	87.3
16. How well have teaching staff supported your learning?	84.5	82.6	86.5	85.5	87.7

With this in mind, we have chosen to highlight the following as our fifth and sixth indication of risk to equality of opportunity in Success:

- **Indication of Risk 5: we have identified persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree ABMO students and those awarded to their white student counterparts, with ABMO students performing less well across a range of programmes**
- **Indication of Risk 6: we have identified persistent differences between the degrees awarded to full-time first degree students from IMDQ12 areas and those from IMDQ345 areas, with IMDQ12 students performing less well across a range of programmes**

Importantly, we will continue to track the other identified groups at risk including the intersections between ethnicity and measures of disadvantage (IMD and POLAR4) as part of our regular monitoring activities and feed this work into our evaluation plan and any relevant short- and medium-term indicators of success.

Annex A Table 17. Attainment gaps[16]

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	TREND
AgeOnCommencement	Young_Under21 | Age31_40	Young_Under21	Age31_40	Full-time	First degree	2	-9	-7.2	10.2	-0.8	4.4	
	Young_Under21 < Age26_30	Young_Under21	Age26_30	Full-time	First degree	-9.5	-13.6	-12.5	0	-9.5	-6.9	
EnglishIMDQuintile_2019	IMDQ1234 < IMDQ5	IMDQ1234	IMDQ5	Full-time	First degree	-10.2	-8	-10.3	-5.1	-5.6	-7.2	
	IMDQ1345 > IMDQ2	IMDQ1345	IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	2.9	5.1	5.4	4.2	5.1	6.1	
	IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1	IMDQ2345	IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	12	9.3	11.2	6.5	11.3	9.6	
	IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	IMDQ3_5	IMDQ1_2	Full-time	First degree	7.7	7.8	9.3	5.9	8.8	9	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	IMDQ4	IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	11.2	9.6	7.9	7.4	13.1	9.7	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ2	IMDQ4	IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	2.8	5.4	2.4	5	7.2	6.2	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	18.1	14	17.2	9.4	14.1	13.7	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	IMDQ5	IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	9.7	9.8	11.7	7.1	8.2	10.2	
Ethnicity	White > ABMO	White	ABMO	Full-time	First degree	21.3	17.5	15.4	19.9	17.7	12.7	
	White > Black	White	Black	Full-time	First degree	33.7	24.7	26.7	31.7	39.6	29.7	
FSMEligibility	NotEligibleForFSM > EligibleForFSM	NotEligibleForFSM	EligibleForFSM	Full-time	First degree	12.7	11.8	11.5	6.2	0	11.3	
Int_IMDEthnicity	IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	First degree	4	-7.1	-6	-4.1	-13.6	-7.4	
	IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_White	IMDQ345_White	Full-time	First degree	-5.6	-3.8	-7.1	-1.9	-3.1	-5.1	

[16] Red bar: Split 1 underperforms; Blue bar: Split 2 underperforms

Combination	Gap	Group1	Group2	Mode	Level	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	
Int_IMDSex	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	First degree	-8.3	-16.9	-14.4	-10.4	-20.7	-13	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	First degree	-16.9	-23.2	-24	-16.8	-26.9	-23	
	IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male	IMDQ12_Male	IMDQ345_Male	Full-time	First degree	-7.4	-10.7	-8.6	-6.6	-13.8	-9.2	
Int_POLAREthnicity	POLAR4Q12_ABMO > POLAR4Q345	POLAR4Q12_ABM	POLAR4Q345_AB	Full-time	First degree	1.6	11.9	10.4	12.5	6	8.2	
	POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q12	POLAR4Q345_Wh	POLAR4Q12_ABM	Full-time	First degree	23.8	8.6	8.3	10	14.8	6.9	
Int_POLARSex	POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q345_	POLAR4Q12_Male	POLAR4Q345_Fer	Full-time	First degree	-17.8	-17.3	-13.8	-5.9	-19.7	-13	
	POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q345_	POLAR4Q345_Mal	POLAR4Q345_Fer	Full-time	First degree	-11.2	-14	-14.4	-10.6	-15.3	-13.4	
POLAR4Quintile	POLAR4Q4	POLAR4Q2	POLAR4Q4	POLAR4Q2	Full-time	First degree	6.9	1.7	-5.5	-5.2	3.6	1.8
	POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q2	POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q2	Full-time	First degree	8.5	1	-0.2	-6.8	6.1	1.9
Sex	Male < Female	Male	Female	Full-time	First degree	-8.6	-13.2	-14.8	-9.3	-14.4	-12.7	

Annex A: Table 18. Attainment gaps: population sizes

Combination/Gap	Mode	Level	Group	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6
Young_Under21 | Age31_40	Full-time	First degree	Young_Under21	1680	1630	1360	1410	1280	1200
			Age31_40	40	40	30	30	30	40
Young_Under21 < Age26_30	Full-time	First degree	Young_Under21	1680	1630	1360	1410	1280	1200
			Age26_30	50	70	40	40	40	40
IMDQ1234 < IMDQ5	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ1234	1430	1390	1140	1130	1050	1050
			IMDQ5	560	580	480	490	440	390
IMDQ1345 > IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ1345	1640	1640	1340	1350	1240	1180
			IMDQ2	350	340	280	270	240	250
IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ2345	1780	1790	1440	1470	1330	1260
			IMDQ1	210	190	190	150	150	170
IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ3_5	1430	1450	1160	1210	1090	1010
			IMDQ1_2	560	530	470	410	400	420
IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ4	470	410	360	400	350	330
			IMDQ1	210	190	190	150	150	170
IMDQ4 > IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ4	470	410	360	400	350	330
			IMDQ2	350	340	280	270	240	250
IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ5	560	580	480	490	440	390
			IMDQ1	210	190	190	150	150	170
IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ5	560	580	480	490	440	390
			IMDQ2	350	340	280	270	240	250
White > ABMO	Full-time	First degree	White	1660	1720	1360	1420	1260	1130
			ABMO	380	310	300	240	210	250
White > Black	Full-time	First degree	White	1660	1720	1360	1420	1260	1130
			Black	160	130	120	80	70	80
NotEligibleForFSM > EligibleForFSM	Full-time	First degree	NotEligibleForFSM	1270	1250	1030	1100	[DP]	910
			EligibleForFSM	140	200	170	150	[DP]	170
IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12_ABMO	190	160	150	120	100	120
			IMDQ345_ABMO	180	160	150	120	110	130
IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12_White	360	370	320	290	280	270
			IMDQ345_White	1250	1290	1000	1090	940	840
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ12_Female	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12_Male	290	270	260	190	190	200
			IMDQ12_Female	260	260	200	220	210	220
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12_Male	290	270	260	190	190	200
			IMDQ345_Female	630	600	530	570	500	500
	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ12_Male	290	270	260	190	190	200

Combination/Gap	Mode	Level	Group	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6
IMDQ12_Male < IMDQ345_Male			IMDQ345_Male	800	850	630	640	590	510
POLAR4Q345_White > POLAR4Q12_ABMO	Full-time	First degree	POLAR4Q345_White	910	930	750	840	700	600
			POLAR4Q12_ABMO	70	80	70	60	60	70
POLAR4Q12_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	First degree	POLAR4Q12_Male	280	300	250	220	240	210
			POLAR4Q345_Female	520	490	440	460	400	350
POLAR4Q345_Male < POLAR4Q345_Female	Full-time	First degree	POLAR4Q345_Male	610	600	480	500	430	410
			POLAR4Q345_Female	520	490	440	460	400	350
POLAR4Q4 | POLAR4Q2	Full-time	First degree	POLAR4Q4	390	350	260	280	250	240
			POLAR4Q2	300	320	240	240	240	220
POLAR4Q5 | POLAR4Q2	Full-time	First degree	POLAR4Q5	430	440	360	380	320	300
			POLAR4Q2	300	320	240	240	240	220
Male < Female	Full-time	First degree	Male	1120	1150	910	860	790	730
			Female	930	890	760	800	740	740

Progression

By applying the selection criteria, 42 gaps were identified at the Progression lifecycle stage. These were all in our FT Undergraduate population. Most of the gaps are relatively small. However, the historical performance of Progression has highlighted the need for Solent to improve overall performance at the university level, even though the score remains above the OfS's minimum threshold. We aim to employ a university-wide approach to enhance performance while providing additional support to the target groups identified below. The gaps emerged when comparing diverse groups of students based on Age, Ethnicity and its intersections with different measures of disadvantage (IMD, ABCS, TUNDRA and POLAR4).

We recognise that some groups of students remain disproportionally affected. The analysis applying the selection criteria showed that IMDQ12 graduates and those that come from ABMO ethnic backgrounds are at a greater risk of experiencing lower progression rates.

Gaps were also observed when looking at the intersection of ethnicity and IMD quintile. Due to this intersectional gap manifesting at Solent in small sample sizes, we decided to set targets around IMDQ12 and ABMO separately. Our two Indications of Risk are therefore:

- **Indication of Risk 7: we have identified persistent differences between the progression outcomes of IMDQ12 graduates (most disadvantaged) and those from IMDQ345 (least disadvantaged).**
- **Indication of Risk 8: we have identified persistent differences between the progression outcomes of graduates from ABMO ethnic backgrounds students when compared to their White counterparts.**

Importantly, given the focus of Indications of Risk 1-6, this final Indication of Risk offers us the opportunity to complete our analysis of the ABMO and IMDQ12 at-risk groups longitudinally across the whole lifecycle and to ensure that targeted interventions can take place at the earliest opportunity and progress is monitored at each staging post.

Annex A Table 16. Progression gaps[17]

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[17] Red bar: Split 1 underperforms; Blue bar: Split 2 underperforms

CHARACTERISTIC	COMPARISON/GAP	SPLIT 1	SPLIT 2	MODE	LEVEL	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	TREND
ABCSQuintile	ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4	ABCSQ1	Full-time	First degree	14.9	16.1	4.8	14.9	
	ABCSQ4> ABCSQ2	ABCSQ4	ABCSQ2	Full-time	First degree	4.6	7.2	7.7	7.5	
	ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ4_5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	17.4	19.7	7.6	15.3	
		ABCSQ4_5	ABCSQ1		First degree	18.2	17.9	6.2	14.6	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	23.7	25.1	13	15	
		ABCSQ5	ABCSQ1		First degree	25.5	22.5	10.3	13.6	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	13.5	16.4	15.6	7.3	
		ABCSQ5	ABCSQ2		First degree	15.2	13.6	13.1	6.2	
	ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ3	ABCSQ5	ABCSQ3	Full-time	All undergraduates	11.2	14.7	7.8	-3.8	
AgeOnCommencement	Young_Under21 < Mature_Age21andOver	Young_Under21	Mature_Age21andOver	Full-time	All undergraduates	-10.4	-12.3	-10.7	-6.1	
DisabilityType	NoKnownDisabilityType < MentalHealth	NoKnownDisabilityType	MentalHealth	Full-time	All undergraduates	-1.8	-6.7	-7.5	5.6	
		NoKnownDisabilityType	MentalHealth		First degree	-2	-8.4	-8.1	5.3	
Ethnicity	White > ABMO	White	ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.1	7.6	4.3	1.5	
		White	ABMO		First degree	5.1	6.7	3.3	1.5	
	White > Asian	White	Asian	Full-time	All undergraduates	15.8	18.8	9.4	2.8	
		White	Asian		First degree	14.6	20.8	8.3	3.5	
EnglishIMDQuintile_2019	IMDQ1345	IMDQ2	IMDQ1345	IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	5.4	6.3	-3	-0.2	
	IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1	IMDQ2345	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.2	4.9	1.9	10.4	
		IMDQ2345	IMDQ1		First degree	5.9	5.8	1.6	11.6	
	IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	IMDQ3_5	IMDQ1_2	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.3	7	-1.7	4.8	
		IMDQ3_5	IMDQ1_2		First degree	6.6	7.2	-1.6	5.2	
	IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	IMDQ4	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	3.9	7.2	0.4	10.7	
		IMDQ4	IMDQ1		First degree	4.6	8	-0.1	11.5	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	IMDQ5	IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.9	8.3	3.1	10.7	
		IMDQ5	IMDQ1		First degree	7.1	9.7	2.9	12	
	IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	IMDQ5	IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.6	9.5	-1.4	1.3	
		IMDQ5	IMDQ2		First degree	6.2	9.9	-1.1	1.4	

						YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6	
Int_IMDEthnicity	IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	-14.3	-4.2	-12.9	-2.2	
	IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_White	IMDQ345_White	Full-time	All undergraduates	-3.2	-6.5	5.7	-5.8	
	IMDQ12_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ12_White	IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	10	5.1	12.9	-1.3	
	IMDQ345_White | IMDQ345_ABMO	IMDQ345_White	IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	-1.1	7.3	-5.7	2.3	
	IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	IMDQ345_White	IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	13.3	11.6	7.2	4.5	
Int_IMDSex	IMDQ12_Female < IMDQ345_Female	IMDQ12_Female	IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	-5.3	-6.1	3.8	-1.4	
POLAR4Quintile	POLAR4Q1234 < POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q1234	POLAR4Q5	Full-time	All undergraduates	-3.9	-5.9	2	-6.5	
		POLAR4Q1234	POLAR4Q5		First degree	-4.6	-5.7	1	-7	
	POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q1	POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q1	Full-time	All undergraduates	1.8	8.5	-3.2	8.6	
		POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q1		First degree	2.3	9.2	-3.3	9	
	POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q2	POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q2	Full-time	All undergraduates	6.8	3.3	4.2	8.1	
		POLAR4Q5	POLAR4Q2		First degree	7.9	2.1	5.1	8.8	
Sex	Male > Female	Male	Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	5.4	3.2	5.7	6.9	
		Male	Female		First degree	5.7	4.2	4.1	6.7	
TUNDRAQuintile	TUNDRAQ5 > TUNDRAQ2	TUNDRAQ5	TUNDRAQ2	Full-time	First degree	5.9	1.6	-1.8	6.5	

Annex A Table 17. Progression gaps: population sizes

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
ABCSQ4> ABCSQ1	Full-time	First degree	ABCSQ4	280	230	250	210
		First degree	ABCSQ1	140	120	140	130
ABCSQ4> ABCSQ2	Full-time	First degree	ABCSQ4	280	230	250	210
		First degree	ABCSQ2	330	280	280	230
ABCSQ4_5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ4_5	420	360	360	310
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ1	150	130	140	130
		First degree	ABCSQ4_5	400	320	330	300
		First degree	ABCSQ1	140	120	140	130
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	130	120	100	90
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ1	150	130	140	130
		First degree	ABCSQ5	120	90	80	80
		First degree	ABCSQ1	140	120	140	130
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	130	120	100	90
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ2	330	280	290	230
		First degree	ABCSQ5	120	90	80	80
		First degree	ABCSQ2	330	280	280	230
ABCSQ5 > ABCSQ3	Full-time	All undergraduates	ABCSQ5	130	120	100	90
		All undergraduates	ABCSQ3	370	280	280	260
	Full-time	All undergraduates	Young_Under21	1000	820	910	760

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
Young_Under21 < Mature_Age21andOver		All undergraduates	Mature_Age21andOver	270	230	160	170
NoKnownDisabilityType < MentalHealth	Full-time	All undergraduates	NoKnownDisabilityType	1050	860	850	740
		All undergraduates	MentalHealth	50	50	50	60
		First degree	NoKnownDisabilityType	1010	800	820	720
		First degree	MentalHealth	50	50	50	60
White > ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	White	1070	870	910	770
		All undergraduates	ABMO	200	170	150	150
		First degree	White	1030	810	870	750
		First degree	ABMO	190	170	150	150
White > Asian	Full-time	All undergraduates	White	1070	870	910	770
		All undergraduates	Asian	50	50	40	40
		First degree	White	1030	810	870	750
		First degree	Asian	50	40	40	40
IMDQ1345 | IMDQ2	Full-time	First degree	IMDQ1345	970	800	820	740
		First degree	IMDQ2	220	160	170	150
IMDQ2345 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ2345	1110	910	940	810
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
		First degree	IMDQ2345	1070	850	910	800
		First degree	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
IMDQ3_5 > IMDQ1_2	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ3_5	880	740	760	660
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1_2	350	280	270	250
		First degree	IMDQ3_5	850	690	740	650
		First degree	IMDQ1_2	340	260	260	240
IMDQ4 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ4	250	230	250	220
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
		First degree	IMDQ4	250	210	230	220
		First degree	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
IMDQ5 > IMDQ1	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	370	300	320	260
		All undergraduates	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
		First degree	IMDQ5	350	280	310	250
		First degree	IMDQ1	120	110	90	90
IMDQ5 > IMDQ2	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ5	370	300	320	260
		All undergraduates	IMDQ2	230	170	180	150
		First degree	IMDQ5	350	280	310	250
		First degree	IMDQ2	220	160	170	150
IMDQ12_ABMO < IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	100	80	80	70
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_ABMO	100	90	70	80
IMDQ12_White < IMDQ345_White	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_White	250	200	180	170
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	780	640	690	580
IMDQ12_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_White	250	200	180	170
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	100	80	80	70
IMDQ345_White | IMDQ345_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	780	640	690	580
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_ABMO	100	90	70	80
IMDQ345_White > IMDQ12_ABMO	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ345_White	780	640	690	580
		All undergraduates	IMDQ12_ABMO	100	80	80	70
IMDQ12_Female < IMDQ345_Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	IMDQ12_Female	160	130	140	130
		All undergraduates	IMDQ345_Female	370	340	360	300
	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q1234	730	610	680	570

COMPARISON/GAP	MODE	LEVEL	SPLIT	YEAR3	YEAR4	YEAR5	YEAR6
POLAR4Q1234 < POLAR4Q5		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q5	270	210	230	190
		First degree	POLAR4Q1234	720	600	660	570
		First degree	POLAR4Q5	260	210	230	190
POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q1	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q5	270	210	230	190
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q1	140	140	140	130
		First degree	POLAR4Q5	260	210	230	190
		First degree	POLAR4Q1	140	130	140	130
POLAR4Q5 > POLAR4Q2	Full-time	All undergraduates	POLAR4Q5	270	210	230	190
		All undergraduates	POLAR4Q2	210	140	170	140
		First degree	POLAR4Q5	260	210	230	190
		First degree	POLAR4Q2	200	140	160	140
Male > Female	Full-time	All undergraduates	Male	720	560	560	490
		All undergraduates	Female	550	490	510	440
		First degree	Male	680	530	520	470
		First degree	Female	550	460	510	440
TUNDRAQ5 > TUNDRAQ2	Full-time	First degree	TUNDRAQ5	180	140	150	130
		First degree	TUNDRAQ2	200	160	180	150

Students with declared mental health conditions

As OfS has highlighted supporting students who have declared a mental health condition as a strategic priority, Solent has conducted further analysis on students with declared mental health conditions in response.

In continuation, the gaps between students with declared mental health conditions and those without any disabilities are minimal (below 5ppt) across the years (See Annex A Figure 2). In the latest year, students with declared mental health conditions had a 2.5ppt higher continuation rate than those without known disabilities. Unlike the sector, which has shown a persistent gap over the past six years, this issue does not occur at Solent.

In completion, while the gaps were substantial in 2012 and 2013, they have gradually narrowed in subsequent years and decreased to 0.8ppt in the most recent year (See Annex A Figure 3), contrasting with the sector's persistent gap. Therefore, we have decided to continuously monitor this gap instead of setting students with mental health conditions as a target group.

In attainment, the gaps between students with mental health conditions and those with no disabilities has narrowed below 5ppt since 2018 (See Annex A Figure 4); in the latest year, students with declared mental health conditions performed better.

In progression, students with mental health conditions have historically shown higher progression rates, except for the latest year which shows a 5.6ppt gap lower than those without any disabilities (See Annex A Figure 5). We will continuously monitor this gap in the coming years.

These trends align with a change in service delivery when Solent introduced Single Session Therapy in addition to block counselling and a proactive support model eliminating waiting times for students.

Annex A Figure 2. Continuation gaps between students with declared mental health conditions and those without known disability
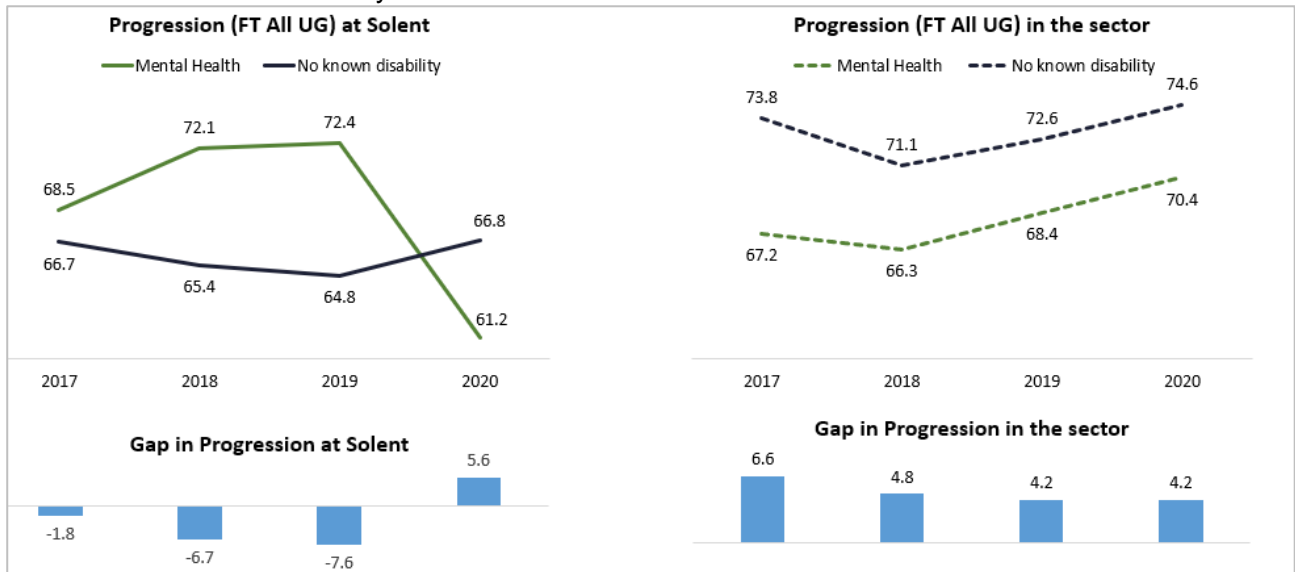
Continuation (FT All UG) at Solent
Mental Health — No known disability

89.8 89.6 89.4 88.9 88.8 88.2
87 88.9 87.1 87.8
85.7

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020

Gap in Continuation at Solent
2.6 -0.5 1.8 1 -2.5

Continuation (FT All UG) in the sector
Mental Health — No known disability

90.5 90.4 90.1 90.2 91.4 89
86.5 86.7 86.9 86.7 88.4 87

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020

Gap in Continuation in the sector
4 3.7 3.2 3.5 3 2
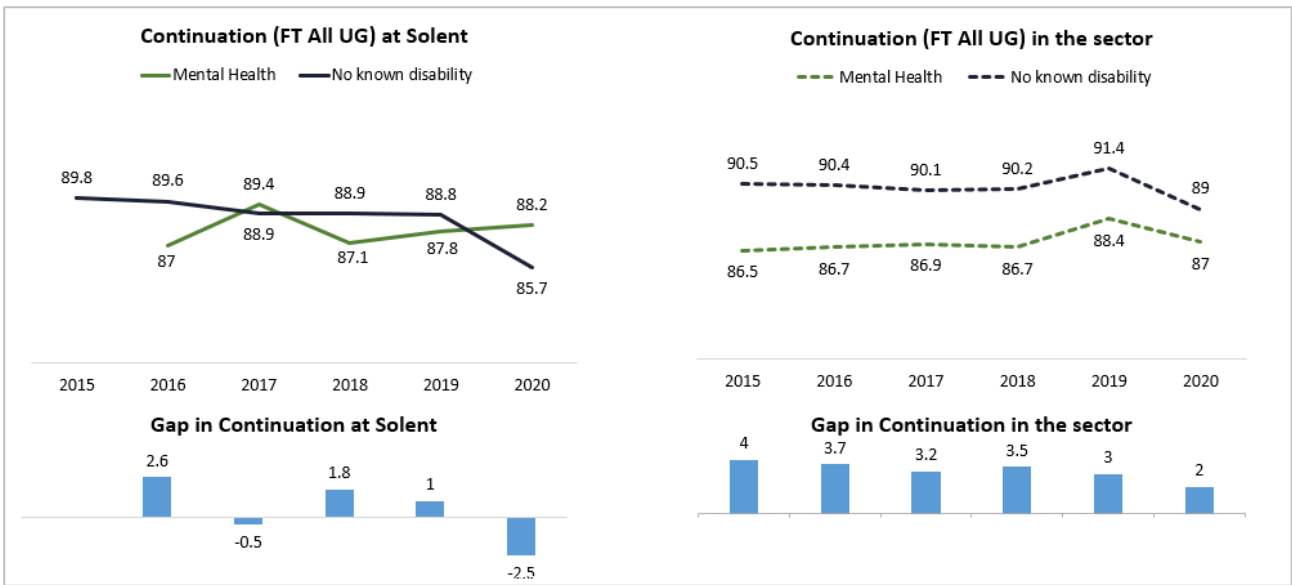
Annex A Figure 3. Completion gaps between students with declared mental health conditions and those without known disability

Completion (FT All UG) at Solent
Mental Health — No known disability

84.2 84.1 85.4 87.5 86.1 84.8
84.1 86.2 82 84
74.2 74.1

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Gap in Completion at Solent
10 10 1.3 -1.3 4.1 0.8

Completion (FT All UG) in the sector
Mental Health — No known disability

89 89 88.3 88 87.9 87.5
77.9 79.5 80.4 82 83 82.2

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Gap in Completion in the sector
11.1 9.5 7.9 6 4.9 5.3
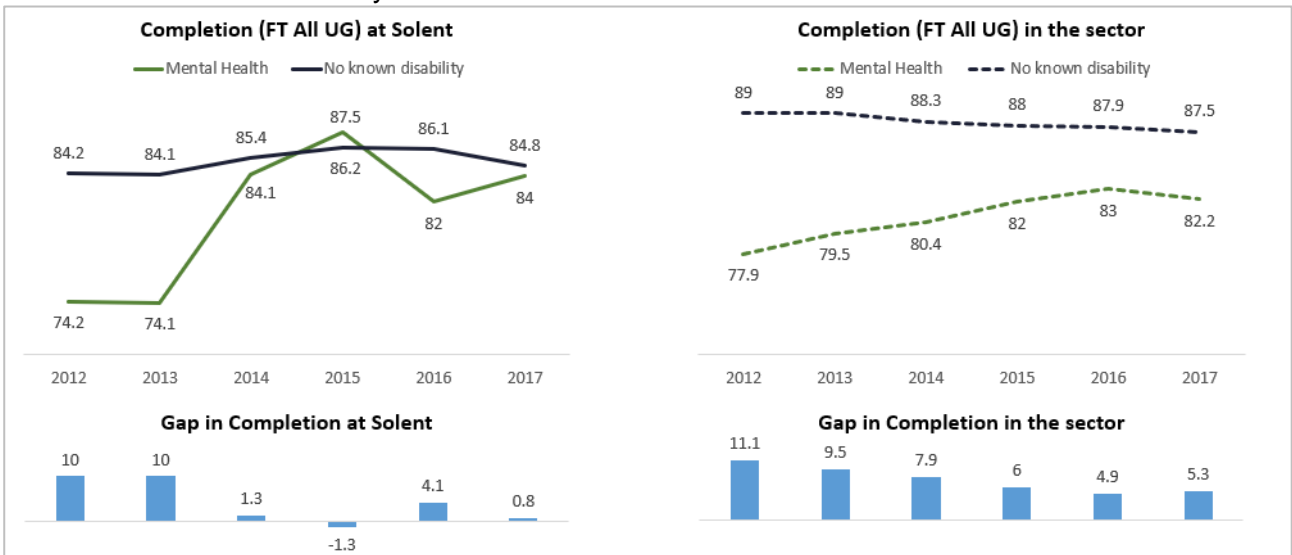
Annex A Figure 4. Attainment gaps between students with declared mental health conditions and those without known disability

Attainment (FT FD) at Solent
Mental Health — No known disability

73.8 73.2 72.1 80.4 80 80.4
70.9 79.8 76.3 73.1
64.9 67.6

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

Gap in Attainment at Solent
-2.9 8.3 4.5 0.6 3.7 -7.3

Attainment (FT FD) in the sector
Mental Health — No known disability

82.7 83.3 81
77.1 78.1 77.9 82.6 83.5 78.9
76.7 76.6 77

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

Gap in Attainment in the sector
0.4 1.5 0.9 0.1 -0.2 -2.1
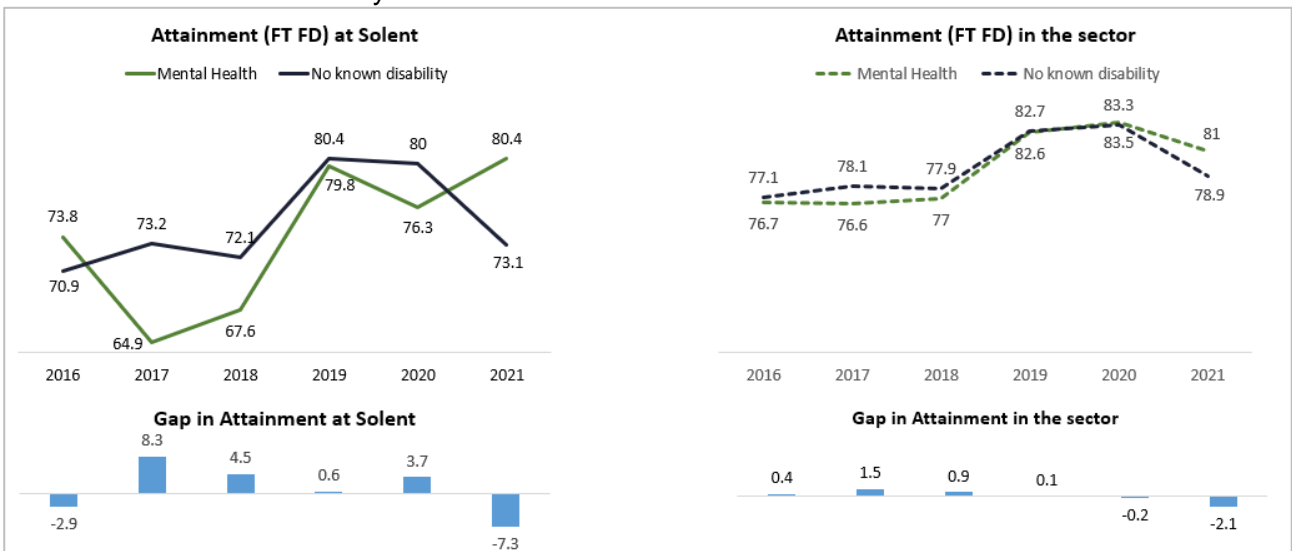
Annex A Figure 5. Progression gaps between students with declared mental health conditions and those without known disability

Progression (FT All UG) at Solent
Mental Health — No known disability
68.5, 72.1, 72.4
66.7, 65.4, 64.8, 66.8
61.2
2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Progression (FT All UG) in the sector
Mental Health — No known disability
73.8, 71.1, 72.6, 74.6
67.2, 66.3, 68.4, 70.4
2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Gap in Progression at Solent
-1.8, -6.7, -7.6, 5.6

Gap in Progression in the sector
6.6, 4.8, 4.2, 4.2

Following this investigation, we decided not to include students with declared mental health conditions as one of the target groups. However, at Solent we are deeply committed to enhancing the mental health and wellbeing of our students, in line with sector-wide priorities. To promote mental wellbeing and provide positive experiences for our students, we have planned a series of workshops and interventions as outlined in our intervention strategies in addition to BAU activity. These initiatives will focus on improving mental health-related elements such as resilience and self-confidence, as well as factors proven by research to contribute to the mental wellbeing of university students, such as peer connections and academic self-efficacy.

Additionally, to facilitate early identification of students at risk of mental health issues, we will conduct an annual institutional survey to continuously measure mental health-related psychometrics, as detailed in our evaluation plan. This approach will enable us to provide early preventive support to students and continuously enhance their university experience.

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Workstream 1: Contextual Admission

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	Solent University is committed to social mobility and social justice. Education is a common good. As such, we believe that to have a diverse and representative society we must ensure that we provide equal opportunities for all qualified learners to access university education irrespective of their identity characteristic, demographic or social background. Once they arrive at university, we must ensure all learners have the potential to succeed. In the 2021/22 academic year our proportion of entrants from IMD Q12 (more deprived) areas was 5.8ppt lower than sector average. This is a persistent issue observed in the last 5 years. Our contextual admissions process aims to address persistent inequalities in access to higher education. We will make reduced tariff offers that consider systemic barriers to exclusion by intentionally taking positive action to to providing access to higher education to students who are economically disadvantaged. As such, we will focus on students from IMD Q12 areas (in addition to those from Polar 4 Q1 areas, Care leavers/looked-after children, Disabled learners, young carers, refugees, GRT communities, military families, estranged learners and those who attend low performing secondary schools – based on the Progress 8 score). In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, our contextual admissions and supporting Widening Participation activities will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 1 - Knowledge and Skills: Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions. • EORR Risk 2 - Information and Guidance: Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their higher education options. • EORR Risk 3 - Perception of HE: Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified. • EORR Risk 4 - Application Success Rates: Students may not be accepted to a higher education course, or may not be accepted to certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	To promote equal opportunities and increase the access rate of students from IMDQ12 backgrounds to better reflect the proportion of 18 year olds in this group in the sector, Solent University has continued the contextual admission policy as one of the interventions. This is expected to contribute to the following target in the Access and Participation Plan: PTA_2: Increase the access proportion of IMDQ12 full-time first degree entrants to 44% by 2028, in line with the sector average

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
			Short term outcomes	**Medium term outcomes**	**Long term outcomes**
1. Solent Staff time (to administrate, promote/market, deliver linked activities, monitor, and evaluate). 2. Student's time to attend webinars and information sharing events. 3. Student's time to complete UCAS applications and apply. 4. Student's time to complete evaluation surveys. 5. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges (who engage in events and support applicants). 6. Data analysis and sharing of data Business Insights team.	1. Create/enhance University infrastructure to facilitate the contextual offers programme (including administration systems e.g. the self-declaration form and website resource). 2. Promote contextual offer programme to potential applicants, offer support to facilitate informed decisions and assist with university applications during Widening Participation activities e.g. Campus visits and during UK Student Recruitment activities e.g. Open Days (All year), and clearing. 3. Promote contextual offer programme to other stakeholders including Teachers/Careers advisers e.g. CPD events and Parent/Carers e.g. Parent/Carer information events (Autumn/Winter). 4. Applicants apply for University place with reduced tariff offer made (typically If an applicant meets one criteria, the standard tariff will be reduced by a minimum of 16 points. If an applicant meets two or more criteria, the standard tariff will be reduced by a minimum of 32 points). 5. Invite contextual offer holders to information event (these events explain what contextual offers are, the potential support that can be access during transition to university and during study e.g. grants, scholarships and bursaries and discuss other areas including applying for accommodation (Spring/Summer).	1. Contextual offers made - numbers of offers recorded. 2. Contextual offer and transition information events undertaken – number of contextual offer attendees recorded, and activity evaluation undertaken. 3. Contextual applicants enrol – enrolment numbers recorded, relationship between offers made, events attended, and enrolment established.	1. Improved prospect knowledge of Higher Education (specifically the benefits, UCAS application process and what it like to study at university) 2. Enhanced awareness of contextual admission, the options available at Solent and the ability to make informed decisions 3. Increased teacher and career advisers' knowledge of contextual admission, entry requirements, and scholarship 4. Increased parent/carer knowledge of contextual admission, benefits, student finance, university application support, available support during studies and accommodation options	1. Reduced concerns about financial issues related to studying at Solent for both applicants and parents/carer 2. Increased prospect confidence in meeting the entry requirement and successfully receiving offers from Solent 3. Enable teachers and career advisers to advise disadvantaged students to apply through contextual admission if their predicted scores fall slightly below the requirements.	1. Greater rates (volume and proportion) of applicants from IMD Q12 apply to Solent University 2. Greater conversion rates from IMD Q12 applicants (application to enrolment)

Rationale and Assumptions		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
	Rationale: The impacts of poverty on academic performance and educational journeys are well-documented. Previous research reviews (Considine & Zappalà, 2002) have suggested that children from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to show poorer educational outcomes compared to their affluent peers, such as lower levels of literacy, numeracy, and comprehension, as well as lower higher education participation rates. Parents in wealthier areas can afford more learning materials and can recruit additional teachers for their children (Gorski, 2017). Additionally, they have more power to negotiate with school teachers and other decision-making bodies. All of the above factors contribute to a wider gap in academic performance between economically disadvantaged students and their affluent peers. Therefore, we believe that reducing the entry requirements for students from IMDQ12 backgrounds can mitigate the financial impact on these students and promote equality of opportunity. The use of contextualised admission practice is well established in the UK HE sector (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions, 2015). Research suggests that applicants with prior participation in institutional widening participation activities are relatively more likely to take up an offer of a place and do better than average on retention and course performance measures (Boliver, 2019). Nevertheless, the Centre for Social Mobility at the University of Exeter concluded that contextualised offers are having a positive impact in institutions in terms of diversifying the student body and encouraging disadvantaged applicants to apply. A report by the Sutton Trust and Atherton (2020) discusses how students have been given access to similar support across the world. This pre-emptive support for students benefited them significantly, however, it must be ongoing throughout the progression through higher education. This indicates the needs of entrants through contextual admission should be continuously assessed to ensure the support remains sufficient and effective. **Assumptions:** The use of data-led and evidence based approaches to enhance decision making, understanding and awareness of contextual offers among students and educators in schools and colleges have proven effective in supporting recruitment teams in universities and colleges to meet their strategic objectives in terms of widening access to higher education (University of Exeter, 2019). This finding has underscored our holistic approach to approach to embedding contextual offers within widening participation and outreach activities at Solent University. Whilst it is recognised that more systematic work is needed to determine how well different contextual indicators (or combinations of) impact on degree outcomes for disadvantaged students, existing studies suggest that contextual admissions can increase academic success in some contexts (Rowbottom, 2017; Taylor et al, 2013; Hoare & Johnston, 2010). With this in mind, we have developed our contextual offers intervention to improve access to higher education for disdvantaged students (IMD Q12). Once enrolled, we will longitudinally track the academic success and proression of students from our target groups to explore their educational outcomes in relation to their comparators.	**Short term evaluations**	**Medium term evaluation**	**Long term evaluation**
		Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended Type 2: Pre and post activity surveys for to (potential) applicants, parents/carers, and teachers and career advisers utilizing self-reported scales to measure the corresponding outcomes	Type 2: Pre and post activity surveys for to (potential) applicants, parents/carers, and teachers and career advisers utilizing self-reported scales to measure the corresponding outcomes	Type 1: Monitor the access rate of IMDQ12 students and the gap compared to the sector average Type 1/3: Ongoing tracking of continuation status of the entrants through contextual offers. Explore the possibility to analyse the data with propensity score matching and Regression Discontinuity Design Type 1/3: Ongoing tracking of academic performance and attainment status of the entrants through contextual offers. Explore the possibility to analyse the data with propensity score matching and Regression Discontinuity Design

Workstream 2: GRIT workshop: Young Leaders (Pre-entry)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	According to data on widening participation in higher education (2023), the progression rate to higher education among 19-year-old state-funded pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in Southampton has been below the national average since 2009/10. However, the gap has been narrowing over the years, decreasing from -12.2 ppt in 2009/10 to -3.5 ppt in 2021/22. This trend suggests a continuing need to encourage students from minority ethnic backgrounds in the Southampton community to pursue higher education. At Solent University, the proportion of entrants from ABMO ethnic backgrounds has been 15.4 ppt lower than the sector average over the past four years. Further investigation into the intersection of ethnicity and IMD reveals that the proportion of White entrants from IMDQ12 is 4.1 ppt lower than the sector average (Solent 8.4% vs Sector 12.5%). However, the gap is even more pronounced for ABMO entrants from IMDQ12, where Solent's proportion is 11.9 ppt lower than the sector average (Solent 9.8% vs Sector 21.7%). This data indicates that the disparity is primarily among ABMO entrants from IMDQ12, highlighting the impact of socioeconomic disadvantage as a significant barrier for Level 3 ABMO learners progressing into higher education. The relationship between ethnicity, age, and self-esteem has been a significant focus of research. Previous studies indicate that individuals from Black African backgrounds generally exhibit higher self-esteem compared to their White counterparts, who in turn score higher than other racial minority groups, including Hispanics, Asians, and Indians. These differences in self-esteem are minimal during childhood but become more pronounced with age (Twenge & Crocker, 2000). Heine et al. (1999) pointed out that in some collectivist cultures, which promote self-criticism for self-improvement to maintain harmony in relationships, people tend to have lower self-esteem compared to those from individualist cultures. This can result in an underestimation of personal capability to progress into higher education. Additionally, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often face daily challenges that their affluent peers do not. They develop cognitive patterns and coping mechanisms to adapt to less-than-ideal situations, focusing on accepting limitations and deficits in their lives (Jensen, 2010). This fixed mindset can undermine their belief in their ability to plan and achieve future goals, whether in progressing into higher education or pursuing desired careers. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 1 - Knowledge and Skills: Students may not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their expectations and ambitions. • EORR Risk 2 - Information and Guidance: Students may not have equal opportunity to receive the information and guidance that will enable them to develop ambition and expectations, or to make informed choice about their higher education options. • EORR Risk 3 - Perception of HE: Students may not feel able to apply to higher education, or certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified. • EORR Risk 4 - Application Success Rates: Students may not be accepted to a higher education course, or may not be accepted to certain types of providers within higher education, despite being qualified.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	To increase the progression rate to level 3 qualification and further increase the progression to higher education rate among students from minority ethnic backgrounds (ABMO) in Southampton to better reflect the national average.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
1. Solent Staff time (to administrate, promote/market, deliver linked activities, monitor, and evaluate). 2. Student's time to attend events. 3. Collaboration with GRIT to design and deliver information and sessions for staff and students 4. Student's time to complete evaluation surveys. 5. Collaboration with teaching/careers/support staff in schools and colleges (who engage in events and support applicants). 6. Data analysis and sharing of data to Business Insights team.	1. Create/enhance University infrastructure to facilitate the Future Leaders programme (including planning, collaboration with GRIT, content of the event and creating stakeholder buy in e.g. target schools, colleges and members of the community). " 2. Promote Future Leaders programme to stakeholders including Teachers, careers advisers and participants e.g. creating appropriate promotional material and providing pre-information including a pre event 3. Enrolment of participants including appropriate pre-survey. 4. Logistical arrangements made for physical event e.g. room bookings, catering, parking and resources.	1. Future Leaders event undertaken (focused on cultural identity, peer support, confidence, self-esteem, creating networks and what Solent University has to offer ABMO students) – who/number of attendees recorded and activity evaluation undertaken (post-survey). 2. Participants recorded on HEAT system with tracking undertaken	**Short term outcomes** 1. Enhanced self-esteem to recognize and value personal strengths and abilities 2. Improved prospect knowledge of Higher Education and Solent University 3. Facilitated planning in their educational or career journey (post 18).	**Medium term outcomes** 1.Progression of participants to Level 3 qualifications	**Long term outcomes** 1. Greater volume of ABMO applicants apply to higher education

Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:**		**Evaluation to assess the outcomes**		
	Recent research suggests that self-esteem does not have a direct impact on academic engagement. However, adolescents with higher self-esteem tend to develop stronger self-cognition and academic self-efficacy (Zhao et al., 2021). This enables them to better obtain and manage available resources, supporting their academic goals and ultimately increasing their engagement in learning (Ouweneel et al., 2021). Enhanced self-esteem also leads to better interpersonal relationships and higher achievement (Wadkar, 2023), including improved outcomes for Level 3 learners after their graduation. To enhance the self-esteem of students from ABMO backgrounds, particularly those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Solent University has coordinated with GRIT to propose a workshop aimed at increasing the access rate of these students in partnered colleges. This initiative seeks to address the unique challenges faced by these students and support their journey toward higher education.		**Short term evaluations** Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended Type 2: Participant feedback collected in post-survey, which includes satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure self-esteem and knowledge of higher education Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-designed question to collect the plans at age of 18	**Medium term evaluation** Type 1: Monitor the number of attendees progressed into Level 3 qualifications by HEAT	**Long term evaluation** Type 1: Monitor the number of attendees progressed into higher education by HEAT
	Assumptions: The GRIT programme aims to bring students together and forge communities. Students can form bonds and networks through the workshops, getting to know fellow prospective Solent students in pre-entry and forming stronger bonds with them as they progress through the programme. Both role modelling and belonging are key aspects of the social sphere for students who may otherwise feel they cannot attain their full potential. The trainer in this workshop will guide participants to understand and appreciate their valuable strengths and personal characteristics, rather than focusing on their deficits. They will be introduced to various support systems that can aid in decision-making and creating opportunities. Consequently, this will help change the fixed mindset and foster the belief that they have the ability and support to achieve their desired future. After attending the workshop, participants will be better able to identify and value their achievements and understand how their strengths can lead to future success. They will develop stronger self-esteem, feel more comfortable making future plans and more confident in achieving them. As a result, participants will be empowered to set higher and more ambitious goals for their lives, including progressing into higher education.				

Workstream 3: Peer mentoring (Mentee - L4 & Mentor - L5)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	Numerous research studies have identified socio-economic inequality as one of the key factors contributing to academic achievement, resulting in the rise of student dropout rates. Students from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to follow more traditional educational pathways compared to their peers from lower backgrounds (Muller & Schneider, 2013). Dustmann (2004) also indicated a strong relationship between parental backgrounds and the educational journey of children in secondary school, influencing success in tertiary education. Jensen (2010) pointed out that economically disadvantaged students encounter daily challenges that their affluent peers have never experienced. To accept less-than-ideal situations, they have developed corresponding cognitive patterns and coping mechanisms. This fixed mindset serves as a setback to their academic achievement. Students from Asian, Black, Mixed, and Other ethnic (ABMO) backgrounds also encounter difficulties in higher educational institutions. According to Wilkins and Lall (2011), those students withdrew their study journey associated with the fears of social isolation and stereotypes from their peers. Kauser et al. (2021) conducted a semi-structured interview with 13 ABMO students from post-1992 universities in the West Midlands and concluded that academic failure, lack of institutional support, financial insecurity, family pressure, and social isolation are the core determinants contributing to their withdrawals. At Solent University, there is a 6 ppt gap in continuation, with students from IMDQ12 backgrounds being lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, and an 8.1 ppt gap, with ABMO students being lower than White students, recorded in 2020/21 entrants. Regarding attainment, students from IMDQ12 backgrounds were 9 ppt lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, while ABMO students were 12.7 ppt lower than White students among 2021/22 graduates. This is a persistent issue observed in the last 6 years. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 6: Insufficient academic support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 8: Mental health: Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	Academic and social integration are the major contributors to student retention and academic achievement (Behr et al., 2020). Academic integration refers to grades and internalization of academic norms and values, while social integration includes interactions with other learners and participation in extracurricular activities. To reduce the continuation and attainment gaps by half and promote equal opportunities, Solent University has proposed a peer mentoring intervention as one of the interventions aimed at enhancing academic self-efficacy, course engagement, connection with peers, sense of belonging to Solent, and engagement in other activities. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan: PTS_1: Reduce the continuation gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028 PTS_2: Reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028 PTS_3: Reduce the attainment gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028 PTS_4: Reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
			Short term outcomes	**Medium term outcomes**	**Long term outcomes**
1. Skills, knowledge and Solent staff time (to design, administer, manage, promote, monitor and evaluate 2. University funding for the project 3. Research identify and implement a suitable online mentoring platform 4. Staff and student training materials and workshop resources 5. Staff time to collaborate and work with mentoring platform provider 6. Staff time for maintenance/upgrades/enhancements of mentoring platform 7. Student's time to hold and attend mentoring sessions 8. Time and resource to promote and increase engagement with the programme 9. Feedback/focus group sessions with staff and students	1. Create a University infrastructure to facilitate a peer mentoring programme (In the first year a 4 course pilot programme, then phased roll out) 2. Work with software platform provider to design/deliver and implement an online peer mentoring system 2. Design training materials and resources to promote peer mentoring programme 3. Develop and deliver information sessions on peer mentoring for staff and students 4. Promote the peer mentoring programme to engage and recruit students as mentors and mentees 5. Develop and deliver training for mentors 6. Develop and deliver training for mentees 7. Conduct pre evaluation survey 8. Monitor engagement in the programme at key check in points 9. Conduct post evaluation surveys 10. Evaluation and analysis of programme	1.No. of students registering for the programme to be mentors and mentee's 2.No. of courses engaged in the programme 3.No. of actual mentors and mentee's (and vs those who registered) 4.No of mentors who attend training sessions 5.No. of staff who attend information/training sessions 6.No. of Mentoring sessions attended 7.Survey outcomes on academic self efficacy, connection with peers, and sense of belonging. 8.No of attendees in feedback/focus group sessions	1. Enhanced academic self-efficacy to develop a stronger belief in continuing their studies and achieving higher academic performance 2. Enhanced sense of belonging to treat themselves as one of the core members in the university 3. Enhanced connection with peers to create a supportive learning environment at Solent	1. Increased engagement in the studies (attendance) 2. Increased engagement in other activities, such as guided learning, extracurricular activities, Associate Fellowship, and other services	1. Increased continuation, completion and attainment rates 2. Reduced gap in the continuation, completion and attainment rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 3. Reduced gap in the continuation, completion and attainment rates of ABMO students vs White students

		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:** Many research studies have suggested that mentoring programmes in higher education benefit both mentors and mentees across multiple dimensions, such as academic performance (Folger et al., 2004) and perceived support (Santos & Reigadas, 2005). For institutions, these programmes can reduce the dropout rate (Leidenfrost et al., 2014). Compared to informal mentoring, students who engage in formal mentoring with a specified matching process, goals, and structure are more likely to experience higher satisfaction (Strayhorn & Terrell, 2007). According to academic and social integration models, learning motivation, self-efficacy, and social support are predictors of academic success and student retention (Behr et al., 2020). However, students from economically disadvantaged or minority ethnic backgrounds experience disproportionately high degrees of loneliness and social isolation, which have a detrimental impact on personal health and academic performance (Macdonald et al., 2018; Arday, 2018). To promote supportive learning environment at Solent, we have proposed a peer mentoring programme focused on addressing academic and personal challenges throughout students' study journeys. We anticipate that this approach will enhance both academic and social integration among our students, leading to increased student retention and improved academic performance. **Assumptions:** Students generally feel more comfortable to share their challenges and concerns with peers rather than academic staff. Through the interactions between mentors and mentees, mentees are encouraged to view senior-year mentors with similar backgrounds as potential role models for their future academic progression and success. They can discuss academic and personal challenges they face in their studies and seek advice from mentors. Upon completing the programme, mentees are more likely to experience increased motivation, openly discuss their challenges, seek support from others, and develop a stronger belief in continuing their studies and achieving higher academic performance. Simultaneously, mentors derive greater satisfaction in their academic abilities by assisting mentees and sharing their learning experiences. By the end of the intervention, we aim for the positive experiences and enhanced sense of belonging to serve as a solid foundation, encouraging students to participate in additional activities such as guided learning, extracurricular activities, and other services. This continuous involvement will further strengthens their sense of belonging, creating a positive cycle.	**Short term evaluations** Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure sense of belonging at Solent, connection with peers, and academic self-efficacy. Explore the possibility of comparing with a control group using data collected from annual institutional surveys, employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching (PSM) Type 2: Mentee and mentor feedback collected in post-survey, which includes satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme information. Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need	**Medium term evaluation** Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up comparison (A-B-A design) utilizing course attendance data collected internally. Explore the possibility of utilizing Interrupted Time-series Design to analyze the longitudinal attendance data Type 2/3: Post intervention engagement record in other activities. Explore the possibility of comparing with students from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test)	**Long term evaluation** Type 1 and 2: Monitor the continuation and completion rate. Compare the continuation and completion status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released Type 1 and 3: Monitor the attainment rate. Compare the academic performance and attainment status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released

Workstream 4: GRIT workshop: Resilience (L0/L4)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	University students face several stressors during their academic journey, such as academic concerns. However, students from ABMO backgrounds often encounter a wider range of psychosocial stressors, including underrepresentation in programmes, social isolation, and racial discrimination (Olaniyan, 2021). Pariat et al. (2014) noted that child poverty is a major threat to student mental health. A review of the nationally representative survey of UK residents, Understanding Society (2009-2014), found that UK-born ethnic minorities with lower socio-economic backgrounds reported worse mental health than affluent non-UK born minorities (Nandi et al., 2016). The transition to higher education has a more significant impact on students from socio-economically disadvantaged or minor ethnicity backgrounds compared to their peers. At Solent, there is a 6 ppt gap in continuation rates, with students from IMDQ12 having lower continuation rates than those from IMDQ345. Additionally, an 8.1 ppt gap exists between ABMO students and White students, as recorded in the 2020/21 entrants. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 8: Mental health: Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	To reduce the continuation and attainment gaps by half and promote equal opportunities, Solent University has coordinated with GRIT to conduct a workshop of resilience as one of the interventions. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan: PTS_1: Reduce the continuation gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028 PTS_2: Reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
1. University funding for the project 2. Skills, knowledge and Solent staff time (to design, administer, manage and promote workshop/build engagement 3. Collaboration with GRIT to design and deliver information and sessions for staff and students 4. Collaboration with GRIT to deliver enrolment sessions for students 5. Suitable venue to hold GRIT sessions and catered lunch 6. Collaboration with Solent Students Union to promote/ build engagement to help promote the programme" 7. Staff time, skills and knowledge to design pre and post survey 8. Staff time, skills and knowledge to evaluate and carry out analysis	1. Online promotion and onsite promotion session to raise awareness and engagement with the workshop 2. Targeted comms to academic and professional services staff to raise awareness and build engagement 3. Targeted email to all applicable students in Foundation/Level 4 4. Information Sessions for staff and students - awareness raising and building engagement facilitated by GRIT and SAT team 5. Pre Enrolment session for students facilitated by GRIT 6. Conduct pre and post evaluation surveys 7. Conduct evaluation and analysis of workshop	1. 1 day Resilience Workshop facilitated by GRIT (with SAT team input on University support) 2. No of students/staff attending information sessions 3. No of students attending enrolment sessions 4. No of students attending Resilience Workshop 5. Pre and Post Workshop Surveys	**Short term outcomes** 1. Enhanced sense of community within the academic department/course 2. Enhanced sense of belonging at Solent 3. Enhanced resilience skills by uncovering unhelpful behaviours and patterns of thinking 4. Increased awareness of support available at Solent	**Medium term outcomes** 1. Enhanced connection with peers at Solent	**Long term outcomes** 1. Increased continuation and completion rates 2. Reduced gap in the continuation and completion rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 3. Reduced gap in the continuation and completion rates of ABMO students vs White students

Rationale and Assumptions		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
	Rationale: Researchers have identified resilience factors to the UK-born people from ABMO and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, including number of close friends and having higher personality traits of Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness (Nandi et al., 2016). Kemp (2002) conducted a research study to examine the relationship between resilience, life events, and student retention. The results showed a positive relationship between resilience and student retention. However, life events did not impact this relationship, indicating that resilience contributes to student retention independently of the life events experienced by the students. Given the challenges mentioned in the situation section, it is crucial to enhance the resilience of students from both ABMO and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Improving their coping strategies can reduce the impact of these stressors and support their academic and personal success. **Assumptions:** In this workshop, the trainer will guide participants through a process of introspection, helping them to examine their reactions when reality does not meet their expectations. Participants will learn to develop appropriate coping strategies, such as exploring alternative choices and possibilities. Additionally, they will identify their valuable strengths and personal capabilities and set goals for personal development. After attending the workshop, participants will be equipped to handle challenges in their personal and academic lives with enhanced resilience skills. They will be able to respond to difficulties using effective coping strategies, focusing on solutions that leverage their existing resources and abilities.	**Short term evaluations** Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure sense of community, sense of belonging at Solent, resilience skills, and connection with peers. Explore the possibility of comparing with a control group using data collected from annual institutional surveys, employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching (PSM) Type 2: Participant feedback collected in post-survey, which includes satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	**Medium term evaluation** Type 2/3: Pre-, post-, and follow-up comparison (A-B-A design) utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure connection with peers. Explore the possibility of comparing with a control group using data collected from annual institutional surveys, employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching (PSM)	**Long term evaluation** Type 1 and 2: Monitor the continuation and completion rate. Compare the continuation and completion status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released

Workstream 5: GRIT workshop: Leadership (L5)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	Cotton et al. (2015) conducted a focus group to understand the gender and ethnicity attainment gap in UK universities. The findings revealed that students from minor ethnic groups tend to have higher extrinsic motivation, driven by factors such as family pressure and career stability, whereas White students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated by personal interest and development. This focus on external factors may indicate that students from ethnic minority backgrounds engage less deeply in their courses and adopt more surface-level approaches to their studies. Jensen (2010) highlighted that economically disadvantaged students face daily challenges that their affluent peers do not experience. These challenges foster a concrete thinking pattern necessary to adapt to demanding situations, but this also impedes comprehensive future planning (Caballero et al., 2021). At Solent University, there is a 6 percentage point (ppt) gap in continuation, with students from IMDQ12 backgrounds being lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, and an 8.1 ppt gap, with ABMO students being lower than White students, recorded in 2020/21 entrants. Regarding attainment, students from IMDQ12 backgrounds were 9 ppt lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, while ABMO students were 12.7 ppt lower than White students among 2021/22 graduates. This is a persistent issue observed in the last 6 years. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 8: Mental health: Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	To reduce the attainment gaps by half and promote equal opportunities, Solent University has coordinated with GRIT to conduct a workshop of leadership as one of the interventions. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan: PTS_3: Reduce the attainment gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028 PTS_4: Reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
	Process			**Impact**	
1. University funding for the project 2. Skills, knowledge and Solent staff time (to design, administer, manage, promote and build engagement in the workshops 3. Collaboration with GRIT to design and deliver information and sessions for staff and students 4. Collaboration with GRIT to deliver enrolement sessions for students 5. Suitable venue to hold GRIT sessions and catered lunch 6. Collaboration with Solent Students Union to promote/ build engagment to help promote the programme 7. Staff time, skills and knowledge to design pre and post survey 8. Staff time, skills and knowledge to evaluaate and carry out analysis	1. Online promotion and onsite promotion session to raise awareness and engagment witht the workshop collaborative working between GRIT, SAT team and SU 2. Targeted comms to academic and professional services staff to raise awareness and build engagment 3. Targeted email to applicable students in Level 5 4. Information Sessions for staff and students - awareness raising and building engagment facilitated by GRIT and SAT team 5. Pre Enrolement session for students fascilitated by GRIT 6. Conduct pre and post evaluation surveys 7. Evaluation and analysis of programme	1. 2 day Leadership Workshop fascilitated by GRIT (with SAT team input on University support) 2. Follow up session delivered by GRIT 3. No of students/staff attending information sessions 4. No of students attending enrolement sessions 5. No of students attending Resiliance Workshop 6. Pre and Post Workshop Surveys	**Short term outcomes** 1. Enhanced self-leadership to bring out the best in individuals, including academic performance 2. Increased sense of responsibility, particularly toward their academic engagement 3. Enhanced leadership skills to coach and support others	**Medium term outcomes** 1. Enhanced academic self-efficacy 2. Enhanced academic performance	**Long term outcomes** 1. Increased continuation, completion and attainment rates 2. Reduced gap in the continuation, completion and attainment rates of students from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 3. Reduced gap in the continuation, completion and attainment rates of ABMO students vs White students

Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:**		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
	Self-leadership is defined as proactive efforts to engage in a process of self-change and self-influence to achieve greater self-management and self-direction, resulting in effective performance (Ross, 2015; Neck et al., 2019). Previous research has suggested that strengthening self-leadership positively impacts academic performance. Zahir et al. (2023) found a strong positive correlation between self-leadership and academic performance among over 300 university students across various academic disciplines. Those with higher self-leadership actively set goals, evaluated their thoughts, and engaged in positive self-talk and self-rewarding behaviors. Similarly, Napiersky and Woods (2016) reached a comparable conclusion in their study involving 150 students from a UK university-based business school. Their findings suggested that five aspects of self-leadership (goal-setting, regulating and directing, goal-directed behavior, motivational awareness, and optimism) were predictive of academic performance. Students who reported higher scores in these aspects exhibited greater use of self-leadership behavioral strategies, were aware of their motivation, adopted a more positive mindset, and achieved higher scores in their academic assessments. Given the challenges mentioned in the situational section, enhancing self-leadership can enable stronger self-imposed strategies for handling tasks with low intrinsic motivation for students from ABMO backgrounds (Manz, 1986). It can also help economically disadvantaged students generate appropriate solutions and facilitate the selection of the most effective ones (Georgianna, 2007).		**Short term evaluations**	**Medium term evaluation**	**Long term evaluation**
			Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure self-leadership, sense of responsibility, and leadership skills Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences if there is a need. The qualitative data collected from peer mentoring post-survey and focus group may also provide evidence to support the effectiveness of leadership workshop. Type 2: Participant feedback collected in post-survey, which includes satisfaction ratings, experiences, and programme limitations Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	Type 3: Pre-post intervention comparison utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure academic self-efficacy collected from annual institutional surveys, employing a matched design or Propensity Score Matching (PSM) Type 3: Compare the honors classification with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the attainment rate. Compare the attainment status with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the OfS's data have been released
	Assumptions: In the workshop, the trainer will guide participants in creating leadership life maps. This exercise will allow participants to reflect on their life experiences and recognize how they have applied self-leadership skills to achieve personal success. By enhancing their self-observation and self-awareness, they will build confidence in their ability to lead themselves towards future goals and self-actualization. Furthermore, the trainer will emphasize the importance of taking responsibility for their commitments and focusing on achieving desired outcomes, rather than being influenced by external circumstances. This focus aims to develop their self-regulation and self-management skills. Participants will also have opportunities to reflect on how their opinions and experiences have shaped their identities, which will enhance their self-awareness and self-compassion. Through these activities, participants are expected to develop strong self-leadership skills, ultimately guiding them toward academic success. Additionally, improving leadership skills can enable mentors to better support the mentoring process in peer mentoring programme, thereby enhancing its overall effectiveness.				

Workstream 6: Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	There is persistent unequal educational experiences and attainment between racially minoritised and White students in higher education (HE). The curriculum of most programs in HE is dominated by White, male, Eurocentric perspectives. Significant educational research suggest that higher education (HE) curricula are often perceived as culturally insensitive by students from Asian, Black, or other minority ethnic (ABMO) backgrounds (Thomas & Quinlan, 2023) and that culturally sensitive curricula are associated with students' higher interest in their programs (Quinlan et al, 2024).Solent university had a ABMO degree awarding gap of 12.7ppt in 2021/22, while the sector gap was 11.4ppt. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 8: Mental health: Students may not experience an environment that is conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	To develop culturally sensitive curricula and promote a diverse and inclusive learning environment, Solent University has proposed the implementation of the Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales surveys and a series of masterclasses. These interventions aim to reduce the attainment gap within the university. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following target in the Access and Participation Plan: PTS_3: Reduce the attainment gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
1. Leadership 2. Course/ Module leaders participation in the masterclass series 3. Participation of students to complete the CSCS survey to share their perspectives 4. Data analysis to the data collected from CSCS 5. Time to develop/deliver Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Masterclass Series	1. CSCS survey data collected and fed back to module convenors 2. Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Masterclass series delivered (attended by teaching staff) 3. Module convenors develop SMART action plan to revise their curriculum 4. Participants complete minute papers during each workshop 5. Participants develop a plan (theory of change) to revise their curriculum 6. Participants completing pre/post workshop questionnaires	Diversified curricula: a) Curricula with more intersectionally diverse reading lists b) Diverse and wider range of examples in taught content c) Culturally sensitive assessments (enabling learners to draw on the global tapestry of knowledge and scholarship) d) Curricula that draws on theories, pedagogy, teaching and assessment materials from the global tapestry of knowledge	**Short term outcomes** 1. Increased awareness of causes of differences in student experiences and outcomes by teaching staff 2. Teaching staff report increased agency to engage in conversations pertaining to educational justice 3. Teaching staff develop skills, agency, knowledge and understanding to effect curricula changes to make them more culturally sensitive.	**Medium term outcomes** 1. Enhanced engagement of ABMO students with the curriculum, specifically: a) enhanced ABMO student interest in curriculum, and b) enhanced relationships between ABMO students and teachers 2. Culturally competent educators (those with the confidence and cultural intelligence to deliver advance social justice in their curriculum and pedagogical practices (especially White educators) 3. Curricula perceived as more culturally sensitive by all students (especially ABMO students)	**Long term outcomes** 1. Reduced degree awarding gaps between ABMO and White 2. Enhanced student engagement 3. Students' increased levels of satisfaction with their educational experiences

		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:** A growing body of research shows that if students perceive curricula as more culturally sensitive, then they will be more interested in it and have better relationships with their teachers (Thomas & Quinlan, 2023; 2021; Quinlan et al., 2024). This could positively influence their educational experiences and outcomes. Extant literature suggests that interest and improved relationships with teachers serve to predict atttainment. Research also shows that supporting teachers to develop confidence and agency to engage in social justice education may improve educational experiences for racially diverse learners. Despite contemporary discourses and directives from the higher education regulators to reduce gaps in degrees awarded by 2030, module/ course convenors may not be fully aware how culturally insensitive curricula shape students' educational outcomes and experiences. **Assumptions:** A Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Masterclass series raises awareness of these issues while supporting teaching staff to develop skills and strategies to effect curricular changes (making them more culturally sensitive to develop life ready, work-ready, world-ready and future-ready graduates). Throughout the Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Masterclass series, teaching staff at Solent University will be supported to revise their curriculum and pedagogy to see whether it enhances the engagement and attainment.	**Short term evaluations** Type 2: Pre-post surveys will be provided to the teaching staff in the workshop	**Medium term evaluation** Type 2/3: Annual CSCS surveys to the students and teaching staff. Explore the possibility to compare the results collected from the adjusted curricula with the previous cohorts/ non-adjusted curricula. Type 2: Semi-structured interviews for Module/Course Leaders in the next academic year to facilitate a more in-depth exploration of their experiences with curriculum adjustments in the previous year and provide insights into their planned approaches for the upcoming academic year	**Long term evaluation** Type 1: Monitor the attainment rate

Workstream 7: Professional mentoring (L6)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	UK-based charities, such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Child Poverty Action Group, have highlighted the impact of poverty on health issues, academic performance, and challenges in securing good employment (Barber, 2013). Daly et al. (2015) also pointed out that obtaining a degree does not always result in improved prospects, especially for graduates from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Many students graduate from university with student loans, leading to financial insecurity and reduced purchasing power if they cannot secure well-paying and stable employment. This situation can perpetuate a cycle of poverty. The graduates from Asian, Black, Mixed, and Other ethnic backgrounds (ABMO) also encountered challenges in achieving career success. Ossenkop et al. (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews on professional career experiences with employees from ABMO backgrounds. The results showed that these graduates are less likely to attain equal levels of career success in terms of pay and career advancement, leading to their cumulative disadvantage in progressing into managerial and professional careers. At Solent University, there is a 4-year aggregated gap of 4.2 percentage points, with IMDQ12 being lower than Q345, and a gap of 4.7 percentage point between ABMO and White graduates in Progression measure. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current intervention will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 12: Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	According to Hamzah, Musa, and Mohamad (2022), people with higher self-confidence, self-esteem, and ability to translate their career aspirations into action in their workplace, are more inclined to achieve successful outcomes. To reduce the progression gaps by half and promote equal opportunities, Solent University has proposed a professional mentoring intervention as one of the interventions aimed at enhancing self-confidence, self-esteem, and employability skills. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan: PTP_1: Reduce the progression gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028 PTP_2: Reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
1. Skills, knowledge and Solent staff time to design, administer, manage, promote, monitor and evaluate 2. University funding for the project 3. Research, identify and implement a suitable online mentoring platform 4. Staff and student training materials and workshop resources 5. Staff time to collaborate and work with mentoring platform provider 6. Staff time for maintenance/upgrades/enhancements of metoring platform 7. Student's time to hold and attend mentoring sessions 8. Time and resource to promote and increase engagement with the programme 9. Feedback/focus group sessions with staff and students 10. Professional mentor time to hold and attend meeting 11. staff time to source professional mentors	1. Create a university infrsructure to facilitate the professional mentoring program (including a mentoring platform) 2. Promote the professional mentoring program to students to gain as many applicants as possible - this is through university mechanisms from central services to academic teams 3. Promote the professional mentoring program to professionals in the local area who wish to become mentors. 4. Provide training for the professional mentors. 5. Provide training for the mentees 6. Take initial survey from mentees and mentors 7. Run initial greeting session on campus for all mentors and mentees 8. Run halfway session on campus for all mentors and mentees 9. Run final celebration on campus for all mentors and mentees 10. Conduct and collect the final surveys 11. Monitor usage of the mentoring system	1. Number of students registering for the programme to be mentors and mentee's 2. Number of actual mentors and mentee's (and vs those who registered) 3. Number of mentors who attend training sessions 4. Number of Mentoring sessions attended 5. Survey results on the proposed outcomes 6. Number of attendees in feedback/focus group sessions	**Short term outcomes** 1. Increased self-confidence to become more adept at facing challenges and have better performance in the interview 2. Increased self-esteem to recognize and appreciate their own value and abilities 3. Enhanced employability skills to prepare students for entry into their chosen field upon graduation	**Medium term outcomes** 1. Enhanced likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursue opportunities for career advancement 2. Increased engagement with Solent Futures (career support service)	**Long term outcomes** 1. Increased progression rates (proportion of graduates going into high-skilled employment or further study) 2. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 3. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from ABMO vs White ethnic backgrounds

Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:**	**Evaluation to assess the outcomes**		
		Short term evaluations	**Medium term evaluation**	**Long term evaluation**
	Professional mentoring can benefit students in many ways, from psychosocial support to career and professional development to personal growth. Kalen et al. (2015) suggest that professional mentoring is an important part of students' professional development by allowing students to experience the reality of working in their chosen profession and understanding the professional competences and behaviours needed to succeed. Focusing on students' career development, Renn et al. (2014) find that career support via professional mentoring positively impacts on student mentees' career planning and job search intentions, and that it reduces their self-defeating job search behaviour. Individuals with high self-confidence are more likely to engage in leadership positions, actively participate in meetings, and pursue opportunities for career advancement, thereby increasing their prospects for career success (Jones, 2024). DiMartile (2012) emphasized the importance of confidence in relation to career progression. To advance to managerial roles, employees must demonstrate confidence in their abilities to effectively influence others. Regarding self-esteem, a research study has shown that higher levels of self-esteem and self-worth are associated with an increased likelihood of success in career advancement (Hamzah et al., 2022). Strong self-esteem is also linked to a higher level of self-motivation to attain a diverse set of knowledge and skills essential for the future workplace (Yuen, 2014). General employability skills are also key contributor to career success. In an employer interview, the findings revealed that the employers generally prioritize basic skills and personal attributes over formal qualifications or specialized, advanced skills (Nickson et al., 2012). Newton et al. (2005) conducted an extensive literature review and original research to examine what qualities employers seek when hiring from the unemployed and economically inactive populations. The results indicated that if a candidate demonstrates employability and soft skills, such as interpersonal and communication abilities, employers may not require technical skills or job-specific qualifications unless there are legislated requirements for the position. A study conducted by Lee and Cramond (1999) focused on mentoring relationships and indicated that sustained mentoring and supportive adult interactions were pivotal in enhancing the confidence, self-expectations, and self-esteem, leading to academic and career success by bolstering self-efficacy, aspirations, and future perspectives. **Assumptions:** In the professional mentoring programme, mentees are paired with professionals working in their desired industry. Through these mentoring sessions, the mentees can expand their professional networks, obtain industry-specific information (including entry requirements), and hone general skills essential for employment in the UK throughout the programme. This approach ensures that mentees develop general and industry-specific competencies, equipping them for entry into their desired field upon graduation. Mentors are expected to pinpoint students' areas of improvement during their meetings and directing them to seek support from Solent Futures (career service unit). During the interactions with a mentor with professional background, mentees are expected to take the lead in discussions. This exposure helps mentees become more comfortable with challenges, improving their self-confidence. Following the intervention, as they become more adept at facing challenges, this enhances their likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs, effectively showcasing themselves during interviews, and pursuing opportunities for career advancement.	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure self-confidence, self-esteem, employability skills, and likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement.	Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported item to meausre likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement. Type 2/3: Post-intervention engagement record in Solent Futures. Explore the possibility of comparing with students from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test)	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the progression rate. Compare the graduates' activities with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the graduate outcomes survey and OfS's data have been released

Workstream 8: GRIT workshop: Employability (L6)

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	Researchers have found that teenagers from minority ethnic backgrounds tend to have higher career aspirations. For instance, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Black African 14-year-old boys reported aiming for jobs with an hourly wage of £24, while their White and Indian counterparts aspired to £18. Similarly, girls from minority ethnic groups expected roles with wages of £19 or more per hour, whereas their White peers aimed for jobs that paid £16 per hour (Platt & Parsons, 2018). The Education Endowment Foundation (2021) found that when investigating aspiration interventions for marginalised students, many had very high aspirations for themselves, however, this does not always translate into better outcomes for students, and the reasons for this are manifold. This suggests that underachievement results do not necessarily stem from low aspirations but rather from a gap between aspirations and the knowledge, skills, and characteristics needed to attain them.

Croll (2008) investigated the occupational choices of individuals at age 15 and their occupations in their early 20s. The findings show that teenagers with higher career aspirations and strong academic performance tend to achieve better occupational outcomes, regardless of their families' socio-economic status. In contrast, young people who lack career ambition and educational success experience much poorer occupational outcomes if they come from disadvantaged families compared to their peers.

At Solent University, there is a 4-year aggregated gap of 4.2 percentage points, with IMDQ12 being lower than Q345, and a gap of 4.7 percentage point between ABMO and White graduates in Progression measure.

The results from the graduate outcomes survey suggest that a higher proportion of students from IMDQ12 backgrounds are engaged in "Unemployment and looking for work" 15 months after their graduation. Over a four-year aggregated period, the unemployment rate for IMDQ12 students is 9.6%, compared to 6.9% for IMDQ345 students. Additionally, graduates from minor ethnicity backgrounds (ABMO) also have a higher proportion of "Unemployment and looking for work" compared to white graduates, with 11.2% of ABMO students compared to 6.9% of white students. These findings suggest a need to support students from IMDQ12 or ABMO backgrounds in securing stable employment upon graduation.

In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including:
• EORR Risk 12: Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience. |
| **Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)** | This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan:

PTP_1: Reduce the progression gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028
PTP_2: Reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028 |

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		Impact
Process			**Impact**		
			Short term outcomes	**Medium term outcomes**	**Long term outcomes**
1. Venue for the sessions to run 2. GRIT consultants to deliver the sessions 3. Collaboration with GRIT 4. Information and enrolment sessions for students 5. Information sessions for staff 6. Solent futures staff to co-deliver information sessions 7. Staff time to promote and build engagement 8. Collaboration with the SU to support engagement 9. Catering and lunch	1. Taster with staff to raise awareness and facilitte engagement with GRIT methodology and awarding gap 2. Two information sessions set up in collaboration with GRIT: student session and staff session 3. Pre-enrolement session delivered by GRIT to explain workshop 4. Targeted email to all L6 ABMO and IMDQ1/2 students to explain the sessions and benefits of attendance	1. A 2 day program facilitated by GRIT 2. A follow up session delivered by GRIT 3. Attendance at each session including students from target group 4. Pre and post surveys	1. Enhanced career aspiration and facilitation of development plans for desired career-related skills 2. Enhanced self-advocacy 3. Enhanced sense of purpose	Increased engagement with Solent Futures (career service) upon the establishment of career goals	1. Increased progression rates (proportion of graduates going into high-skilled employment or further study) 2. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from IMDQ12 vs IMDQ345 3. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from ABMO vs White ethnic backgrounds

Rationale and Assumptions	Rationale:		Evaluation to assess the outcomes		
			Short term evaluations	**Medium term evaluation**	**Long term evaluation**
	Grant and Yates (2023) found that targeted programmes have transformative effects on female cadets' personal confidence, recognising of transferable skills and personal aspirations. The latter, according to the authors, is the result of enhanced self-perception and let to stretching of career ambitions and goals. Given the challenges mentioned in the situational section, targeting aspiration raising and career-related skills development plan preparation as part of a holistic GRIT programme can help address this gap. Supporting students to identify and celebrate their skills and achievements throughout a programme that spans from pre-arrival to graduation can provide a foundation for more appropriate attainment (Tatsi and Darby, 2018). Assumptions: In the workshop, the trainer will guide participants through setting career goals, developing a skill development plan, outlining actions to achieve these targets, and identifying potential barriers. Participants will then explore solutions and available support options to enhance their chances of reaching their career targets. This approach aims to provide opportunities to enhance their career aspirations and assess their needs, enabling Solent Futures (the career services unit) to offer relevant support before graduation. After attending the workshop, participants will be encouraged to prepare for their post-graduation journey with a comprehensive plan to equip themselves for entry into their desired industry.		Type 2: Pre-post surveys utilizing self-reported validated scales to measure employability, self-advocacy, sense of purpose, and likelihood of applying for high-skilled jobs and pursuing opportunities for career advancement Type 2: Separated focus group to collect experiences in the programmes if there is a need Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended	Type 2/3: Post-intervention engagement record in Solent Futures. Explore the possibility of comparing with students from similar backgrounds	Type 1 and 2: Monitor the progression rate. Compare the graduates' activities with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the graduate outcomes survey and OfS's data have been released

Workstream 9: Living CV

Situation (Risk to Equality of Opportunity)	According to the Graduate Outcomes Survey data, disparities in employment outcomes persist between White and ABMO graduates. ABMO graduates experience higher unemployment rates compared to their White counterparts and are 3-7 ppt less likely to be hired. Similarly, consistent employment disparities are evident among graduates from different IMD quintiles. Higher IMD quintiles correlate with lower unemployment rates. For the 2021/22 UK-domiciled full-time UG graduating cohort, the unemployment rate for IMD Quintile 1 (most deprived) was 7%, while it was 4% for IMD Quintile 5 (least deprived), reflecting a 3 ppt gap (https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/13-06-2024/sb268-higher-education-graduate-outcomes-statistics). Structural inequalities arguably sets high thresholds for ABMO and more deprived (IMDQ12) qualifiers and poses barriers to them progressing from higher education into graduate employment that is reflective of their skills, abilities and qualification levels. This may lead to lower lifelong earning and lower job satisfaction for students with certain characteristics. Controlling for structural inequalities, deficiences in socio-cultural capital have been cited as a factor that motivates ethnic and IMD employment disadvantages in higher education. For example, an inability to understand and articulate the skills, knowledge and experience that make them unique may serve to build their social capital and equip them with the necessary tools to navigate the labour market. At Solent University, there is a 4-year aggregated gap of 4.2 ppt, with IMDQ12 being lower than Q345, and a gap of 4.7 ppt between ABMO and White graduates in Progression measure. Considering the risks to progression that different student groups face, and ways in which those risks interact to promote barriers to students' work readinedd, the Living CV initiative was formally launched at Solent University in 2020 as a cross-institutional, whole setting approach to building students' social capital to enable them to improve their prospects of gaining graduate level employment. The Living CV initiative provides students with information and guidance to enable them to develop knowledge and skills to support their work readiness and progression from higher education. In addition to addressing this persistent issue at Solent University, the current workshop will address risks identified on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register including: • EORR Risk 6: Insufficient academic support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised academic support to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 7: Insufficient personal support: Students may not receive sufficient personalised non-academic support or have sufficient access to extracurricular activities to achieve a positive outcome. • EORR Risk 12: Students may not have equal opportunity to progress to an outcome they consider to be a positive reflection of their higher education experience.
Aims (and associated Objectives and Targets)	The Living CV aims to empower students to develop awareness of the applicability of their programme learning to their future employability and highlighted how they could use their academic learning outcomes on their CV as a tool to achieve this. This intervention is expected to contribute to the following targets in the Access and Participation Plan: PTP_1: Reduce the progression gap for ABMO first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028 PTP_2: Reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
	Process		**Impact**	
			Short term outcomes	**Long term outcomes**
1. Collaboration with teaching staff 2. Collaboration with Program Leads 3. Students' time to complete Living CV 4. Staff time 5. Collaboration with Guided Learning Advisors	1. Module Leaders provide module descriptors and assessment briefs that translate learning outcomes into tangible employability language 2. Course Leaders provide information on course webpages that provides students with information and guidance on the Living CV. 3. Academics promote and sign post living CV workshops as part of the Guided Learning offer 4. University careers service deliver regular workshops to support and guide students on the use of Living CV 5. Guided Learning Curriculum Coordinator support teaching staff through CPD events to raise their capabilities of implementing the Living CV in their curriculum. 6. Monitor student engagement with Living CV through data analytics. 7. Annually evaluate institutional graduate outcomes against sector comparitors as reported in the graduate outcomes survey (HESA).	1. Living CV being made available to all students on the VLE 2. Students develop a Living CV 3. Academic staff attend Living CV CPD workshop 4. Students attend Guided Learning workshops on Living CV	1. Improved understanding of using Living CV. 2. Increased self-confidence in creating a high-quality CV.	1. Increased progression rates (proportion of graduates going into highly skilled employment or further study) 2. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from IMD Q1 vs IMDQ5 3. Reduced gap in the progression rates of graduates from ABMO vs White ethnic backgrounds

Rationale and Assumptions	**Rationale:**	**Evaluation to assess the outcomes**	
		Short term evaluations	**Long term evaluation**
	Employability and how graduates fare in the job market is of increasing interest for educators and educational leaders, considering that future employability is a major consideration for students who choose to attend university (Neves & Hewitt, 2020). Thus, HE providers spend considerable efforts to design activities, pedagogies and learning spaces to enable their students to graduate with the attributes and skills needed to succeed in their future careers (Hill et al., 2016). Within this context, there are persistent and stark inequalities for disadvantaged groups who study in British higher education (UUK ,2022); these inequalities persist throughout the student lifecycle and in the labour market (Ramaiah & Robinson, 2022) where White graduates are more likely to secure more lucrative graduate employment than their counterparts. Existing equality gaps in employment are very large and are patterned in non-random ways. There are also significant earning gaps between graduates from different ethnic groups which widens exponentially in the 10 years following graduation. For disadvantaged groups who graduate from british universities, earning gaps in graduate earnings emerge immediately after graduation and increase exponentially over time. Therefore, students' needs for employability development are as diverse as ever (Muhammad et al., 2021), so is the need for universities to take reasonable steps to ensure that they identify and address structural inequalities that may pose barriers to students developing the necessary skills and abilities to be work-ready and competitive in the labour market. According to Daubney (2022), strategies for embedding employability are particularly impactful if they focus on extracting the knowledge, attributes and skills from higher education curricula that employers value most, allowing educators to highlight the distinctive employability value of what they teach across the curriculum. One such tool is the Living CV, which is an initiative launched at Solent University to support students to understand how the kowledge, skills and experiences gained throughout their student journey can be reflected on their CVs to support their work-readiness (Dibben & Morley, 2018).	Type 1: Self-designed evaluation toolkits to report the rationales and record and evaluate the intervention implemented as intended Type 2: Pre-post surveys with self-designed items to measure the outcomes	Type 1 and 3: Monitor the progression rate. Compare the graduates' activities and skill level with non-participants from similar backgrounds (Propensity score matching with McNemar test) once the graduate outcomes survey and OfS's data have been released
	Assumptions: Students at Solent university are encouraged and supported to be competitive in the labour market (work readiness) through continuous reflection throughout their student journey, where they develop a portfolio of knowledge and expereinces that enables them to reflect on and track and record their progress on a Living CV (Carmona et al., 2020; Muniz & Eimerbrink, 2018). The Living CV is an initiative launched at Solent University to support students' work readiness (Dibben and Morley, 2018). The Living CV encourages students to translate their learning outcomes into CV outputs so that their implicit learning becomes explicit to themselves and potential employers. The strong focus on learning outcomes is fundamental to the conceptualisation of the Living CV. It is rooted in the idea that there is often a divergence between the students' perception of their learning and skills required to succeed in the workplace. Consequently, students are more likely to engage with learning outcomes that are contextualised, especially if they are given the opportunity to engage in the development of competences and in the collection of evidence for employability. The Living CV, thus, helps students to develop student's awareness of the competences that they develop during their studies, so that they can identify, grow and evidence those competencies in order to improve their work-readiness and employability (Jorre de St Jorre & Oliver, 2017). The Living CV goes beyond the development of generic employability skills as it provides students with the opportunity to self-manage their career building process, marking the beginning of a life-long career building mindset (Bridgstock, 2009). It also has the potential to drive motivation in students to transfer their learning (Bredenkamp, Botma, & Nyoni, 2023). In addition, it allows educators to use their learning outcomes as a learning resource for a student-centred learning approach and for the purpose of accountability (Dobbins et al., 2016)		

Fees, investments and targets
2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Solent University, Southampton

Provider UKPRN: 10006022

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for new entrants

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree		N/A	9250
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	9250
HNC/HND		N/A	8500
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year		N/A	1650
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	BICMP	10083222	9250
First degree	QAHE (Solent) Limited	10067682	9250
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	6167
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND		N/A	4250
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

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

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

Fees, investments and targets
2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Solent University, Southampton

Provider UKPRN: 10006022

Investment summary

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

Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£863,000	£890,000	£919,000	£948,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£611,000	£614,000	£618,000	£621,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£289,000	£299,000	£310,000	£321,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£456,000	£469,000	£482,000	£497,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£340,000	£352,000	£365,000	£377,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£67,000	£69,000	£72,000	£74,000
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£863,000**	**£890,000**	**£919,000**	**£948,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	**6.3%**	**6.4%**	**6.3%**	**6.1%**
Access activity investment	**Total access investment funded from HFI (£)**	**£593,000**	**£613,000**	**£635,000**	**£657,000**
Access activity investment	**Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)**	**£270,000**	**£277,000**	**£284,000**	**£291,000**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£90,000	£90,000	£90,000	£90,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£491,000	£494,000	£498,000	£501,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£611,000**	**£614,000**	**£618,000**	**£621,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	**4.4%**	**4.4%**	**4.2%**	**4.0%**
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£289,000	£299,000	£310,000	£321,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%

Office for Students ofs

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Solent University, Southampton

Provider UKPRN: 10006022

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Increase the access proportion of ABMO full-time first degree entrants to 34.5% by 2028, in line with the sector average	PTA_1	Access	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)		In the 2021/22 academic year, Solent's proportion of entrants from ABMO backgrounds was 20.9%, which is 13.6 ppt lower than the sector average of 34.5%. Our target is to align with the sector average by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	20.9	20.9	25.4	30.0	34.5
Increase the access proportion of IMDQ12 full-time first degree entrants to 44% by 2028, in line with the sector average	PTA_2	Access	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	Other (please specify in description)	In the 2021/22 academic year, Solent's proportion of entrants from IMDQ12 areas was 38.2%, which is 5.8 ppt lower than the sector average of 44%. Our target is to align with the sector average by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	38.2	38.2	40.1	42.1	44
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Reduce the continuation gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028	PTS_1	Continuation	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)	White	At Solent, there is a 8.1 ppt gap in continuation, with ABMO students being lower than White students, recorded in 2020/21 entrants. Our target is to reduce the continuation gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 4.05 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	8.1	8.1	8.1	6.1	4.05
Reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028	PTS_2	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	At Solent, there is a 6 ppt gap in continuation, with students from IMDQ12 backgrounds being lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, recorded in 2020/21 entrants. Our target is to reduce the continuation gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 3 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	6	6	6	4.5	3
Reduce the attainment gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028	PTS_3	Attainment	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)	White	At Solent, there is a 12.7 ppt gap in attainment, with ABMO students being lower than White students, recorded in 2021/22 qualifiers. Our target is to reduce the attainment gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 6.35 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	12.7	12.7	10.6	8.5	6.35

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028	PTS_4	Attainment	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	At Solent, there is a 9 ppt gap in attainment, with students from IMDQ12 backgrounds being lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, recorded in 2021/22 qualifiers. Our target is to reduce the attainment gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 4.5 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	9	9	7.5	6	4.5
	PTS_5														
	PTS_6														
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Reduce the progression gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028	PTP_1	Progression	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)	White	At Solent, there is a 1.5 ppt gap in progression, with ABMO students being lower than White students, recorded in 2020/21 qualifiers. Our target is to reduce the progression gap for ABMO full-time first degree students by half to 0.75 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.125	0.75
Reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028	PTP_2	Progression	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	At Solent, there is a 5.2 ppt gap in progression, with students from IMDQ12 backgrounds being lower than those from IMDQ345 backgrounds, recorded in 2020/21 qualifiers. Our target is to reduce the progression gap for IMDQ12 full-time first degree students by half to 2.6 ppt by 2028.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	5.2	5.2	5.2	3.9	2.6
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														
	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														