



# Access and Participation Plan

## 2020-21 to 2024-25

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# Solent University

## Access and participation plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

This Access and Participation Plan covers the five years from 2020-21 through to 2024-25. It provides Solent University's commitment to equality of opportunity to people from all backgrounds to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. Solent's mission and strategy are dedicated to the pursuit of an excellent university education that enables learners from all backgrounds to become enterprising citizens and responsible leaders, while also promoting economic and social prosperity for the communities we serve. Solent is a proud champion of widening participation (WP), which is at the core of our operations and our culture. We attract and support a diverse student body and over 70% of our students are first in family to access higher education.

We will continue to develop our WP work, using a whole institution approach: the Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group, chaired by the Head of Student Experience, has student and staff members who are representative of our community. Development, implementation and evaluation is led by the Pro Vice-chancellor Students and Teaching. The strategic objectives, targets and measures – our promises – have the full support of the Board of Governors, the Vice-chancellor's Group, our senior management team and the academic and professional staff community. The Plan has been discussed and endorsed by senior committees, which are part of the University's deliberative structure: Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee; Equality and Wellbeing Committee; Academic Board; Student Board. We are continuing to promote awareness of the plan and our targets across the University community, gathering signatures from staff to commit to delivering the Plan. Members of the Vice-chancellor's Group and the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee have signed to pledge their commitment to delivering the Plan.

We are committed to eradicating the gaps that have been identified and to achieve this we are using evidence-based, targeted, long-term approaches. A comprehensive analysis of data follows, identifying underrepresented groups, and setting out our strategies and targets to reduce and ultimately eradicate any gaps. Solent University takes equality, diversity and inclusivity seriously by virtue of our mission statement. In the process of developing this plan have we acknowledged the need to adapt our language for future iterations particularly in relation to people identifying as trans-plus. Part of this work is the development of our Transgender Policy, which was drafted by one of our students and is currently being considered by student and staff representatives who are members of our deliberative committees. It is our intention to undertake research around this topic, and we will review our progress throughout the duration of this plan.

## Assessment of performance

Solent University are committed to closing all inequality gaps for students. The following assessment of performance provides details of inequalities in access and participation at Solent. In addition, a table is included that identifies the key groups that are not included in the 2020-25 Access and Participation plan because no gap currently exists. A more detailed summary of this data can be found in Annex 1. These groups will continue to be monitored in case gaps appear.

<u>Access:</u>	<u>Continuation:</u>	<u>Attainment:</u>	<u>Progression:</u>
<b>Mature students</b> Proportion of entrants has been stable since 2015-16, however there was a decrease of just under 6% between 2014 and 2015.	<b>HE participation/household income/socioeconomic status</b> 91% of IMD Q1 continued in 2017, the same proportion as Q5 and more than Q 3 and 4. Those eligible for free school meals continued at comparable rates (88% each year) to those who were not (92 and 91%) in 2017 and 2018).	<b>Mature students</b> These students consistently achieve proportionally more good honours than their young counterparts.	<b>Mature students</b> Consistently more likely to progress to PM employment.
<b>Disabled students</b> Proportion of entrants has increased steadily.	<b>Disabled students</b> Students with known disabilities demonstrated higher continuation rates than those at instances throughout a five year period.	<b>HE participation</b> 70% of POLAR Q1 students achieved Good Honours degrees in 2017-18, comparable to students from quintiles 3 (71%), 4 and 5 (74%); while POLAR Q2 students were the second highest attaining group. The proportion of Q1 students attaining good honours has increased every year since 2014.	<b>Disabled students</b> Consistently equal to or better than students with no known disability
<b>Care leavers*</b> Number of entrants has increased each year.	<b>Care leavers*</b> No data was available for this group. An accurate means of sourcing this data is in development.		<b>Care leavers*</b> 80% in PM level roles compared to 68.7% for all students (DLHE, 2016-17)

Table of groups without gaps in inequality

\*Note that there are difficulties in accurately identifying care leavers as nearly ten times as many individuals refuse to, or do not, provide this information compared to those who do.

The assessment of performance is divided into three sections: Access, Success, and Progression. This structure best reflects the approach the Access and Participation Strategic Working Group took to analyse the data and develop strategies to address inequalities. Furthermore, this structure is consistent throughout the report and aims to represent the working group's consideration of the interconnectedness of each stage of the student lifecycle. Finally, the conclusions that followed from the analysis are outlined.

## ACCESS

### LPNs

The proportion of 18-year-old entrants from POLAR4 quintile 1 at Solent (14.1%) was significantly lower than in the population (18.1%) in 2017-18. Indeed, except for 2016-17, this gap was significant every academic year from 2013 to 2018.

### IMD

The proportion of 18-year-old entrants from IMD quintile 1 (8.5%) at Solent was also significantly lower than in the population (22.1%), as was the proportion from IMD quintile 2 (13.2% versus 20.3%). The gaps for both quintiles were significant throughout the five-year period from 2013 to 2018. Furthermore, those from quintiles 1 and 2 were far less likely to access part-time study at Solent and this has been the case consistently between 2013 and 2018 (between 7-9% of PT entrants were from quintile 1 and between 14 and 17% were from quintile 2). The highest number of part time students are studying BSc (Hons) Construction

Management (47) and Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (23), within these courses many students are typically funded by large employers or from the apprenticeship levy.

## BAME

The proportion of 18-year old entrants of Asian ethnicity (3%) was significantly lower than in the general population (8.2%) in 2017-18. This gap was significant throughout the five-year period. Furthermore, from 2013 to 2018 White students were overwhelmingly more likely to access part-time study at Solent (91- 94 per cent of entrants were White).

## BAME / IMD

At Solent 9.6% of entrants were Asian, Black, Mixed, or Other ethnicity (ABMO) and from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 in 2017-18. Overall the proportion of ABMO entrants from the most deprived quintiles has been in decline since 2013-14 when the figure stood at 12% per cent.

## SUCCESS

### BAME

The ethnicity attainment gap trends at Solent are largely consistent with those at sector level. The attainment gap between Black students and all other ethnicities (-23%) was significant in 2017-18. Indeed, this gap has been significant every academic year since 2014-15. Moreover, the attainment gaps between White students and students of all ethnicities except white (-18%), and White and Black students (-24%) were also significant. Both latter gaps were significant throughout the five-year period since 2013-14.

Using HESA data to further disaggregate ethnicity, it was established that 2017-18 saw the highest proportion of Black or Black British-African students attain 'good honours' degrees (57% - an increase of approximately 15% on the previous academic year). However, this still represents an approximate 17% deficit relative to White students. Moreover, 49% of Black or Black British – Caribbean students attained a 'good honours' degree in 2017-18 – an approximate 4% increase on 2016-17 but an 11% decrease relative to 2015-16. Once again, this figure represents a substantial (25%) attainment gap relative to White students.

At Solent 59% of Mixed or 'Other' ethnicity students attained a 'good honours' degree in 2017-18; this was a 4% decrease relative to the previous year but a 9% increase on 2015-16 – in fact this was the second highest proportion of 'good honours' attainment amongst this group of students over the four-year period. Nonetheless, this still represents a 16% attainment gap relative to White students. The gap between 'Other' ethnicity students and White students in continuation in 2016-17 was -4.8%. 1.8% more 'Other' ethnicity students continued their studies in 2012-13, whereas 9.2% less did in 2013-14 and 4.8% less did in 2014-15. More recently in 2015-16, 1.1% less 'Other' ethnicity students continued their studies than White students. One reason for the volatility of the continuation statistic for 'Other' ethnicity students is that this category contains the fewest number of students (approximately 30-50).

'Good honours' attainment amongst Asian students was up 1.4% on the previous academic year in 2017-18 to reach the highest proportion seen for this group over the four-year period. However, this still represents an approximate 12.5% deficit in 'good honours' attainment relative to White students. Disaggregating the Asian ethnic group revealed that 73 and 78 per cent Bangladeshi and Indian students attained 'good honours' respectively. However, the 'good honours' attainment rate for Pakistani students was 44%.

### Disability

The attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students stood at 6% as of 2017-18. This represents an increase of 5% on the gap in the previous two academic years and a return to the same figure as in 2014-15. The growth of the gap is predominantly attributable to a 4% drop in 'good honours' attainment among students with a disability in 2017-18 relative to the previous academic year.

Disaggregating the disability group revealed that the attainment gap between students with no known disability and cognitive or learning difficulties rose 3% between 2016-17 and 2017-18. The gap between students with no known disability and students with a mental health condition (previously in favour of the latter) reversed to 9% in favour of the former between 2016-17 and 2017-18. The gap between students with no known disability and those with multiple impairments was 15% in 2017-18 having been 0 the previous academic year (the only other measurement instance present in the dataset). The gap between students with no known disability and those with sensory, medical or physical impairment has stood at 10 per cent in

favour of the former from 2014-15 to 2017-18, having dropped from 20% in 2013-14. Finally, 11% (62% total) less students with a social or communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome achieved a 'good honours' degree compared to students with no known disability in 2017-18.

### **IMD/ LPN / Gender**

There was a gap of 12% in attainment of good honours between IMD quintile 2 students (65%) and IMD quintile 5 students (77%) in 2017-18. Similarly, the gap between IMD quintile 1 (66% good honours) and IMD quintile 5 students was 11%. The quintile 2 to quintile 5 gap has increased slightly, from 9-10% between 2013-2017, while the quintile 1 to quintile 5 gap has decreased from 14-17% over the same period.

Further analyses determined that in 2017-18 IMD quintile 1 and 2 Females (74% good honours) outperformed IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 Males (70%). Furthermore, the gap between IMD quintile 1 and 2 Females and IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 Males did not exceed 4% between 2014 and 2018. Overall the data suggest the gap between IMD quintile 1 and 2 and IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 students is predominantly attributable to lower attainment amongst IMD quintile 1 and 2 Males specifically.

The attainment gap between IMD quintiles 1 and 2 Males and IMD quintiles 3, 4 or 5 Females (-25%) was significant in 2017-18. Indeed, this gap has been significant every academic year since 2013-14. Moreover, the attainment gap between POLAR quintiles 1 or 2 Males and quintiles 3, 4 or 5 Females was significant in 2017-18 (at -17%), 2016-17 (-18%) and 2014-15 (-18%).

### **Care Leavers**

In 2017-18, 27 out of 46 (59%) Care Leavers attained 'good honours' degrees. This was the lowest proportion observed between 2014 and 2018. Ten out of 14 (71%) and 18 out of 25 (72%) Care Leavers attained 'good honours' degrees in 2015-16 and 2016-17 respectively.

## **PROGRESSION TO EMPLOYMENT OR FURTHER STUDY**

### **BAME**

No progression data was available with the OfS data release for the Asian ethnic group for 2016-17. However, disaggregated Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data shows that 43% of Pakistani students and 50% of Indian students progressed to Professional or Managerial (PM) employment in 2016-17. These figures represent respective 27% and 20% deficits relative to progression rates amongst White students that year. In summary 55% of Asian students achieved PM level outcomes compared to 71% of White students – this represents a 16% deficit. Furthermore, 14 out of 27 (48%) Black or Black-British Caribbean students and 34 out of 54 (63%) Black or Black-British African students progressed to PM employment. These figures represent 22 and 7 per cent deficits relative to the White PM employment rate respectively.

### **BAME / IMD**

In 2016-17, 60% ABMO IMD quintile 1 and 2 students progressed to PM employment or further study compared to 70% of their White counterparts. This 10% gap was the biggest between these two intersectional groups over the five-year period from 2012-13. In the previous academic year, 2% fewer ABMO IMD quintile 1 and 2 students progressed to PM employment or further study (55% total) relative to their White counterparts, while the gap was 1% in the preceding two academic years. In 2012-13, 34% of ABMO IMD quintiles 1 and 2 students progressed to PM employment, compared to 43% of White IMD quintiles 1 students. Since then, both groups have increased progression at a similar rate, resulting in a 26 and 27 per cent respective increase for each over the five-year period.

### **BAME / Gender**

Using DLHE data to explore potential interactions between ethnicity and gender in terms of inequalities in progression, it was established that in 2016-17 the progression rate for Black Females was 53% compared to 73% for Black Males. A similar deficit was also observed between Mixed ethnicity females (62%) and Mixed ethnicity Males (81%), and Other ethnicity Females (38%) and Other ethnicity Males (62%).

## LPN / Gender

In 2016-17, 71% of POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 Males progressed to PM employment compared to 61% of Females from the same quintiles. The previous academic year the gap was just 1% (in favour of Males); however, 13% more Males from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 progressed to PM employment or further study in 2016-17 than the previous year, whereas there was only a corresponding 4% increase amongst their Female counterparts. From 2012-13 to 2015-16, the progression gap between POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 Males and Females was between five and ten per cent in favour of Males.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings from this analysis of performance have been used to prioritize efforts to address inequalities in access and participation at Solent. In terms of access it was decided to prioritize recruitment of students from low-participation-neighbourhoods, relatively deprived areas (i.e. IMD quintiles 1 and 2), Asian students, and ABMO students from relatively deprived areas. In terms of success, attainment amongst BAME students, disabled students, male students from lower participation and deprived neighbourhoods, and Care Leavers will be targeted. As far as progression is concerned, progression to PM employment or further study amongst BAME students, BAME students from relatively deprived areas, Female students from low-participation neighbourhoods, and BAME Females will be priorities. Overall, these empirically derived priorities align with the OfS' Key Performance Measures (KPM) 1, 3, 4, and 5 (as Solent is not a higher-tariff provider, KPM 2 is not relevant to us).

## 1.0 Strategic aims and objectives

We have developed our strategic aims and objectives in collaboration with our student community, devising targets and initiatives to support students from disadvantaged groups. Targets are based on reducing the gaps identified in current data. It is appreciated that the data may change, but the focus on reducing the gap remains the same.

### ACCESS

- a) IMD, Q1: reduce the gap between the proportion of IMD Q1 entrants and IMD Q1 18-year olds in the population from 13.5% to 7.5% in five years and to 0 after ten years.
- b) IMD, Q2: reduce the gap between the proportion of IMD Q2 entrants and IMD Q2 18-year olds in the population from 6.9% to 1% in five years.
- c) Polar 4, Q1: reduce the gap between the proportion of POLAR 4 Q1 entrants and POLAR 4 Q1 18-year olds in the population from 4% to 0 in five years.
- d) Asian students: reduce the gap between Asian entrants and Asian 18-year olds in the population from 5.2% to 1.2% in 5 years and to 0 in ten years.
- e) Collaborative targets with Southern Universities Network:
  1. Reduce the gap in higher education participation between the most and least represented groups;
  2. Support young people to make well-informed decisions about their future education;
  3. Support effective and impactful local collaboration by higher education providers and communities;
  4. Contribute to a stronger evidence base around 'what works' in higher education outreach and strengthen evaluation practice in the sector.

All of the above Aims and Objectives will be targeted at both pre and post 16 provision, although a larger investment will be focussed on pre-16 as it is critical that we engage with pupils as early as possible in order to encourage them to think of university as an option for their future and to improve attainment to facilitate progression to university.

Our programme will focus on the following themes which will support our aims and objectives:

- Key Stage 2: Discover - Gaining an insight into Higher Education/Transition to secondary school
- Key Stage 3/4: Aspire - Gaining an understanding of key concepts Higher Education/Transition to Level 3 and 4 Qualifications
- Key Stage 5: Achieve - Applying to Higher Education/Transition to Level 4 Qualifications

## SUCCESS

- a) Halve the BAME attainment gap from 21.7% in 2016/17 to 10.9% or less by 2021-22 and subsequently eradicate any gap by 2029-30. We have already reduced the gap to 18% in 2017-18 (national average 14%).
- b) Race Equality Charter, Bronze Award by 2022-23, Silver Award by 2025-26.
- c) Reduce the gender attainment gap by reducing the attainment difference between IMD quintile 1 or 2 male students and IMD quintile 3,4 & 5 female students from 25% in 2017-18 to 5% or less in 2024-25 and also reducing the attainment difference between POLAR quintile 1 & 2 males and POLAR quintile 3, 4 & 5 females from 17% in 2017-18 to 0% in 2024-25.
- d) Eradicate the disability attainment gap by 2024/25. (2017-18 is 5%, national comparator is 4%).

## PROGRESSION

- a) Close the gap between BAME students and White students in securing PM level roles by 2024-25, with particular focus on:
  - Asian Students (55%) v. White Students (71%) – the gap of 16% to be closed
  - BAME students from IMD Q1&2 60% v. White students from IMD Q1&2 (70%) – the gap of 10% to be closed
  - BAME females (53%) v. White Males (73%) – the gap of 20% to be closed
- b) Close any gap between females from lower participation neighbourhoods (61%) and white males from LPNs (71%) in securing PM level roles by 2024-25. – the gap of 10% to be closed

## OTHER

We are currently preparing an application to become a University of Sanctuary, which we will submit by the end of academic year 2020-21.

## 2.2 Target groups

Closer scrutiny of the data has allowed us to identify some of the causes of the identified inequalities and also some useful indicators that will help us to create appropriate interventions. This section breaks down the groups that the university will be targeting in more detail. Unless otherwise stated, these target groups include both full and part-time students.

## ACCESS

Following a detailed analysis of the University's performance on the areas of disadvantage identified as key by the OfS, it was agreed by the Access and Participation Strategic Working Group that the University should focus outreach pre- and post-16 work on the following:

- IMD, Q1 and Q2
- POLAR 4 Q1
- Asian

## IMD, Q1 and Q2

Although the University has exceeded its targets in previous Access plans in respect of low participation neighbourhoods and pupils from state schools, it is disappointing to note the decrease in the percentage of students from IMD Quintile 1 and 2 enrolled in 2017-2018 and that Solent falls considerably below the proportion of IMD Quintile 1 and 218-year olds in the population.

## **Polar 4, Q1**

In 2017-18, the proportion of entrants to Solent from POLAR 4 quintile 1 was 14.1% which is significantly lower than the proportion of POLAR4 Quintile 1 18-year olds in the population.

## **Asian Students**

In 2017-18, the proportion of entrants of Asian ethnicity (3.0%) at Solent was significantly lower than the general population (8.2%). In the past our outreach work has focussed on BAME as a whole group. However, from research we have learnt that the groups within the BAME population are very different, having differing barriers and behaviours and hence requiring bespoke outreach activities.

## **Collaborative Target – Southern Universities Network Partners (SUN)**

In addition to our three main targets we also plan collaborative targets with the Southern Universities Network partners (Universities of Winchester, Southampton, Portsmouth, Bournemouth University and Arts University Bournemouth). All six partners have committed to the SUN partnership activities alongside the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) (Phase 2) and will work together to:

- Develop an approach to supporting narrowing the attainment gap in the SUN region between looked after children and non-looked after children, in collaboration with virtual school strategic priorities;
- Continue to embed best practice in staff development, through sharing opportunities for networking and involvement of specialists in the field of widening participation;
- Share good practice in evaluation, both in terms of each partner's activity and in collaborative projects.

## **SUCCESS**

### **BAME Students**

The BAME attainment gap was significant in 2017-18 with an overall attainment gap between white students and all other ethnicities of 18%. More detailed analysis of the gap shows that there is a statistically significant (23%) differential attainment between black and all other ethnicities and a statistically significant (24%) differential attainment between black and white students. Moreover, intersectional analyses show that the attainment gap between white students from the least disadvantaged groups (IMD quintiles 3, 4 and 5) and all ethnicities from the most advantaged groups (quintiles 1 and 2) was also statistically significant at 22%. This means that target groups for improving success will include all ethnicities (including 'Other) except white, with an increased focus on the attainment of black students.

### **IMD/POLAR/gender attainment gap**

In 2017-18, IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 females attained significantly better than IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 males. IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5 females attained significantly better than IMD quintile 1 and 2 males. In 2017-18 POLAR quintile 1 & 2 males performed worse than POLAR quintile 3, 4 & 5 female students. This means that the target groups for improving success will also include POLAR quintile 1 & 2 males.

### **Disabled Students**

In 2017-18, disabled students' attainment was 6.0% below that of non-disabled students. This was higher than the sector average gap of 2.8% and the first time in three years that the Solent gap was larger than the sector average. This means that a target group for improving success will be students with disabilities.

## **PROGRESSION**

Two key target groups have been identified with subsets to allow tailored interventions

### **All BAME students with a particular focus on:**

- Asian Students
- BAME students from relatively deprived areas
- BAME females

## Female students from LPNs

Solent University has improved overall professional and managerial (PM) level employment by 10.5% in the last two years, with a PM rate of 68.7%. However, this hides some significant disparities of outcome. Female students are less likely to be in PM level roles than their male counterparts (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE), 2018). This appears to be different to the trends in other universities:

PM% - Gender	Bournemouth University		Buckinghamshire New University		London South Bank University		Solent University		The University of Brighton		The University of West London		The University of Winchester	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
	70.0%	67.9%	71.6%	65.4%	90.3%	84.1%	64.4%	72.3%	69.0%	64.2%	68.7%	66.2%	54.4%	51.3%

Further analysis indicates that this difference in outcomes is even more significant for BAME females and for females from LPNs. Only 53% of BAME females progressed to PM level roles compared to 73% of white males for example. In order to be able to target these groups, analysis of courses has shown that there are clusters, although quite small with 7 to 8 students on each, of Black-African females are on Business Management, Accountancy & Finance and LLB (Hons). In addition, there are small clusters of Black-Caribbean students on Fashion Styling and Creative Direction (6) and Make-up and Hair Design (5). There is a large cluster of Black-African students on the Social Work course, however, this course has a high level of PM employability (91.9%, DLHE, 2018).

The progression gap between all BAME students and white students which was identified is even more pronounced between all Asian students and white males with 52.9% of Asian females and 54.6% of Asian males securing PM level roles again compared with 70.7% of all white students. Again to help with engaging with these groups, our analysis shows that approximately 45.0% of our Asian students live within commuting distance of the University and there are large clusters on the following courses:

Accountancy & Finance (22), Business Management (19), Law (19), Computing (10); with a smaller, but noticeable trend for Asian female students on Fashion Management with Marketing (7) and Psychology (7). There are clusters of male BAME students on Sport Coaching and Development (10), Digital Music (12) and Football Studies (11). Finally, there are clusters of females from LPNs on the following courses FDS Health & Social Care Practice (Nursing) Apprenticeship (49), Make-Up & Hair Design (34) and again Social Work (20), although Fashion courses are also popular amongst these groups as are Criminology and Law. The analysis of courses reveals that some courses have clusters of all of the target groups that we are seeking to work with. We will seek to engage relevant students in our initiatives through working with Course Leaders and Course Representatives.

## 2.3 Aims and objectives

### ACCESS

#### IMD Target for Q1 and Q2 targets

The target for 2024-25 is to reduce the gap between the proportion of 18-year old IMD Q1 entrants to Solent and IMD Q1 18-year olds in the population from 13.5% to 7.5%. Following this we will work towards the eradicating the gap entirely by 2029-30.

The table below shows the timeline to reduce the gap between IMD Q1 entrants to Solent compared to their counterparts in the population:

2017-2018 (Baseline Gap)	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
13.5%	13%	12%	11%	9.5%	7.5%

We also aim to reduce the gap between the proportion of 18-year old IMD Q2 entrants to Solent and IMD Q2 18-year olds in the population from 6.9% to 1% by 2024-25. Following this we will work to eradicate the gap within a further five years.

The table below shows the timeline for the IMD Q2 target:

2017-2018 (Baseline Gap)	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-.2024	2024-2025
6.9%	6%	5%	4%	3%	1%

Delivering this target will involve more focus and targeting to ensure that we are working with schools and colleges which attract students from these areas and, therefore, prioritising our outreach activities where they are most needed. To support access for part-time students we also plan to work with employers to promote the benefits of higher education to those from IMD quintile 1 and 2 areas. Within our delivery in schools and colleges (targeted at those living in IMD quintile 1 and 1 areas) we plan to place greater emphasis on highlighting that part time study is an option including video content and the use of role models studying part time courses, this will be supplemented by our wider community activity.

A Theory of Change model has been developed for each target group to ensure that we are clear what interventions are required, how they will be delivered, what underlying assumptions we have made and what risks we may encounter as well as how we will monitor and evaluate impact. The targets and milestones we have set are in line with those of the OfS and will contribute to the national target.

#### **Polar 4, Q1 Target**

We aim to eradicate the gap between the proportion of 18-year old POLAR4 Q1 entrants and POLAR4 Q1 18-year olds in the population (currently 4%). This target has been set by reviewing the trends over the last five years and being realistic about potential to reach this target. The same Theory of Change model is relevant, and this target is in line with the targets set by the OfS and will contribute to the national target.

The table below shows the reduction in the POLAR4 Q1 entry gap over a five-year period:

2017/18 (Baseline Gap)	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
4%	3.9%	3%	2%	1%	0

#### **Asian Students Target**

This target is, perhaps, the toughest for the University due to the absence of data on ethnicity at enquiry and application stage. Ethnicity is not a characteristic collected by the University before enrolment. In order to target Asian applicants (and other groups of disadvantaged students where we cannot currently collect this data at the application stage) the University is starting to develop a web page where students will self-select their area of protected characteristics in order to qualify for contextual admissions, additional support with their application and transition to higher education. Another perceived barrier is that Solent's portfolio and reputation may not be the best for attracting Asian students. To address the gap for Asian student studying part-time, we plan to work with employers further to promote the benefits of higher education to these groups. Within our delivery in schools and colleges (targeted at Asian and black learners) we plan to place greater emphasis on highlighting that part time study is an option including video content and the use of role models studying part time courses, this will be supplemented by our wider work targeted at Asian students.

The target for this group is to reduce the gap between 18-year old Asian entrants and Asian 18-year olds in the population from 5.2% to 1.2% by 2024-25. Following this we aim to eradicate the gap entirely within a further five years. This takes into account the local and county data: Hampshire County Council 2.7%, Portsmouth City Council 6.1% and Southampton City Council 8.4%, the national average is 7.5% (Census Data 2011 – the most recent data available). This target is realistic and will contribute to the national target.

The table below shows the planned reduction in the Asian entry gap over a five-year period:

2017- 2018 (Baseline Gap)	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
5.2%	4.75%	4%	3%	2%	1.2%

## Activities and Interventions

Activities and Interventions Summary Table		Target Groups		
Activities / Interventions	Justification	Live in IMD Quintile 1 / 2 area	Live in Polar 4, Q1 area	Asian students
Research / barriers / approach	To ensure our programme is relevant to we will be using a participatory action research approach which supports our programme design for disadvantaged groups based on the Durham University research toolkit <sup>1</sup> .	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contextual Admissions: reduced offer (by 8 UCAS points), invitation to Transition Day	The Fair Education Alliance report <i>Putting Fairness in context: using data to widen access to higher education</i> (2018) <sup>2</sup> supports the use of contextual admissions.  Solent will be trialling the use of contextual admissions for those from Polar 4 quintile 1 (short term) and IMD quintiles 1 and 2 (long term) areas, which we believe will support the challenge set by the Office for Students (2019) <sup>3</sup> .	Yes (Medium term)	Yes	No
Campus Visits / Taster Days Visits / Taster Days (Pre- / Post-16)	The Gatsby Foundation guidance <i>Good Career Guidance: Reaching The Gatsby Benchmarks</i> (2013) highlights the importance of young people having meaningful encounters with higher education providers <sup>4</sup> , with the Department for Education (DFE) <i>Careers Strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents</i> (2017) supporting this <sup>5</sup> .  During a recent campus visit at Solent 100% of attendees reported that the day had given them a better understanding of the opportunities available, with 94.44% suggesting that confidence had increased as a result of the visit. Solent will be continuing such activities to support raising aspirations, increasing understanding of higher education and demystifying assumptions.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community / Partnership Events	Successful activity by Blackburn College highlights the benefits of community engagement (with Asian communities) that moves beyond typical outreach interventions <sup>6</sup> . This supports a new approach that Solent will be taking, with planned partnerships events with housing associations (Radian) and faith organisations based within disadvantaged areas.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parent / Carer Events	We will be developing activity with parents/carers based on the University of Warwick report <i>Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement Do Parents Know They Matter</i> (2007) <sup>7</sup> . Like the Parent Power project used by King's College London we wish to mobilise parents/carers using them to support our messaging within disadvantaged areas.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parent / Carer Events	We will be developing activity with parents/carers based on the University of Warwick report <i>Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement Do Parents Know They Matter</i> (2007) <sup>8</sup> . Like the Parent Power project used by King's College London we wish to mobilise parents/carers using them to support our messaging within disadvantaged areas.	Yes	Yes	Yes

1 <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/beacon/PARtoolkit.pdf>

2

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/543e665de4b0fb2b140b291/t/5b4456f2758d46c38661be76/1531205398488/FEA+Putting+Fairness+in+Context+Report+July+2018.pdf>

3 <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/bf84aeda-21c6-4b55-b9f8-3386b21b7b3b/insight-3-contextual-admissions.pdf>

4 <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/good-career-guidance-handbook-digital.pdf>

5 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664319/Careers\\_strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf)

6 <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/d21cb263-526d-401c-bc74-299c748e9ecd/ethnicity-targeting-research-report.pdf>

7 <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6639/1/DCSF-RW004.pdf>

8 <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6639/1/DCSF-RW004.pdf>

Residential Visits (Pre- / Post-16)	The Sutton Trust report <i>The impact of the Sutton Trust's Summer Schools (2012)</i> highlights that those who attend summer schools are more likely to apply to university <sup>9</sup> . The benefits of residential are also supported in our findings via the Southern Universities Network, suggesting that engagement broadens the academic horizons for disadvantaged learners. These findings support such activities taking place at Solent University.			Yes
Students' Union Society Collaboration (Pre- / Post-16)	Successful activity by Buckinghamshire New University highlights the benefits of collaborative widening participation activity with students' unions. This supports a new approach that Solent will be taking, with use of role models from student societies, which is similar to the London School of Economics approach with representatives from disadvantaged groups (including Asian) supporting the delivery of widening participation activities <sup>6</sup> .			Yes
Transition Days (Pre- / Post-16)	The University has supported Year 12 learners preparing for transition. Positive post activity feedback from 2018 (92% of participants reporting that they feel more confident about fitting in socially at university and 100% of the participants reporting they feel more confident about the academic expectations of university study) supports our plans to continue this activity. In response to the findings in the DFE report <i>Influence of finance on higher education decision-making</i> we will ensure content dispels myths and enhances knowledge of student finance <sup>10</sup> .	Yes (Medium term)	Yes	Yes
Mentoring (Post-16)	The Kings College London report <i>The underrepresentation of white working class boys in higher education: The role of widening participation (2016)</i> <sup>11</sup> highlights the benefits of mentoring and the positive impact on decision making. This supports a new approach that Solent will be taking, with planned mentoring and Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) activity with target groups.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Attainment raising (Pre- / Post-16)	The University has delivered attainment raising activities for Year 11 pupils in GCSE English and Maths. Positive post activity feedback from 2018 (95.9 % agreeing that the session helped them learn new study skills to prepare for GCSEs and 93.88% agreeing that the session benefitted overall learning) supports our plans to continue these activities including supporting those retaking GCSEs.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Role models (Pre- / Post-16)	The University has used widening participation student ambassadors in delivery of its outreach activities. We will be continuing this practice, whilst learning from approaches used by Leeds Beckett University and Manchester Metropolitan University ensuring that ambassadors with the same backgrounds (including Asian) are interacting and supporting pupils of similar backgrounds <sup>6</sup> .	Yes	Yes	Yes
Targeted Resources (Pre/Post 16)	Following focus groups (1st year undergraduates and key stage /4 learners) we will be developing specific resources for differing age groups which responds to feedback including requests for increased jargon busting information.	Yes	Yes	Yes

9 <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/summer-school-summary-final-draft.pdf>

10 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693188/Influence\\_of\\_finance\\_on\\_higher\\_education\\_decision-making.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693188/Influence_of_finance_on_higher_education_decision-making.pdf)

11 <https://www.lkmco.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-underrepresentation-of-white-working-class-boys-in-higher-education-baars-et-al-2016.pdf>

## SUCCESS

### BAME attainment gap - Aims and Measures

The University has an ongoing, well embedded, strategic objective to halve the BAME attainment gap over five years, from a baseline of 21.7% in 2016-17 with an overarching long-term aim to eliminate the gap. The overall BAME attainment gap has reduced to 18% in 2017-18 demonstrating the effectiveness of the current strategy in achieving this aim. We aim to build on the current successful outcome by continuing to reduce the gap year on year.

Our starting point was a gap of 21.7% in 2016-17. We will continue our work to halve the overall BAME attainment gap by 2021-22, as well as the attainment gaps related to ethnicity within this, for example between black and all other ethnic minority students. There will be an attainment gap of 10.9% or less by 2021-22 and then subsequent reductions in this gap in the following eight years to eradicate any gap by 2029-30. The following plans to address the BAME attainment gap also address the 4.8% continuation gap between White and 'Other' ethnicity students. During the last three years Solent's Achievement Team have completed data analyses to improve our understanding of student retention at the University and the resulting successful strategy is to support students' achievement which in turn improves student retention. Our analyses suggest that academic failure often precedes a student dropping out. The planned activities below focus on supporting and improving the achievement of BAME and students of 'Other' ethnicity.

To achieve this target, we will action Course Leaders to utilise unit level attainment gap data to reduce the BAME attainment gap at unit level. We will provide attainment gap data at unit level together with good practice activities for Course and Unit Leaders to action as part of the annual Course Review process. This objective is derived from the success of providing unit level BAME attainment gap data to 36 unit leaders as part of the OfS funded Student Attainment Project 2 (SAP2) research. During focus group and individual feedback sessions that formed part of the evaluation of this project, staff reported that data at unit level was critical in highlighting the issues and informing strategies to reduce the BAME attainment gap. Staff reported a greater understanding about their course level attainment gap through discussion of unit level data. The measure of success will be that each year an increasing number of courses will report a decrease in their BAME attainment gap.

We will use Solent's student engagement monitoring project (learning analytics system) to reduce the overall BAME attainment gap at course level. This project will provide detailed engagement data about individual students. The purpose of the project is to improve student retention and achievement. Staff and student feedback in the form of focus groups has informed the development of the project, as have pilot studies in the form of the Rich Information Set for Educators (RISE) project and Course Data reports provided as part of the achievement team initiatives. The student engagement monitoring system will be a tool to inform the advice, information and guidance provided to individual students to facilitate their success, as well as to inform the enhancement and development of new and existing targeted and inclusive interventions. The pilot will be implemented in two Schools during 2019-20 and then rolled out across the University in 2020-21. The measure of success will be that as each course adopts the student engagement monitoring system there is a year on year reduction in the BAME attainment at course level.

We will embed the proven good practice activities from the SAP2 project across the University. A significant part of the University's approach to reducing the attainment gap to date has been its participation in the OfS funded SAP2 project. The findings from this inclusive project indicate that this approach to deconstructing assessment for students is effective in reducing the BAME attainment gap. The project concluded in April 2019 and at Solent we are now focusing on sustainability and embedding the interventions as standard in teaching and learning across the University. We have already embedded the 'Fit to submit' assignment checklist intervention which has been made available as standard on the Virtual Learning Environment for all units. This objective will include developing strategies to embed the other intervention (Understanding the Assignment Brief activity) and for staff to share the ongoing development of good practice using both interventions. The measure of success will be that all students who participate in focus groups report that assignment briefs are being supported by the interventions and that these are perceived as effective support for success. In addition, there will be a reduction in the attainment gap in units where the interventions are being used as reported by students and evidenced by VLE usage analysis and content analysis.

We aim to secure the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) Race Equality Charter. During good practice visits to other universities, the benefits of becoming a member of the ECU Race Equality Charter were discussed and this was recommended to us. The charter provides a framework for self-reflection and self-evaluation to improve the representation, success and progression of BAME students. At Solent, we have identified that the charter process, including recognition of inequality, complex backgrounds and experiences and

intersectionality along with developing solutions to provide opportunities for all students, will further enhance and validate the work already in place to reduce the attainment gap in a meaningful way and contribute to changing the culture of the university. The measure of success will be initially attaining the bronze award followed by the silver award.

We will facilitate BAME students developing a sense of belonging at Solent. The University’s Achievement Team are completing a project at Solent investigating how all students develop a sense of belonging, identifying and sharing good practice at course level. A literature review completed by the team indicates that developing a sense of belonging is critical to student retention. This project will be extended to look at a sense of belonging for different minority groups within the student BAME population. Qualitative and quantitative data will be used to assess the student sense of belonging and develop activities and support for the BAME student community.

From September 2022 we will deliver development programmes for BAME students using programmes with proven success in the sector in contributing to reducing the awarding gap. Alongside we will deliver interventions to courses that are not meeting awarding gap milestones.

2016/17 Baseline	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-2021	2021-2022
21.7%	18.0%	17.4%	15.2%	13.1%	10.9%

**The gender attainment gap - IMD Q1 & 2 Males/POLAR Q1 & 2 Males – Aims and Measures**

Analysis of the data shows that female performance is improving each year while male performance is remaining static. Specific reasons for this have not yet been identified. Although Solent will work towards closing the male /female attainment gap across all POLAR quintiles, we will focus on, and target improving the performance of, IMD quintile 1 & 2 males and POLAR quintiles 1 & 2 males. We will investigate the potential barriers to male success at Solent, with a particular focus on IMD quintile 1 & 2 males and POLAR quintiles 1 & 2 males, We will also investigate the year on year improvement in female success and identify enabling factors for success and apply lessons learnt to improving male success for these target groups. A recent development is that the Solent Students’ Union have appointed a Men’s Health Officer so this investigation would be in collaboration with the Students’ Union. The measure of success will be clearly identified barriers to male success and clearly defined action points for services and schools.

We will further develop the Solent ‘Inclusive course design checklist’ and embed it fully in course design, curriculum and course review as a mandatory part of these processes. This objective is based on good practice developed and shared by UCL, (Universities UK, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic student attainment at UK universities #closingthegap, 2 May 2019). The measure of success will be that student feedback and audit outcomes indicate that teaching, learning and assessment is inclusive. Good practice in inclusivity is identified and shared annually across course teams.

Solent Students’ Union Access and Participation Poll outcomes indicate that there is a need for bridging between academic and student with students more likely to go to an identified and credible peer for help. We will therefore explore peer mentoring as a tool to improve male success for these targeted groups. The measure of success will be year on year improvement of male success amongst IMD Q1 & Q2 males and POLAR Q1 & Q2 males and with reporting of greater confidence in their learning from these targeted groups.

IMD Quintile 1 & 2 Male students v. IMD Quintile 3, 4 & 5 female students

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
25.0%	21%	17%	12%	8%	4.0%

POLAR Quintiles 1 & 2 Males v. POLAR Quintiles 3, 4 & 5 Females

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
17.0%	14%	10%	7%	4%	0%

## Disabled students' attainment gap – Aims and Measures

The University's disability service (Access Solent) is undergoing modernization as a service. As part of this process staff are identifying good practice from across the sector including a wide variety of support options for students. Visits to universities to discuss good practice are being planned together with staff development. A new student voice group is being set up from September 2019 to inform the development of the service and to evaluate new support strategies. New support options will include peer support, online support and group support. The objective of this is to broaden the offer of Access Solent to include a wide range of support options for students. The measures of success will be year on year improvement in student feedback about disabled students' experiences of Solent. A menu of effective support options will be available to students with disabilities.

## Activities and Interventions

Activities and Interventions Summary Table		Target Groups		
Activities / Interventions	Justification	BAME	All Polar Quintiles	Disabled Students
Course Leaders to utilise unit level attainment gap data to reduce the BAME attainment gap at unit level.  Embed the proven good practice activities from the SAP2 project across the University:	The Appreciative Inquiry Approach already embedded to evaluate our approach to the BAME attainment gap includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.	Yes		
Pilot use of the student engagement monitoring project in two Schools during 2019-20 and then rolled out across the University in 2020-21.	Enhanced engagement monitoring will help us to identify students who are at risk across a range of different characteristics and to use this predictive data to target support.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Facilitate BAME developing a sense of belonging at Solent.	Research has told us that there is little sense of belonging, especially amongst BAME groups. This project will define ways to engender a sense of belonging through societies and other targeted initiatives.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Investigate potential barriers to male success at Solent.	This includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.		Yes	
Further develop the Solent 'Inclusive course design checklist' and embed it fully in course design, curriculum and course review as a mandatory part of these processes.	Student feedback and audit outcomes should indicate that teaching, learning and assessment is inclusive. Good practice in inclusivity both internally and externally should be identified and shared annually across course teams.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explore peer mentoring as a tool to improve male success for the targeted groups.	Peer mentoring can be a powerful tool to raise aspirations and increase confidence.		Yes	
Broaden the offer of Access Solent to include a wider range of support options for students.	Offering group and peer support as well as individual support will give disabled students more choice and will help to engender a greater sense of belonging.			Yes
Reduce the number of reasonable adjustments made for individual students at course level as our teaching, learning and assessment becomes entirely inclusive.	The aim of an entirely inclusive curriculum will reduce the marginalisation that can be felt by disabled students.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Deliver targeted interventions to support courses which do not meet BAME awarding gap milestone.	The University is enhancing it's offer of interventions, based on good practice internally and from the sector and informed by data, to work closely with staff and students to review and enhance the curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment.	Yes		

Implement development programmes targeting BAME students to help reduce the awarding gap.	Offering group programmes that have proven effectiveness in the sector will help accelerate progress towards reducing the awarding gap.	Yes		
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## PROGRESSION

### Aims and Objectives

The University has identified the need to ensure equality of outcomes for all students regardless of their gender, social background or ethnicity. The following targets have been set to address the inequality between BAME students and White students. The targets have all been set using DLHE data focussed on graduate level roles. From 2020, new data will be available on graduate destinations, Graduate Outcomes Survey. This may mean that targets will need to be reviewed once this data is available. The target for BAME v White students has been broken down into 3 sub-sets to allow for more tailored interventions. Focussing on key groups is part of the University' employability strategy, which aims to offer support to all, but with targeted interventions for groups where disparities exist. The tables below show the planned reduction in key gaps over a five-year period:

#### Asian students v. White students

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
16%	12%	8%	5%	2%	0%

#### BAME students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2 v. white students from IMD quintiles 1 & 2

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
10%	8%	6%	4%	2%	0%

#### BAME females securing graduate level roles v. Solent University average for all students

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
20%	16%	12%	8%	4%	0%

#### Females from lower participation neighbourhoods

In addition, another target has been set for this group as there is a significant gap between their progression to graduate level roles against their male peers.

2017/18 Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
10%	8%	6%	4%	2%	0%

Theory of change models have been developed for each of the targeted groups. These can be found in Annex 2. A summary of the planned interventions is listed below.

### Activities and Intervention

Activities and Interventions Summary Table		Target Groups			
Activities / Interventions	Justification	Asian Students	BAME From Deprived Areas	BAME Females	Females from LPNs
Research into the barriers to success	In order to better understand the reasons behind the data and to identify appropriate interventions	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Guest speakers and role models	An inclusive approach to ensuring that guest speakers are indicative of our student population and act as clear role models for successful progression.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mentoring (Group, Peer and Professional)	<p>The University has run a number of professional mentoring schemes over the last eight years. There is clear evidence that having a professional mentor increases the likelihood of securing a graduate level role. Based on DLHE data for 2017, analysis of our Professional Mentoring scheme showed that 70% of mentees secured a graduate level role compared to 61.3% of all graduates.</p> <p>Previous peer mentoring schemes around work placements and digital literacy have been shown to benefit both the mentor and the mentee. Peer mentoring will impact on Success and Progression as there seems to be a correlation between a student achieving a good honours degree and securing graduate level work</p> <p>Group mentoring will provide students with a peer support mechanism which was recommended from a recent Focus Group with students and graduates from a BAME background.</p> <p>Group mentoring will also potentially help with Success as the group will be able to ask for support in key areas, as well as supporting Progression through interaction with professional mentors and alumni.</p>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tailored interventions for key groups	Tailored interventions with course teams have proven successful with below benchmark courses and have helped the university to improve their graduate level outcomes by 10.5% in two years from 58.2 in 2016 to 68.7% in 2018.	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Positive action with local employers for placements, internships and jobs. Better promotion and support for existing BAME schemes	A number of schemes exist that are aimed at BAME students, both in the creative industries and in general e.g. the House of Commons and the BBC. These should be promoted, and more schemes identified that aim at increasing in key industries.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bursaries for BAME students who choose to go into Further study (at Solent or an alternative provider)	OfS data shows that of all students taking taught postgraduates masters courses in 2018-18, only 9.9% were black and only 10.9% were Asian compared to 73% white. (OfS, 2019)	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Supporting entrepreneurial students with a focus on all females and BAME females.				Yes	Yes

### 3.0 Strategic measures

Solent University is committed to delivering the Government's targets to support underrepresented groups in higher education. We are well placed to continue to improve our metrics regarding improving attainment in schools. We attract a high proportion of students from disadvantaged groups, and over 70% are first in their family to go into higher education. We strive to continuously develop and provide flexible learning/assessment approaches to ensure all our students can realise their full potential. We have accessible support systems that assist students to achieve success during their studies and progress into good employment or further study.

#### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

##### Overview

The University is committed to providing the provision of fair access and widening participation for all those who have the potential to benefit from higher education regardless of disadvantage or background. This is part of a whole provider approach to incorporating the whole student lifecycle. The University is strongly committed to social justice and intends to remain highly ranked among English Universities for its proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Access and Participation Plan has been developed collaboratively between academic and professional staff from departments across the University with Students' Union colleagues and members of the student body.

In working to deliver to our key strategic objectives, we have placed significant focus on developing excellent teaching and learning provision and assessment practices. This is at the core of our provision and we are committed to continuous development in this area. We want our student learners to achieve more than formal qualifications, we also want them to develop skills and personal qualities required by employers or to enable them to become successful entrepreneurs.

In designing the targets and interventions we have identified the groups of students for whom we need to make improvements, we have established the issues for these students, and we have considered assumptions and how we will measure and know the effect of interventions, so that we can make amendments as necessary during the life of the plan. In doing this we have adopted a theory of change model to our access and participation plan, considering the gaps, analysing what needs to be changed and identifying key steps to bring about the required changes.

## **Alignment with other strategies**

Solent University has aligned the ethos and content of its Access and Participation Plan with key University strategies, policies and committee terms of reference. These include development of the University's overarching strategy; equality, quality, diversity and inclusion; and learning, teaching and assessment. The strategic objectives, targets and measure set out in the Access and Participation Plan will be referenced and considered during discussions at key meetings, including the Equality and Wellbeing Group; Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee; Academic Board; Management Board; Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group; the Beating the Attainment Gap Working Group; Student Board; Vice-chancellor's Group meetings; Board of Governors; and during periodic review of programmes and courses. The plan also aligns closely with our employability strategy. The interventions from the Access and Participation Plan form part of the operational plan for Solent Futures, the university's careers service. Strategically, Solent Futures offers all students access to career support but focusses key interventions on target groups aligned to the Access and Participation Plan.

## **Strategic measures**

### **ACCESS**

The University recruitment sub-strategy incorporates relevant sections of the University Access Agreement to actively encourage applications from underrepresented groups. For the current plan, the University is piloting contextual admissions in a more planned and structured way. Students from IMD Q1&Q2 areas and Polar 4, Q1 areas will have a reduced academic offer and a package of support which includes transition activities and paid tutor/mentor support during the course.

As part of this commitment, the University works and collaborates with the Southampton Education Forum, local authorities, the wider education community, NCOP partners and employers to ensure that its outreach work draws from other providers strategies, and develops and strengthens its offering to meet the needs of the local community as well as potential students.

The Southern Universities Network is our NCOP partner and all six university partners are committed to work together to:

- Reduce the gap in higher education participation between the most and least represented groups
- Support young people to make well-informed decisions about their future education
- Support effective and impactful local collaboration by higher education providers working together with schools, colleges, employers and other partners
- Contribute to a stronger evidence based around 'what works' in higher education outreach and strengthen evaluation practice in the sector

The strategy for access is to align appropriate interventions to deliver targets which seek to decrease the gaps in our performance, being mindful of aligning our measures to our equality, diversity and inclusion strategy. A variety of measures, some tried and tested, other new activities/projects form a key part of our overarching recruitment strategy and form part of this plan over the next 5 and 10 years. Coupled with activities/interventions our plan marries up targeted bursaries which are packaged to include cash, a transition day and banked hours for mentors/academic tutors/additional support measures.

A strategic element of our plan for the next five years is student engagement and involvement in the design and development of our outreach work both from pre-16 pupils, post-16 pupils as well as current students, staff and alumni to ensure we are continuously developing and improving what we provide to deliver the best

impact. Current students and peer mentors/role models will be used wherever practicable to deliver outreach activities and monitor impact from recruitment to transition to settling-in at the University.

Theory of change models have been used for the three Access targets to ensure that the planned interventions are well researched, justified and will deliver the desired results. The local context and assumptions sections of the models provide an overview of the challenges and risks that will be faced.

## SUCCESS

The University has an established strategy for tackling the overall BAME attainment gap and the attainments gaps relating to ethnicity within this. In 2015-16 investigation work was completed to understand the attainment gap at Solent and to develop a cross-university action plan. Visits were made to two universities who have successfully reduced their attainment gap by 50% with good practice identified and discussed. A literature review was completed, and we undertook and reported background work into deconstructing the attainment gap at Solent, including data analyses, for example, differences in NSS feedback from BAME and white students to further understand the differences in university experience.

A 'Beating the attainment gap' (BTAG) Steering Group was set up to oversee work to reduce the BAME attainment gap but with the intention that this group would have longevity and over time drive and monitor work to reduce all attainment gaps. The BTAG Steering Group monitors progress against the BTAG action plan and outcomes are reported regularly to the University's Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee. To date the BTAG approach has been inclusive, with classroom strategies benefiting all students. Evaluation of the interventions has been through focus groups with staff and students who participated in the SAP2 project.

In July 2018, Solent also completed an Appreciative Inquiry workshop with 31 managers and representation from each School and service. This provided the opportunity for the experience and impact of interventions to date to be reviewed and discussed within the wider context of cross-university work to reduce the BAME attainment gap by a cross section of university staff. Activities facilitated critical reflection and identification of good practice. The effectiveness of this approach, detailed outcomes and action plan means that the Appreciative Inquiry method will be embedded as a method of evaluation for the Solent approach to addressing the BAME attainment gap and will be repeated every 18 months.

The approach to reducing the BAME attainment gap forms the structure, processes and governance for work to reduce the gender attainment gaps across the targeted groups of males from LPN and deprived areas. There is currently a SEED-funded project to investigate the reasons for the attainment gap for white working-class males.

The outcomes will form part of the investigation into barriers to male success. The BTAG Steering Group will oversee progress against the objectives to reduce the gender attainment gaps and report progress to the University's Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee. Evaluation of these interventions will be through the Appreciative Inquiry sessions described above.

## PROGRESSION

Overall progression at Solent University has improved dramatically over the last two years (by +10.5% for graduate roles according to DLHE, 2018). This has been achieved through offering tailored interventions to courses with poor graduate level outcomes on DLHE. The same strategy will be adopted for the groups identified in this plan. A range of tailored interventions will be offered to targeted groups aimed at improving their progression outcomes. The impact of each will be closely monitored to allow for interventions to be developed, improved or expanded as appropriate.

It should be noted that all progression data has been based on the DLHE survey. This has now moved the Graduate Outcomes Survey and there may be some disparity in the results once they are made public in Spring, 2020. This data will be analysed, and targets will be adapted accordingly.

## Access and financial support expenditure

The University estimates a student body in 2020-21 of 5,821 Home full time undergraduate students, as per the Fee Information table 5a. Our planned Access expenditure for 2020-21 is £692,859 in total with £476,304 being funded by higher fee income (HFI) from tuition fees. Expenditure on Financial Support of £1,633,000 and £53,898 on Research and Evaluation are both fully funded by the HFI (tables 4.a and 4.b. of the Investment Summary). Across the five-year period the University intends to maintain its percentage spend on Access and Financial Support as a proportion of its HFI however this is based on the assumption that tuition fees remain at £9,250 for undergraduate students.

The conditions for which bursaries were awarded to students who entered the University prior to 2020-21 will remain as stated in the Access Agreement relevant at the time of entry. The University will maintain all agreed expenditure on bursaries and scholarships relating to students who entered in these years. The package of financial support for new entrants from 2020-21 has been designed to help the retention of students at the University from under-represented groups. Expenditure has been forecasted to reduce overall as a result of a forecasted reduction in student numbers. Applicants who are full-time students will also be expected to have applied for means tested student support from Student Finance England and given consent to share information in order that their declared household income level may be verified.

A Hardship Fund of £459,000 in 2020-21 will provide support to students facing financial difficulties including those on courses with higher associated costs for example course materials and trips. To assist Access from other underrepresented groups annual bursaries for each year of study will be offered to care leavers and estranged students (£1,500), students who are carers (£1,200) and in addition from September 2022 Romany/Traveller students (£1,200).

During 2021/22 the University evaluated the impact of our Access and Participation investment commitment to providing a university bursary of £500 to all students with a household income of under £25K for each year of their academic study. Despite having offered the bursary for the last 2 years, our attainment gaps have continued to widen. The evidence as well as success stories across the sector suggest that targeted interventions to support disadvantaged groups are more effective in closing the gaps. This means that we plan to phase out the University Bursary for new students from September 2022 but will continue our commitment to the bursary for continuing students. From September 2022 this will release £200K Access and Participation spend to redeploy to fund staff hours to lead a comprehensive approach to rigorous work on awarding gaps and delivering a comprehensive programme of activities and work to target awarding gaps. The Hardship Fund will continue to be maintained.

In 2017-18 and 2018-19, the University increased its bursary to £3,000 for the new eligible intake of students but to a lower number. We have not yet completed our research into the long-term impact of the £3000 bursary; however, initial analysis indicates that recipients of the £3,000 bursary withdrew at a higher rate than the overall university average (+ 2.6%), whereas a study of the impact of £500 bursaries showed that students in receipt of a bursary had a similar retention rate as students from higher-income backgrounds. Nonetheless, we will conduct an analysis of the long-term impact as soon as data is available, and this will be used to inform our Access and Participation Plan moving forward. Across the five-year period the University will review and assess its various bursary schemes and in the light of its findings may introduce new ones and/or revise the amounts paid while maintaining the terms for those on previous ones. The percentage of HFI spent on financial support is predicted to remain constant at 9.1% (table 4.b of the Investment Summary) over the five years.

The University is currently moving to a system of paying bursaries via an Aspire card rather than cash. As expenditure is limited to certain categories related to educational requirements it will be possible to restrict and identify the categories of spend.

The University's eligibility requirements for the support package are:

- A declared household income of £25,000 or less;
- Reside in a Polar 4, Quintile 1 region
- Enrolment on a full-time course, paying full variable or new regime fees;
- Fee status of UK (to be eligible for bursaries).

Internal research based on the methods developed for OFFA (<http://shura.shu.ac.uk/14889/>) was conducted to determine the impact of bursaries on retention. This will continue to be implemented to monitor the impact of bursaries. Firstly, logistic data modelling indicated that bursaries were effective in mitigating the disparity in retention outcomes between lower and higher income students. Following this a survey (of 60 bursary recipients and 80 non-recipients) and interviews (with 6 bursary recipients) corroborated the findings obtained from the data model.

### 3.2 Student consultation

The Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group includes student representation. This included involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of the plan and every aspect of the plan reflects their input. The Students' Union President has been particularly instrumental in developing the Plan. Major

contributions have been welcomed from student representatives and the Students' Union Vice-presidents. We have been particularly pleased to have the voice of students from underrepresented groups at meetings and via other means, so that we could take into account the issues and ideas that they raised.

As described, the Students' Union was fully involved in developing the plan and also canvassed student feedback via a survey.

The Students' Union, in consultation with students, have produced a statement about the University's Access and Participation Plan – this is appended. The University was pleased to receive this thorough and honest appraisal of the Plan.

To inform proposed interventions we have held various different types of consultation and activity with students from a range of backgrounds. The feedback and outputs from these activities were used to aid in the design of both the strategy and specific interventions. For example:

- Focus group in a secondary school: This focus group took place in a Southampton based secondary school (82% of pupils from IMD quintile 1 & 2 and 93% of pupils from Polar4 quintile 1 & 2 areas), the 9 pupils (in year 9) where all met widening participation criteria. Pupil feedback highlighted personal perceptions of the barriers to higher education and thoughts on effective interventions. Their input highlighted the need to include information surrounding GCSE options and the links to higher education, attainment raising activities and the use of role models from similar backgrounds to raise aspirations.
- Focus group with current WP Student Ambassadors (round table discussion): One focus group took place with 20 widening participation student ambassadors (who are trained to support our activities). Their input supported our use of role models from similar backgrounds to raise aspirations of young people, they felt that this was a useful way to engage disadvantaged groups. They also highlighted that content to help inform parents/carers about higher education is useful.
- Focus group with Post 16 Education Providers: Four focus groups took place with targeted post 16 education providers who have high portions of disadvantaged groups (a Southampton based college, a Southampton based sixth form, a Portsmouth based college and a London based college), these focus groups included feedback from careers advisers, careers leaders and senior teachers. We discussed our ideas, with positive feedback surrounding mentoring projects, increased community engagement and attainment raising activities.
- Focus groups with current BAME students: Three focus groups with 14 BAME students were carried out in 2018/19 to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot classroom interventions in the SAP2 project. Student feedback included their personal experiences of the positive impact of the interventions on their experience of assessment. This feedback has informed the aim to embed good practice from the SAP2 project across the University.
- Focus groups with 25 students including care leavers, mature students, and students who were the first in their family to enter higher education has informed the aim to further develop inclusive course design as part of the approach to close the gender attainment gap across all POLAR quintiles.
- Focus group with 5 BAME female students who were asked to critique a number of proposed interventions for Progression. Their input highlighted the need to include more appropriate role models and to encourage peer support.
- Surveys held to monitor impact of bursaries for low income families over the last 4 years. Stronger results for those receiving higher bursaries (less anxious, able to enjoy student life more, less need to go over the recommended number of hours of work whilst studying).
- Focus groups with 25 students including care leavers, mature students and students who were the first in their family to enter higher education have informed the aim to further develop inclusive course design as part of the approach to close the gender attainment gap across all POLAR quintiles.
- Three BAME students attended a writing retreat with BAME students from the University of Derby and the University of West London as part of the SAP2 project in February 2019. Their feedback at the SAP2 end of project dissemination conference held at the university of Derby. Their feedback informed the decision to focus on facilitating the development of a sense of belonging for BAME students at Solent and informed the decision to commit to gaining the ECU Race Equality Charter as the process will help the University address the issues raised by the students.

### 3.3 Evaluation strategy

Solent University engaged with the OfS evaluation self-assessment toolkit and summarised the following scores and categories in different areas of evaluation:

Areas of evaluation	Total Score	Category of evaluation practice
Strategic context	9 / 24	Emerging
Programme Design	13 / 18	Emerging
Evaluation design	4 / 12	Emerging
Evaluation implementation	16 / 20	Emerging
Learning from evaluation	14 / 22	Good

## Strategic Context

Solent University needs to develop a whole-university evaluation framework that will guide the Access, Success and Progression teams to apply evaluation mechanisms consistently. We also need to identify resources and staff expertise that will drive the programme evaluation regularly and ensure that they are discussed at appropriate forums regularly. Sufficient investment in evaluation activities including staff development for capacity building in evaluation are important steps we should take for fully engaging with the Access and Participation Plan. Currently the University has seed funding opportunities through a competitive bidding process for enhancement of learning, teaching, student achievement and continuation related projects. In future, the entire pot of funding, circa £20,000, or significant part thereof can be allocated to evaluate different projects in Access, Success and Progression programme areas.

## Programme Design

There is a clear intention and plan to embed evaluation for all activities related to our Access and Participation Plan. There is clear evidence that Solent University identifies best practice across the sector to identify its own activities and programmes. We carefully choose quantitative and qualitative measures to evaluate achievement of outcomes. We probably need to be more focused on regularly reflecting on measures to ensure we get to the desired outcomes and have reflective practice to fine tune future activities and programmes.

## Evaluation Design

Access objectives and related activities have some robust evaluation in place, and they are based on evidence and theory of change although causality is hard to establish. We aim to move more towards causal level evaluation of our access and participation activities. Currently a working group is being set up to develop research methods which will allow us to conduct inferential analyses. To use an access intervention as an example, we could compare exam scores pre and post-intervention (by conducting a paired-samples t-test) or between those who took part in our attainment raising activities and those who did not (by conducting an independent samples t-test). Moreover, our new student engagement project (learning analytics system) will allow us to collect broad and in-depth data on students' academic performance at Solent. This data could be used to conduct more complex models of attainment, such as ANOVA. The working group will also engage with qualitative methods such as thematic analysis and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to explore data obtained through focus groups and interviews.

Our greatest investment is in financial support for students. This will continue to be evaluated using the data model developed by Sheffield Hallam, UWE, Oxford, Kings College and Bedfordshire. This model explores the relationship between a number of variables (including household income, subject studied, and accommodation type) and HE outcomes. The model can be used to determine whether there are significant differences between financial support recipients and non-recipients in continuation, completion, attainment and progression. The model will be used in conjunction with a survey of recipients and non-recipients, as well as in-depth interviews and/or focus groups. Furthermore, it is hoped that greater engagement with qualitative analysis methods moving forward will improve the insights that this evaluation project generates.

## Evaluation Implementation

The University will identify skillsets among staff members who are capable of designing, implementing and delivering a comprehensive evaluation framework. All qualitative and quantitative methods applied to evaluate different activities will be scrutinised by the University Ethics Committee. Subsequently, there will be rigorous reliability and validity tests to remove any identified biases for the instruments to collect unbiased data to measure impact at individual as well as sub-group level. The effectiveness of different interventions and activities will not only be measured at sub-group level but also at individual level using the Engagement Monitoring / Learning Analytics platform.

## Learning

We need to strengthen the internal process to formulate a common evaluation framework, design and implement in all programmes. We also need to ensure that all evaluation interim and final reports are inspected by relevant committees. We will continue to organise the Learning and Teaching Community Conference and share effective intervention evaluation reports with The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO-HE).

Each year the Access and Participation Plan Working Group will undertake a formal review of the Access and Participation Plan and will measure the impact and salience of each intervention. Interventions will then be adapted, or new interventions introduced to ensure that targets are met. We will ensure that we reflect on, and learn, from this review.

The following section articulates the evaluation strategic steps as part of the Access and Participation Plan with timeline in a tabular format followed by evaluation strategies for different activities:

<b>Evaluation Objective</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Identify clear resources for evaluation: skilled individuals with appropriate time allocation and monetary resources	2020-21
Establish an evaluation framework involving mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative research methods) across three programmes ensuring a culture of evaluation and reflection for fine tuning the activities	2020-21 for framework 2020 to 2025 for reflection and continuous improvement
Regular evaluation reporting as narratives, empirical evidence and causes for targeted change	2020 to 2025

## ACCESS – Summary of Approach to Evaluation

	Analysis of calendar of events and target areas, schools, colleges and groups reached	Analysis of follow up survey and identification of trends	Analysis of School/ College/LA attainment data - across the past three academic years	Analysis of School/College/LA continuation to FE data - across the past three academic years	Analysis of School/College/LA continuation to HE data - across the past three academic years	Comparison of baseline and follow up survey responses	Events registration and attended data - comparison for historic trends	Measurement of School/College meeting Gatsby Benchmarks	Monitoring and analysis of HEAT engagement data	Monitoring and analysis of HEAT progression data	Qualitative data analysis - open text responses, interviews and focus groups
Research/barriers/approach		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Contextual Admissions (reduced offer by 8 UCAS points, invite to Transition Day.				✓	✓	✓					
Campus Visits/Taster Days Visits/Taster Days (Pre/Post 16)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Community/Partnership Events	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		✓
Parent/Carer Events	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		✓
Residential Visits (Pre/Post 16)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student Union Society Collaboration (Pre/Post 16)	✓	✓				✓					✓
Transition Days (Pre/Post 16)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mentoring (Post 16)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Attainment raising (Pre/Post 16)	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓
Role models (Pre/Post 16)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Targeted Resources (Pre/Post 16)		✓									✓

The diagram above shows the access interventions and what evaluation methods will be used. When designing activities we will aim to achieve type 3 - causal evaluation. Some methods of evaluation will be used across a range of interventions/activities as they are appropriate to a wide range of outreach work. The choice of evaluation methods is realistic and we will employ those that can provide the best evidence of impact available at the time (recognising that some evaluation methods may be new to the University, thus a trial/pilot).

## SUCCESS – Summary of Approach to Evaluation

Activities/Interventions	Appreciative Inquiry	Focus Groups	Reduced attainment gap
Provision of unit level attainment gap data and support	✓	✓	✓
Embedding SAP2 assessment practice across the university	✓		✓
Enhanced Engagement Monitoring	✓		✓
Inclusive course design checklist	✓	✓	
Peer mentoring for male students	✓	✓	
Inclusive curriculum for students with disabilities	✓	✓	

The Appreciative Inquiry method of evaluation was piloted in July 2018 as part of the SAP2 project. The 31 managers from all Schools and services reported this was a successful method to generate critical reflection and identification of good practice resulting in detailed outcomes and an action plan. The Appreciative Inquiry method will be embedded as a method of evaluation for interventions and held every 18 months. Outcomes of other methods of evaluation including focus groups and data outcomes will be included as evidence for consideration in the Appreciative Inquiry sessions.

## PROGRESSION – Summary of Approach to Evaluation

Activities/Interventions	Graduate Outcomes Survey	Focus Groups	ESE Test Pre and Post	Longitudinal tracking
Professional Mentoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peer Mentoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
Course Interventions	✓		✓	
Group Mentoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employer Interventions	✓		✓	✓
Guest Speakers and role models	✓		✓	✓
Specialist interventions	✓		✓	✓

The first results from the new Graduate Outcomes Survey are due in Spring 2020 and this may have an impact on targets. This survey will be used to track the progress of all targeted groups and it will be particularly useful as it will provide comparator data to benchmark progress against. However, this does have its limitations as it will be difficult to show causal links between an intervention and the Graduate Outcomes Survey. In addition, results will not be available until 20 months after graduation. To support this information, the university will track all students who directly take part in any intervention and will correlate this against the Graduate Outcomes Survey data and the findings from other sources e.g. the ESE test.

The ESE test is a unique survey that plots a student's strengths and weaknesses around a number of key areas related to their human, social and psychological capital. The survey has been reviewed using factor analysis and a new version with fewer, more focussed questions has been developed as a result. In addition, questions have been added that relate the student's career readiness. This will launch in September 2019. The survey has been successfully used pre and post interventions to see the impact on confidence, positivity in the context of careers and motivation.

By using a mixed method approach and triangulating qualitative and quantitative findings, we will achieve Type 2 – Empirical Enquiry and will be approaching Type 3 – Causality.

### **3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan**

The University's Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group will continue to meet regularly to review progress, decide on whether revisions or new initiatives are required, and to ensure that there is whole-institution engagement with the work. Regular evaluation meetings measuring the impact of our work will involve Students' Union representation as well as students and academic colleagues from all of our schools. As well as student representation on the University's Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group, students are also represented on the committees that the group reports to (the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee) and on the governing body.

Key personnel from professional services aligned to the three stages of the lifecycle (Access, Success and Progression) will undertake regular reviews, at least four times annually in line with reviews undertaken for Service Level Agreements and the University's planning cycle.

We will use critical friends where appropriate to assist us in our review, monitoring and evaluation. For example, we will invite colleagues from Southern Universities Network partners to give feedback on results and student feedback; we will also involve local community contact and employers.

The University's deliberative committees will oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the Plan. This includes the Student Board; the Equality and Wellbeing Committee; the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee; and Academic Board.

Progress will be monitored annually, and the findings will be used to develop or change initiatives to ensure that optimum impact is achieved. The Access and Participation Plan (2020/21-2024/2525) was presented and approved by the governing body. The Access and Participation Plan Strategic Working Group will present the annual review to the Governors for scrutiny and challenge.

### **4.0 Provision of information to students**

Solent University's Access and Participation Plan has been written in consultation and collaboration with student representatives. Development, implementation and evaluation of the Plan involves the University's deliberative committees, all of which include student representation.

The University will employ a variety of communications channels to disseminate information about the Plan, including web pages, intranet, social media, apps, verbal messaging and printed materials. Communications to enquirers and applicants will include a link to the website information.

Advice will be provided at UCAS fairs/HE fairs and in assemblies, talks and workshops in schools regarding fees, funding and bursaries.

Financial support will continue to be detailed on the website and provided in prospectuses and hand-outs at events. It will be clear to prospective and current students what their fees are for the duration of their course, as well as the financial support that is available to them.

Materials will be made available to students in the Student Hub.

All interventions described in the Access and Participation Plan will have awareness campaigns communicated digitally and/or using printed materials and available at relevant times and touch-points.

## **5.0 Annexes**

Additional information has been supplied that has supported the development of the plan:

- 1. Evidence for Target Groups not included in the APP**
- 2. Theory of Change Models**

## Annex 2

### Theory of Change Models

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## Access

### IMD, Q1 & Q2 Aims and Measures

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for outreach work in the short, medium and long term in respect of delivering our target to improve recruitment from IMD, Q1 and Q2 areas. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact. For additional detail – refer to our Evaluation Strategy in 3.3. All inputs/interventions below have been discussed within focus groups involving pupils from secondary schools, colleges and current Solent WP Ambassadors.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 Years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 Years	Inputs Long term 4– 5 Years	Evaluation & Impact
<p>The University has proportionally more students from two of the least disadvantaged quintiles, and only has 10.8% percentage share of students from (IMD Q1 and Q2).</p> <p>The National percentage of IMD Q1 &amp; Q2 is 22.1%.</p>	<p>Increase the percentage share of new entrant enrolments from IMD Q1 from 10.8% to 12.7% over 5 years and to 16.0% by 2029/2030.</p> <p>Increase the percentage share of new entrant enrolments from IMD Q2 from 18.3% to 20.0% over 5 years.</p>	<p>Research/Development approaches/activities surrounding working with target group, effective targeting methods/best ways of recording activities.</p> <p>Research to include meeting key stakeholders (schools, colleges, LAs and learners), with further research needs identified.</p>	<p>Pre-16 activities: attainment raising (GCSE English and Maths) and transition support to Level 3 learners.</p> <p>Post-16 activities: promotion of HE/Apprenticeships, transition support to Level 4/5, attainment raising (GCSE re-takes English and Maths), mentoring, shadowing and subject specific workshops.</p> <p>Contextual Admissions Package developed (Offer reduction of 8 UCAS points and invitation to transition day) if results of pilot for Polar 4, Q1 successful.</p> <p>Use of role models to support activity (student ambassadors, alumni and Students' Union (SU) groups).</p>	<p>Pre-16 activities: attainment raising (GCSE English and Maths) and transition support to Level 3 learners.</p> <p>Post-16 activities: promotion of HE/Apprenticeships, transition support to Level 4/5, attainment raising (GCSE re-takes English and Maths), mentoring, shadowing and subject specific workshops.</p> <p>Contextual Admissions package rolled out (Offer reduction of 8 UCAS points and invitation to transition day)</p> <p>Use of role models to support activity (student ambassadors, alumni and SU groups).</p>	<p>A mixed method evaluation approach will take place (see 3.3) where we will continuously assess whether we are seeing impact in respect of interventions before moving onto next stage. Where impact is limited, we will review what more should be done or whether the activity should be discarded.</p> <p>Review whether investment (financial and staffing) has been appropriately focussed and if the attainment results have improved for the learners we have worked with.</p>
<p><b>Evidence/Research</b></p> <p>See Activities and Interventions Summary Table for breakdown of research surrounding interventions, including those by King's College London (mentoring) and Manchester Metropolitan University (use of role models).</p> <p>We will be considering local authority data when targeting. Southampton City Council Local Authority - Ranked 67th on the overall IMD 2015 data out of the 326 Local Authorities (one the most deprived).</p>			<p><b>Short Term Measures/ Outcomes</b></p> <p>Understanding of barriers to IMD quintiles 1 and 2 students entering HE established.</p> <p>Ascertained advice and guidance on appropriate interventions having buy-in</p>	<p><b>Medium Term Measures/ Outcomes</b></p> <p>Increased understanding of barriers to IMD quintiles 1 and 2 students entering HE. Research with young people, applicants and students informs future approach.</p>	<p><b>Long Term Measures/ Outcomes</b></p> <p>Continuous assessment of barriers and behaviours embedded.</p> <p>Rapid increase in acceptances. (contextual offers embedded).</p> <p>Sustained positive evaluation outcomes for activities</p>

<p>Most deprived areas in Southampton include Weston, Thornhill, Northam, Redbridge and Stadium<sup>1</sup> – our target areas. Hampshire County Council Local Authority - Amongst the least deprived local authorities (ranked 12<sup>th</sup> least deprived, ranking 152 on 2015 IMD data). nine LSOAs (lower layer super output areas) are within the 10% most deprived including within Gosport, Havant, North Holbury and Blackfield<sup>2</sup> – our target areas.</p>	<p>from local community/key stake holders (within target areas).</p> <p>Existing relationships with local secondary schools, colleges and local authorities improved to an extent where access to disadvantaged pupils' data is collaborative and shared.</p>	<p>Initial increase in acceptances (contextual offers piloted).</p> <p>Positive evaluation outcomes for piloted activities delivered.</p>	<p>delivered, including improvements in progress 8 scores or % of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths GCSEs in targeted areas.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Underlying assumptions/Investment and Risk</b></p> <p>Assumptions: Target group have ability to progress. Course appropriate. Activities appropriate.</p> <p>Investment: Continued financial investment in activities and appropriate staffing provided. Strong support and leadership from senior management. Staff with the right skills to deliver the plan provided.</p> <p>Risks: Lack of stakeholder engagement (eliminated strategic planning and collaboration with multiple stake holders). Target group disengaged (eliminated via appropriate interventions and strategy). Other local universities targeting the same groups of students (collaboration, shared goal).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Essential to evaluate in between each stage of the plan to ensure continuous improvements and impact.</p> <p>Evaluation through discussions, surveys, interviews, data and attainment results to inform the appropriateness of the interventions and what might need changing/improving or discarding (see 3.3 for mixed methods approach).</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>Some of the interventions/activities will cross a number of areas of disadvantage so it would be recommended to extend/increase the use of those interventions which deliver the best impact. Best practice to be shared with key stakeholders (schools/colleges/local authorities) and with collaborative networks (SUN/Higher Education Liaison Officers Association).</p>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.southampton.gov.uk/policies/imd-\(2015\)-analysis-of-changes-since-2010\\_tcm63-378051.pdf](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/policies/imd-(2015)-analysis-of-changes-since-2010_tcm63-378051.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna/demographysummary/demography>

## Polar 4, Q1 Aims and Measures

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for outreach work in the short, medium and long term in respect of delivering our target to improve recruitment from Q1 areas. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact. For additional detail – refer to our Evaluation Strategy in 3.3. All inputs/interventions below have been discussed within focus groups with pupils from secondary schools, colleges and current Solent WP Ambassadors.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 Years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 Years	Inputs Long term 4-5 Years	Evaluation & Impact
The University has proportionally more students from the highest participation than there are in the general population (18-year-olds).	Increase the percentage share of new entrant enrolments from Polar 4, Q1 from 16.9% to 18.0% over 5 years.	<p>Research/Development approaches/activities surrounding working with target group, effective targeting methods/best ways of recording activities. Research to include meeting key stakeholders (schools, colleges, LAs and learners), with further research needs identified.</p> <p>Development of contextual admissions package.</p>	<p>Pre-16 activities: attainment raising (GCSE English and Maths) and transition support to Level 3 learners.</p> <p>Post-16 activities: promotion of HE/Apprenticeships, transition support to Level 4/5, attainment raising (GCSE re-takes English and Maths), mentoring, shadowing and subject specific workshops.</p> <p>Contextual Admissions pilot rolled out (Offer reduction of 8 UCAS points and invitation to transition day).</p> <p>Use of role models to support activity (student ambassadors, alumni, SU groups).</p>	<p>Pre-16 activities: attainment raising (GCSE English and Maths) and transition support to Level 3 learners.</p> <p>Post-16 activities: promotion of HE/Apprenticeships, transition support to Level 4/5, attainment raising (GCSE re-takes English and Maths), mentoring, shadowing and subject specific workshops.</p> <p>Contextual Admissions pilot rolled out (Offer reduction of 8 UCAS points and invitation to transition day).</p> <p>Use of role models to support activity (student ambassadors, alumni, SU groups).</p>	<p>A mixed method evaluation approach will take place (see 3.3) where we will continuously assess whether we are seeing impact in respect of interventions before moving onto next stage. Where impact is limited, we will review what more should be done or whether the activity should be discarded.</p> <p>Review whether investment (financial and staffing) has been appropriately focussed and whether the attainment results have improved for the learners we have worked with.</p>
<b>Evidence/Research</b>			<b>Short Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Medium Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Long Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>
<p>See Activities and Interventions Summary Table for breakdown of research surrounding interventions, including those by King's College London (parent/carer engagement) and our own (transition days and attainment raising).</p> <p>We will be considering local authority data when targeting. Southampton City Council - Consists of 32 MSOAs (middle layer super output area), of these 17 are POLAR 4 Quintile 1 areas (lowest participation areas); our target areas: five are quintile 2, three quintile 3, three quintile 4 and four quintile 5<sup>3</sup>.</p>			<p>Understanding of barriers to Polar 4 quintile 1 students entering HE established.</p> <p>Ascertained advice and guidance on appropriate interventions having buy-in from local community/key stake holders (within target areas).</p> <p>Existing relationships with local secondary schools, colleges and</p>	<p>Increased understanding of barriers to Polar 4 quintile 1 students entering HE. Research with young people, applicants and students informs future approach.</p> <p>Initial increase in acceptances (contextual offers piloted).</p>	<p>Continuous assessment of barriers and behaviours embedded.</p> <p>Rapid increased in acceptances. (Contextual offers embedded).</p> <p>Sustained positive evaluation outcomes for activities delivered, including improvements in progress 8</p>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/map-of-young-participation-areas/>

	local authorities improved to an extent where access to disadvantaged pupils' data is collaborative and shared	Positive evaluation outcomes for piloted activities delivered.	scores or percentage of pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths GCSEs in targeted areas.
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Underlying Assumptions/Investment and Risk</b></p> <p>Assumptions: Target group have ability to progress. Course appropriate. Activities appropriate.</p> <p>Investment: Continued financial investment in activities and appropriate staffing provided. Strong support and leadership from senior management. Staff with the right skills to deliver the plan provided.</p> <p>Risks: Lack of stakeholder engagement (eliminated by strategic planning and collaboration with multiple stakeholders). Target group disengaged (eliminated via appropriate interventions and strategy). Other local universities targeting the same groups of students (collaboration, shared goal).</p>	<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Essential to evaluate in between each stage of the plan to ensure continuous improvements and impact.</p> <p>Evaluation through discussions, surveys, interviews, data and attainment results to inform the appropriateness of the interventions and what might need changing/improving or discarding (see 3.3 for mixed methods approach)</p>		<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>Some of the interventions/activities will cross a number of areas of disadvantage so it would be recommended to extend/increase the use of those interventions which deliver the best impact. Best practice to be shared with key stakeholders (schools/colleges/local authorities) and with collaborative networks (SUN/HELOA).</p>

## Asian Students – Aims and Measures

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Access outreach work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for Asian students. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact. For additional detail – refer to our Evaluation Strategy in 3.3. All inputs/interventions below have been discussed within focus groups with pupils from secondary schools, colleges and current Solent WP Ambassadors.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 Years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 Years	Inputs Long term 4-5 Years	Evaluation & Impact
An area within BAME that Solent has a gap of significance is Asian student enrolments. Solent is currently at 3.0% (the national average is 7.5%)	Increase the percentage share of new entrant enrolments from Asian students (all age groups) from 3% to 5.0% in five years and from 5.0% to 7.5% in ten years.	<p>Work with SU Officers and Student Focus Groups to explore the barriers to HE.</p> <p>Hold Focus Groups with Asian Community Group Leaders/Mosque/Temple Leaders and Wardens to understand what interventions may deliver the best results.</p> <p>Target colleges in South London with a high proportion of Asian students (overlapping with IMD Q1&amp;Q2 and Polar 4 Q1 regions where we have established relationships (18% Asian/Asian British MSOA Greater London).</p>	<p>Continuous Action Research with SU, Asian staff and students</p> <p>Attainment Raising activities– GCSE English and Maths</p> <p>Targeting English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners in Secondary Schools, building relationships with role model WP Asian students as mentors/buddies.</p> <p>Translation/design of Communications and materials for parents of Asian learners, especially for IMD areas.</p> <p>Liaise with staff involved with curriculum review to influence role models for reading lists.</p> <p>Devise relevant communications for Asian students that are appropriate for their parents.</p>	<p>Continuous Action Research with SU, Asian staff and students.</p> <p>Attainment Raising activities: GCSE English and Maths.</p> <p>English Language and Writing Residential for Asian learners living in IMD Q1&amp;Q2 and Polar 4, Q1 regions.</p> <p>Reading circles/writing circles as part of Year 12 Transition Day.</p>	<p>Continuously assess whether we are seeing impact in respect of interventions before moving onto next stage. Where impact is limited – what more should be done or whether the activity should be discarded.</p> <p>Review whether investment (both financial and staffing) has been appropriately focussed; whether the attainment results have improved for the learners we have worked with and if the improvements are the result of our interventions.</p> <p>Extend activities and interventions to other WP groups.</p>
<b>Evidence/Research</b>			<b>Short Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Medium Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>	<b>Long Term Measures/ Outcomes</b>
See Activities and Interventions Summary Table for breakdown of research surrounding interventions, including those by Blackburn College (community engagement project), Leeds Beckett (use of role models) and London School of Economics (collaboration with student unions).			<p>Understanding of barriers to Asian students and challenges they face in terms of progressing to HE.</p> <p>Ascertained advice and guidance on appropriate</p>	<p>On track with understanding the barriers and behaviours of Asian learners and current students</p> <p>Built confidence and trust with ESOL learners and their parents to attend</p>	<p>Continuous assessment of barriers and behaviours embedded in our work with focus groups and SU.</p> <p>Improved GCSE grades in Maths and English by one</p>

	<p>interventions having buy-in from local community.</p> <p>Existing relationships with local secondary schools and colleges fully collaborative and data shared.</p> <p>Success at developing relationships with colleges in South London using role models and staff from Asian backgrounds.</p>	<p>workshops/events outside school/college hours.</p> <p>Influenced reading lists to include role model writers/contributors.</p> <p>Communications and materials tailored to Asian students, positive feedback and next step taken.</p>	<p>grade (to achieve 4 or 5 to gain entry to FE).</p> <p>Applications from students attending the English Language Residential.</p> <p>Attendance at reading/writing circles leading to improved English Language ability.</p>
<p><b>Underlying assumptions/Investment and Risk</b></p> <p>Data provided by UCAS does not include Ethnicity, so it is difficult to target our own applicants for conversion activities.</p> <p>The local Southampton area has 8.2% Asian population, however, Hampshire has only 2.7% Asian population.</p> <p>Applications to the South East and South West have fallen for 2019 entry by 2% and applications to Solent have dropped by 19-20%. The numbers of 18-Year-olds does not start to increase until 2021 entry.</p> <p>Limited courses in Solent's portfolio of interest to Asian students. Ranking of the University for courses like Business, Accounting, Law and Biomedical Science an issue.</p> <p>Strong support and leadership from senior management. Staff working outside of normal timetabled hours. Staff with the right skills to deliver the plan.</p> <p>University applications remain constant. Continued financial support.</p>	<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Essential to evaluate in between each stage of the plan to ensure continuous improvements and impact.</p> <p>Evaluation through discussions, surveys, interviews, data and attainment results to inform the appropriateness of the interventions and what might need changing/improving or discarding (see 3.3 for mixed methods approach)</p>	<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>Some of the interventions / activities will cross a number of areas of disadvantage so it would be recommended to extend/increase the use of those interventions which deliver the best impact. Best practice to be shared with key stakeholders (schools/colleges/local authorities) and with collaborative networks (SUN/HELOA).</p>	

## Southern Universities Network Collaborative Target – Aims and Measures

Collaborative activities with the Southern Universities Network (SUN) will support attainment raising and education choices at post-16 and post-18, with a focus on subject specific areas and supporting schools meeting Gatsby Benchmarks 7, 2 and 5. In addition to collaboration with local authorities, EBPs (Education Business Partnerships) and the Careers Enterprise Company, collaboration will expand to include local sports clubs and charities who work with young people in target wards.

These are to be finalised by the SUN partners working group and will be added by 31 May 2019.

## Success

### The BAME attainment gap

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Success work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for BAME students. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term	Inputs Medium term	Inputs Long term	Evaluation & Impact
The University had a BAME attainment gap of 21.7% in 2016-17. In 2017-18 the gap was 18.0% while the national average was 14.0%.	Halve the overall BAME attainment gap to 10.9% by 2021-22.  Further reduce the gap in the following eight years to eradicate any statistically significant gap by 2029-30.	Course Leaders to utilise unit level attainment gap data to reduce the BAME attainment gap at unit level.  Embed the proven good practice activities from the SAP2 project across the University:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing strategies to embed Understanding the Assignment Brief activity</li> <li>Staff to share the ongoing development of good practice using both interventions.</li> </ul>	Pilot use of the student engagement monitoring project in two Schools during 2019-20 and then rolled out across the University in 2020-21.  Facilitate BAME developing a sense of belonging at Solent.  Complete the project investigating how all students develop a sense of belonging, identifying and sharing good practice at course level.  Extend the project to look at a sense of belonging for different minority groups within the student BAME population.  Use qualitative and quantitative data to assess the student sense of belonging and develop activities and support for the BAME student community.	Secure the ECU Race Equality Charter Bronze by 2022-23 and Silver by 2025-26.	Unit level: each year an increasing number of courses will report a decrease in their BAME attainment gap.  Embedding SAP2: students who participate in focus groups report that assignment briefs are supported by interventions and that these are perceived as effective support for success. Plus a reduction in the attainment gap in units where the interventions are being used as reported by students and evidenced by VLE usage analysis and content analysis.  Student engagement monitoring system will be that as each course adopts the system there is a year on year reduction in the BAME attainment at course level.  Developing a sense of belonging: BAME students self-report a sense of belonging that is in line with all other groups.  ECU Race Equality Charter awards secured.
<b>Underlying assumptions</b>  We are assuming that our current approach has been successful in reducing our attainment gap to 18%.		<b>Evaluation/Justification</b>  The Appreciative Inquiry Approach already embedded to evaluate our approach to the BAME attainment gap includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.		<b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b>  Our close links with the University of Derby and University of West London through the SAP2 project will be maintained to share experience and good practice.  The Beating the Attainment Gap Steering Group provides an opportunity to share good practice internally.	

The gender attainment gap for MD Quintile 1 & 2 Male students v. IMD Quintiles 3, 4 & 5 female students and POLAR Quintiles 1 & 2 Males v. POLAR Quintiles 3, 4 & 5 Females

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Success work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target in relation to the gender attainment gap across targeted IMD and POLAR quintiles. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 years	Inputs Long term 4-5 years	Evaluation & Impact
<p>Female performance is improving each year while male performance is remaining static. Although specific reasons have not yet been identified we will undertake an investigation in collaboration with the Solent Students' Union, who have recently appointed a Men's Health Officer.</p>	<p>The target is to reduce the percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for IMD Quintile 1 &amp; 2 Male students v. IMD Quintile 3, 4 &amp; 5 female students from 25% to 4% and POLAR Quintiles 1 &amp; 2 Males v. POLAR Quintile 3, 4 &amp; 5 Females from 17% to 0%.</p>	<p>Investigate potential barriers to male success at Solent.</p> <p>Investigate year on year improvement in female success and identify enabling factors for success; apply lessons learnt to improving male success.</p>	<p>Further develop the Solent 'Inclusive course design checklist' and embed it fully in course design, curriculum and course review as a mandatory part of these processes.</p>	<p>Explore peer mentoring as a tool to improve male success amongst students from the identified target groups</p>	<p>Clearly identified barriers to male success and clearly defined action points for services and schools. This includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.</p> <p>Inclusive course design: student feedback and audit outcomes indicate that teaching, learning and assessment is inclusive. Good practice in inclusivity is identified and shared annually across course teams.</p> <p>Peer mentoring: year on year improvement of male success and male students from the identified target groups reporting greater confidence in their learning.</p>
<p><b>Underlying assumptions</b></p> <p>At this early stage before initial investigations into this gap no assumptions have been made about the reasons for differential gender attainment from the male students in the identified target groups.</p>		<p><b>Evaluation/Justification</b></p> <p>The Appreciative Inquiry Approach, already embedded to evaluate our approach to the BAME attainment gap, will be extended to include the gender /IMD/POLAR attainment gap. This includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.</p>		<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>Objectives are based on good practice developed and shared by UCL, (Universities UK, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic student attainment at UK universities #closingthegap, 2 May 2019). Further opportunities to learn from best practice externally will be sought.</p> <p>The Beating the Attainment Gap Steering Group provides an opportunity to share good practice internally.</p>	

## Disabled students' attainment gap

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Success work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for disabled students. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term	Inputs Medium term	Inputs Long term	Evaluation & Impact
<p>The disability advice service is undergoing modernization. As part of this process staff are identifying good practice from across the sector including a wide variety of support options for students.</p>	<p>Eradicate any statistically significant attainment gap for students with disabilities by 2024-25.</p>	<p>Develop a new student voice group to inform the development of the service and to evaluate new support strategies.</p> <p>Introduce new support options, including peer support, online support and group support.</p> <p>Research and adopt good practice as part of staff development and to inform the development of the service at Solent.</p>	<p>Broaden the offer of Access Solent to include a wider range of support options for students.</p>	<p>Reduce the number of reasonable adjustments made for individual students at course level as our teaching, learning and assessment becomes entirely inclusive.</p>	<p>Student voice group: year on year improvement in student feedback about disabled students' experiences of Solent.</p> <p>Good practice: a plan for the development of the disability service informed by good practice from across the sector.</p> <p>A menu of effective support options will be available to students with disabilities resulting in positive student feedback.</p> <p>Student feedback will indicate that course provision is inclusive. Data from the Disability Advice service shows that staff time is not spent facilitating reasonable adjustments.</p>
<p><b>Underlying assumptions</b></p> <p>At this early stage before initial investigations into this gap no assumptions have been made about the reasons for differential attainment.</p>		<p><b>Evaluation/Justification</b></p> <p>The Appreciative Inquiry Approach already embedded to evaluate our approach to the BAME attainment gap will be extended to include the disability attainment gap. This includes bringing all schools and services together to engage in critical reflection, review and planning. This will ensure that assumptions regarding reasons for success are regularly challenged.</p>		<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>Links are being made with local universities to share good practice.</p> <p>Staff attend the annual NADP conference to identify good practice from across the sector.</p>	

## Progression

All BAME Students (focussing on Asian Students, BAME students from deprived areas, BAME females) – Aims and Measures

Asian students

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Progression work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for Asian students. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 years	Inputs Long term 4-5 years	Evaluation & Impact
Asian students are significantly underperforming when it comes to securing graduate level roles.	To provide equality of outcomes for all in line with white students, eradicating any statistically significant gaps by 2024-25.	<p>Undertake research around the barriers to success for this group.</p> <p>Secure more guest speakers and role models with an Asian background with a focus on alumni.</p> <p>Work with course teams on tailored interventions where clusters of Asian students have been identified. This will include support with finding work placements and potentially funding placements.</p> <p>Pilot a group mentoring scheme for Asian students (segregated by gender), potentially in conjunction with the SU and targeted societies. This could involve peers, professional mentors and alumni.</p>	<p>Work with local employers to identify opportunities.</p> <p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 1 &amp; 2 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 2 & 3 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.	<p>In years 1 – 5 achieve a 4% increase on the previous year with the optimum aim of matching the top performing group within five years and a minimum aim of being on par with the university average for graduate level employment by 2025.</p> <p>This will be evaluated through the Graduate Outcomes survey, supported by a longitudinal tracking study for each student. The University's ESE test will also be used to monitor pre- and post-test? attitudes related to the student's human, social and psychological capital.</p> <p>Focus groups will help to identify barriers.</p>
<b>Underlying assumptions/risks</b>		<b>Evaluation/Justification</b>			<b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b>
That Asian males and females will require the same interventions and that their barriers will be the same.		Tailored interventions with course teams have proven successful with below benchmark courses and have helped the university to improve their graduate level outcomes by 10.5% in two years from 58.2 in 2016 to 68.7% in 2018..			The University is part of SEARCH (South East Area Careers Heads). This groups meets quarterly to

<p>Asian females will be included in the overall BAME interventions as well.</p> <p>That the problem lies with the student having the confidence to seek and secure a role rather than a problem within in the businesses related to employing Asian candidates. This issue was raised at a recent Focus group with BAME females.</p> <p>Another issue or assumption: “is the employer bias resulting in the ‘chill factor’, as noted in the Aiming Higher Northern Ireland context (Li and O’Leary, 2007), to the effect that they do not apply because of anticipated discrimination; another reason could be the impact of Islamophobia reports rampant in the media in the last decade with particularly negative effects on Pakistani/Bangladeshi and parts of Black-African group – both may lead members from these groups to become ‘discouraged workers’”.(Aiming Higher, Alexander and Arday, 2015)</p>	<p>Group mentoring will provide students with a peer support mechanism which was recommended from a recent Focus Group with students and graduates from a BAME background.</p> <p>Group mentoring will also potentially help with Success as the group will be able to ask for support in key areas, as well as supporting Progression through interaction with professional mentors and alumni.</p>	<p>share best practice and hosts a conference annually. In, addition, through AGCAS, there is an opportunity to share case-studies and initiatives.</p>
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## BAME students from deprived areas

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Progression work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for BAME students from deprived areas. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 years	Inputs Long term 4-5 years	Evaluation & Impact
BAME students from deprived areas are less likely to secure graduate level roles than their white peers	To provide equality of outcomes for all compared to white students from deprived areas	<p>Build on existing research knowledge around the barriers to success for this group.</p> <p>Encourage uptake of the ESE test to assess social capital amongst this group. (<a href="https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/enhancing_employability_through_enterprise_education_good_practice_guide.pdf">https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/enhancing_employability_through_enterprise_education_good_practice_guide.pdf</a>)</p> <p>Secure more Guest Speakers and role models with a BAME background with a focus on alumni.</p> <p>Work with course teams on tailored interventions where clusters of BAME students from deprived areas are found.</p> <p>Focus a professional mentoring scheme on BAME students from deprived backgrounds based on the assumption that they need to increase their social capital.</p> <p>Encourage uptake of graduate schemes aimed at this group</p>	<p>Work with local employers to develop a positive action work placement/internship scheme for BAME students connected to areas of study.</p> <p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 1 &amp; 2 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 2 &amp; 3 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>In years 1 – 5 achieve a 7% increase on the previous year with the aim of matching all white students.</p> <p>This will be evaluated through the Graduate Outcomes survey, supported by a longitudinal tracking study for each student.</p> <p>The University’s Employability Self-evaluation (ESE) test will also be used to monitor attitudes related to the student’s human, social and psychological capital both before and after interventions.</p> <p>Further focus groups will help to identify barriers.</p>

		<p>e.g. BBC and the Houses of Parliament.</p> <p>A programme of activity to support creative students into employment through promoting existing BAME schemes and developing new ones.</p> <p>£1,000 bursaries to all BAME students from deprived backgrounds who choose to go on to Further study either at Solent or at another HEI. This will also be available to any BAME student from a deprived background from another university who chooses to study at Solent.</p>			
<p><b>Underlying assumptions</b></p> <p>That all BAME students want graduate level roles.</p> <p>That BAME students lack the networks to support them into graduate level roles.</p> <p>That the problem lies with the student having the confidence to seek and secure a role rather than a problem within the businesses related to employing BAME students. This issue was raised at a recent Focus group with BAME females.</p> <p>The additional funding might encourage BAME students from deprived backgrounds to so on to further study.</p>		<p><b>Evaluation/Justification</b></p> <p>The University has run a number of professional mentoring schemes over the last eight years. There is clear evidence that having a professional mentor increases the likelihood of securing a graduate level role. Based on DLHE data for 2017, analysis of our Professional Mentoring scheme showed that 70% of mentees secured a graduate level role compared to 61.3% of all graduates.</p> <p>Tailored interventions with course teams for below benchmark courses have proven successful and have helped the University to improve students' graduate level outcomes by 10.5% in two years from 58.2% in 2016 to 68.7% in 2018 (DLHE, 2018).</p> <p>OfS data shows that of all students taking taught postgraduates masters courses in 2018-18, only 9.9% were black and only 10.9% were Asian compared to 73% white. (OfS, 2019)</p> <p>A number of schemes exist that are aimed at BAME students, both in the creative industries and in general e.g. the House of Commons and the BBC. These should be promoted, and more schemes identified that aim at increasing in key industries.</p>			<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>The University is part of SEARCH (South East Area Careers Heads). This groups meets quarterly to share best practice and hosts a conference annually. In, addition, through Association of Graduate Careers Advice Services, there is an opportunity to share case-studies and initiatives.</p>

## BAME females

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Progression work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for female BAME students. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

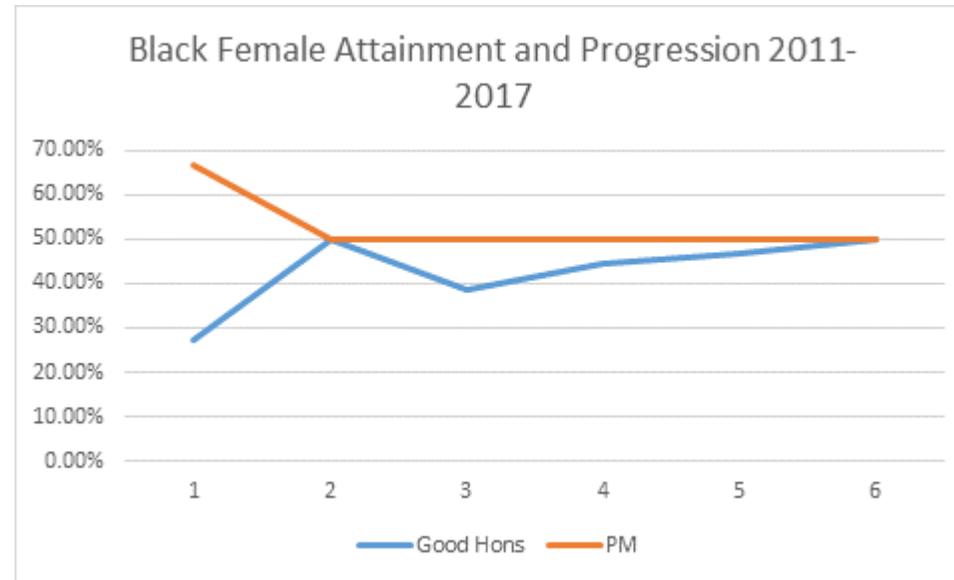
Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 years	Inputs Long term 4-5 years	Evaluation & Impact
<p>BAME females are less likely to get graduate level roles compared to all females.</p>	<p>To provide equality of outcomes for all in line with white males</p>	<p>Build on existing research knowledge around the barriers to success for this group.</p> <p>Analyse the impact of the Focus Female Mentoring Scheme</p> <p>Based on the results of the impact analysis, further develop the Focus Female Mentoring Scheme and encourage uptake from BAME female students. Targeting 30% of all BME female 2<sup>nd</sup> years.</p> <p>Secure more Guest Speakers and role models with a BAME background with a focus on alumni.</p> <p>Work with course teams on tailored interventions where clusters of BAME females have been identified.</p> <p>Pilot a peer mentoring scheme to support with 20 BME female 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2nd years mentoring 20 BAME first years.</p> <p>£1,000 bursaries to all BAME female students choosing to go on to Further study either at Solent or at another HEI. This will also be available to any BAME female student from another university who chooses to study at Solent.</p>	<p>A programme of activity to support creative students into employment through promoting existing BAME schemes and developing new ones.</p> <p>Supporting entrepreneurial students with a focus on all females and BAME females.</p> <p>Work with local employers to develop a positive action work placement/internship scheme for BAME female students</p> <p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 1 &amp; 2 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 2-3 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>In years 1 – 5 achieve a 7% increase on the previous year with the optimum aim of matching the top performing group within five years and a minimum aim of being on par with the university average for graduate employment by 2025.</p> <p>This will be evaluated through the Graduate Outcomes survey, supported by a longitudinal tracking study for each student. The university’s Employability Self-Evaluation (ESE) test will also be used to monitor attitudes related to the student’s human, social and psychological capital both before and after interventions.</p> <p>Focus groups will help to identify barriers.</p>
<p><b>Underlying assumptions</b></p> <p>That all BAME female students want graduate level roles. There may be cultural nuances attached</p>		<p><b>Evaluation/Justification</b></p> <p>The University has run a number of professional mentoring schemes over the last eight years. There is clear evidence that having a professional mentor increases the likelihood of securing a graduate level role.</p>			<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>The University is part of SEARCH (South East Area</p>

to this or issues related to their course and employability outcomes. For example, many young women from Bangladeshi and Pakistani background experience barriers in terms of parents preferring daughters to remain living at home while studying and parents' expectations regarding marriage (Bagguley & Hussain, 2007).

That the problem lies with the student having the confidence to seek and secure a role rather than a problem within the businesses related to employing BAME females. This issue was raised at a recent Focus group with BAME females.

The additional funding might encourage BAME students from deprived backgrounds to so on to further study.

Previous peer mentoring schemes around work placements and digital literacy have been shown to benefit both the mentor and the mentee. Peer mentoring will impact on Success and Progression as there seems to be a correlation between a student achieving a good honours degree and securing graduate level work:



Tailored interventions with course teams for below benchmark courses have proven successful and have helped the University to improve students' graduate level outcomes by 10.5% in two years.

OfS data shows that of all students taking taught postgraduates masters courses in 2018-18, only 9.9% were black and only 10.9% were Asian compared to 73% white. (OfS, 2019)

A number of schemes exist that are aimed at BAME students, both in the creative industries and in general e.g. the House of Commons and the BBC. These should be promoted, and more schemes identified that aim at increasing in key industries.

Careers Heads). This groups meets quarterly to share best practice and hosts a conference annually. In, addition, through Association of Graduate Careers Advice Services, there is an opportunity to share case-studies and initiatives.

## Females from LPNs

The diagram below is a Theory of Change model that shows the planned aims and measures for Progression work in the short, medium and long term in respect of our target for female students from LPNs. Alongside these planned inputs there is reference to how these activities/interventions will be evaluated and tested for impact.

Issues	Aims, Objectives and Target	Inputs Short term 1-2 years	Inputs Medium term 2-3 years	Inputs Long term 4-5 years	Evaluation & Impact
<p>Female students from LPNs are less likely to be in graduate level roles than male students from LPNS</p>	<p>To provide equality of outcomes in line with male students from LPNs</p>	<p>Analyse the impact of the Focus Female Mentoring Scheme</p> <p>Based on the results of the impact analysis, further develop the Focus Female Mentoring Scheme and encourage uptake from female students from LPN.</p> <p>Secure more female Guest Speakers and role models.</p>	<p>Work with local employers to develop a positive action work placement/internship scheme for female students from LPN.</p> <p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 1 &amp; 2 – these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>Based on evaluation of the inputs in Years 2-3, these will be further developed and rolled out as appropriate or new initiatives introduced to replace them.</p>	<p>In years 1 – 5 – equality of outcomes compared to male students from LPNs</p> <p>This will be evaluated through the Graduate Outcomes survey, supported by a longitudinal tracking study for each student. The university's Employability Self-Evaluation (ESE) test will also be used to monitor attitudes related to the student's human, social and psychological capital both before and after interventions.</p>
<p><b>Underlying assumptions/risks</b></p> <p>The choice of course may impact on graduate level outcomes and rigorous scrutiny is required to interrogate the extent to which this causes a disparity in outcomes.</p> <p>It is hypothesised that all students from deprived areas lack the social capital to create networks to support them into graduate level roles. This may be exacerbated with female students.</p> <p>Female students from LPNs may also share other characteristics e.g. BAME, deprived backgrounds.</p>		<p><b>Evaluation/Justification</b></p> <p>The University has run several professional mentoring schemes over the last eight years. There is clear evidence that having a professional mentor increases the likelihood of securing a graduate level role.</p>			<p><b>Learning &amp; Sharing Best Practice</b></p> <p>The University is part of SEARCH (South East Area Careers Heads). This groups meets quarterly to share best practice and hosts a conference annually. In, addition, through AGCAS, there is an opportunity to share case-studies and initiatives.</p>

**Annex 3**  
**Next steps in Access and Participation: Addressing the new priorities**

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## Priority A: Make access and participation plans more accessible in a way that prospective and current students, their parents and other stakeholders can easily understand.

The 3 side accessible summary of Solent University's access and participation plan is available on our website.

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

To ensure that we continue to meet our targets and in response to the OFS priorities, we plan to enhance aspects of our Widening Participation Programme including increased primary activity, increased post-16 activity and increased attainment raising whilst also enhancing strategic partnerships with schools and colleges. This includes:

- Development of a Key Stage 2 Southampton Literacy Programme
- Development of a Knowledge Exchange Programme
- Enhancement of a Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 Maths Attainment Raising Programme
- Development of Teacher Training Provision and Education Pathways
- Enhancement of Strategic Partnerships and Governance support for Hampshire schools and colleges.

These developments and enhancement of activity are detailed below.

### The Development of a Key Stage 2 Southampton Literacy Programme

In 2023/24 we plan to develop a Key Stage 2 Literacy Programme to support narrowing the Southampton gap between disadvantaged (IMD Quintile 1 and 2, POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and 2 and Pupil Premium) and non-disadvantaged learners reaching expected standards in reading. Literacy has an impact on children's attainment and is essential when seeking to improve social mobility.

The latest available data is from 2019 and shows only 64% of Key Stage 2 pupils in Southampton reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. This is 1% below the national performance, with the authority rank position of 106th out of a total of 149 Local Authorities (2). We recognise that the pandemic learning loss (2) and the local challenge in Southampton, also highlighted to us by the Aspire Learning Trust, means we need to facilitate step changes in reading levels in our city. Solent University's Key Stage 2 Literacy Programme will work with local primary schools serving areas of high deprivation (IMD Quintile 1 and 2) and low higher education participation areas (POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and 2) to facilitate these step changes.

The programme will align with activity delivered by the University of Southampton, enabling the two civic universities to work collaboratively to support narrowing the gap across the Southampton local authority area and to work closely with the Southampton Education Forum and Southampton City Council.

Staff and student volunteers will be trained to deliver the activity in primary schools. For schools where volunteers are not scheduled to visit, Solent University will offer local parents/carers training on supporting their child with reading. This programme will align with our university's civic activity and lifelong learning approach, will draw upon the success of other evidence based interventions supported by the National Literacy Trust 'Catch Up Literacy' and 'Skills Academy' initiatives (3) and the OFS case study on schools, attainment and the role of higher education 'Bournemouth University: Books and Stories' (4). We will evaluate this activity using type 2 evidence (empirical enquiry) using both pre and post participant surveys and will make use of both school lead assessment and DFE performance indicators.

1. <https://data.southampton.gov.uk/cyp/education/>
2. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/covid-19-and-literacy/covid-19-and-literacy-primary-schools/>
3. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/education-recovery/interventions/>
4. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/bournemouth-university-books-and-stories/>

### The Development of a Knowledge Exchange Programme

With activities piloted from 2022/23, we plan to develop a Knowledge Exchange (KE) programme which will support narrowing the local gap between disadvantaged (IMD Quintile 1 and 2, POLAR4 Quintile 1 and 2, Looked After Children, Pupil Premium and B.A.M.E. communities) and non-disadvantaged learner attainment (Key Stage 3 and 4) and progression to Higher Education.

Informal feedback from partner schools and local multi academy trusts suggest many teachers want to improve pedagogy and outcomes for disadvantaged learners through research. To support schools and colleges we plan to develop a pedagogy focused KE programme which will involve 4 stages:

1. **Training** - Teachers will be trained in action research and other research methodologies appropriate to the educational context.
2. **Matching/KE** - Teachers will be paired with academic staff enrolled on our Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education which is designed for full-time staff new to teaching. The paired relationships will be established in Module 2 (Sept-January) where HE academic staff undertake a piece of action research with a focus on inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practice which teachers can shadow.
3. **Teacher Led Research** – The paired exchange relationships established via stage 2 will be encouraged to continue and teachers will have access to Solent University resources including postgraduate research methods training delivered via the Solent Graduate School.
4. **Celebration/Sharing** – Teachers will be invited to join an end of Module Solent Exchange event whereby Solent's academic staff on the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching share their action research project via a Poster Presentation and teachers that have completed their own action research project share their practice too. Solent collects good practice in inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practices for internal dissemination and these will also be shared with schools and colleges who in turn share their practice with us.

The teacher led research will focus on either raising attainment (Key Stage 3 and 4) or access to higher education for disadvantaged learners (IMD Quintile 1 and 2, Polar 4 Quintile 1 and 2, Pupil Premium, Looked After Children and BAME communities). The programme will also aim to enhance learning, teaching and assessment practices at Solent University with our academic staff gaining an increased understanding of key aspects of the school teaching environment, e.g. the inclusivity of pedagogic practices in schools including academic support for disadvantaged learners and classroom behaviour management.

To support this work we will use the Research England Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) (1) and the TASO evidence toolkit (2) when designing evaluation in addition to findings from the Brilliant Club (3). We will pilot activity during 2022-23 academic year, prior to refinement.

1. <https://kef.ac.uk/>
2. <https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/>
3. <https://thebrilliantclub.org/researchers-in-schools/>

### The Enhancement of a Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 Maths Attainment Raising Programme

We plan to enhance our maths attainment raising activity, which will support narrowing the local gap between disadvantaged (IMD Quintile 1 and 2, POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and 2, Looked After Children, Pupil Premium and BAME communities) and non-disadvantaged learners attainment (Key Stage 2, 3 and 4) and progression to Higher Education.

Our progressive Widening Participation programme spans from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 5, the programme consists of a number of elements and themes including gaining an understanding of higher education, developing self-efficacy, educational transition, mental health, careers guidance, applying to higher education, wellbeing and raising attainment. Going forward, we plan to continue this programme increasing activity in several areas, this includes an increased emphasis on attainment raising activity.

During the 2021/22 academic year Solent University successfully piloted maths attainment raising activity via our ‘More Maths’ programme working with 212 learners. The programme was targeted at local disadvantaged learners (IMD Quintile 1 and 2 areas, POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and 2, B.A.M.E. communities and Looked After Children), aiming to supporting the long term achievement of a minimum of a grade 5 at GCSE Maths. We worked with a local community-based training provider, Upton Training, who supported us in reaching target learners, with this also supported by the United Voice of Africans Association, Abu Bakr Mosque and partner schools including Cantell School, St Anne’s Catholic School and Bitterne Park School. Interventions included off-campus maths tutoring (8 weeks, after school at Upton Training for year 9, 10 and 11), on campus maths tutoring (10 weeks, after school for year 10 and 11) and an intensive holiday maths revision programme (2 days for year 11). All the interventions were designed around topics that learners typically struggle with, and included access to widening participation content such as revision resources, careers activities and campus tours. During the pilot cohort 48.1% were from IMD Quintile 1/2 areas, 48.1 % were from POLAR 4 Quintile 1/2 areas and 82.7% were from B.A.M.E. communities. The pilot programme supported an 11% increase in confidence surrounding sitting GCSE Maths exams and 6% increase in learners who said they intended to go to university.

Following the success of these pilot programmes and supporting evidence surrounding the effectiveness of tutoring from Education Endowment Foundation (1), we plan to enhance our attainment raising programmes. We aim to support more local learners with maths tutoring provided to key stage 2 learners, key stage 3 learners and key stage 4 learners.

We are confident that our programme will support reducing the 19.3 month progress gap between the most and least affluent learners in secondary schools (2). It will help address the 2020 disparities between Southampton (40.7%) and the national average (49.9%) of pupils achieving grade 9-5 in English and Maths (3) and will address the concerns highlighted by the OFS, including disparities between those eligible for free school meals (FSM) and those not eligible for FSM entering higher education (4). We will evaluate this activity using type 2 empirical enquiry evidence using both pre and post participant surveys and will make use of DFE performance indicators.

Whilst developing this attainment raising activity we will be consulting the Southampton Education Forum partners whom we have engaged with when planning this activity already. We also plan to explore partnerships with attainment raising organisations such as our local Solent Maths Hub (5) where we will look to provide in kind support for regional activity.

1. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/one-to-one-tuition>
2. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/king-s-college-london-attainment-programmes/>
3. <https://data.southampton.gov.uk/cyp/education/>
4. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/cd782ede-93d9-4de0-9f50-3c95a49aabf3/ofs-insight-brief-13-updated-10-may-2022.pdf>
5. <https://www.solentmathshub.org.uk/>

### **The Development of Teacher Training Provision and Education Pathways**

We plan to develop our teacher training provision and education degree pathways.

Solent University are a partner within the Southampton Education Forum (SEF) which aims to attract dynamic and talented teachers who strive for excellence and raise the achievement of disadvantaged groups (1). To complement Solent University’s teacher professional development activities, degree programmes, the SEF professional development programme and to support the aims of the SEF, Solent University plans to develop a School of Education offering education courses and initial teacher training.

Solent University currently offers a Physical Education degree BA Hons, which has been developed to prepare undergraduates to access teacher training and become high quality teachers (2). Although not currently a QTS route, the programme supports schools with their physical education curriculum via our Southampton School Sports Partnership. This is a scheme which aims to improve the quality of sports education within the city, working with 72 primary schools, 15 secondary schools and 6 further education providers. To develop our provision further, the School of Education development includes plans to offer a BA in Education Studies from 2023 and QTS Training currently planned from 2024 in all national curriculum subjects in additional to a postgraduate education course.

Developing a School of Education will align with OFS recognised activities to support schools and colleges (3), help address the national teacher shortage (4) and will support the localised SEF aims. In addition to this significant develop we plan to continue our broader education professionals CPD programme focused around supporting disadvantaged learners, also offering joint opportunities with the University of Southampton’s widening participation team.

1. <https://teachsouthamptoneducation.co.uk/teaching>
2. <https://www.solent.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/physical-education-ba>
3. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/cd782ede-93d9-4de0-9f50-3c95a49aabf3/ofs-insight-brief-13-updated-10-may-2022.pdf>
4. <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/news-events/press-releases/teacher-recruitment-targets-likely-to-be-missed-in-english-maths-and-science/>

### **The Enhancement of Strategic Partnerships and Governance support for Hampshire schools and colleges**

We plan to enhance our existing strategic partnerships with the local schools and colleges which will support narrowing the local gap between disadvantaged (IMD Quintile 1 and 2, POLAR 4 Quintile 1 and 2, Looked After Children, Pupil Premium and B.A.M.E. communities) and non-disadvantaged learners attainment (Key Stage 2, 3 and 4) and progression to Higher Education.

Solent University is already active strategic and operational partners in the Southampton Education Forum (SEF). SEF is an alliance of Southampton’s education leaders reaching 15,000 young people across Southampton, comprising of 15 secondary schools, 5 post-16 providers, 2 universities, the local authority and primary school representation.

In addition to Solent University being members of the SEF executive forum, we are represented at 18 of the subject networks/working groups including Pupil Premium, Careers, SENCO and various subjects. We have developed strong relationships with schools and have supported and led opportunities including the annual Southampton School Business Challenge and Get Inspired Southampton careers fair.

We plan to work more collaboratively with the University of Southampton to address SEF needs, including joint events for post-16 learners and underrepresented groups including refugees and looked after children.

In addition to the SEF, the Southampton Sixth Form Premium is an emerging partnership that aims to enhance learning, extra-curricular activities and cultural opportunities available to learners choosing to take their post-16 studies in Southampton. Solent University plans to commit to supporting this partnership on a strategic level with the partnership steering group chaired by our Vice-Chancellor.

Solent recognises the importance of supporting individual schools, colleges and multi academy trusts at a strategic level. This is already demonstrated by our Vice-Chancellor’s Group acting as either board members, trustees or governors for 5 local education organisations - The Lighthouse Learning Trust, Itchen Sixth Form College, City College Southampton, Eastleigh College and Fareham College. Across the wider university we plan to support the national governor shortage and will develop a partnership with Hampshire County Council to support their governor recruitment, including promotion of opportunities to students and alumni.

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

We continually review progress towards our targets and we have recognised that we are not meeting all of our success milestones or making progress at the pace required. We have analysed the extent to which our access and participation investment commitment to providing a university bursary of £500 to all students with a household income of under £25K for each year of their academic study contributes to our targets and have concluded that this is not having the anticipated impact on reducing award gaps that we require. As a result, we plan to phase out the University Bursary for new students from September 2022 but will continue our commitment to the bursary for continuing students. The University submitted a variation request in April 2022 which was approved by the OFS to release £200K of access and participation investment to redeploy to staff hours to deliver a comprehensive approach to rigorous work on awarding gaps based on strategies with proven success in the sector.

The Student Achievement Team will continue to support retention and achievement work which is critical to supporting students to achieve successful outcomes. Impact analyses of initiatives carried out by the team by demonstrates good outcomes in relation to retention and achievement. Interventions consist of a programme of activities delivered throughout the academic year. Activities include seminars, workshops, phone calls, meetings and emails. Communications and discussions are informed by a student’s assessment records and engagement information. The focus of activities is providing timely, high-quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) and support for learning. Following each intervention student and staff feedback is sought. Feedback strongly demonstrates the value students and staff place on the interventions and how they enhance the student experience. Impact analyses are completed at the end of each year, each programme is reviewed and actions to develop and improve programmes are put in place for the following year.

We are strengthening our study skills support provision and in 2022/23 will begin by scoping and developing a model for Academic Support Hours to ensure that English proficiency, Maths, Technical skills and other academic support is provided to those students on the borderline of attaining 2:1 and 1<sup>st</sup>.

As part of the University’s successful application for the Race Equality Charter, Bronze Award submitted in June 2022, we developed an Action Plan which includes targets to deliver race equality including reducing the B.A.M.E. awarding gap at pace. The University will deliver interventions to support courses which do not meet awarding gap milestone. Interventions include the established Solent Course Enhancement Programme. We are also increasing the pace of the Inclusive Curriculum Framework roll out and delivery of enhancement programme for courses where the B.A.M.E value added score is below 1. In 2022 we have started to implement GRIT breakthrough personal development programmes for B.A.M.E students and their staff to help reduce the awarding gap.

We continue to enhance and broaden the offer of Access Solent, our disability support service, to include a wider range of support options for students so that we can reduce the number of reasonable adjustments made for individual students at course level as our teaching, learning and assessment becomes entirely inclusive. To give disabled students more choice and to engender a greater sense of belonging we continue to strengthen our group, peer and individual support through evaluation and co-creation using different student voices.

In 2022/23 we are implementing a modernized and enhanced Student Hub provision to support students’ progression and success throughout their learner journey. This includes the development of flexible and inclusive spaces which provide a new location for group support work initiatives.

Also in 2022/23 we are beginning our Mental Health Charter Accreditation to help embed wellbeing in all aspects of the institution which we anticipate will also contribute to impacting positively on awarding gaps.

### **Priority D: Seek to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of flexible Level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships.**

Solent University is a small, modern university located in Southampton city centre. Our range of courses include Foundation, Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Apprenticeships and PhD. We have 8,500 students in 3 Faculties and 3 Schools:

- Faculty of Creative Industries, Architecture and Engineering
- Faculty of Business, Law and Digital Technologies
- Faculty of Sport, Health and Social Sciences
- Warsash Maritime School
- Solent Business School
- Solent Law School.

#### **Apprenticeships**

We offer higher and degree-level standards-based apprenticeships at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7. Apprenticeships are offered in Construction and Built Environment, Technology and we have our largest cohorts in Health and Social Care and Business and Management and all are on standards-based apprenticeships. We continue to develop our apprenticeship provision and the following courses are currently in development:

- L6 Project Manager
- L4 Cyber Security Technologist
- L6 Digital User Experience (UX) Professional - Computing
- L7 Artificial Intelligence Data Specialist
- L6 Harbour Master
- L6 Design and Construction Management
- L4 Construction Design and Build Technician
- L6 Construction Quantity Surveyor (degree)
- L5 Health Play Specialist

#### **Warsash and Maritime School**

Solent Warsash and Maritime School offers over 150 accredited deck, engineering, interior, maritime and offshore safety courses approved by the MCA, MNTB, SIGTTO, SQA and other awarding bodies.

#### **Institute of Technology (IoT)**

We are leading a DfE funded Institute of Technology in partnership with the University of Portsmouth and 5 local colleges. By increasing technical training primarily at level 4 and 5, the IoT aims to have a sustainable impact on the economic and social prosperity of the South Coast through enhanced education and employment opportunities in Maritime, Engineering, and Digital (MED) industries.

This new employer focused model of skills delivery aims to strengthen higher technical education that gives students the skills they need now and, in the future, to work in STEM based occupations. Our IoT will accomplish this aim by:

1. Connecting employers, educational institutions, and students. This will be achieved by establishing and maintaining good channels of communication; encouraging the sharing of knowledge, skills, and understanding; and promoting opportunities for collaboration that enhance employability.
2. Removing barriers and enhancing accessibility into MED industries. This will be achieved by listening to the student voice; diversifying modes of study to widen opportunities in higher education by offering flexible and affordable qualifications to adults of all ages; and ensuring students can see themselves in the curriculum and careers and have access to concordant mentoring.
3. Designing and delivering employer led, authentic, real-world learning that prepares students for careers in MED industries. This will be achieved by working collaboratively to research evolving skills gaps and employer needs which, in turn, will enable co-design and delivery of a curriculum that fulfils the identified gaps and needs; capital investment to fund industry-standard facilities and equipment; and employing innovative and agile teaching, learning and assessment practices.

The success of the IoT will be measured by the number of students recruited on to MED courses within the IoT portfolio; the number of students that successfully complete their studies and the number of students that subsequently go into employment in MED industries. We are particularly keen to diversify the population of students. Women and B.A.M.E. students are currently underrepresented, and we will be working closely with our partners to enhance accessibility, recruitment, achievement, and destination of these underrepresented students.

#### **Higher Technical Qualifications**

To develop more flexible, diverse and directly occupationally aligned provision, the University has opted to transition 7 of its existing Level 4 and/or 5 awards in the areas of construction, digital and health into Higher Technical Qualifications. In addition, a new Level 4 HTQ in cyber security will be added to complement the existing digital portfolio. These new and refocused awards are undergoing University validation ready to be marketed and delivered as HTQs in September 2024. They will be offered as standalone awards but will also clearly link into Solent’s wider portfolio offering progression, as appropriate, to higher levels of study.

The HTQ offer will be linked into the wider portfolio of the Solent Institute for Technology and will through this, link to local college T Level providers to clearly articulate a next step route for their learners. HTQs form a key part of Solent’s strategic priorities designed to lead to high quality courses, good student outcomes and success in the workplace. The courses link closely with employers as key stakeholders in the development and ongoing delivery of these awards to ensure they are fit for purpose and contribute to up-skilling existing employees and developing the occupational skills of the future regional workforce.

#### **Enhanced Evaluation**

Solent University is committed to continue following an evidence-based approach to access and participation. To achieve this, we have developed an Evaluation Framework that allows us to track the progress and outcomes of our evaluations. This framework is currently being reviewed to increase the volume and quality of our evaluations, ensuring that we use appropriate research designs to produce robust evidence. This review process follows the guidance produced by the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) and the Office for Students.

Furthermore, we have established an Access and Participation accountability and reporting structure that will facilitate communicating the findings of our evaluations to relevant stakeholders. This will allow us to maximise our understanding of *what works* across the University. We will also establish formal channels to make our

evaluation reports publicly available as appropriate and intend to publish evaluation findings on our website by January 2024.

So far, we have joined regional sector networks where we will seek to share our findings with other providers as well as learn from theirs. Likewise, we will collaborate with external bodies who gather evidence on effective practice, such as TASO, once the mechanisms to do so have been established.

**Provider fee information 2021-22****Summary of 2021-22 course fees**

\*course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2021-22. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2021-22 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

**Table 1a - Full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,800
Foundation degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£8,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to continuing students only	£7,800
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£8,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£1,385
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£1,385
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

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

**Table 1c - Part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to continuing students only	£5,850
HNC/HND	*	Fee applies to entrants/all students	£6,375
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Table 1d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2021-22 students**

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Additional information:	Cohort:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*	*

HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

**Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees**

\*Course type not listed by the provider as available to new entrants in 2020-21. This means that any such course delivered to new entrants in 2020-21 would be subject to fees capped at the basic fee amount.

**Inflationary statement:**

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	£7,800
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	£7,800
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	£1,385
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	£1,385
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	£6,935
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	£5,850
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

# Targets and investment plan

## 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Solent University, Southampton

Provider UKPRN: 10006022

### Investment summary

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

#### Note about the data:

The figures in Table 4a relate to all expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education. The figures in Table 4b only relate to the expenditure on activities and measures that support the ambitions set out in an access and participation plan, where they relate to access to higher education which is funded by higher fee income. The OFS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£692,859.00	£601,375.00	£552,302.00	£543,889.00	£543,889.00
Access (pre-16)	£216,672.00	£188,063.00	£172,717.00	£170,086.00	£170,086.00
Access (post-16)	£386,277.00	£335,273.00	£307,914.00	£303,224.00	£303,224.00
Access (adults and the community)	£63,113.00	£54,780.00	£50,310.00	£49,543.00	£49,543.00
Access (other)	£26,797.00	£23,259.00	£21,361.00	£21,036.00	£21,036.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£1,633,000.00	£1,417,377.00	£1,101,718.00	£881,891.00	£681,891.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£53,898.00	£55,784.00	£57,737.00	£59,758.00	£61,849.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (EHFI)</b>	£17,927,986.00	£15,630,533.00	£14,325,654.00	£14,134,431.00	£14,134,431.00
<b>Access investment</b>	2.7%	2.6%	2.7%	2.6%	2.6%
<b>Financial support</b>	9.1%	9.1%	7.7%	6.2%	4.8%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	12.1%	12.1%	10.7%	9.3%	7.9%

# Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Solent University, Southampton

Provider UKPRN: 10006022

## Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from IMD Q1.	PTA_1	Socio-economic	The target is to reduce the gap between the proportion IMD Q1 entrants and IMD Q1 18 year olds in the population from 13.5% to 7.5% in 5 years and to 0 after 10 years.	No	Other data source	2017-18	13.5%	13%	12%	11%	9.5%	7.5%	Aim to eradicate the gap by 2029-30.
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from IMD Q2.	PTA_2	Socio-economic	The target is to reduce the gap between the proportion of IMD Q2 students and IMD Q2 18 year olds in the population from 6.9% to 1% in 5 years.	No	Other data source	2017-18	6.9%	6%	5%	4%	3%	1%	Aim to eradicate the gap within ten years
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from POLAR 4, Q1.	PTA_3	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	The target is to reduce the gap between the proportion of POLAR 4 Q1 entrants and POLAR 4 Q1 18 year olds in the population from 4% to 0 in 5 years.	No	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	2017-18	4%	3.9%	3%	2%	1%	0	
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for Asian students.	PTA_4	Ethnicity	The target is to reduce the gap between Asian entrants and Asian 18 year olds in the population students from 5.2% to 1.2% in 5 years and to 0 in 10 years.	No	Other data source	2017-18	5.2%	4.75%	4%	3%	2%	1.2%	Aim to eradicate the gap within ten years.
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												
	PTA_9												
	PTA_10												
	PTA_11												
	PTA_12												
	PTA_13												
	PTA_14												
	PTA_15												
	PTA_16												
	PTA_17												
	PTA_18												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
								2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups.	PTS_1	Ethnicity	The target is to reduce the percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between black and white students.	No	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	2016-17	21.7%	13.1%	10.9%	9.5%	8.2%	6.8%	Halve the attainment gap from 21.7% in 2016-17 to 10.9% or less in 2021-22 and subsequently eradicate any statistically significant gap by 2029-30.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups.	PTS_2	Gender	The target is to reduce the percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for IMD Quintile 1 & 2 Male students v. IMD Quintiles 3, 4 & 5 female students	No	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	2017-18	25%	21%	17%	12%	8%	4%	
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups.	PTS_3	Gender	The target is to reduce the percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for POLAR Quintiles 1 & 2 Males v. POLAR Quintiles 3, 4 & 5 Females	No	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	2017-18	17%	14%	10%	7%	4%	0%	

