

Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25

Walsall College

Part of Walsall College's ethos is unleashing the potential of all our students. Through projects that help revitalise communities, our strategies deliberately attract and support applications to higher education from low-income families and under-represented groups and to continue supporting them throughout the student lifecycle so that they become skilled, professional and enterprising. According to the Office of National Statistics, Walsall is ranked 33rd (from 326) most deprived local authority in England, and 13th in terms of levels of high employment, and 12th in residents engaged in education, skills and training.

In 2017, 11.9% of working age adults had no qualifications, this was an improvement of 4.8% from 2016, and Walsall College is very much a part of this success and regeneration of the region. We are committed to being an outstanding education provider within the Black Country, proud to see our students as the legacy of the work that we do. We aim to tackle low aspirations from day one, often a key contributing factor in those arriving at the College with level 2 or 3, not always with a clear sight to employment or higher study. Black Country residents with qualifications above Level 3 were 40.3% in December 2018, compared with 51.9% in the wider West Midlands, and 57.8% in Great Britain, holistically (Nomis). The Black Country therefore, represents a particular challenge in encouraging participation in post level 3 qualifications.

Walsall College has a responsibility to adults in the surrounding area, to provide an attractive and HE offer offering value for money and a clear sight to career opportunities. By supporting our level 2 and 3 students to consider their options regarding a transition into HE, we directly address previous misconceptions that HE is 'too difficult', or 'not for someone like them'. Over and above the College's own HE numbers reviewed in this document, we also encourage around 500 students each year to progress to HE elsewhere, often securing their first choice university option.

With the college working with local employers and industries from level 2 onwards, students have access to highly practical vocational courses, encouraging a clear line of sight to a job, a better job, or career, which can invigorate their interest in the opportunities that HE can provide. Increasing participation rates of non-traditional students into HE remains a priority for the College and whilst around 500 level 3 students progress to HE each year, we are delighted to cater for those very local students who, for whatever reason, cannot move away from home to study.

Recruitment onto our own HE provision is predominantly from our local area, as we offer HE provision in an FE environment, as an alternative to applying to Universities outside of Walsall. We continue to recruit most HE students from Walsall's most deprived wards often progressing with us from levels 2 and 3. We see living and operating in an area of very high levels of social deprivation as a context, and not an excuse, as demonstrated through very successful outcomes for high volumes of our HE students, demonstrated for example by our overall HE achievement for 2018/19 at an outstanding 81.2%.

The size of our Walsall based HE provision has remained relatively static across the previous three academic years, through the recruitment of around 220–250 HE students. In 2017/18 however, we began working in partnership with the London College of Contemporary Arts (LCCA), gaining approval from Pearson (awarding organisation) for collaborative provision. All students are registered as Walsall College students. This explains an increase of 224 additional HE students studying at LCCA based in central London from 2017/18. It is however very important to differentiate between the two delivery sites to more accurately assess the different context, challenges and progress against targets. With the need for this dual view of data, our assessment of performance looks carefully at both separate cohorts (Walsall College and LCCA) in order to better explore where particular challenges are, and what specific intervention can therefore be agreed.

An additional 327 students are currently studying at the College's satellite campus in London (LCCA). LCCA provides London-based students with Pearson Level 4 Higher National Certificates and level 5 Higher National Diploma courses in a number of subject areas. The 2019/2020 tuition fee was set higher for those studying at LCCA, to better reflect the costs of delivery in central London. As this full time fee was set above £6K (£6,500), there is a regulatory requirement to publish this access and participation plan to outline our performance across the student cycle and to set out our targets to eliminate any unexplained gaps in student outcomes.

Any increased income generated from Higher Education provision provides opportunity to further develop and enhance our ambitions and strategies in place to increase participation and improve performance across the student lifecycle. It has recently been agreed that due to the separate and very different strategic direction that both Walsall College and LCCA have outlined, the collaborative arrangement will come to an end January 2021, with the final London based LCCA cohorts completing their qualifications at this time. No further recruitment will take place at LCCA.

Whilst this access and participation plan will not set targets for this collaborative provision beyond the January 2021 date, we will continue to support and monitor our students until this partnership has ceased, publishing final outcomes in the next iteration of the APP.

1. Assessment of Performance

The OfS data dashboard has improved in recent months to show various data sets which support the College in assessing any equality gaps for underrepresented student groups, or sub-groups in relation to access, success and progression. There are limitations to some aspects of this data where equality gaps are statistically insignificant (due to small student numbers) and therefore not presented. General Data Protection Rules (GDPR) also restricts the publication of any data that could identify small groups or smaller sub-groups or individuals. The College however has robust internal data sets from which to assess performance annually as well as in-year where necessary, informing targets and milestones.

The assessment of performance in this section therefore uses the combination of data supplied by the OfS dashboard as well as the College's own internal data taken direct from the Individual Learner Records (ILR) system. We have agreed that from September 2020, further work will take place to better align the College data with the OfS dashboard, by including additional fields for other underrepresented groups, such as Care Leavers and GRT by September 2021 and by including HE students in our destinations data collection.

As with many General Colleges of Further Education (GFE), we do not award Degrees as such, and therefore student achievements are not analysed as 1:1's nor 2:1's for example. The College's own, not partnership HE offer is delivered through Pearson's Higher National Certificates and Diplomas which have an achievement range of Pass, Merit and Distinction grades across an average of eight units per qualification (at level 4 and again at level 5 if topping up). Level 4 is the equivalent to the first year of Degree in terms of the framework of qualification UK, and the HND level 5 top-up maps across to the second year of a Degree. We also offer level 6 top-ups for actual degree provision, however these are not classified as the College's own HE numbers as they are delivered via partnership with Birmingham City University (BCU), where numbers belong to BCU's APP.

Our aim is to continuously review our HE offer, in line with opportunity and demand which has seen further expansion of our Higher Apprenticeship offer, which now includes our first ever Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA), delivered in partnership with the University of Worcester.

With specific GFE terminology needing to be explained and aligned to Office for Students (OfS) terms, the College have included a **Glossary of Terms** within this access and participation plan, to ensure transparency of our assessment, evaluation and target setting.

As an addition to the glossary below, we note that some university pass rates exclude those students who are not retained and instead measure only those who have completed the course. This means that non-retained (non-continuation rates) are removed from pass rates. We have not adopted such a view, as we believe this fails to offer a full picture of the overall performance of the qualification and provider.

Glossary of Terms

Starts - refers to recruitment numbers or percentage of students who are registered on programme at week six. This broadly correlates with the OfS term '**access**' as it looks at the same number of students entering onto each course.

Retained – number of students or percentage who remain on programme after the six-week point. The College reviews retention rates both in-year and at the end of the course. This broadly correlates with the OfS term '**continuation**' as it looks at the same number who remain on the qualification until the end qualification end date.

Widening Participation (WP) – students from under-represented groups (those from lower income families, people with disabilities and some ethnic minorities). WP broadly maps to **POLAR's 1 and 2** however this is not a precise correlation as POLAR does not assess an area's socio-economic profile. It is purely and simply concerned with the proportion of young people in a local area who enter higher education. It is clear when looking at POLAR maps that POLAR 1 and 2 does reflect our WP post code analysis so correlation is relatively reliable for comparison. We also have published student success by WP later within this report.

Pass – used to denote the numbers (or percentage) of students that have complete their qualification and achieved it. This Pass Rate will include all students receiving either an overall pass, merit or distinction for their qualification. It will not count those students who complete their qualification and fail. This broadly correlates with the OfS term '**attainment**' as it examines students that have completed a full qualification.

Achieved - students that have been retained on programme from the start (measured at six weeks in) who have remained on programme, and have completed and passed their qualification. This broadly measures the attainment rates of those students who complete and achieve; but includes in the data all students who began the programme, even those in the non-continuation group.

Success - primarily an OfS term to denote part of the whole student lifecycle which focuses on addressing the barriers that prevent underrepresented students from continuing and therefore succeeding in higher education. 'Success' therefore incorporates **continuation** and **attainment**.

Attainment - part of the success stage of the student lifecycle and considers the academic outcomes achieved by students. There are identified gaps in degree outcomes for underrepresented groups when compared with their peers. We refer to this difference as the 'attainment gap'.

1.1 Higher Education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 regulation requires the College to address under-representation in higher education. This does not necessarily include other measures of deprivation and disadvantage; however, the College have extended analysis beyond POLAR (under-represented areas of the UK) to include Widening Participation (WP). Many other things affect the likelihood of a young person entering into higher education – such as gender; ethnicity; whether their parents went to university or the availability of alternative post-18 opportunities, for example.

The Colleges uses **Widening Participation** (WP) to address discrepancies in the take-up of higher education opportunities between different under-represented groups, disadvantaged backgrounds, lower income households and other considerations which may mean applicants could face barriers to entry to higher education. This plan will outline the positive steps taken by the College to deliberately target those from Widening Participation areas, in terms of access, success and continuation.

Access

OfS Regulatory Notice 1 sets out guidance for Fair Access and Participation. The information here under 'access' focuses on understanding and eradicating the gaps in access for underrepresented groups. Access is the first stage in the whole student lifecycle.

The College is surrounded by HEIs right across the West Midlands region and therefore we recruit those students who want to study locally to Walsall. These are students that progress internally from our level 3 qualifications who generally also do not want to move away from the area as they need to retain their employment, or have childcare or wider family commitments. Progression is planned through tutorial sessions and personal tutor and career discussions throughout the year, and supplemented by further and wider HE recruitment activities. Our strategic ambition to promote Higher Education as a positive progression route, sits firmly at the heart of our independent advice, guidance and careers support for all students.

The data tables below are sourced directly from the OfS Dashboard and whilst it is important to see this data at institutional level, the data does not differentiate between LCCA provision and that of HE based in Walsall. We therefore feel it is also necessary to include a 'split view', so we can more effectively analyse our data and support students from different cohorts more specifically.

As the demographic of Walsall College HE students come from areas of high deprivation, the marketing we produce aims to encourage those students, from particular ‘cold-spots’ (Quintile 1). LCCA are based in High Holborn (central London) and represent a significantly different socio-economic and ethnic and age group than those based in Walsall, therefore requiring us to differentiate between the two sites in terms of promotion, recruitment and support.

Overall for example, access of students recruited from Quintile 1 has seen a decline, however, from 2017/18 (the start of the partnership with LCCA), this began to improve dramatically as students located in London are often attracted from out-of-borough ‘cold spots’ and areas of significant deprivation. Both Walsall College and LCCA locations are improving recruitment from cold areas and targeting activities more specifically to enable us to close any access gaps. POLAR (Participation of Local Areas) is a classification of small areas across the UK according to the participation of young people in higher education. Nationally, there has been an increase in entrant numbers from all Participation of Local Areas (POLAR4) quintiles, but the proportional increase in entrant numbers is highest for students from the lowest-participation areas (Quintile 1). The POLAR quintile was assigned based on the student's postcode on entry to their undergraduate degree and therefore correlates to the WP data referenced within this plan.

Participation of local areas (POLAR4) – Proportion of entrants

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

The dataset below indicates that whilst the percentage of students accessing our HE provision from Quintile 1 (the lowest-participation areas) has remained static since 2016/17, recruitment from Quintile 3 has increased by 7% over the same period. This indicates that the College needs to more to target those specifically from the ‘coldest spots’ of the region, whilst also continuing to support those from Quintile 2 and 3, who are clearly becoming more aware and attracted to our HE provision.

During this same period, access from Quintile 5 has dropped by 7% (creating an increasing gap between Q1 and Q5), however, this is affected more by a decrease in access from POLAR Quintile 5 than a drop in access from Quintile 1, which the College is less concerned about given the high levels of deprivation in our area (forming our key target recruitment group). We often see for example, our highest achievers from POLAR 4 and 5 successfully securing their chosen places at Universities outside of the region.

The College will target an increase in access from Quintile 1 by 2% for 2020/21 with longer-term strategies with the ambition to further improve this reaching 30% by 2025. The College has already strengthened our investment in schools’ liaison activity (through the newly recruited Schools Marketing Executive and extended contracts for NCOP staff). **(PTA_1)**.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Quintile 1	38%	32%	22%	18%	22%
Quintile 2	25%	35%	27%	23%	25%
Quintile 3	19%	15%	16%	20%	23%
Quintile 4	10%	14%	22%	25%	23%
Quintile 5	8%	5%	14%	13%	7%
Q1 vs Q5	30%	27%	8%	5%	15%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Deprivation (IMD 2015) – Proportion of entrants

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

The deprivation quintiles indicate that the gap of underrepresentation of students from deprived areas is closing. This is fundamental, as a closure gap indicates equality of student experience for all. It is noted however this is achieved mainly from an increase in the proportion of access from Quintile 1 compared to Quintile 5, despite a slight drop in actual recruitment from Quintile 1. It is important to set challenging targets to recruit students from the coldest spots, hence the target which has been set above (PTA_1).

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Quintile 1	51%	49%	46%	41%	38%
Quintile 2	19%	26%	32%	34%	34%
Quintile 3	13%	9%	9%	14%	14%
Quintile 4	10%	10%	8%	8%	10%
Quintile 5	7%	6%	5%	4%	5%
Q1 vs Q5	44%	43%	41%	37%	33%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Access - Widening Participation (WP)

In 2016/17, for Walsall College based (non-LCCA) HE students there were 13.2% more students from Widening Participation postcodes. This demonstrates that the College's focus on recruiting students from POLAR 1 and 2 areas. For 2018/19 we can see that WP recruitment is still higher than non-WP although this is now only 3.2% more. The WP cohort in 2018/19 represented 52% of our intake.

Figure 1 – Widening participation Walsall College

Widening Participation	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Starts	Starts %	Starts	Starts %	Starts	Starts %
No	89	43.4%	102	47.0%	88	48.4%
Yes	116	56.6%	115	53.0%	94	51.6%
Grand Total	205		217		182	

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Figure 2 – Widening participation LCCA

Widening Participation	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Starts	Starts %	Starts	Starts %	Starts	Starts %
No	N/A	N/A	71	36.2%	156	41.4%
Yes	N/A	N/A	125	63.8%	221	58.6%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Success

Continuation and Non-continuation (see references to retention and retention %)

Deprivation continuation rates have shown sustained improvement from 2016/17, after a period of decline before this which was associated with a small number of Higher National Diploma programmes where the retention overall had dropped. After suitable intervention to address the areas of concern it is pleasing to note the improving picture. As there are no significant changes; the College will continue to survey HE students, as well as audit material to examine the inclusivity of teaching, learning and assessment and the effectiveness of academic and pastoral support.

Deprivation (IMD 2015) – Continuation Rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

We have an aim to close the continuation rate for Q1 students across a five-year period in order to raise this back to the figures pre-LCCA collaboration in 2015-16 (85%). With no more LCCA activity post January 2020 and due to the specific low continuation rates for this collaborative delivery, we anticipate that continuation will rise dramatically across the duration of the plan.

Despite a small improvement in Q1 continuation from 2016-17, there remains an 18% disparity between the College continuation rate of IMD students between Q1 - Q4 in 2017/18, which also demonstrates the particular issue as related to students from Q1 (those coming from areas that are least likely to enter HE). This is also a gap that we aim to close across the five-year period so as to demonstrate effective on-course support leading to improved continuation rates for all Quintiles.

(PTS_1).

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Quintile 1	85%	80%	85%	53%	57%
Quintile 2	DP	N	80%	46%	56%
Quintile 3	DP	DP	DP	65%	59%
Quintile 4	DP	DP	DP	75%	75%
Quintile 5	DP	DP	DP	N	N
Q1 vs Q4	N/A	N/A	N/A	-22%	-18%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Attainment (see references to achievement % or pass rates) - Widening Participation

In 2016/17, for Walsall College based (non-LCCA) HE provision, there was a gap of 6.1% in achievement for those from Widening Participation postcodes. For 2018/19 we can see that the gap has been successfully reduced to 2.9% in achievement (this is a 3.2% improvement).

In Figure 2 below, we see that the overall institutional access of WP students had a gap of 5.46% in 2016/17. This gap has been reduced to 2.33% by 2018/19, which is a 3.13% improvement.

Figure 1 – Widening Participation (without LCCA)

Widening Participation	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Starts	Ach%	Starts	Ach%	Starts	Ret%
No	89	82.02%	102	88.24%	88	95.45%
Yes	116	75.86%	115	84.35%	94	92.55%
Grand Total	205	78.54%	217	86.18%	182	93.96%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Figure 2 – Widening Participation (including LCCA)

Widening Participation	2017/18		2018/19	
	Starts	Ach%	Starts	Ach%
No	74	44.59%	190	79.47%
Yes	138	39.13%	280	77.14%
Grand Total	212	41.04%	470	78.09%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Progression to employment or further study

Deprivation (IMD 2015) – Progression Rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

There is clear disparity between progression rates of IMD students from Q1 in 2016/17 compared to other HE providers. This is addressed in the target and investment plan, and as a strategic aim (PTP_1).

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Quintile 1	35%	N/A	N/A	26%	45%
Quintile 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	20%	55%
Quintile 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quintile 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quintile 5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Deprivation (IMD 2015) – Progression Rates, all other HE providers

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Quintile 1	58.5%	60.5%	63.6%	65.2%	68.9%
Quintile 2	61.6%	63.5%	66.6%	67.7%	70.8%
Quintile 3	64.7%	66.4%	69.5%	70.3%	73.3%
Quintile 4	66.9%	68.6%	70.9%	72.7%	74.5%
Quintile 5	68.3%	70.0%	72.5%	73.8%	76.0%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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1.2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students

Access

Exploring Access Proportions

The number of Black students that attend Walsall College (both Campuses) significantly increased in 2017/18, when the College began collaborated delivery with LCCA. This has resulted in a higher than national average number of students (when compared to all HEI providers) - 24% in 2016/17, 31% in 2017/18, and 24% in 2018/19. The number of White students has decreased substantially; 21% over the full-time series. We have a higher than average number of students declare that they are from a mixed background, and our proportion of White students is much lower than the national average (Walsall College at 56% in 2018/19; compared to 68.7% national average (a difference of 12.7%). This time series accurately reflects when the College commenced their partnership with LCCA, which has significantly changed the overall ethnicity of the student body due to the demographic of LCCA's location (Central London).

Access: make-up of students entering higher education – Walsall College and LCCA

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Asian	10%	12%	14%	8%	9%
Black	8%	10%	24%	31%	24%
Mixed	4%	4%	5%	7%	8%
Other	N/A	N/A	2%	4%	2%
White	77%	74%	56%	51%	56%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Access: make-up of students entering higher education – All English Higher Education Providers

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Asian	12.5%	12.9%	13.3%	13.7%	13.9%
Black	9.8%	10.1%	10.4%	10.5%	10.3%
Mixed	4.4%	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%	4.9%
Other	1.8%	1.8%	2.0%	2.1%	2.2%
White	71.6%	70.6%	69.9%	69%	68.7%

Lower than the previous year	Higher than the previous year	Equal to the previous year
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2017/18 Walsall College Ethnicity

For 2017/18, the large majority of Walsall Students were English/Welsh etc. but with a healthy 31% recruited from BAME backgrounds, we were alerted their overall achievement which was below the overall cohort achievement of 82.89%. Other groups of students achieved higher, although 10% of the BAME cohort, specifically African and Pakistani performed even less well due to lower retention. This however did represent a 4% improvement of this underperforming BAME cohort against the previous year. As a result of this analysis, we have set a target (using our internal College data) to improve BAME achievement by 5% by the 2025 date.

Ethnicity: gap between 18 year olds in the population and at the provider

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Asian	N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%
Black	N/A	N/A	-5%	-10%	-5%
Mixed	N/A	-5%	N/A	-5%	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
White	N/A	0%	10%	20%	5%

Lower than the previous year	Higher than the previous year	Equal to the previous year
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Walsall College Data

Ethnicity	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
African	12	66.67%	69.23%	88.89%
Pakistani	11	81.82%	90.91%	90.00%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	152	82.89%	92.76%	89.36%
Bangladeshi	10	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Any Other White Background		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Indian	11	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Any Other Asian background	10	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Any other ethnic group		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Any Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White and Asian		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Caribbean	15	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White and Black African		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Arab		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White and Black Caribbean		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	221	85.52%	92.79%	91.75%

London College of Contemporary Arts (LCCA)

2017/18 LCCA Ethnicity

For 2017/18 we introduced a further 196 HE students onto our provision via delivery based at LCCA in central London. Over 41% of Londoners are Black and Minority Ethnic, compared to an average of 10-19% in the rest of England. White British are declining although White Other is increasing in terms of migration from Europe. This trend may of course change in the forthcoming years. Other groups showing increase in Asian, Black and Mixed. The 2011 census recorded London the city with the second largest immigrant population, behind New York City. Polish and Bengali are amongst the most common languages spoken in Greater London after English.

Reviewing the LCCA 2017/18 Ethnicity data (the first full academic year of completers available) we can instantly see the makeup of this cohort to be a very different mix than in Walsall. The mix of ethnicity is more diverse and reflect the London borough overall. English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British represents just 5.6% of the overall LCCA cohort. We can also instantly see, when using the same ProAchieve rules of six weeks then counting all starts, the overall achievement is much lower than at Walsall and therefore a cause for concern. LCCA argued to extend the six-week rule to nine weeks before each student is counted, however in order to analyse the provision on a like for like basis, these tables retain the six-week rule.

The largest majority of students at LCCA are classified as 'Any Other White Background', chiefly European persons who are not of the English, Welsh, and Scottish or Irish ethnic groupings. This group are the highest performing at LCCA. This cohort is closely followed by African origin students who, are also doing better than others, comparatively speaking.

Ethnicity	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Arab	16	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%
White and Black Caribbean		0.00%	0.00%	
Any Other Asian background		0.00%	50.00%	0.00%

Any Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background		0.00%	60.00%	0.00%
Indian		0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Pakistani		0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Not Provided		0.00%	66.67%	0.00%
Caribbean	28	10.71%	43.33%	23.08%
Bangladeshi	20	20.00%	53.85%	28.57%
Any other ethnic group	12	25.00%	25.00%	100.00%
Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background		25.00%	37.50%	66.67%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	11	36.36%	45.45%	80.00%
African	52	43.75%	66.00%	63.64%
White and Black African		50.00%	100.00%	50.00%
Any Other White Background	57	59.65%	67.21%	82.93%
Grand Total	196	36.22%	58.96%	56.80%

Success

Continuation and Non-continuation (appears as Ret % in the College table below)

Continuation rates for white students remain higher than that of BAME students (source: OfS Data Dashboard). Asian continuation rates have substantially increased from 2016-2018 by 25%. Continuation of white students began to increase by 8% from 2016/17 following a decline in previous years. Whereas, continuation for black students has decreased by 5%. The student demographic also changed when the College commenced its partnership with LCCA (based in London) in 2017/18, where student numbers have increased.

The Asian continuation rate drops by 20% over an academic year; and the Black continuation rate increases by 13%. Again, this correlates with the LCCA partnership, and indicates that the College has a requirement to continue to support Asian students through enrichment activities to provide a sense of belonging within the HE community. This is further underpinned by courses that have traditionally attracted Asian students, decreasing in size.

Ethnicity: Gaps between white and other ethnic groups

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

The gap between continuation rates of White and Black students has increased by 13%, whereas the gap between White and Asian students has decreased by 17%. This reflects 38 students from BAME groups (21%) who performed 3% or lower mainly due to retention issues and this gap is an action to address for the provision.

As the largest majority of students at LCCA are classified as 'Any Other White Background', chiefly European persons who are not of the English, Welsh, Scottish or Irish ethnic groupings. This group are the highest performing at LCCA. This cohort is closely followed by African origin students.

Of concern, is where we see large numbers of African (53.42% achievement) and Caribbean students (25.49% achievement) with much lower rates of continuation when compared with Any Other White Background. This will be shared with LCCA as an area of exploration and action at the Centre.

Based on the OfS data dashboard, which outlines limited data for only two academic years. There is a clear disparity between the college continuation rate of Black and Asian students compared to white students in 2017/18. This is to be addressed in the target and investment plan, and as a strategic aim (PTS_2 and PTS_3).

Ethnicity: Continuation rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Asian	DP	N	DP	30%	55%
Black	DP	N	N	42%	37%
Mixed	DP	DP	DP	N	50%
Other	DP	DP	N/A	N	N
White	93%	88%	84%	67%	75%
White vs Black	N/A	N/A	N/A	25%	38%
White vs Asian	N/A	N/A	N/A	37%	20%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Attainment (Appears as Pass % in the College table below)

For 2018/19 we introduced significant growth in students based at LCCA with 377 adding to the data that year. Overall achievement has significantly improved from the previous year's 36.22%. The final cohort of Walsall College students studying at LCCA will complete by January 2021, where we expect to see further improvement to attainment/success.

2018/19 Walsall College Ethnicity

The actual active HE students for 2018/19 was 195 including self-funding and others. We feel however, the 180 included in the OfS data set is representative of the provision/broadly in line with overall achievement rate and therefore worthy of analysis in terms of Ethnicity etc.

With the large majority of access to Walsall Students being English/Welsh, their 87.20% achievement is much improved on both previous years and remains the significant benchmark from which to measure. BAME groups of students still represented 30% of the cohort so this remains a positive in terms of access. Whilst a small minority of this group achieved higher, these are far fewer in number. There were however 38 students from BAME groups (21%) who performed 3% or lower mainly due to retention issues and this gap is an action to address for the provision.

Source: Walsall College Internal Data

Ethnicity	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background	15	50.00%	100.00%	50.00%
White and Black African		50.00%	100.00%	50.00%
Indian		54.55%	72.73%	75.00%
Caribbean	11	57.14%	66.67%	66.67%
African		75.00%	75.00%	100.00%
Any Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	6	83.33%	83.33%	100.00%
Pakistani	6	83.33%	85.71%	83.33%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	125	87.20%	89.06%	95.61%
Any Other White Background	11	90.91%	83.33%	100.00%
White and Asian	6	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Bangladeshi		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
White and Black Caribbean		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	180	83.33%	86.63%	92.59%

London College of Contemporary Arts (LCCA)

2018/19 LCCA Ethnicity

For 2018/19 we introduced significant growth in students based at LCCA with 377 adding to the data that year. Again, students mainly with European origins dominated the cohort in terms of one specific grouping. We can see that overall achievement is significantly improved from the previous year's 36.22%. Of concern in the table below where we see large numbers of African (53.42% achievement) and Caribbean students (25.49% achievement) with much lower rates of success when compared with Any Other White Background. This has been agreed an area for improvement at LCCA for this final cohort of students due to complete January 2020.

Ethnicity	Starts	Suc %	Ret %	Ach %
Not Provided	16	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%
White and Black Caribbean		20.00%	25.00%	66.67%
Indian		25.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Caribbean	51	25.49%	48.39%	43.33%
Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background	9	33.33%	63.64%	42.86%
Any Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	6	50.00%	37.50%	100.00%
Any other ethnic group	14	50.00%	64.29%	55.56%
Pakistani		50.00%	50.00%	50.00%
White and Asian		50.00%	50.00%	100.00%

African	73	53.42%	54.26%	76.47%
Bangladeshi	13	53.85%	80.00%	58.33%
Any Other Asian background	5	60.00%	66.67%	75.00%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	29	68.97%	63.89%	86.96%
Any Other White Background	151	70.20%	69.15%	81.54%
White and Black African	10	83.33%	71.43%	100.00%
Arab		100.00%	60.00%	100.00%
Irish		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	377	56.50%	60.81%	74.22%

Progression to employment or further study

Walsall College currently collects systematic annual destination data for our further education students through investment in an external data capture provider (J2Research) to specifically collect student destinations. We have extended this contract and agreement to include all HE students who will also be contacted from 6 months of them leaving programme and this data will be added to our collective view of progression from all levels, from August 2020 onwards. This will supplement the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data, which displays the progression of many of our HE students, but lacks the range necessary to make the data of more useful significance.

1.3 Mature students

Access

2018/19 OfS data highlights that Walsall College has a significant amount of mature students (79%), (over 21), an increase of 5% in comparison to 2017/18. Subsequently we see a decline of young people (5% since 2017/18) making up 21% of HE provision overall.

The College will explore any increase in progression route opportunities for Level 3 students into HE through a more focussed approach and increased investment in Schools Liaison through the Marketing team (as stipulated in the Resource Plan).

Age: Proportion of entrants

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	52%	52%	66%	74%	79%
Young (under 21)	48%	48%	34%	26%	21%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Success

Continuation and Non-continuation

Continuation rates highlight that mature student rates increased, following previous decline prior to 2017/18 when the College merged with LCCA (where students are predominantly more mature /older who are balancing work and study).

The OfS data below highlights that Walsall College's continuation rates for mature students in 2017/18 (over 21) was 57%, an increase of 7% in comparison to 2016/17. The continuation rate, for young people (under 21), in 2017/18 is 66%, which is a 3% increase in comparison to 2016/17. This is not significant; however, we will continually monitor our mature students to ensure that gaps in their continuation do not decrease. Although a decline has been documented; the increase in student numbers, following commencement of the partnership with LCCA, has altered the percentage of student continuation. In order to close the gap of 9% between young people and mature students by 2% per academic year, the College must explore opportunities for change, such as timetable flexibility to ensure that the continuation of older students increases. There is a clear disparity between the College continuation rate of mature students compared to their younger counterparts in 2017/18 compared to other HE providers. This is to be addressed in the target and investment plan, and as strategic aim **(PTS_4)**.

Age: Continuation rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Mature (21 and over)	90%	80%	80%	50%	57%
Young (under 21)	90%	90%	90%	63%	66%
Mature vs Young	0%	10%	10%	-13%	-9%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Attainment

2018/19 OfS data highlights attainment of 55% for mature students, (over 21), this is an increase of 5% in comparison to 2017/18.

Age: Attainment rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	N/A	55%	N/A	50%	55%
Young (under 21)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Progression to employment or further study

The OfS data below highlights that Walsall College's progression rate for mature students in 2016/17 (over 21) is 55%, which is a significant increase of 20% in comparison to 2015/16, and 43% young people (under 21) in 2016/17, a further increase of 22% in comparison to 2015/16. It is anticipated that this positive position will continue; reflecting the positive progression into employment for all students, as mature students generally work part-time alongside their studies and will progress into full-time jobs after graduation.

As previously stated, we have invested in external expertise (provided by J2Research) to specifically collect higher education student destinations and this data will be available from August 2020. This will supplement our Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data, which displays the progression of many of our HE students.

Age: Attainment rates: All HE Providers

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

There is a clear disparity between the college attainment rates of mature students compared to their younger counterparts in 2018/19 compared to other HE providers. This is addressed in the target and investment plan, and as a strategic aim **(PTS_4)**.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	66.6%	67.6%	68.6%	70.0%	70.3%
Young (under 21)	76.9%	77.8%	79.4%	80.2%	80.2%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Age: Attainment rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	N/A	55%	N/A	50%	55%
Young (under 21)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Age: Progression rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

There is a clear disparity between the college progressions of mature students compared to their younger counterparts in 2018/19 compared to other HE providers. This is to be addressed in the target and investment plan, and as a strategic aim (PTP_2).

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Mature (21 and over)	45%	50%	N/A	35%	55%
Young (under 21)	30%	N/A	36%	21%	43%
Mature vs Young	15%	50%	36%	14%	12%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Age: Progression rates: All HE Providers

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	70.5%	72.4%	73.4%	73.1%	75.7%
Young (under 21)	63.2%	65%	68.1%	69.7%	72.3%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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1.4 Disabled students

Access

The number of students in full-time higher education that disclosed that they have a disability in 2017/18 is 13%, which reflects other higher education providers at 14.6%. The number of students in full-time higher education that are not known to be disabled in 2017/18 is 87%, which reflects other higher education providers at 85.4%.

Access: Make-up of students entering higher education – Walsall College

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Disabled	13.0%	15.0%	13.0%	13.0%	16.0%
Not known to be disabled	87.0%	85.0%	87.0%	87.0%	84.0%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Access: Make-up of students entering higher education – All English Higher Education Providers

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Disabled	12.3%	12.9%	13.7%	14.6%	15.8%
Not known to be disabled	87.7%	87.1%	86.3%	85.4%	84.2%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Success

2017/18 Walsall College Disability

With around 9% of the cohort declaring they have a disability, we see this cohort securing high achievement during 2017/18.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	14	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Hearing Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Mental Health difficulty		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Multiple Disabilities		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
N/A		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
No Disability		203	91.05%	93.14%
Not known/Information Not provided	5	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	221	91.75%	92.79%	85.52%

2018/19 Walsall College Disability

With the number of students disclosing a disability increasing to 15.5% in 2018/19, performance continues to display high achievement to mirror their non-disability peers.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	10	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Hearing Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Mental Health difficulty	9	100.00%	66.67%	66.67%
No Disability	152	92.03%	86.79%	83.55%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)	9	80.00%	100.00%	80.00%
Other Physical Disability		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Grand Total	180	92.59%	86.63%	83.33%

London College of Contemporary Arts (LCCA)

2017/18 LCCA Disability

With just 5% of students disclosing a disability at LCCA for 2017/18, the data is less significant in terms of achievement, however it is important to monitor the pass rate where lower than the non-disability cohort.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Mental Health difficulty	9	50.00%	100.00%	50.00%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)		80.00%	100.00%	80.00%
Temporary Disability After Illness (For Example Post-Viral) or accident		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
No Disability	187	55.93%	58.13%	35.29%
Grand Total	196	56.80%	58.96%	36.22%

2018/19 LCCA Disability

With an increase in support mentors, the centre has improved their focus on encouraging self-referral as well as diagnostics. This is also supporting those with learning difficulties or where English is a second language more effectively. LCCA seriously explore statistical differences in disability in student body.

With just 5% of 377 HE students declaring a disability, this requires a review of the identification and support mechanisms in operation at the centre so as to ensure there are no actual or perceived barriers to inclusion.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	12	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Mental Health difficulty		100.00%	71.43%	71.43%
Multiple Disabilities		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
N/A		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

No Disability	358	73.26%	60.80%	55.87%
Not known/Information Not provided	7	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Other		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)		100.00%	40.00%	100.00%
Temporary Disability After Illness (For Example Post-Viral) or accident		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	377	74.22%	60.81%	56.50%

Continuation and non-continuation

The OfS data below pulls together all HE numbers for the College, including LCCA and this outlines the continuation rates for students that have disclosed they have a disability in 2017/18. This has declined to 49% from 60% in 2016/17 (a decrease of 11%). The continuation rates for students that are not known to be disabled in 2017/18 was 61% from 53% in 2016/17 (an increase of 8%). This has led to a gap of 12%.

The disability gap in continuation rate for 2017/18 can be attributed to low numbers of students with a disability (which disproportionately magnifies the comparison) however, the actual decline in the continuation of those declaring a disability cannot be overlooked in this same way and therefore will appear as a targeted area for improvising across the five-year length of this plan. The College continues our commitment to enable the inclusive continuation of all students although we acknowledge that there is a clear disparity between continuation of disabled students and students that are not known to be disabled. This disparity occurs specifically for our LCCA students in London and therefore we have set the relevant targets for current active cohorts in order that disability students continue in their studies towards achievement in January 2021. Fundamentally, the college is committed to reducing the 12% continuation gap between disabled students and students with no known disability across the five-year plan **(PTS_5)**.

Disability: Continuation rates

Source: Access and Participation Data Dashboard

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Disabled	DP	DP	N	60%	49%
Not known to be disabled	89%	83%	84%	53%	61%
Disabled vs. not known to be disabled	N/A	N/A	N/A	7%	-12%

Lower than the previous year		Higher than the previous year		Equal to the previous year	
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Attainment (Referred to as Ach (Achievement) Overall % in the College data)

The OfS data dashboard does not sufficiently cover the information required in order to make reliable analysis of attainment. Therefore, the tables below are taken from the College's internal Information Learner Records (ILR) data so that we can analyse the precise data for our students, identifying any gaps and setting the relevant targets for action.

2016/17 Walsall College Disability

With around 10% of HE students disclosing some form of disability in 2016/17, we see the majority of those performing better than their non-disability peers.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	6	100.00%	33.33%	33.33%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Hearing Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Mental Health difficulty	7	100.00%	83.33%	83.33%
Multiple Disabilities		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
N/A	197	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
No Disability		88.02%	85.64%	77.37%
Other		100.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)		50.00%	100.00%	50.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	210	87.98%	85.12%	76.67%

2017/18 Walsall College Disability

With around 9% of the cohort claiming disability, again we see this group performing extremely well during 2017/18.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	14	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Hearing Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Mental Health difficulty		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Multiple Disabilities		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
N/A		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
No Disability	203	91.05%	93.14%	85.22%

Not known/Information Not provided	5	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	221	91.75%	92.79%	85.52%

2018/19 Walsall College Disability

With the disability cohort growing to 15.5% in 2018/19 it was pleasing to note they continue to outperform their non-disability peers.

Disability	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Asperger's Syndrome	10	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Disability Affecting Mobility		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Hearing Impairment		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Mental Health difficulty	9	100.00%	66.67%	66.67%
No Disability	152	92.03%	86.79%	83.55%
Other Medical Condition (For Example Epilepsy, Asthma, Diabetes)	9	80.00%	100.00%	80.00%
Other Physical Disability		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Visual Impairment		100.00%	50.00%	50.00%
Grand Total	180	92.59%	86.63%	83.33%

2016/17 Walsall College Learning Difficulty

Those HE students in 2016/17 with Learning Difficulty represented 11% of the overall cohort with the majority of these with Dyslexia diagnosis. Overall this group performed slightly better than their non-learning difficulty peers.

Learning Difficulty	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Autism Spectrum Disorder	5	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Dyscalculia		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Dyslexia	11	88.89%	81.82%	72.73%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	6	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Multiple Learning Difficulties		100.00%	66.67%	66.67%
N/A		0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
No Learning Difficulty	188	87.73%	84.90%	76.47%
Other		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	210	87.98%	85.12%	76.67%

2017/18 Walsall College Learning Difficulty

Those HE students with Learning Difficulties represented 9% of the overall cohort. There were eight students with Dyslexia whereby the pass rate was much lower than their peers. This was not a trend and the volume meant it was difficult to extrapolate an actual issue as such. Managers were reminded to ensure material was accessible and adjusted where necessary (**PTS_6**). A dyslexic student's struggle is neither a lack of intelligence nor wilfulness. Multisensory activities help them to engage and retain information as well as support the rest of the cohort.

Learning Difficulty	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Autism Spectrum Disorder	6	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Dyslexia	11	85.71%	87.50%	75.00%
Multiple Learning Difficulties		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
N/A		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
No Learning Difficulty	204	91.49%	93.07%	85.57%
Not Known/Information Not Provided		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Other		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Other Specific Learning Difficulty		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	221	91.75%	92.79%	85.52%

2018/19 Walsall College Learning Difficulty

For 2018/19 we see that there are no significant gaps for any group of students (and those with learning difficulties represented a larger 12% of the overall cohort).

Learning Difficulty	Starts	Ach %	Ret %	Pass %
Autism Spectrum Disorder	21	100.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Dyslexia		90.91%	78.57%	83.33%
Moderate Learning Difficulty		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Multiple Learning Difficulties		100.00%	75.00%	75.00%
No Learning Difficulty	159	92.36%	87.80%	83.65%
Grand Total	180	92.59%	86.63%	83.33%

Progression to employment or further study

The OfS data dashboard does not sufficiently cover this information. As previously stated, we have invested in an external support from a destinations data provider (J2Research) to specifically collect higher education student destinations for the College and this data will be available from August 2020. This will then supplement our Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data, which displays some of the progression information of HE students.

1.5 Care Leavers

There are no Walsall College based Care Leavers enrolled for 2019/20 and there is a very small number of students enrolled at LCCA. Therefore, it is not possible to analyse this information without potentially identifying individual students. The College will continue to capture data on Care Leavers and will analyse access and participation for this group, should student numbers increase in the future.

Care Leavers aim:

The proportion of Care Leavers and people estranged from their families progressing to HE nationally, remains extremely low. Walsall College has had some historic progression from this group, in very small quantities.

Care leavers objective/target:

The College will continue to monitor access of Care Leavers at next enrolment period in October 2021, whilst also ensuring support and guidance is provided leading to high levels of continuation and achievement. We will publish data should it allow non-identification of individuals and also if it became statistically significant.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

The College does currently have the facility to recognise multiple factors of disadvantage. However, the new Head of MIS has been tasked to source this data from September 2020. As numbers of HE students within the college's Wisemore and London Campus are small in total, multiple intersections of disadvantage, when available, could mean that individual students may be able to be identified and therefore the College will adhere to GDPR/data protection guidance should this be the case (and therefore suppress the actual data).

For academic year 2021, The Equality and Diversity Team will actively review our identification of underrepresented groups in and during higher education with a view to take the College forward in its deeper analysis of wider groups such as care leavers and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities as well as possible intersections. The intersection of two or more indicators of underrepresentation or continuation will enable the College a more precise understanding of impact and contributing factors.

Invest in and expand our Equality and Diversity activities to reflect the student lifecycle

In January 2020, the Assistant Principal for Quality and HE was assigned as the lead for Equality and Diversity at the College, specifically to strengthen and enhance the Senior Leadership commitment and influence on this important agenda.

For 2019/20, the College's E&D statement was refreshed to align our ambitions with our Ready Respectful and Safe approaches, to embrace the diversity of our students, apprentices and staff and work hard to embed an ethos of equality of opportunity for all. Following a cross-college call out for volunteers in February 2020, we secured a new team of staff with broader representation who wanted to be a part of the group to support the agenda of inclusion.

Despite the impacts of COVID-19, this team have already begun to strengthen induction material for next academic year with an on-line remote induction experience for those who initially enquire about HE places for next year, to be followed by face-to-face delivery where permitted from September 2020.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in Higher Education

There are very small numbers of students in these categories, i.e. military families, refugees, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, carers and estranged students, therefore, it is not possible to analyse this information without potentially identifying individual students. The College will continue to capture data on these groups and will analyse access and participation, should student numbers increase in the future. The College will review opportunities for conducting further analysis for other groups who experience barriers in Higher Education, in preparation for September 2020.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities aim: The proportion of students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities progressing to HE nationally, remains extremely low and therefore data is suppressed to protect the identity of individuals.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities objective/target: The college will continue to monitor access of students from these groups at next enrolment period in October 2021, whilst also ensuring support and guidance is provided leading to high levels of continuation and achievement. We will publish data should it allow non-identification of individuals and also if it became statistically significant.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

From the above assessment of our performance, we will be targeting the following groups in our access and participation work:

Access, success (continuation, attainment), progression

- Disability – Success (Continuation and Attainment).
- Ethnicity – Success (Attainment).
- Asian student continuation rates and black student continuation rates
- Mature student continuation rates
- IMD Q1 and Q2 student continuation rates
- IMD Q1 and Q2 student progression rates
- Mature student attainment rates
- Mature student progression rates

In section 2.2 below, we have deliberately separated the provision between Walsall based students and those students based in LCCA, in order to more acutely analyse across access, success (continuation, attainment) and progression. Whilst we have included overall intuitional data within this report, any exercise to review holistically would offer limited transparency, as this would not enable us to identify the two very different student cohorts based in Walsall and in London. Therefore, we feel it important to review the very different delivery sites and student cohorts separately, until the LCCA teach out concludes in January 2021.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Target Groups - HE Targets for 2020-25

Based on our assessment of performance our aims and objectives are as follows:

PTA_1 – POLAR access (increase proportion)

The College will target an increase in access from Quintile 1 by 2% for 2020/21 with longer-term strategies towards the ambition to further improve this, reaching 30% by 2025.

PTS_1 – IMD continuation (increase proportion)

Increase continuation rates for IMD Q1 students year-on-year reaching 80% in 2024/25.

PTS_2 – BAME continuation – white vs black (reduce gap)

Close the continuation gap (20%) between white and Asian students, reaching just 2% in 2024/25.

PTS_3 – BAME continuation – white vs Asian (reduce gap)

Close the continuation gap (38%) between white and black students, reaching just 5% in 2024/25.

PTS_4 – Mature continuation (reduce gap)

Reduce the 9% gap in continuation rates for our mature students across the five-year plan, reaching 0% in 2024/25.

PTS_5 – Disabled continuation (reduce gap)

Reduce the 12% continuation gap between disabled students and students with no known disability across the five-year plan, reaching 0% in 2024/25.

PTS_6 – Learning difficulty continuation (increase proportion)

Maintain and review continuation rates termly throughout 2021. This will remain an area to monitor for retention to improve by 2% across the five-year plan.

PTP_1 – IMD progression (increase proportion)

Address the disparity between progression rates of IMD students from Q1 compared to other HE providers, improving progression by 23% over the five-year plan.

PTP_2 – Mature progression (increase proportion)

Address the disparity between the college progression rates of mature students compared to young people improving progression by 20% over the five-year plan.

LCCA Based HE Provision/Termination of Collaborative Provision

Due to the imminent dissolution of the partnership between Walsall College and LCCA in January 2021, it is not appropriate for the College to assign targets in this section, as there will be no further enrolment of College students at LCCA. However, we will continue to monitor our students until this partnership has ceased, and share our findings and recommendations with LCCA colleagues. Following the above-mentioned date, we will also update and republish our APP where necessary to reflect the end of our affiliation, by removing references to LCCA.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

The College continues with its ongoing commitment to offering high quality education and value for money for our Higher Education students across all areas of the student's lifecycle. We have robust Quality Assurance processes in place to identify good practice and areas for improvement, which is shared with all staff involved in the management and delivery of our Higher Education provision. This is evidenced throughout all of the stages of the student lifecycle from admission to accreditation. This journey starts with information, advice and guidance, continues with high quality teaching and learning support and ends with achievement and guidance on their next steps.

In our Corporate Strategy we said we would increase progression pathways for our students and, as such, our ambition to promote Higher Education as a positive progression route, continues to sit at the heart of our independent advice and careers support for those students where this may be a viable option. The annual Higher Education Fair held across 2 days in October 2019 was visited by just under 1,300 Level 3 students. This event supports our students in their understanding of higher level progression opportunities and feedback from both participants and exhibitors was very positive.

Stakeholder feedback is an important part of the College's Quality Assurance processes as students complete termly surveys to feedback back on their experience, for example for classroom delivery students can complete an Induction Survey, Teaching and Learning Survey and End of Year (Progression) Survey. This is supported by a HE Student Representative and 'Report It' system, so that students can alert management of more urgent requests/concerns.

There are further plans for HE Student Voice in the next academic year to introduce a termly meeting with the Curriculum Manager for HE and the Quality Assurance Manager and the HE Student Representative/HE students.

Please see section 3.3 (Evaluation Strategy), which outlines the specific elements that review inclusivity across all stages of the student lifecycle.

Alignment with other strategies

The Access and Participation strategy closely aligns with the following strategies/plans:

- HE Enhancement Cycle.
- HE Academic Regulations.
- The HE Strategy.

- The Quality Improvement Strategy.
- HE Teaching and Learning Strategy.
- Walsall College Curriculum Strategy.
- Student Voice Strategy.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity

Walsall College is passionate about inclusion, respect and enabling all students and staff to reach their full potential. Our work in this area was recognised by Ofsted in February 2013 as outstanding. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was developed in consultation with trade unions, staff, students and partner organisations that have a legitimate interest in the policy and it is reviewed annually by the Equality and Diversity Committee. This propagates throughout the student lifecycle, as is published on the College website to ensure transparency for the public and stakeholders, and displays our ongoing commitment to improve access. The Equality Action Plan 2016-2020 also provides clarity of our equality and diversity impact measures for curriculum areas. The plan identified areas where we could further improve inclusivity through our analysis of Equality and Diversity data for Higher Education, by reducing the BAME success gap by 8% (from 13% to 5%). This was motivated by an aspirational student community, which is able to adapt to an interchangeable and fluctuating global economy.

Holistically, the College recruits and drives equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the curriculum, and the recruitment of staff and students, to encourage collaboration and to create a culture of respect and trust. This is underpinned by the 'Ready, Respectful, Safe' Agreement; that is used as part of the College induction for HE students, and advocates the rules we perpetrate to all; to ensure the environment is safe and to develop an organisation that is equal in all processes and systems. This is encompassed in the policies we publish; The Single Equality Scheme, The Equality and Diversity Strategy, and the Equality Action Plan.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

The College's Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy, specifically for higher education students; is underpinned by The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Island (FHEQ). The student offer includes various modes of study; flexible and work based learning, blended and technology enhanced learning. The commitment to continuous learning is reflected by recruitment integrity, transparency of recognition of prior learning, empowered staff to ensure the student has a 'best fit' on their course, and Information, Advice and Guidance appropriate to the College's curriculum offer.

Employability

The College embraces the ethos of 'Skilled, Professional and Enterprising' as a key to its development of students that are independent, aspirational and reach their potential in their fields of study. This is completed through a personalised experience when they attend the College; to ensure that they feel valued and that they can contribute to the College community; but also to their own community on graduation. Teaching and learning excellence is the centre of the student journey at the College; and attention is paid to the bespoke curricula and engagement that each student encounters when attending. This can encompass a range of interventions when a student attends, as the College has a range of initiatives to encourage positive outcomes.

The curriculum, pedagogic and student support

The delivery and assessment of all HE curriculums are designed with study skills that ensure that students are building on their prior knowledge and accumulating a pool of experience on which to base their studies. 'Live' assignments from employers, and practical scenarios reflected in the Pearson RCF programmes for Level 4, 5 and 6 students mean that they can relate to the content; therefore, ensuring valid assessment mechanisms that are up-to-date and credible. This ensures that they take personal control of their learning programme and display autonomous social skills, associated with their field of study. The instruments used for assessment are then tailored to the student need – seminars, visiting speakers, master-classes, visits to companies, lectures, group project work, and work based visits. The aim is to encourage the students to be ready for the world of work, which is reflected in the Walsall College Graduate outcomes.

As the College runs HE that encompasses Higher Apprenticeships and classroom taught provision, it has strong employer links which is highlighted in the Walsall College Graduate outcomes. HE students use and reflect on their work experience to ascertain how it benefits their study programme, so the student can gauge their progression.

Collaboration and Partnership

The College works in partnership with our students, parents, employers, staff, service providers and communities and we strive to develop external relationships which enhance the student experience. Our innovative approach to partnerships when working with external agencies in order to provide a wide range of health and well-being initiatives for all students, including raising awareness of the Prevent Duty is provided via support from the Counter Terrorist Unit (CTU) and Local Authority Prevent Officers.

Strategically, the College has representation on various Boards and Committees. This includes the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships, Strategic Partnership Board, Safer Walsall Partnership, Violence Reduction Group, Adult Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Group and the Corporate Parenting Group. We also attend operational groups.

There is a planned further recruitment of 25 additional students onto the CMDA Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (Worcester) in February 2019, meaning that the in-year total will be just above 300 at that point.

The teacher training programmes continue to be offered through our partnership with the University of Warwick, where 2018 saw our first graduates completing.

National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP)

The College continues to have two formalised agreements that proceed into outreach activities. The Black Country Consortium establish common themes between colleges to discuss succession planning, good practice, national updates and increase retention. The termly meetings have discussed widening participation by the completion of a shared online prospectus for colleges in the consortium to provide to their Advice and Guidance Teams to ensure on a wider scale, that all student course needs are addressed across the county.

The 'Aspire to HE' partnership, funded through NCOP led by the University of Wolverhampton, provides a range of activities throughout the year for students who live at prescribed postcodes to raise attainment but also to provide aspiration to ensure that HE options are viable and achievable for these chosen individuals.

Aspire to HE is a partnership with local schools and colleges, who are committed to improving access to higher education for everyone in the Black Country, and Telford and Wrekin. We provide impartial guidance and practical support to help people make an informed and ambitious decisions about their future. The College's use of student engagement funds allocated via the partnership allows students to carry out widening participation initiatives and events to help us achieve a more diverse student community.

Sixty-three second year NCOP students cross College signed up to the Passport to Success programme, which is designed to provide students with expert information, advice and guidance. The programme supports students to explore different career prospects, setting targets and providing activities to enrich their college experience. Thirty-one of these students submitted a HE application. More than 500 students benefited from Maths and English revision support sessions. 'Rip Roaring Resit' workshops were created to support and advise students with exam preparation, and techniques built confidence, aspiration and performance.

The College also invited Student ambassadors and recent graduates from a range of universities across the UK to deliver informative and interactive workshops to 43 tutorial groups regarding university life and student finance. There has been three University Visits to De Montfort University, Birmingham City University and University of Worcester. The aim of these events was to provide students and family members with information that will enable them to support their child in making the most informed decision about Higher Education. Lastly, 143 students were able to take part in the Cultural Capital Days, to explore different cities, broaden their outlook and promote positive leaver destinations after college.

Alignment with other work and funding sources

The College remains to have two formalised agreements that proceed into outreach activities. The Black Country Consortium establish common themes between colleges to discuss succession planning, good practice, national updates and increase retention. This group emerged from Area Review recommendations and is used as a starting point for HE growth and curriculum planning, adding value, traction with external partners etc. Collective value as HE in FE is small and our combined awareness will be useful. Notion of a 'Black Country Offer'. The Assistant Principal – Quality and Higher Education chairs a group to see if there is potential for joint work for Black Country Colleges over the local area.

Financial support (where applicable).

Higher Education Bursary Funds are discretionary funds that aim to assist Higher Education students who are experiencing financial hardship. All bursaries are assessed in accordance with the College's Bursary Policies and Procedures, however, processes allow administrators to take a flexible approach and exercise discretion, where appropriate. The funds aim to help those students who are in most financial need and for whom the additional cost of studying may be prohibitive.

This support aims to achieve transparency and provide students with every opportunity to access financial support for progression into higher education. As previously stated, our students may not necessarily have the funds available to access education and may need financial assistance.

Walsall College will continue to provide financial support to students, including access to student bursaries, which are reviewed annually, subject to change and are based on individual circumstances.

Students are assessed based on their household income. In 2019/20 we amended the household income limit to £30,000 from £24,000, following Government increases in the National Minimum Wage, making it quite easy for households to exceed £24,000. All students are assessed on an individual basis and are required to provide us with evidence of their income to allow us to make an informed decision as to their eligibility for support. Upon a successful application, students will receive correspondence informing them of their award, how it is paid and any conditions, such as attendance, on the award being made. Our HE Bursary Policy sets out the criteria for eligibility and the assessment process. The HE Bursary section of the website also details award amounts as well as eligibility criteria. This information is also available should a student request it when visiting the Customer Service Desk at our College or when emailing/calling the Customer Service Team. Financial Support is also covered as a specific topic during the College's Student Induction (in College and online). The College's Student Finance Team are also available to discuss individual eligibility.

The following information illustrates the support available to Home students, resident in England in 2019-20.

Details of Bursary Payment Considerations

The College recognises that financial constraints are often a barrier to entry into HE and obtaining a successful outcome. To mitigate the impact of financial hardship the College provides a guaranteed bursary of £800 per academic year for every student (pro-rata for part-time students) who has a household income of below £30,000 per annum and are subject to the minimum attendance criteria of 85% per term.

The College also has a financial hardship fund from which awards are made on a case-by-case basis and all HE students are eligible to apply regardless of household income. Students who study at the main Walsall College campus are also eligible for a subsidised place at the College nursery, subject to availability. Students are made aware of the financial support available through the HE prospectus, College and LCCA websites and upon enrolment.

Moving forwards, from September 2020, we aim to evaluate our financial support provision, which will include the use of the OfS financial support evaluation toolkit, where appropriate.

The table displays the ethnicity of students that have accessed the HE Bursary fund; provided by the College. There has been an increase of 3.11% of BAME students that are accessing this fund between 2018/19 to 2019/20. The College has a responsibility to ensure that the accessibility of the bursary incorporates all students through its marketing strategy. The 2018/19 gap between BAME and White students has opened compared to the previous year of 2017/18; and then the gap is closed in 2019/20; which is a positive for the College.

Ethnicity	No. of Students	2017/18	No. of Students	2018/19	No. of Students	2019/20
White	25	53.19%	44	61.11%	29	58.00%
BAME	22	46.82%	28	38.89%	21	42.00%
Gap	3	6.37%	24	22.22%	8	16.00%

Barriers to Learning and Additional Support Strategies

The Information, Advice and Guidance provided to students ensures that all student aspirations are met, regardless of barriers to learning. Students are encouraged to communicate their needs confidentially to ensure a smooth transition into learning at each stage of the student journey. The College regularly reviews the barriers to learning by measuring the impact of interventions to ensure funding impacts positively on student achievement.

The College works with the Local Authority to publish the Local Offer. This advocates the provision available across education, health and social care and young people in the Borough that have SEND needs. This displays information regarding how to access information and provision within the Borough, and ensures that the College remains responsive to its student body.

Strategic measures

Vision and Strategy (Strategic Ambitions)

Theory of Change

In order to demonstrate an overarching theory of change, we have for this plan, redefined our goals for access and participation and how we will achieve them across the five-year period in scope. Based on our assessment of performance and target areas, the College needs to do more to outline the quantitative and qualitative evidence necessary to evaluate the impact of our activities and success measures. We have included our ambition to increase our data sets to better inform a more detailed evaluation where we are not yet fully able to.

The College continues with its ongoing commitment to offering high quality education and value for money for our Higher Education students across all areas of the student's lifecycle. We have robust Quality Assurance processes in place to identify good practice and areas for improvement, which is shared with all staff involved in the management and delivery of our Higher Education provision. This is evidenced throughout all of the stages of the student lifecycle from admission to accreditation. This journey starts with information, advice and guidance, continues with high quality teaching and learning support and ends with achievement and guidance on their next steps.

As HE provision is relatively small in comparison with our full time provision for young people, we realise we need to do more to align our FE vernacular, to more appropriately reflect the expectations of the Office for Students and in supporting their understanding of the work and impact of our HE planning, activity and evaluation.

Referring to the results of the inaugural graduate outcomes survey published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), it is good to see that higher education continues to have significant benefit for most students in their employment and career prospects.

Most graduates also feel that they are doing something meaningful, making progress towards their future plans and applying the things they have learned whilst studying at HE level. There is clearly more still to do to ensure that these benefits are felt equally across all student groups. It is concerning that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) graduates were more likely to be unemployed than their white peers, and that women are overrepresented in lower pay bands. With the labour market likely to become more challenging in the aftermath of coronavirus (COVID-19), it is more important than ever that all graduates are well prepared with the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their career aspirations. We already know that BAME students experience differential outcomes in admissions, attainment and employment following graduation. COVID-19 will likely exacerbate these disparities for a generation of BAME students at pivotal stages of their educational journeys. The College will continue consider the whole student lifecycle when planning and strategising through this crisis.

The next challenge for our own HE provision over and above these imminent adjustments required during the run up to next academic year and into next term, is strategic, including the need to adapt and change to medium, to long-term provision amid uncertainties about funding and HE Students' abilities to secure jobs after their studies (which could impact on recruitment patterns for example, but also success and progression).

Walsall College plays a crucial role in widening participation, offering opportunities to those who would otherwise not participate in HE. The size of our College HE activity, although relatively small, is a strategically important part of our wider offer in many ways. We do know that many of Students begin their studies with us at levels 2 and 3 without any inclination of wanting to progress to HE, but then are inspired to do so after taking part in collaborative projects and through close support from personal tutors and our Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Team. Walsall College is a driver of social mobility and plays an important role in our community in improving life chances of young people as well as mature Students. Our HE Strategy outlines our commitment to:

- offering courses on a part-time basis, working with employers.
- delivering technical and professional education with a clear line of sight to work.
- offering local choices in one of the UK's highest areas deprivation (and cold spots).
- providing an alternative to large universities with courses that often involve small class sizes, with more individual tutorial support and progression from FE courses.
- providing a stepped progression model, allowing access to employment at levels 4 and 5, rather than a fixed three-year degree offer (we also see students join us at levels 5 and 6).

We believe that Walsall College will have an important role in the nations recovery from the current COVID-19 crisis and in building a better future for Britain. We have a contribution to make in our higher education activities as well as our FE courses. This role is even more pronounced in the current times as more students may wish to study locally rather than going away from home.

Walsall College's Strategic Measures

Using the analysis of our prior performance against across all aspects of the Student lifecycle, we have at Senior Leadership Level, outlined the main strategic measures we will use to deliver our aims and objectives across access, success and progression. In the next section, we have outlined these strategic measures as described primarily for the academic year 2020/21 in the first instance, with longer term considerations being added across a five-year period and to be reviewed (and where necessary refreshed) annually thereafter.

Strategic Measure 1 - Offer a comprehensive programme of specific staff development

Specific considerations for widening participation are linked to our ambition to expand the 'ACES' - Adverse Childhood Experiences Training, to include our outreach activity staff, as well as teaching staff, managers and admissions staff, including those who are supporting our NCOP/Uni Connect Programme. As well as our dedicated Tutorial Co-ordinator, we have a strong team of highly committed Learning Facilitators and Pastoral Officers, to help promote and share resources who will also receive this training.

The Aspire to HE Partnership agreed the continuation of allocation of funding for all partners for the academic year 2020/21. As such, from 01 August 2020 – 31 July 2021 we will be able to bid for up to £80,000 of partnership funding, inclusive of the staffing costs of our two Aspire to HE team members, extending their contracts until the current period of the NCOP/Uni Connect Programme until 31 July 2021. The role of the staff involved in this project is very much around raising aspiration of those students who may not have considered HE study. It is powerful to be able to support their understanding of the options available but often this can mean them overcoming various barriers such as low self-esteem. Across 2020/21 we will expand our ACEs training to broader College staff so they can better understand the role of resilience in helping children/young people cope with adversity and explore factors can support the development of wellbeing and resilience.

We are training delivery staff to consider a range of pedagogical methods to take account of the changes in interaction between students and tutors (due to COVID-19 and the need for remote delivery) and to ensure that academic standards are maintained. Guidance and training for staff has already outlined a 'blended' model that can operate in either synchronous or asynchronous modes, where teaching can be delivered to groups of students in 'real time' or be recorded or documented on our GOAL site (virtual learning environment) for Students to access in their own time. Approaches will differ on a course-by-course basis, factoring in the amount of practical work needed.

Strategic Measure 2 - Generate a deeper analysis of wider communities and intersections through greater transparency of data and its review.

For 2020 and through to 2021, The Equality and Diversity Team will actively review our identification of underrepresented groups in and during higher education, such as disability, ethnicity, age (mature students) and gender, with a view to take the College forward in its deeper analysis of wider groups such as care leavers and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities as well as possible intersections, through greater transparency of data and its review. The intersection of two or more indicators of underrepresentation or continuation will enable the College a broader understanding so as to, for example is used this to identify barriers to equality of opportunity.

We will, through this work, also specifically and formally address the following aims set out within our Access and Participation Plan:

Care Leavers aim: The proportion of care leavers and people estranged from their families progressing to HE nationally, remains extremely low. People who have spent time in local authority care face many and significant barriers to entering and succeeding in higher education. For the current year 2019-20, Care Leavers studying HE at Walsall College is low and numbers will not be reported in the APP in accordance with GDPR, as this could potentially identify individual students.

Care leavers objective/target: The target is to maintain and review these figures termly throughout 2021; and therefore action and record on the target and investment plan if the data becomes statistically significant. Clearly this will inform actions to increase participation from this group, such as the introduction of a Care Leavers Bursary for 2021/22 for applicants from care or who are estranged from their parents.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities aim: The proportion of students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities progressing to HE nationally, and also for the College, remains extremely low. Data will not be reported in the APP in accordance with GDPR, as this could potentially identify individual students. Recognising this diversity is important to identifying, understanding and addressing the needs of individuals within these communities. Research shows that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils have the lowest attainment in compulsory schooling of all ethnic groups, which in turn impacts their access to higher education.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities objective/target: The target for the College will be to maintain and review data for this group termly throughout 2021; and therefore action and record on the target and investment plan if the data becomes statistically significant. Clearly this will inform actions to increase participation from this group and in particular working with our school link partners to consider actions at that stage where issues of non-participation and exclusion exist (we know that the attainment gap in compulsory schooling between Gypsy and Roma pupils and white pupils has also widened).

Strategic Measure 3 - Strengthen our view of HE destinations to include a more throughout survey conducted by external agency.

Whilst the College receives and analysis the annual data set provided from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE), this does not fully represent College HE cohorts across our level 4 and 5 Higher National provision.

To supplement this data, we have for 2019-20, engaged with an external agency (J2Research) who have been commission to collect this data on behalf of the College. The data will also provide information on the activities of students after they have left the College, however this will represent a more comprehensive inclusion of our volumes of HE Students at the College, regardless of year or level of study. Data is collected through a survey carried out approximately six months after students leave. The publication includes information about what the leaver is doing - whether studying, working or both. Where a leaver is in employment, it records the type of industry, sector, occupation type and location.

We will, through this work, also specifically and formally address the following aim set out within our Access and Participation Plan:

Destination (Progression) Data aim: Aim to improve destination data for Higher Education students.

Data objective/target: We have invested in an external software tool (provided by J2Research) to specifically collect higher education student destinations data which will be available from August 2020. This will supplement our Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data, which displays the progression of HE students.

Following publication in August 2020, we will analyse the data to identify any gaps by October 2020, for periodic review by College managers from November 2020. The refreshed Equality and Diversity Team will play an active part in this understanding and will, as an outcome from the data, will set out a number of actions where necessary to address any gaps in securing positive destinations for underrepresented groups. For 2020/21 and each year following, the data will build a comparison review of the College each year, with the DHLE data offering the national perspective.

Strategic Measure 4 - Increase access to provision from underrepresented groups

With Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students experiencing disparities exacerbated by COVID-19, and particularly for a generation of at pivotal stages of their educational journeys, the College will do more for its community in terms of encouraging progression to HE where this is likely to improve life choices and strengthen career options in this uncertain time of significant economic decline.

Our pledge to increase progression pathways for our students is at the heart of our ambition to promote Higher Education as a positive progression route. We will dedicate energy to promote an annual Higher Education Fair held across two days each October (for 2019, this was attended by just under 1,300 Level 3 students). The event supports our students in their understanding of higher level progression opportunities and feedback from both participants and exhibitors was very positive.

For 2020/21 and strengthening activity further across 2021/23, the College will grow the Equality and Diversity Team of staff to build in the expectations to deliver contextualised and or subject specific outreach activity. This ambition to expand our delivery of outreach work will seek to encourage increased year-on-year progression to higher education for under-represented groups.

Strategic Measure 5 - Close continuation gaps for target groups identified

The College has increased opportunity by widening access to higher education through various strategies as outlined in this plan, such as the dedicated and targeted National Collaborative Outreach Programme partnership work. The College would value the OfS continuing the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) role in identifying and disseminating good practice and in encouraging collaboration through, but not limited to, the NCOP work we are involved in. Aspire to HE is a partnership with local schools and colleges, who are committed to improving access to higher education for everyone in the Black Country, and Telford and Wrekin. We provide impartial guidance and practical support to help people make an informed and ambitious decisions about their future. The College's use of student engagement funds allocated via the partnership allows students to carry out widening participation initiatives and events to help us achieve a more diverse student community.

Sixty-three second year NCOP students cross-college signed up to the Passport to Success programme, which is designed to provide students with expert information, advice and guidance. The programme supports students to explore different career prospects, setting targets and providing activities to enrich their college experience. Thirty-one of these students submitted a HE application. More than 500 students benefited from Maths and English revision support sessions. 'Rip Roaring Resit' workshops were created to support and advise students with exam preparation, and techniques built confidence, aspiration and performance.

The College also invited Student ambassadors and recent graduates from a range of universities across the UK to deliver informative and interactive workshops to 43 tutorial groups regarding university life and student finance. There has been three University Visits to De Montfort University, Birmingham City University and University of Worcester. The aim of these events was to provide students and family members with information that will enable them to support their child in making the most informed decision about Higher Education. Lastly, 143 students were able to take part in the Cultural Capital Days, to explore different cities, broaden their outlook and promote positive leaver destinations after college.

We have more to do to ensure that the continuation rates for our targeted groups are improved through raising aspirations, building resilience and challenging negative perceptions and stereotypes in terms of the perceived value of higher education. For example, through our targeted parents' admissions evening events, we know that our HE students remain heavily influenced by the background and experiences of their parents and guardians. It is not uncommon, for example, for a parent to put pressure upon the student to leave the provision mid-year in order to 'get a proper job' or to start to 'contribute to the household income'. Whilst respecting family discussion and values, we also do deliberately outline the benefits of higher education during targeted parents' evenings, explaining the potential impact of graduation, the economic benefits and the likely impact of increased social mobility with further benefits that can be passed on to future generations as a result.

Because of the overwhelmingly positive impact from the parents' evenings (measured through feedback and improved continuation where parents were in attendance) we have agreed plans to extend their availability to parents beyond the singular event, where students are considering HE at the College. Originally such events were felt unnecessary as the HE offer is aimed at those aged 18 plus and therefore parental engagement was less important, however through experience we now know parent opinions can be changed to be more positive, when they are in possession of the facts around the benefits of HE. The College has agreed therefore, a termly opportunity for any HE parent or guardian to attend on an evening to ask questions around continuation, employer engagement or progression opportunities (rather than the one event positioned ahead of UCAS applications date).

Issues around a fall in continuation rates also can be linked to in-year student concerns around their personal progress, the value of their qualification, or disillusionment, fuelled potentially by social media, around value for money. The College has agreed to include such topics in the termly review meetings with each curriculum area where HE students will be encouraged to air their concerns and questions more specifically around these concerns.

The College understands that more needs to be done to fully appreciate the financial pressures that local families are facing. For example, Walsall has 20.1% living in income deprived households, which is increasing upon previous years (becoming relatively more deprived compared to the IMD 2015). We have therefore agreed to increase financial incentives from 2022/23 where we will aim to provide a more focused package of financial support students to attract students onto HE programmes and to support their continuation. Student financial support will be further developed from September 2020, with the aim to include subsidised travel scheme, scholarships for funded study, and to review the current student bursaries by September 2022. All of these recognise our low participation demographic and aim to provide our non-traditional students with a financial incentive to study and to stay engaged once on programme.

Walsall College believes we have a unique role as community leaders, representing everybody who learns from us and works with us and we may therefore believe we have the power, mandate and potential to move things forward by making appropriate equality and diversity statements followed by the relevant action. To this end the College has posted a message on our Website so that our community will know that we support Black Lives Matter (BLM) and will offer a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students and staff. BLM is a response to the historic and continued oppression and marginalisation of Black people across the world. For many HE students, their involvement will be their introduction to politics and political movements. It is an exciting and challenging time in their personal development as they seek to find their voice and to use it for good - something that we support students to do, day in and day out.

College communications to staff are crammed with resources and guidance to use to bring topics and discussion to life. As well as our dedicated Tutorial Co-ordinator, we have a strong team of highly committed Learning Facilitators to help promote and share resources for diversity and to raise aspirations leading to improved continuation rates and eliminate gaps for underrepresented groups.

Strategic Measure 6 - Increase progression rates for target groups identified

National progression to Higher Education varies significantly by ethnic group and there are also differences in progression from HE. We have referred to recruitment to HE as 'access' therefore we will focus here on strategic measures which aim to increase progression rates for our identified targeted groups, from their qualification end, onto positive destinations as defined by them securing further/higher study or employment.

Graduate employment rates and, in particular, progression to professional jobs and postgraduate study appears to be under particular national scrutiny, potentially made worse by the impact of Covid-19. To strengthen our resolve in understanding opportunities for graduates and therefore supporting our students, we aim to explore the strategic use of public grant funding for teaching and related activities whereby a teaching grant may also be used to support access, success and progression. This will be targeted at students from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups where additional funding is needed to build on provider level regulation, for example to support collaboration. We feel that, for example, creating stronger collaborative links with the National Careers Service will further enhance those HE students who can potentially question the worth of their studies mid-way through their course. To this end we will more formally signpost the guidance and support on offer.

The College understands we must provide an improved satisfactory progression statement for students and prospective students so we are committed to strengthening such statements, demonstrating that we are promoting clear progression routes for students wishing to proceed to a course of higher-level study or a job, a better job or career (our ambition for the 'A, B, C' of progression).

The College accepts within its evaluation measures, that improvements are necessary for its administrative support systems to monitor student progression more accurately and provide timely, secure and accurate information to satisfy academic and non-academic management information needs. This plan has outlined a range of student outcomes indicators, to include outcomes for students with different characteristics that include, progression to professional and managerial jobs and postgraduate study.

We have already commissioned a full survey of 2018/19 HE completers, using an impartial external agency who will have completed this work by August 2020 and will therefore provide the most accurate, impartial and robust coverage of progression into positive destinations from which to review, analyse and establish targets.

We have signalled a formal requirement to increase our commitment to produce 'Walsall College Graduates' to include our HE students and activity. Whilst this is firmly established at level's one, two and three, tutors and managers have agreed to expand the concept of formal support for wider learning and personal development, extended to our HE students in just the same manner, albeit at a higher level. Our Walsall College Graduate package provides opportunities for all students to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression, for example academic, employment and future career management skills.

The College will strengthen its offer of a wraparound developmental experience for our HE students which, for example, may include further development of English and or maths skills, as well as formal wider opportunities to include work experience, industry placements, volunteering and a full programme of personal development. There are clubs and societies to join and opportunities to volunteer and attend educational trips both locally and further afield. Our HE students will expand their digital literacy and take part in enrichments and tutorials to explore wider issues such as culture, equality and diversity and the values that will support them into being good citizens, able to contribute positively within their community and beyond. HE students will leave with much more than a qualification, to become a Walsall College Graduate, gaining the wider personal development and employability skills which will give them edge amongst the completion.

We will strengthen our resolve and pledge to HE students outlining that to be successful in a chosen career is much more than achieving a qualification. Our students will need to stand out from the crowd through gathering skills to do their chosen job but also to learn so much more to become will become a Walsall College Graduate. The College will more formally and systematically delivered the mandate for Walsall College graduate, students becoming skilled, professional and enterprising:

Skilled – we will strengthen specific industry skills, knowledge and experience so that positive progression is improved and students can thrive in the workplace, from day one of employment.

Professional – We will more precisely deliver activities to ensure students become job ready, with increased initiative, communication skills and the ability to work well as part of a team.

Enterprising – We will teach students how to be resourceful, adaptable to the changing needs of business and able to innovate.

We aim to improve our ambitions that students will leave the College having become a well-rounded individual, ready to make an instant contribution to their career - with a whole range of skills that employers want, from team-working to problem solving and communicating. This means that students will be prepared for anything, wherever their career takes them - onward, upward or even in a completely different direction, they will have the transferable skills to make find success.

For 2020-21 our HE students will, at the end of their studies, receive a personal profile pack showcasing your holistic skills and achievements ready to take to their next steps interview. We will raise aspirations through a silver or gold award, showing employers and universities that students go above and beyond in developing their transferable skills. Our outstanding Gold award winners will understand that they will be personally recognised during a prestigious end of year ceremony to celebrate and shine a light on their success.

Every HE course from 2020-21, will include a number of elements, unique to the individual needs of students to support their career ambitions.

Higher Education qualification - For most students this will make up the majority of their learning experience at the College. A mix of practical and theory, each qualification will stretch student's understanding of the subject.

English and maths - HE students will continue to build on their skills in these subjects.

Work experience/industry placement - HE students will undertake meaningful work experience/industry placements related to the vocational area of their qualification, to develop employability skills and apply learning in real life situations.

Enrichment - HE students will also be expected to engage in activities designed to support and help them to develop their job related skills, experience and confidence required to progress to employment or increasingly higher education. This includes activities such as tutorials, personal and social development, volunteering and sport.

Personal Development - Alongside the HE programme, tutors will help students to develop the skills needed to become responsible, respectful and active citizens. Through enrichment activities HE students will deepen their understanding of British values, develop a broader knowledge of physical and mental health and have access to impartial careers advice and guidance.

3.2 Student Consultation

Students from a range of backgrounds have been involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of our Access and Participation Plan (APP). HE students from all HE courses were invited to a student consultation meeting in June 2020 to discuss the plan and ask for their feedback. Some of these students stated that they were from working class backgrounds and undertaking qualifications at a later age. Combining this with previous feedback, we were able to ascertain that our students were satisfied with our commitment to continuous improvement of access and participation for our HE provision.

Socio-economic backgrounds were discussed, opportunities for education and the background of Walsall in this context. Students were asked about their opportunities and experience of Higher Education. Some students on their courses had not previously felt that they have had the opportunity to undertake a degree/Higher Education qualification. Different backgrounds were discussed, where advantages/access to education are available/unavailable, the College's position in relation to the national level of deprivation and the overall accessibility of College's offer.

Student commented how their studies have made them more employable and improved their quality of life, as they could access higher positions/wages. They were able to access education that they otherwise could not afford due to the College's fees in comparison to University costs. They commented on increased confidence and promotion opportunities as a result of studying HE and how students studying on the apprenticeship have the opportunity to undertake a degree through their employer (levy-funded), where they feel they would not have otherwise had the chance, due to the substantial cost that they would incur.

Students also commented that the College provided them with increased opportunities for the future and advancement to Higher Education e.g. progression from Level 3. Students were made aware that the approved plan will be shared with them via email and that we will continue to share our progress against the plan.

The consultation reinforced the need for us to provide further opportunities for our HE students to share their opinions, as it can be difficult for them to attend meetings due to personal/work commitments. Therefore, from 2020/21 onwards the Quality Assurance Manager and HE Curriculum Manager will meet with HE students, at least every term, in person or remotely to ensure that their experience is regularly reviewed. The aim of this is to complement the existing Student Voice arrangements for HE students.

Other Student Voice Opportunities

Students are also present at Periodic Reviews, which is an opportunity to periodically review HE provision on a three-year cycle. Any student feedback that is collected throughout each academic year informs relevant changes to the HE Enhancement Cycle, HE Strategy and the Academic Regulations. Students are also involved in Pearson's SV process, as the Standards Verifier can request to communicate with students. Feedback from SV reports is captured centrally through the EQA/EV Tracking System, which has an immediate SharePoint workflow that sends an email to the lead and their managers outlining any actions identified by the Awarding Body.

In addition, all HE students are surveyed once a year to assess their satisfaction. 18/19 to 19/20 indicated that there was a rise of 2% of overall HE student satisfaction, with growth in other areas, such as facilities and satisfaction with teaching. Highlights included a 7.0% rise in students that agree overall that the course provided them with opportunities to apply what they had learned, and an 8.1% increase in students that agree overall that it is clear how their feedback on the course has been acted upon. For the academic year 19/20, Walsall College was not eligible to participate in the external National Student Survey (NSS). However, feedback from the internal survey was acted upon by investing in software for specialist computers for Graphic Design students; and developing a HE lounge with an extension to create a deeper identity for HE students.

Students also attend the College conference to express their ideas and opinions and take part in the HE Board meeting. The student contribution to our APP has been highlighted at these meetings, to shape its targets and content.

The QAA review of Higher Education (December 2014) appraised the high quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The College was commended for the quality of student learning opportunities, and the report identified areas of good practice.

3.3 Evaluation Strategy

The following section will offer a description of the College's robust and credible evaluation strategy which demonstrates continuous improvement in practice for the duration of the plan. It will outline the mechanisms in place to enable the outcomes of evaluation to influence practice.

The evaluation plan will outline the evaluation activities to be undertaken, the forums where this will take place and responsibilities for co-ordinating and undertaking the evaluation. We outline arrangements for using results (dissemination, agreeing and monitoring recommendations).

The College's Higher Education Enhancement Cycle demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring that the activities and interventions have the greatest possible impact on the student experience and the student lifecycle.

We systematically evaluate these actions, interventions and strategies that support the APP in order to develop the service, inform strategic planning and ensure that we are having an impact on the gaps identified.

We feel we are able to demonstrate our commitment to prioritise a culture of evidence to support our work to eliminate inequality in higher education. To that end, there is an Assistant Principal – Quality and Higher Education role at the College, which includes senior level leadership and specific focus on strategic HE developments and the importance of evidence and evaluation across the college.

Through our HE Quality Cycle and associated quality assurance policies, strategies and practice, we aim to share and learn from compelling evidence about what works to eliminate inequalities in higher education. Through evaluation narrative, we have outlined in this APP a coherent explanation of what we do and why and our findings are outlined in our research and reviews.

When referring to the OfS Evaluation Self-assessment Tool, there are areas that we have identified as requiring further development, which we will seek to review moving forward. Whilst only referring to the tool to support our evaluation for this plan, we have decided to actually move to use the self-assessment tool in its entirety for the APP update during next academic year (2020/21).

This move will better enable us to more specifically evaluate our own performance and capabilities. We have however, recognised and recorded in this section, areas for further improvement that we will make to our evaluation strategy, for example, our aim to improve the collection, accuracy and evaluation of data for Care Leavers for both pre-entry students and those on-course. This will require our engagement with Care Leavers and local authorities, and will support our greater understanding of the issues facing this group.

The College's evaluation of our activity will inform our commitment to widening participation and therefore the APP will act as a vehicle to articulate the focus of the activities and interventions that will be implemented moving forwards. There are already a number of excellent activities and agendas as outlined within this APP, that are in operation however, through evaluation we accept there is more to do.

The actions captured in this APP as stated, will become a primary driver for the College's refreshed Equality and Diversity Group whose primary focus will be to enact activities and interventions that will support the APP. It will be through this mechanism that the reporting and dissemination of information regarding widening participation and the progress of the APP will be channelled. Our newly appointed Head of Management Information Systems (MIS) has also been tasked to align specific and dedicated support for HE data sets and OfS returns. For a medium sized FE College, we have not always been able to allocate such dedicated support for additional HE data activities however, a specific resource has now been approved for 2020/21 and we look forward to the extended opportunities as a result of this investment. This recognised a previously reported lack of dedicated resource in undertaking the detailed analysis to support the Colleges HE monitoring and evaluation purposes, and the impact of this investment will be reviewed moving forward. There are many current aspects of our data analysis that are not developed to design, implement or evaluate only for higher education students. This mirrors the commitment to develop a better standpoint for data analytics that relate to higher education provision at the College.

An outcome from this evaluation has identified the need to generate a HE data dashboard, which pulls together all relevant information from which to more specifically identify gaps in the Student Lifecycle, as well outline more specific interventions in a timely manner to address.

Whilst there are only two members of staff aligned specifically as a dedicated widening participation team for the higher education provision, we have triggered a broader expectation that the Tutorial Co-ordinator, Learning Facilitators and Pastoral Officers will become a more formal part of this agenda helping also to embed the core principles and practice across our HE provision.

As a direct result of our evaluation of performance, we have secured the actions and associated intervention within our APP targets. We recognise that whilst most timeframes for action state improvements required for 2020-21, we also know that our annual evaluation will help shape ambitions across the five-year period. With the impact of COVID-19, we realise that the scale of the planned impact is likely to be under more rigorous review with the uncertainties around the HE sector at this current time.

There has been less evaluation of how previous actions have influenced improvements on previous gaps and therefore our understanding of what works, is underdeveloped. Our evaluation must include a stronger understanding of the impact of previous specific activities and therefore this will be added as a standing agenda item to our Equality and Diversity Team meetings, as well as our Equality and Diversity Committee meetings.

In this APP was accept that the gaps identified inform actions for next year and beyond. We have also more work to do to identify any potential unintended consequences occurring as a result of our interventions. Analysis of this will commence from September 2020.

Evaluation Implementation

It is expected that this is the area in which we need most development in order to meet the targets as defined by the APP. We have identified that we need to centralise a range of data in order to best utilise it for monitoring and evaluation. The targets we have set, along with the monitoring commitments, will drive the format in which we will collate and centralise the data for analysis.

The College has struggled to secure the often very specific data sets we need to look in more detail at our HE performance across the Student Lifecycle. For example, data from external sources such as NSS and DLHE fail to recognise the specific types of HE Students we cater for, resulting in information which is not represented of our activity. In many ways this demonstrates how HE external drivers often fail to recognise the nuances of HE in FE activity and until data sets improve, the College's ambition is to continue to explore opportunities to build our own suitable data and also to commission this from agencies where appropriate. The College aims to strengthen our empirical enquiry so we can better demonstrate that our specific interventions are associated with beneficial results. This remains a weakness and an area for further improvement in our evaluations as outlined below. We need to generate stronger quantitative and qualitative evidence of a pre/post intervention change or a difference compared to what might otherwise have happened, as this does not always occur in a systematic manner.

Through causality, we have some way to go in being able to identify our intervention causes improvement which can demonstrate the difference using a control or comparison group. Moving forward with the APP and the support of the OfS evaluation tool, we believe this to be a realistic ambition for action during 2023/24 and beyond, depending on the size of our HE provision at that time and how this may support further investment at the College.

Relative to the challenges in this regard, a regular data set widely understood is not yet systematically and routinely reviewed in relation to our HE Students in an integrated format. This can be addressed much more swiftly and moving forwards, we feel this will be achieved during 2021/22. We will be looking to, for example, integrate external data sets (such as from J2 Research in terms of destinations) with our own in order to have more impact with our HE specific data analytical capabilities.

Outcomes and learning from interventions and evaluation.

The Equality and Diversity Committee are responsible for communicating any learning that has taken place as part of any interventions or activities that have been deployed. Sharing findings internally will be through the committee structure as well as our annual publication of our Equality and Diversity Report shared more widely with our stakeholders and community. Our learning from evaluation informs our targets, which are evidence based. We regularly evaluate the interventions being undertaken to address gaps and to create a positive impact for target groups identified in the plan.

The College has committed to improving the way we evaluate its performance and in identifying more specific actions on a termly basis rather than via annual review. This will be reported to the HE Academic board as well as our Equality and Diversity committee and Senior Management Team (SMT). The data we already collect and store needs to be used more effectively using the overarching guidance from the OfS self-evaluation tool; such as our understanding of intersectional groups and those previously unreported such as Care Leavers, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities, carers, people estranged from their families, refugees, children from military families and other Intersections of disadvantage. Through this more confident and systematic approach to evaluation, we will more effectively respond quickly and robustly to necessary interventions.

Structured termly meetings with College managers address areas/courses that have high attrition and further address the demographic of these students against the APP targets proposed. This line of communication then has accountability with the Assistant Principal for Quality and HE and is shared at Governor level; so suitable interventions and strong HE Governance can be assured formally.

Strategy Conclusions

Strategic Context – through dedicated support we have expanded opportunities for a broader team of widening participation staff to have conversations about evaluation on a regular basis. This will include our two dedicated NCOP leads but also includes CIAG staff and the Equality and Diversity Team and Pastoral Officers. Our performance against the APP actions and our systems for evaluation will form standing items in meetings.

We have promised to strengthen the HE culture of evaluation and analysis through our staff and partners' commitment to facilitating robust data collection processes and clearer extrapolation of HE data from our FE data collections. This will inform systematic dissemination of evaluation information at the Colleges set of meetings such as SMT, HE Academic Board and Equality and Diversity Committee.

We have accepted that additional team skills have been identified for increased HE expertise at the College, both in terms of data collection and commissioning evaluation of access and participation plan activities. To this end it has been agreed that the refreshed Equality and Diversity Team will be supported by a dedicated MIS link for 2020/21.

The College's rationale for programmes will always be scrutinised at formal approval panels which do include the consideration of access and participation matters. Delivery teams as supported by curriculum management are asked to resent defined objectives which are capable measureable and subject to evaluation.

We have in this APP clearly identified the indicators and measures agreed the deliverables for 2020 and across the subsequent five-year period. We have more clearly defined our targets for what will be delivered. We have also outlined intentions to strengthen our focus for specifying and agreeing the impact evaluation plans. With new and expanded roles and responsibilities to strengthen our widening participation activities, we will create a new organisational diagram for 2020/21 to appropriate ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear, and appropriate resources are in place. Furthermore, as a result of undertaking this APP, we have agreed to identify development opportunities for enhancing our evaluation practice, with the Curriculum Manager for HE being overall co-ordinator and sponsoring one person per delivery team area, to champion matters in the scheduled meetings as discussed.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

All of the actions identified by this plan will be included in the College's online Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and will require termly updates by the Curriculum Manager for HE, who will have operational responsibility for monitoring progress against the delivery this plan. The Quality Assurance Manager will be responsible for adding the actions from this plan to the College's online QIP and for monitoring progress against each action. The Assistant Principal – Quality and Higher Education will have overall responsibility for monitoring progress against the delivery of the plan at an executive senior management level. Heads of Cluster and Curriculum Managers will have day-to-day responsibility for monitoring progress against the plan. Actions arising from this plan will underpin the HE Strategy 2021/23 which is currently under review. This will be monitored at the HE Management Board, HE Quality Summit Meetings, HE Quality and Standards Meetings and at the HE Practitioner Meetings. The HE Management board consists of attendees from the College Senior Management Team that complete the OFFA agreement. Student representation is encouraged at these meetings; which reflects in the targets and outcomes for the APP.

If progress against delivery decreases, HE qualifications will be subject to additional scrutiny through the Courses in Intensive Care process, which is chaired by the Assistant Principal – Curriculum/Commercial Development and the Quality Assurance Manager and attended by the Head of Cluster/Apprenticeships and curriculum delivery staff.

Improvement and evaluation is monitored by the College's Quality Improvement Strategy. Quality Assurance processes evaluate performance throughout the academic year; and this provides the measures for the plan:

- Annual review of **HE EDIMS**.
- Annual review of the **Higher Education Enhancement Cycle** (outlines Quality Assurance processes throughout the academic year and signed off by the Governing board)
- **Course Approval Panels** (mandatory before the start of a new HE programme and is cited in the HE Academic Board meetings). These panels ensure that due diligence is applied when introducing new HE courses to the curriculum offer. They include a review of finance and resources prior to the implementation of course delivery.
- Walsall College's **Student Union** is the voice of students at Walsall College and every student over 16 is a member of the Students' Union. Daily operation of the Student Union is undertaken by the Executive Committee; these are elected positions filled by students who represent all students at all the campuses. The committee has influence over many of the decisions at the College that directly impact on the student experience.
- **HE Student Representatives** (the appointed student from each curriculum group representing the student voice from each class, that identifies areas for improvement throughout their appointment and as an active attendee at the Student Conference, which are addressed and communicated to all students through the Student Voice Action Plan)
- **HE Student Survey** (content reflects NSS questions, and improvements addressed through the Student Voice Action Plan). This highlights strengths and areas for improvement; good practice is shared at HE meetings and improvements are addressed by area/senior managers.
- **HE Course Reviews** (termly reviews completed by termly reviews by each HE tutor; validated by the Head of Cluster for each area). These self-assessment documents are updated each term for each Higher Education qualification and outline what is done well and what can be improved under the Ofsted EIF categories: Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Leadership and Management.
- **HE Quality Summits** (termly meetings that are attended by the HE Curriculum Manager, Quality Representative and the link Governor, to support and challenge performance across the HE provision. These are reinforced by Quality Summits for each curriculum area.
- **HE Periodic Reviews** (Reviews of programmes that run on a three-year cycle to reflect the process used by QAA, and links the continuous process of monitoring to inform Curriculum Planning). Students are invited to these meetings to represent the curriculum area.
- **HE Assessment Board** and Virtual Assessment Boards (Consists of one annual Assessment Board meeting and two virtual boards within the College Quality website for HE tutors to present grades and extenuating circumstances for approval by the Curriculum Manager for HE, SMT Executive members and an external stakeholder.
- **HE Self-Assessment Report** (The annual SAR for each area in the College creates Quality Improvement Points that are disseminated to every manager as points to action, with set deadlines, learning points, actions from the previous year and strengths and weaknesses). These actions are added to the College Quality Improvement Plan to action and provide termly progress updates.
- **HE Workforce Development Day/Workforce Development** (developing HE tutors and running specialist development sessions, such as Advance HE Membership sessions, methods of sharing good practice and standardisation). Staff development includes the opportunity for HE tutors, senior leaders and associates to become Advance HE members. This enables HE tutors to gain accreditation with a professional body to reflect excellence in

practice for the College's HE tutors. This is embedded in the College organisational culture of inclusion and respect; and promotes HE tutors to reflect upon inclusion within their teaching (as set by the standards framework).

- HE staff are also entitled to **HE Scholarly Activity**, in which they can pursue areas of research in their chosen subject.
- **Staff Equality Training** - we have delivered a range of Equality and Diversity training in College and approved training requests for staff to attend external courses-

Governance

Our Governors are united in their passion to support and maintain an inclusive organisation where the whole community can learn, work and thrive whilst reaching their full potential. Several of our Governors are local residents and all have a passion to see Walsall College fulfil its commitment to its community and play varied roles in business, education, charity and community cohesion.

Governors are keen to support students and, actively, support Student Voice, listen to their voice and use it to make improvements which support inclusion and drive equality forward. To this end there is a Student Voice Committee, which is a key Governor Committee and a named Governor for equality and diversity who sits on the E and D Committee.

The Corporation is responsible for the following functions:

- (a) the determination and periodically review of the educational character and mission of the institution and for the oversight of its activities;
- (b) publishing arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities;
- (c) approving the quality strategy of the institution;
- (d) the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the Corporation and safeguarding their assets;
- (e) Approving annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- (f) The appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of pay and conditions of service of the holders of senior posts and the Clerk including, where the Clerk is, or is appointed as, a member of staff, the Clerk's appointment, grading, suspension, dismissal and determination of pay in the capacity of a member of staff; and
- (g) Setting a framework for the pay and conditions of service of all other staff.

These systems emphasise causes for review and intervention to improve the student experience in-year. The processes also evaluate the recruitment, retention, achievement and progression of our students in the APP to ensure OfS regulation.

4. Provision of information to students

The Access and Participation Plan applies to all prospective Higher Education students commencing their studies at Walsall College from the 2020/21 academic year. This plan outlines the College's Mission and Strategic Plan which demonstrates a clear commitment to widening and increasing participation in Higher Education, regardless of any potential barriers associated with previous experience, background or any other factors. As with all previous College OFFA agreements, the approved Access and Participation Plan will be published on the College's website.

Information outlining fees and financial support is available to prospective and current HE students from a number of sources including the College website. The HE:ED (Higher Education) webpage outlines Higher Education Fees and Financial Support Information. This contains comprehensive information, and customers are signposted to this page from other publications (both online and offline). These other sources include, The Higher Education Prospectus (which is distributed at promotional events and schools, available to download/request hard copies from the website and available from the College Reception). There is also a dedicated page for each Higher Education course on the website, which outlines detailed information for each qualification. In addition to this, students receive a HE Handbook for their chosen qualification, which includes information on financial matters. A standard template is issued to all HE Tutors, to ensure that all HE students have access to this information. This is underpinned by the College's Academic Regulations, that is reviewed each year and provided in hard copy and online to students, which highlights the College HE strategy, rules regarding plagiarism, complaints and academic appeals procedures.

Students are advised that they may be entitled to access a range of financial support mechanisms, including but not limited to:

- Bursaries.
- Higher Education Fees and financial support information.

This support aims to achieve transparency and provide students with every opportunity to access financial support for progression into higher education. As previously stated, our students may not necessarily have the funds available to access education and may need financial assistance.

5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

References

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English Indices of Deprivation 2015 - Statistical Release.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Statistical_Release.pdf)

<https://www.walsallintelligence.org.uk/home/demographics/deprivation/>

https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185537/subreports/quals_time_series/report.asp

X

https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/ED-Annual-Report-18_19.pdf

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	BCU Partnership	£7,500
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Domestic students	£5,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	London College of Contemporary Arts Ltd 10052868 - All subcontracted courses	£6,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND		£2,900
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 entrants

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

Targets and investment plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Walsall College

Provider UKPRN: 10007315

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£89,901.00	£59,276.00	£60,462.00	£61,671.00	£62,904.00
Access (pre-16)	£16,542.00	£16,872.00	£17,210.00	£17,554.00	£17,905.00
Access (post-16)	£19,803.00	£20,200.00	£20,604.00	£21,016.00	£21,436.00
Access (adults and the community)	£53,556.00	£22,204.00	£22,648.00	£23,101.00	£23,563.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£108,145.00	£65,011.00	£65,953.00	£66,664.00	£67,375.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£12,624.00	£12,876.00	£13,134.00	£13,396.00	£13,664.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£140,000.00	£54,500.00	£56,000.00	£57,500.00	£59,000.00
Access investment	39.2%	39.2%	38.9%	38.6%	38.4%
Financial support	24.4%	24.4%	24.6%	24.7%	24.8%
Research and evaluation	8.5%	8.5%	8.4%	8.4%	8.3%
Total investment (as %HFI)	72.1%	72.1%	71.9%	71.7%	71.5%

