Walsall College

Access and Participation Plan (APP)

2022 - 2023 to 2026 - 2027

Bringing talent to life...

DEPARTMENT	HIGHER EDUCATION
DATE ISSUED	JULY 2022
REVIEW DATE	JULY 2023
VERSION	AWAITING APPROVAL

Walsall College

Access and Participation Plan 2022-23 to 2026-27

1. Assessment of performance

The OfS Individualised Performance Measures display a range of 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 not statistically significant (due to small student numbers) and therefore not presented. We have used our own data in these cases, including our own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Measures (EDIM's), taken from our own data gathering software based on individual student records. In some instances, the plan has referred to qualitative analysis and local/regional statistics to supplement our analysis. We recognise that the College has more work to do to disaggregate BAME statistics within progression data, multiple indices of deprivation, POLAR4 and socio-economic background in some instances in the plan.

General Data Protection Rules (GDPR) also restrict 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 the College's aims and objectives. The assessment of performance in this section therefore uses the combination of data supplied by the OfS Individual Performance Data, as well as the College's own internal data taken directly from the Individual Learner Records (ILR) system.

As with many Colleges of Further Education (FE), we do not award Degrees and therefore student achievement is not analysed as 1:1's nor 2:1's for example. The College's HE offer (not partnership HE) 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 a 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.

With specific FE terminology needing to be explained and aligned to Office for Students (OfS) terms, the College has 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. College data therefore includes all students who were active six weeks after the start of the course.

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.

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

Access

Participation of local areas (POLAR4) Proportion of young (under 21) entrants: Walsall College

Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data

The Office for Students (OfS) key performance measures **(KPM) 1** indicates that in 2019-20, participation rates from the most represented neighbourhoods was significantly larger than the least represented areas of the UK resulting in this being a key percentage point gap (ppt) to address nationally.

The percentage point gap of participation between the most represented (Quintile 5) and the least represented (Quintile 1) groups at HEI's in the UK was 28 percentage points, reducing to 26.8 percentage points in 2020-21. Participation nationally had risen for all groups steadily in recent years with even the lowest Quintile 1 rising to around 33% participation overall for 2020-21.

In the West Midlands area however, the percentage from low participation neighbourhoods (Quintile 1) was 15.1% (HESA UK Performance Indicators 2020-21).

The table shows the participation of local areas (POLAR 4) where the College's percentage point gap between quintiles one and five was 23 ppt however, this is in favour of Quintile 1 demonstrating strong participation from the least represented groups.

	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 -19	2019 - 20
Quintile 1	32%	26%	28%	25%	30%
Quintile 2	35%	33%	33%	33%	29%
Quintile 3	15%	18%	26%	27%	21%
Quintile 4	14%	14%	11%	13%	14%
Quintile 5	5%	8%	3%	2%	7%
Q1 vs Q5	27ppt	18ppt	25ppt	23ppt	23ppt

Deprivation (IMD 2019)

Source: OfS Data Dashboard

Deprivation of Proportion of Entrants: Walsall College

It is important to note that our HNC and HND qualifications, which represent around 75% of our total number of higher education students, are all one year in duration and therefore as a result do not feature in the OfS Data Dashboards. The continuation figure from the OfS Data Dashboards therefore is based upon only 25% of our total number of HE students. The OfS data therefore, represents only our programmes delivered over two-years.

In this particular OfS data set then, the 2019/20 data shows a 20-percentage point gap for continuation between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5. When viewed against all HEIs in the UK (6.5pp), the College's percentage point gap (ppt) seems large. It is important to note however that the 20 ppt is not statistically significant due to large ranges between confidence intervals in the data.

This gap is a consequence of the larger proportion of students from Quintile 1 in comparison to the sector average and the high level of local deprivation in the Walsall area. The recruitment of Quintile 1 is significantly greater than Quintile 5, which is a positive representation of our community. Whilst non-continuation is extremely low overall, it is important however that the gap is not ignored, with a focused set of objectives to reduce the non-continuation ppt gap for students from Quintile 1 **PTS_1.**

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Q1 vs Q5	DP	N	N	N	20.0pp

Deprivation of Proportion of Entrants: All HEI's

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Q1 vs Q5	7.6pp	7.6pp	7.7pp	8.0pp	6.5pp

Socio-economic status

Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022, and Office for Students Young Participation by Area

At Walsall College in 2021/22, 67.1% of students reside within the most deprived postcodes in the borough. The TUNDRA (tracking underrepresentation by area) Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) measure for the area of St Matthew's in Walsall (where the College is located) is Quintile 1 (displaying the least participation of 16-year-olds that progressed to a HE course and are now aged 18-19). The 2011 national census data shows that the adult population in the area who reside within Quintile 2, have very low attainment at level 4 or above.

Success

Non-continuation

Higher Education participation POLAR4

Participation of local areas (POLAR4) Proportion of young (under 21) entrants: Walsall College: Continuation Rates
Source: Walsall College Equality and Diversity Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022

The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021/22 (EDI Report) highlights that 58% of students within the total HE provision are from areas of Widening Participation (WP), which demonstrates the College's commitment to engage with students from traditionally low participation areas. These students are almost all first generation HE students amongst their family and friends. It is important to track the continuation rates of these students to ensure that our careers advice and guidance, initial diagnostics and support enable them to succeed at higher levels.

Widening Participation	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %
No	**2020/21**	**91**	**96.47%**
	2019/20	46	91.30%
	2018/19	89	91.86%
Yes	**2020/21**	**128**	**93.39%**
	2019/20	58	94.23%
	2018/19	99	88.42%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**94.66%**
	2019/20	104	92.86%
	2018/19	188	90.06%

Socio-economic status – Continuation Rates: Walsall College

No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.

Deprivation (IMD 2019) – Continuation Rates: All English higher education providers

	2014-15	**2015-16**	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**
Quintile 1	86.6%	86.2%	86.2%	86.0%	85.9%
Quintile 2	88.2%	88.0%	87.8%	87.3%	87.7%
Quintile 3	90.8%	90.7%	90.5%	90.1%	90.5%
Quintile 4	92.3%	92.2%	92.3%	92.0%	92.3%
Quintile 5	93.9%	93.8%	93.8%	93.7%	93.9%
Q1 vs Q5	-7.3%	-7.6%	-7.6%	-7.7%	-8.0%

Attainment

Higher Education participation POLAR4: Attainment rates for young (under 21) students
Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data, Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022

As we have small proportions of students who study on Level 6 Degree Top-Ups at the College, we do not have distinct or significant differences in attainment between students who achieve first or second-class degree classifications. The OfS Individualised Performance Data is suppressed for POLAR 4 achievement, as there are less than ten students that classify as gaining full degree qualifications.

There is a percentage point achievement gap between students that are and are not WP for 2020/21 of 3.81 ppt, which will be addressed in the TIP document. The achievement (attainment) and overall pass grades for Walsall College H.E students from WP backgrounds are increasing. We aim to close this gap between the achievement (attainment) of the most (Quintile 5) and least participation (Quintile 1) groups in H.E across the five-year-period of the plan, to 0 ppt in 2026-27 **(PTS_2)**.

Widening Participation (WP)	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Ach%	Pass%
No	**2020/21**	**91**	**90.59%**	**93.90%**
	2019/20	46	89.13%	97.62%
	2018/19	89	82.56%	89.87%
Yes	**2020/21**	**128**	**86.78%**	**92.92%**
	2019/20	58	86.54%	91.84%
	2018/19	99	84.21%	95.24%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**88.35%**	**93.33%**
	2019/20	104	87.76%	94.51%
	2018/19	188	83.43%	92.64%

Deprivation (IMD 2019): Attainment rates: Walsall College

Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data

It should be noted that the OfS Individualised Data below represents low numbers of students, from 22 to 35 individuals. The quantity of students makes the provided data suppressed and difficult to analyse, therefore we do not have distinct or significant differences in attainment between students who achieve first or second-class degree classifications.

For these specific level 6 top-up courses at Walsall College, we do not have attainment data regarding deprivation in our Equality, Diversity and Impact monitoring (however this is in place for the larger majority of level 4 and 5 students).

	2015-16	2016-2017	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Quintile 1	60%	53%	56%	60%	41%
Quintile 2	11%	13%	18%	27%	32%
Quintile 3	9%	13%	10%	N/A	14%
Quintile 4	9%	13%	15%	10%	9%
Quintile 5	11%	7%	N/A	3%	5%
Q1 vs Q5	60%	53%	56%	60%	41%

Socio-economic status – Attainment Rates: Walsall College

No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.

Progression to employment or further study

Higher Education participation POLAR4: Progression rates for young (under 21) students
Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data, Walsall College Destinations Data: Young People (2019/20), and Higher Education (2019/20)

No destination data is presented within the OfS individualised performance data, which was shared with the College directly from OfS) as the information is suppressed (as there are fewer than 20 students in the chosen population). The OfS dashboard data offers historical data, representing the results from the DLHE survey last captured in 2016 -17.

The College's destination data for 2019-20 HE leavers shows that 87% gained a positive destination (a decline of 4% compared to 91% of 2018-19 leavers). This decline was anticipated due to the impact of the pandemic. The positive destinations are primarily maintained due to the increase in take-up of further and higher study, against a decline in securing employment as industry sectors were struggling to maintain service and employment due to the impacts of Covid-19. It is pleasing to note that positive destinations for WP remain strong at 91%.

Year	Leavers	Destinations			Widening Participation	
		Known	**Unknown**	**Positive**	**WP**	**Non-WP**
2019/20	127	111 (87%)	16 (13%)	87%	91%	83%

Deprivation (IMD 2019) – Progression Rates: Walsall College
Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data, Walsall College Destinations Data: Higher Education (2019/20)

There is no data presented within the OfS individualised performance data, as the information is suppressed (as there are fewer than 20 students in the chosen population).

Socio-economic status: progression
Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 - 2022, Walsall Insight Report from Walsall Borough Council, 2022

Walsall (St Matthew's ward, where the College is located) has a lower proportion of people that have a degree or higher 27.9% (compared to the national average of 43.1%).

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

When using the College's own EDI data, we see that 24% of the total HE cohort at Walsall College in 2020/21 was made up of BAME students which broadly reflects the regional demographic (and in 2019/20 BAME recruitment was 26%).

When referring to the OfS data however, (which reflects a small sub-set of actual HE recruitment at the College) we see a proportion of White students in 2019-20 is 89% compared to BAME recruitment of 11%. Even within this smaller sub-set, the College aims to increase recruitment of BAME students to better represent the regional population where BAME represents around 28%. Within this data we see an 8% decline in the recruitment of Asian students and a decline in Black students. The College will publish aims to address these differences together with associated objectives to achieve improved access which more accurately reflect the regional population.

We have small student numbers in some categories, making clear conclusions difficult from the sample size of our student cohorts, as some of the data is suppressed and displayed as N/A.

The Target Improvement Plan outlines our aim to increase proportions from 2019-20 of Asian and Black students by 2026-27 **(PTA_1 and PTA_2).** Asian students will increase access proportions from 2% to 8% and Black student proportions to increase from 2% to 8%. Achieving this would bring the College in line with reflecting local demographics as well as the national picture where HEIs recruit 68.9% white students.

Ethnicity: Access proportions of entrants (18-year olds only) – Walsall College
Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data

	2015-16	2016-2017	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	9%	3%	3%	10%	2%
Black	N/A	6%	6%	3%	2%
Mixed	9%	6%	6%	3%	7%
White	82%	85%	85%	83%	89%
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Ethnicity: Access proportions of entrants (18-year olds only) – All English higher education providers

Source: Office for Students APP Data Dashboard

	2015-16	**2016-2017**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**
Asian	13.1%	13.1%	14.5%	15.4%	16.7%
Black	4.4%	4.6%	6.3%	6.6%	7.1%
Mixed	4.4%	6.2%	6.3%	6.6%	5.2%
White	75.0%	74.0%	72.7%	71.3%	68.9%
Other	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.8%	2.1%

Success

Non-continuation

Ethnicity: Continuation rates – Walsall College

Source: OfS Data Dashboard

It is important to note that our HNC and HND qualifications, which represent around 75% of our higher education qualifications, are all one year in duration and therefore do not feature in the OfS Data Dashboards. The continuation figure from the OfS Data Dashboards therefore is based upon a very small number (less than 5%) where students study within our two-year programmes.

The dashboard supports the College in being able to disaggregate BAME data to better understand where to focus intervention. The data shows that in 2019/20 there were ppt gaps for Asian students of 10.0pp and a gap however in both these cases the data is classified as not statistically significant due to a wide-ranging confidence limit in each case. The gap for Black students however is statistically significant at 31.0pp and is presented as an aim for improvement within this plan. The College's ambition is to reduce this ppt gap to 5.0 ppt by 2026/27. This will be addressed in our aims and objectives as **PTS_3.**

	2015-16	**2016-2017**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**
Asian	DP	40.0pp	20.0pp	15.0pp	10.0pp
Black	DP	25.0pp	39.0pp	27.0pp	31.0pp
Mixed	DP	DP	25.0pp	20.0pp	20.0pp
Other	DP	DP	DP	DP	DP

Ethnicity: Continuation rates: All English higher education providers

Source: Office for Students APP Data Dashboard

	2015-16	2016-2017	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	0.4pp	1.1pp	1.2pp	0.9pp	-0.2pp
Black	6.1pp	6.4pp	6.6pp	6.1pp	4.7pp
Mixed	2.1pp	2.4pp	2.1pp	2.0pp	1.5pp
Other	3.0pp	2.4pp	2.1pp	2.0pp	1.5pp

The Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022 represents our entire HE student cohort. When examining this larger data set (which more accurately represents our entire HE cohort), we see that retention (continuation) of BAME students has increased significantly, from 2018-19 and compared to 2019-20, the retention rate has increased by 6.2%. In this wider view we see that BAME students are retained at higher rates than non-BAME students however the College will aim to present this data by a more disaggregated view at next iteration for 2022/23.

Ethnic Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %
BAME	**2020/21**	**53**	**97.87%**
	2019/20	27	91.67%
	2018/19	49	86.36%
Non-BAME	**2020/21**	**166**	**93.71%**
	2019/20	77	93.24%
	2018/19	139	91.24%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**94.66%**
	2019/20	104	92.86%
	2018/19	188	90.06%

Attainment

Attainment: Ethnicity: Walsall College

Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 - 2022

Walsall College has very small Level 6 cohorts to gain degree classification qualifications. All other data is suppressed, or is not provided for GDPR reasons. These results reflect our teacher training qualifications, delivered in partnership with Birmingham City University and Warwick University, which are not statistically significant.

When using the College's own EDI data, we see that 24% of the HE cohort at Walsall College in 2020-21 was made up of BAME students which broadly reflects the regional demographic. There is an achievement (attainment) percentage point gap of 4.2 ppt for BAME students, in 2020-21, which has improved from a previous of 11.3 ppt in 2019-20. The Target and Investment Plan displays our aim to close the achievement (attainment) gap from 4.2 ppt to 0 ppt in 2026-27 **(PTS_4).**

Ethnic Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Achievement %
BAME	**2020/21**	**53**	**85.11%**
	2019/20	27	79.17%
	2018/19	49	70.45%
Non-BAME	**2020/21**	**166**	**89.31%**
	2019/20	77	90.54%
	2018/19	139	87.59%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**88.35%**
	2019/20	104	87.76%
	2018/19	188	83.43%

Progression: Ethnicity

Source: Walsall College Destinations Data: Higher Education (2019/20), 2019-20 Destination Data Tool

Destinations Data – 2019/20: Higher Education

No destination data is presented within the OfS individualised performance data, which was shared with the College directly from OfS) as the information is suppressed (as there are fewer than 20 students in the chosen population). The OfS dashboard data offers historical data, representing the results from the DLHE survey last captured in 2016 -17.

The 2019-20 Destinations Data Report highlights a gap in BAME positive destinations of 9 ppt when compared to their Non-BAME peers. Further numbers regarding employment by subject sector area or whether employment is classified as 'highly skilled' are small and therefore would contravene GDPR regulations. Further work to disaggregate BAME destination data will appear in future interaction in 2022/23.

The 9 ppt gap between the positive destinations of BAME students compared to Non-BAME students will be addressed as an action on the Target and Improvement Plan to close this gap to 1 ppt by 2026-27 **(PTP_1).**

Destinations Data – 2019/20: Walsall College

Year	Leavers	Destinations			Ethnicity	
		Known	**Unknown**	**Positive**	**BAME**	**Non-BAME**
2019/20	127	111 (87%)	16 (13%)	87%	81%	90%

1.3 Mature students

Age: Proportion of entrants – Walsall College

Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data

The figures reflect highest percentages of mature students, throughout the last five years, and signifies the LCCA partnership students in London, who were predominantly mature students. However, after the cessation of the partnership in 2018/19, the 2019/20 figures signify a return to the students at Walsall College Wisemore campus, only. This aligns broadly with the sector, which displays a 2019/20 figure of 30.2% of mature students, and 69.8% of young people. The College anticipates that this figure will drop further and align with competitor data averages.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Mature (21 and over)	55%	52%	46%	53%	43%
Young (under 21)	45%	48%	54%	47%	57%

Success

Non-continuation

Age: Continuation rates – Walsall College

Source: OfS Data Dashboard

It is important to note that our HNC and HND qualifications, which represent around 75% of our higher education qualifications, are all one year in duration and therefore do not feature in the OfS Data Dashboards. The continuation figure from the OfS Data Dashboards therefore is based upon a very small number of students within our validated two-year programmes.

The percentage point gap of 26.00 pp between Mature (21 and over) and Young (under 21) continuation for 2019/20 is a statistically significant figure, which we have included in our TIP document. This indicates that Mature students have lower continuation rates than their Young peers. We aim to close this percentage point gap to 7.0 pp in line with other HEIs (reducing it by 19 pp) by 2026/27 (**PTS_5).**

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Mature (21 and over) vs Young (under 21)	10.0pp	13.0pp	9.0pp	17.0pp	26.0pp

The Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022 represents our entire HE student cohort and highlights that the retention rate of mature students at Walsall College in 2018-19 is 3.79% above the sector average. In 2020-21, there is a 3.4% ppt gap in retention between young students and mature students, which is not statistically significant. Whilst this data, based on total HE students, shows a small gap in continuation, the College will aim to close the much larger gap of 26 percentage points within the smaller data set from the OfS dashboard (**PTS_5).**

Age Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %
16-18 (Young)	**2020/21**	**5185**	**93.40%**
	2019/20	4835	95.06%
	2018/19	5321	96.19%
19+ (Mature)	**2020/21**	**5207**	**96.80%**
	2019/20	5280	96.94%
	2018/19	5290	97.00%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**10392**	**95.25%**
	2019/20	10115	96.06%
	2018/19	10611	96.57%

Age: Continuation rates – All other higher education providers

Source: Office for Students APP Data Dashboard

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mature (21 and over)	85.3%	85.1%	84.8%	84.0%	84.4%
Young (under 21)	92.3%	92.1%	92.2%	92.1%	92.4%
Young vs. Mature	7.0%	7.0%	7.4%	8.1%	8.0%

Age: Attainment rates – Walsall College

Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 – 2022

The information presented has achievement (attainment) data for all adult students, for both FE and HE. A previous 6.67 ppt gap in achievement between Adults (19+) and Young People (16-18) students has now been closed.

Age Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %	Achievement%
16-18 (Young)	**2020/21**	**5185**	**93.40%**	**86.12%**
	2019/20	4835	95.06%	88.32%
	2018/19	5321	96.19%	89.97%
19+ (Mature)	**2020/21**	**5207**	**96.80%**	**85.18%**
	2019/20	5280	96.94%	80.72%
	2018/19	5290	97.00%	89.56%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**10392**	**95.25%**	**85.61%**
	2019/20	10115	96.06%	84.26%
	2018/19	10611	96.57%	89.78%

Progression to employment or further study

Age: Progression to employment or further study: Walsall College

Source: Walsall College Destinations Data: Higher Education (2019/20), 2019-20 Destination Data Tool

There is no data presented within the OfS individualised performance data, as the information is suppressed (as there are fewer than 20 students in the chosen population).

Destinations Data – 2019/20: Higher Education

From a total sample of 19+ students in scope (139 students) we see an impressive 89.9% progression into positive destinations (a job or further study).

1.4 Disabled students

Access

The number of students in full-time higher education that disclosed that they have a disability in 2019/20 is 17.0%, which reflects sector averages of other HEI's at 16.6%. The number of students in full-time higher education that are not reported as disabled in 2019/20 is 83%, which reflects other higher education providers at 83.4%.

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

Source: OfS Individualised Performance Data

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Disability reported	16%	16%	14%	22%	17%
No disability reported	84%	84%	86%	78%	83%

Access: Make-up of students entering higher education – All English Higher Education Providers

Source: Office for Students APP Data Dashboard

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Disability reported	12.9%	13.7%	14.6%	15.8%	16.6%
No disability reported	87.1%	86.3%	85.4%	84.2%	83.4%

Success

Non-continuation

Continuation Rates: Disability: Walsall College

Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 - 2022

In 2020-21, recruitment of HE students in 2020-21 with a disability is 10%, which is 7% less than in previous three years. It is worth noting that any ppt gap therefore needs to be understood in this context. The College continues our commitment to enable the inclusive continuation of all students, although we acknowledge that there is a 12.41 ppt gap between retention (continuation) of disability students and students with no disability. This will be addressed as an aim to increase the rate of retention (continuation) for disability students reducing the 12.4 ppt gap to 5 ppt by 2026-27 **(PTS_6).**

Disability Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %
Disability	**2020/21**	**22**	**83.33%**
	2019/20	10	80.00%
	2018/19	32	85.71%
No disability	**2020/21**	**197**	**95.74%**
	2019/20	94	94.32%
	2018/19	156	90.85%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**94.66%**
	2019/20	104	92.86%
	2018/19	188	90.06%

Attainment

Attainment Rates: Disability: Walsall College

Source: Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 - 2022

A significant achievement gap of 23.76 ppt exists for students who report a disability against students with no disability reported (where those with a disability reported have lower attainment) in 2020-21 **(PTS_7).** The aim is to reduce this attainment (achievement) ppt gap between students with a reported disability and those with no disability reported down to a 7.76 ppt gap by 2026-27 on the Target and Investment Plan. It is important to note however, that the volume of students with a disability are small in proportion at just over ten in number for 2019-20, therefore the base number offers further context to this aim.

Disability Group	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %	Achievement %	Pass%
Disability	**2020/21**	**22**	**83.33%**	**66.67%**	**80.00%**
	2019/20	10	80.00%	80.00%	100.0%
	2018/19	32	85.71%	82.14%	95.83%
No disability	**2020/21**	**197**	**95.74%**	**90.43%**	**94.44%**
	2019/20	94	94.32%	88.64%	93.98%
	2018/19	156	90.85%	83.66%	92.09%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**94.66%**	**88.35%**	**93.33%**
	2019/20	104	92.86%	87.76%	94.51%
	2018/19	188	90.06%	83.43%	92.64%

Progression to employment or further study

Disability: Progression Rates into highly skilled employment or high-level study: Walsall College

There is no data presented within the OfS individualised performance data, as the information is suppressed (as there are fewer than 20 students in the chosen population). No students classified as High Needs were captured in the 2019/20 data collection. We have no comparable data for 2018/19 leavers.

Destinations Data – 2019/20: Higher Education

Year	Leavers	Destinations			High Needs	
		Known	Unknown	Positive	HN	Non-HN
2019/20	127	111 (87%)	16 (13%)	87%	-	76%

1.5 Care Leavers

There are no Walsall College Care Leavers enrolled for 2020/21. Therefore, it is not possible to analyse this information without potentially identifying individual students. Less than five Care Leavers were recorded in 2021/22, therefore this data will be suppressed.

Those with care experience have significantly poorer educational and life outcomes than the general population on average and are underrepresented in higher education. Walsall College has developed recruitment and diagnostics which encourages applicants with care experience to state this discreetly in their application so that our support teams can be mindful should additional support emerge. Importantly, in knowing our care experience students and looked after children, we can better ensure their attendance and progress is supported.

The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) are informed by the DfE that the Widening Participation in HE data 2021 comments '13% of pupils who were looked after continuously for 12 months or more at 31 March 2016 progressed to HE by age 19 by 19/20, compared to 43% of all other pupils'. By capturing the Care Leavers who are studying at HE at the College, will enable us to make further improvements to raise their aspirations and increase their enrolment to HE. At the moment, the College provides a counselling service and pastoral support for students that feel they require it.

Access

No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.

Non-continuation – No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. *We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.*

Attainment – No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. *We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.*

Progression to employment or further study – No information displayed within OfS Individualised Performance data. *We will present and analyse the new data that is now available on the OfS dashboard in the next APP submission for 2023 - 2028.*

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Source: Walsall College Destinations Data: Higher Education (2019/20), 2019-20 Destination Data Tool, Walsall College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2021 - 2022

Our HE student cohorts are so small that an analysis of intersections of disadvantage would lead to identification of individuals, therefore we are not able to report this data at this time. The information has been suppressed for data protection reasons.

It is important to note however that the College is aware of some national considerations where multiple intersections of disadvantage have been explored. From national data, white working-class boys are the lowest performing group at the end of compulsory education and they are also underrepresented in higher education. Achievement at school may not be the only relevant factor leading to this. Financial barriers can also act as a deterrent to entry. For example, during exit interviews with level 2 and level 3 students as well as during feedback at information events for parents, the College is made aware of some apparent disillusionment in the suggested benefits of HE study. Families with no prior generational experience of HE often remain sceptical about the financial commitments required to study and question the impact of HE attainment on the chances of gaining employment. Such perspectives do mean that many students who decide to enrol do so despite family advice rather than because of it.

Many more decide not to progress to HE even though they have the prerequisites to do so successfully, which may or may not be the right decision for them. We find this phenomenon is much more prevalent in those from Widening Participation (WP) localities than in non-WP. We also see this trait in Male students more frequently than Female students. The College is reviewing how this may impact upon Male WP students once on programme, for example, there is a 9.04 ppt gap in attainment (achievement) for male HE students. There is also a gap in attainment (achievement) of 3.81 ppt for Widening Participation students in HE. Positive destinations for Male leavers in 2019/20 was 7% below Female leavers.

A further consideration regardless of genre is that of class and regional accents being a barrier to progress at HE. The Social Mobility Commission (SMC), which monitors progress in improving social mobility in the UK, have reported that accents had become a "tangible barrier" for some students. We do know anecdotally that some visiting students (after graduation) had experienced this during their time at university.

HE Male and Female Achievement Data

Gender	Year	Starts (enrolments)	Retention %	Achievement %	Pass%
Female	**2020/21**	**111**	**95.00%**	**93.00%**	**97.89%**
	2019/20	58	90.74%	81.48%	89.80%
	2018/19	101	91.84%	85.71%	93.33%
Male	**2020/21**	**108**	**94.34%**	**83.96%**	**89.00%**
	2019/20	46	95.45%	95.45%	100.0%
	2018/19	87	87.95%	80.2%	91.78%
Grand Total	**2020/21**	**219**	**94.66%**	**88.35%**	**93.33%**
	2019/20	104	92.86%	87.76%	94.51%
	2018/19	188	90.06%	83.43%	92.64%

HE Destinations Data for Males and Females

Year	Leavers	Destinations			Gender	
		Known	**Unknown**	**Positive**	**Female**	**Male**
2019/20	127	111 (87%)	16 (13%)	87%	91%	84%

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, transgender, 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, participation and continuation, should student numbers increase in the future.

State School/College students

Source: Walsall College Internal Data

A significant majority of our HE students are from state schools and progress internally from Further Education qualifications to Higher Education qualifications.

Part-Time students

Source: Walsall College Internal Data

With the exception of the College's Level 6 Top-up courses (with partnership Universities), all BTEC Pearson courses can be adapted to be taught part-time. Presently, the College offers two part-time HE courses, for Construction/Built Environment, and Teacher Education. Students on these courses are either external candidates who have mostly come from industry backgrounds, or are internal members of staff who study one day a week to further their career goals.

1.8 Progression Data

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

The Graduate Outcomes survey provides an invaluable longitudinal perspective on the life experiences and motivations of leavers from UK higher education, enabling better understanding of the long-term social and economic impacts of world events, among this sizeable proportion of the population. HESA, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, are the experts in UK higher education data, and the designated data body for England.

Due to the coronavirus illness (COVID-19) HESA anticipate that there might be some changes in terms of their regular statistical production. The disruption to the UK could affect the publishing schedule for some statistics. In some cases, the production of some data series may need to be suspended or delayed.

The survey of graduates from the classes of 2017/18 and 2018/19 have been released as experimental statistics by HESA. They have shared only a snapshot of some of these statistics from the class of 2018/19:

- Obtained responses from nearly 400,000 graduates.
- 79% of graduates that responded were in Paid Employment.
- 20% of graduates were involved in further study.
- 90% of postgraduates from 2018/19 who were in UK work were in high skilled jobs, compared to 69% of undergraduates.
- The most frequently recorded industries worked in were: Human health and social work activities (21%) and Education (20%).
- 85% of graduates felt that their current activity is meaningful.
- 78% of graduates felt their current activity fitted in with their future plans.
- 71% of graduates were utilising what they learnt while studying.
- 74% of graduates were satisfied with life.

The College will report the outcomes of the Graduate Outcomes Survey once the data from is made available again, as only experimental statistics have been released so far. If made available in time, the results of this data will be presented in the next Access and Participation Plan in 2023. The College will continue to engage with an external data collection agency in order to survey the destinations of all HE leavers on an annual basis.

Walsall College's Destination Data

Destination data for HE students at the College is captured through a third-party research organisation. The College is very successful in ensuring our graduates find work and further study, as 87% of the HE students are positive destinations in the six months following their course.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

The majority of our students are from disadvantaged backgrounds or reside in areas of high deprivation, their families and or peers often do not consider higher education as a realistic or worthwhile option. Too many studying at level 2 and 3 do not see themselves as 'good enough' to be considered for HE. It is to their credit then for those who embark on a journey towards higher attainment, aiming high in the anticipation of better options and a more rewarding career. Many require sustained pastoral care and adjustments along the way to support them to continue and to achieve.

Walsall has been named as one of the 55 Education Investment Areas across England in the Government Levelling Up White Paper published in February 2022. Whitehall has said these areas are where school outcomes are weakest with promises of support over the next decade.

The Colleges role then in widening access and participation to these underrepresented disadvantaged groups in the region remains more important than ever and is a key driver for the College to retain a Higher Education offer. The needs of this smaller community of students would not be met even by the most local of competitors in Birmingham for example, where students have part-time jobs to maintain in Walsall, or families to support. For these students, studying locally remains their only opportunity. These groups are recognised as requiring extra support compared to those from a typical university intake, to achieve similar success rates.

Particular areas of focus will be to close percentage points gaps in access, success or progression for target groups as informed by the assessment of performance presented within this plan.

Whilst non-continuation is extremely low overall, it is important however that the gap is not ignored, with a focused set of objectives to reduce the non-continuation ppt gap for students from Quintile 1 when compared to Quintile 5. The non-continuation mature students and BAME students will also be considered in the plan as well as attainment of BAME and of disabled students.

Each target group is set out below as part of four overarching strategic aims in respect of the delivery of equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students. These are set out alongside their measurable objectives relating to each of the target groups and specifying the stage of the lifecycle in each case. Each of these states the timescale over which we expect to deliver these strategic aims and objectives.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Access

Aim 1

Increase access proportions for BAME students through analysis of disaggregated data

Objectives

1. Increase Asian student access proportions, from 2% to 8% to represent other HEI access proportions by 2026-27.
2. Increase Black student access proportions from 2% to 8% to reflect all HEI access proportions by 2026-27.

Key Commitments

- Address barriers faced by underrepresented groups through pulse surveys to be reviewed via EDI. Consider if this is relative to higher study or specific course related (perceived job opportunities).
- Use Intent Documents, Periodic Reviews, EDIMs and Quality Summits for all Higher Education qualifications to include a focus on EDI activity with particular regards to curriculum strategies to increase Asian and Black student access.
- Increased outreach activities at College will specifically use bespoke activities to attract more Asian and Black students to HE study.
- Engage the EDI staff group to support targeted and more effective activity to attract Asian and Black students.
- Ensuring robust financial support surrounding students that experience financial barriers at the start of their chosen course.
- We will analyse our application, offer and acceptance data more forensically, checking to see if there are any patterns or trends in terms of those from underrepresented groups or associated with protected characteristics such as those within our target groups. This will be discussed at H.E Academic Board and EDI Committee where any necessary actions to remove barriers will be agreed.
- Review application, offer and acceptance data through intersections between protected characteristics and socio-economic status to identify and remove any possible barriers.
- Create 'pulse surveys' (and review by underrepresented and protected characteristics) which more frequently target and capture student feedback on particular topics such as their driver to apply for HE and continue in their study, so that we can gain confidence in how better to support our students.
- Review open day, application and student survey data (including taster days, keep warm, induction and student experience surveys) to identify who was participating and what their experience was compared to the whole cohort.

Success - Continuation

Aim 2

To close the continuation gaps of underrepresented students and those with associated protected characteristics.

Objectives

1. To close the percentage point gap of 20.0 (from 2019/20) between Q1 and Q5 of deprivation IMD (2019) to 6.0 by 2026-7.
2. To close the percentage point gap (from 2019/20) for the continuation of Black students from 31.0 to 5.0 by 2026-27.
3. To close the statistically significant continuation gap between mature and young students of 26.0 to 7.0 by 2026-27.
4. To close the continuation gap of 12.41 to 5.0 of students that declare that they have a disability by 2026-27.

Key Commitments

● Review Schemes of Work to ensure all HE qualifications offer an attractive and accessible student experience which is engaging and relates to the lived experiences of all students.
● Ensure HE all activity engages with a vibrant EDI calendar of events which develops the wider cultural capital and ensures students feel that their education and career aspirations are realistic, and underpin their own self-belief.
● Strengthen Career Information, Advice and Guidance so that underrepresented students (or those with protected characteristics) understand the potential barriers to continuation and build the necessary resilience to overcome this.
● Deeper analysis of the non-continuation data for these students, resulting in more targeted intervention.
● Ongoing tutor support through the Walsall College Graduate programme (including one-to-one meetings, pastoral support and setting SMART targets so that students are aware of their progress and motivated to succeed).
● Ensuring clarity of the range of financial support available from application stage, and whilst on programme, targeting students that may experience financial barriers whilst their course is in progress (or may need additional specialist support, or mentorship).
● Explore the post-entry experiences of students with protected characteristics through qualitative research, in collaboration with the students' union/representatives and through HE Voice mechanisms.

Success - Attainment

Aim 3

To close the attainment (achievement) gap of underrepresented students, specifically those from Lower Participation Neighbourhood and different ethnicities, and students who report a disability.

Objectives

1. We have an objective to completely close the 3.81 ppt gap between the achievement (attainment) of the most (Quintile 5) and least participation (Quintile 1) groups on HE across the five-year period of the plan. As this is a small gap, we anticipate that this achievement (attainment) ppt gap will continue to close by 2025-26.
2. There is an achievement (attainment) ppt gap of 4.2 for BAME students, this will be completely closed by 2026-27.
3. To close the attainment gap of 23.76 ppt to 7.76 ppt of students that declared a reported disability vs. students who have no disability reported, by 2026-27.

Key Commitments

- Flexible access to a new HE Learning Deck enables students to continue to study outside of their taught sessions to support their learning (where access to Learning Facilitators is promoted).
- The Outreach Partnership programme will provide students identified from Uni Connect targeted postcodes with laptops.
- Strengthen support to students in the early stages of application to assess specific financial needs (e.g. Disabled Students Allowance/DSA) so that applicants are made aware of the help available to cover study-related costs because of disability including a mental health problem or long-term illness.
- Outreach programmes from Uni Connect (and an Outreach Officer) will enhance engagement of students from specific widening participation postcodes, which will include sustained intervention (mentorship) whilst on course.
- We will offer specific support through representation of Student Union representatives which align to protected characteristics, for example our LGBTQ+ Officer. Feedback from each group (including reverse mentorship approaches) will be reported through Student Governorship and the Student Union President, and formally through the Academic Board to the SMT to ensure that the HE experience is fully accessible and equitable.
- Using in-year data such as student's attendance records and those recorded at risk, in order to affect timely intervention aiming to increase attainment (achievement) for all students.
- Analyse achievement data systematically so as to evaluate the impact of the curriculum and support provided.

Progression

Aim 4

We will increase the proportion of BAME students progressing to a positive destination after they graduate (either paid employment or further/higher level study).

Objective

1. To reduce the 9 ppt gap between the positive destinations of BAME and non-BAME students down to a 1.00 ppt gap by 2026-27.

Key Commitments

- Ongoing tutor support through the Walsall College Graduate programme (including one-to-one meetings and setting SMART targets for all students) and will be reported through College KPI reporting.
- We will continue to analyse the positive destinations of all students and provide careers advice information and guidance (including monitoring attendance for this group to the HE Fayre), with the aim to increase BAME destinations
- Ensure Periodic Reviews have a current student panel member, and a graduate student to contribute to discussions regarding how the student experience supports progression and next steps.
- We will offer specific support through representation of Student Union representatives which align to protected characteristics.
- We will introduce a programme of post-graduate students (ex H.E graduates) who have progressed into positive career opportunities. This will be built into the H.E tutorial programme with an aim to motivate students towards positive destinations.
- The College will further explore wider and external factors which may be impacting on BAME students securing positive destinations. This may inform our influence on employer boards, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Combined Authority and Department for Work and Pensions leading to holistic strategies to tackle issues of progression into employment.

Strategic measures

Access and Participation Strategic Measures

The College's approach to delivery of strategic aims and objectives falls within the remit of the College's Quality Assurance Team led by the Assistant Principal for Quality and HE. The work of the Quality Assurance Team reports directly to the Senior Leadership Team as well as the College's Governing body where formal scrutiny of the College's progress against the APP's aims and objectives are measured.

The strategic measures that we will put in place will be specifically aligned to achieve the ambitions set out in this Access and Participation Plan, and will demonstrate continuous improvement in practice and outcomes for students.

The Targets and Investment Plan (TIP) linked to our access and participation plan, states when we aim to achieve the objectives listed. Our key commitments outline the measures we will take to achieve the strategic aims, objectives and targets detailed in the plan.

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Vision and Strategy

Walsall College's *Mission Statement and Shared Values* position the College as an agent for inclusion and social change and one that welcomes students from all backgrounds, including those not traditionally well represented in higher education. This mission is the core of everything we do as a whole provider approach underpinned by our ambition to eradicate gaps in access, success and progression.

The College ensures that students, from all backgrounds (particularly the most disadvantaged), can access, succeed in and progress from higher education. All students, from all backgrounds and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education. This plan highlights that some students do need additional consideration to overcome barriers which are specific to their protected characteristic or background and the College is committed to addressing their needs specifically to aid equity and inclusion so that students:

1. Are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from, higher education.
2. Receive a high-quality academic experience, and their interests are protected while they study or in the event of provider, campus or course closure.
3. Are able to progress into employment or further study, and their qualifications hold their value over time.
4. Receive value for money.

At a minimum, the Colleges Boards and committees deliver assurance to ensure the organisation is meeting EDI related statutory and regulatory requirements. Governing bodies are, as a matter of law, responsible for ensuring their institutions comply with the Equality Act 2010 and meet the proactive public sector equality duty (PSED) and specific duties relevant to their nation.

It is critical that governing bodies are clear on their role:

- To oversee that the institution meets these legal duties.
- To put robust systems in place to seek assurances from their executive or senior management team that the legal requirements are being met.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is an integral part of the Boards strategy and business plans. It's important that this encompasses not just legal or regulatory obligations but also how EDI is championed and embedded throughout the organisation.

Key to this, is building confidence, knowledge and skills of individuals and groups in the governance system. The College's Board undergo EDI training on an annual basis and receive the College's comprehensive review/ report of EDI activity each January. This is also published on our website.

The Board ensures that the College is challenged against the need to be compliant with the legal and regulatory requirements placed on it in relation to EDI. If an institution is found to be non-compliant, it will be exposed to reputational and financial risks. To ensure compliance, Governors seek assurances from the executive that the institution is delivering on its legal duties and regulatory requirements. Corporation meetings and more specifically the EDI Committee, seek to establish these assurances and record them formally, and advise strategies to engage underrepresented students.

The College's Board is also responsible for setting the values, culture and tone of the organisation. Considering EDI in decision-making, where relevant, allows the Board to demonstrate and promote inclusive behaviours to the wider organisation.

HE Practitioners Meeting

The HE Development Manager meets with all Higher Education Lecturers twice termly to manage and co-ordinate all aspects of Higher Education provision at the College, adhering to conditions as set out by the Awarding Bodies, OfS and QAA. The experience, progress and success of HE students is monitored as a discreet cohort, as well as part of the whole College student body.

HE Academic Board Meeting

The HE Academic Board meets every term to manage and co-ordinate all aspects of Higher Education provision at the College, adhering to conditions as set out by the OfS and QAA. The experience, progress and success of HE students is monitored as a discreet cohort, as well as part of the whole College student body. The board consists of management representatives from Quality, Curriculum and Business Support Areas.

Curriculum, Pedagogic and student support developments to promote inclusivity and address attainment and progression gaps

For Higher Technical Qualifications (those at levels 4 and 5), the Institute of Apprenticeships and Technical Education has introduced a new approval system based on the national system of employer-led standards that is already used for higher apprenticeships. The Institute is an employer-led organisation sponsored by the DfE, ensuring that the apprenticeships and technical products are of the highest quality. By signalling which Higher Technical Qualifications meet these standards, and working with the Office for Students, approval will send a clear message to prospective students about which Higher Technical Qualifications are high-quality and really valued in the labour market.

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.

The College's commitment to developing students holistically looks beyond the obvious desire to achieve certification and includes consideration of their employability and skills development. The College have referenced and utilised the Advance HE Pedagogy for Employability publication (2012), which remains a highly relevant consideration in terms of ensuring our students are equipped for future opportunities and build resilience to become adaptive in their approach to careers.

Staff Training

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 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 College is providing unconscious bias training throughout the organisation (including management levels) as a mandatory part of our continuous professional development offer for all staff. Engaging with external expertise but also working with regional partners to add a sharper context, we see this training as vital in terms of addressing any unintended barriers to access or participation.

We are committed to the training of delivery staff which considers a range of pedagogical methods to take account of the changes in interaction between students and tutors (due in part to the impact of COVID-19) 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.

Talk About Teaching Sessions

The Assistant Principal and HE and the Workforce Development Manager have met directly with circa 370 staff to date signalling a refresh and adding significance to teaching conversations and reflective practice (pedagogy). Over 240 additional staff are scheduled to attend before the end of the academic year. These sessions include promoting innovation and highlighting expectations, reflecting against the ETF Professional Standards, increasing student engagement and coaching which brings out the best performance from individuals. By undertaking these sessions, we can ensure that delivery staff are providing a high-quality experience to all students, with the aim to improve the percentage of underrepresented students going into a positive destination after they graduate (either a job or further level study).

Partnership Arrangements

The College currently has 'Top-Up' partnerships (run as franchise ownership models) with Birmingham City University (who award our teacher qualifications), the University of Worcester (who award our CMDA) and Staffordshire University who currently award our Level 6 Top Up in Computer Science. Students are charged the higher fee cap, without a TEF award. The courses are subcontracted, and the lead university partner receives tuition fees from Walsall College, as the delivery provider.

Across the duration of this plan, the College will continue to explore opportunities to work with partners to offer Higher Apprenticeships and Degree level Apprenticeships (such as our partnership with University of Worcester delivering the CMDA) as well as to expand our Level 6 top-up degrees (as with Birmingham City University).

Financial Support

With high levels of local and regional deprivation, the College recognises often an acute need for financial support which enables students to fully access and participate in their studies. Additional financial support has been directly linked to improved retention of students who had been flagged as at risk of achieving, helping to reduce the gaps in access, success and progression.

The HE Bursary of £800 per academic year is automatically granted to the HE students who are eligible for it. Part-time HE student receive 50% of this amount (£400) This is classified as a bursary, and is managed differently and separately to the Financial Hardship Fund. Students are assessed for the HE Bursary based on their household income. In 2019/20 we amended the household income limit from £24,000 to £30,000, following the Government increases in the National Minimum Wage. Applicants to our HE provision are encouraged to apply for the HE Bursary at the point of enrolment and are supported in doing so on an individual basis. Evidence of household income is assessed as part of the bursary application process and if evidence meets the criteria, the bursary is given automatically. (https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/financial-help/)

The Financial Hardship Fund is not automatically granted, as this is only made available to students who can demonstrate they are experiencing severe financial difficulty. The College also offer 'in-kind' services such as through reduced on-site gym membership and free breakfasts and subsidised place at the College nursery (Childcare Bursary), subject to availability.

All bursaries and hardship funds are reviewed annually in accordance with the College's Bursary and Free Meals Policy and Procedure.

Those HE students who may be eligible for The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) are supported in their application by the College's Inclusive Support Department.

The College also offers the 'Peter Roberts Collab Group Bursary with the Skills Network' to support Level 3 students who want to progress into higher education or self-employment. It is a £2,500 bursary for two individual students. The Collab group is a group of UK wide FE colleges who share ambitions and best practice. An applicant for this bursary has to clearly demonstrate how they intend to use the bursary in support of their higher education course or in establishing their new business. The bursary however, cannot be used to fund tuition fees, accommodation or day-to-day living costs.

The bursary could, for example, be used to invest in course materials, equipment and study related costs.

Each year, HE students have the option to attend a fully funded European work-placement opportunity through our partnership with Gecko (running the Erasmus plus programme). Gecko has been successful in gaining Turing Scheme contracts to replace the EU's Erasmus plus programme and the College will continue to highlight this opportunity for its HE students.

The HE Bursary section of the College's website (and the College Prospectus) 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 is also available to discuss individual eligibility.

The formal Appeal Committee is attended by the Head of MIS, MIS Manager and the Quality Assurance Manager. They include evaluation of financial support using robust methods that consider outcomes for students including gathering their feedback. This can also be supported by their tutor or Pastoral Support Officer. Students then have the option to raise a further appeal with the Director of Finance.

The College however, aims to adopt a more targeted approach to evaluating impact of financial support on student behaviour outcomes, such as improved access, retention and attainment rates. In this way, our evaluation evidence can strengthen our understanding whether financial support is targeted well enough to have the greatest impact. This will feature as a standing item for the HE Academic Board.

The College is currently exploring the OfS impact of financial support report through an APP Task and Finish group, with the EDI committee and bursary judgement panel to assess the impact of the financial support packages for HE students. This will incorporate the OfS Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool.

The table below 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, which supports our aim to increase access and continuation for BAME students, as they are more likely to attend and achieve with financial support. This support at HE level will also significantly increase the likelihood of progressing to a positive destination. 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%

Feedback through our HE Student Voice processes, such as HE Representative Meetings and tutorials demonstrates that this supports increased engagement in their studies and motivates them to continue on to achieve.

The Uni Connect programme - Aspire to HE

The 'Aspire to HE' partnership, funded through Uni Connect 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. It provides impartial guidance and sustained practical support to help people make 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.

For 2021, 143 first-year Uni Connect students signed up to the programme and 91 second years to the Explore 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.

Of the 234 students engaged in the programme in 2021, signed up across first and second year, 48 of these students are considered "target postcode students". Of these identified target students; 13% are from BAME backgrounds whilst the other 87% are white. Target students are provided an intensive programme of contact, the expectation being that these students will have access to additional activities and resources, as well as having regular one-to-one contact with an Aspire colleague, to ensure a smooth transition and to break down barriers when accessing Higher Education.

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 have been three University Visits to De Montfort University, Birmingham City University, University of Worcester and Bristol and Manchester University. 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.

Aspire to HE have also engaged with the College for guided tutorial sessions for Level 3 Year 1 and 2 students that started in October 2021. The impact of these sessions will be gathered by the Aspire team through our 'Walsall College Graduate' scheme. This enables all students to access their individual learning plans, and build these plans whilst attending college. This then produces their CV when they graduate.

The Uni Connect Outreach specifically addresses the aims set by the Access and Participation Plan. to improve progression and attainment of underrepresented groups. The Uni Connect 'Knowledge Curriculum' (a set of videos created by the Uni Connect Team that describe the UCAS process and how to orientate the university admissions process) is used in tutorials for both Year 12 and Year 13 Level 3 students before the UCAS deadline. This information was captured by the Uni Connect Team to determine the 'Cold Spot' participation students (identified by postcode).   This was very successful, and will be used again from 2022/23.

The Uni Connect Officer at the College identifies students from underrepresented groups and completes sustained intervention throughout the academic year through phone calls and working with the Careers Team to provide advice surrounding university options. This encompasses identification of the Uni Connect students in each curriculum area and creating a bespoke programme of activity that surrounds the aims of the delivery plan. The plan includes specific targeting of underrepresented groups. Students receive one-to-one support throughout the UCAS cycle and undertake bespoke activities in each area of the curriculum. This year, for example, we have used 'Medical Mavericks' to inspire careers in the NHS for Science students, 'Positively You' workshops to increase resilience for Public Services students, and used positive ethic minority role models as visiting speakers (Daniel Caines Entrepreneurship Programme) to speak to Sports students. Next year will include 'Sister 2 Sister' which provides mentoring for ethnic minority females, with the aim to close the attainment gap for ethnic minority students. The activities stated have been used and evaluated by the Uni Connect/Aspire to HE programme noting positive impact on ethnic minority groups.

Careers, Information and Guidance

The College's Careers Team provides metrics surrounding underrepresentation of students when progressing to University. They gather the number of UCAS applications, so the College has the ability to track the number of students that apply to HEI's, when they have completed their course.

The Careers Team run an annual HE Fayre that all Level 3 students attend, which highlights progression routes for students into HE, as well as using the fayre to promote various internal marketing opportunities for underrepresented students, such as: Open Evenings for Adults to raise awareness of the Walsall College offer, and Parent Admissions evenings to inform parents regarding the university experience. Talks at the fayre include how to write Personal Statements, Student Finance and how to prepare for University interviews.

3.2 Aligning the Access and Participation Plan with other strategies

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

- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Annual Report
- HE Enhancement Cycle
- Safeguarding and Prevent Strategy
- 2021 – 2024 Corporate Strategy
- HE Academic Regulations.
- The Higher Education and Training Strategy 2021-2024
- The Quality Improvement Strategy
- HE Teaching and Learning Strategy
- Walsall College Curriculum Strategy
- Student Voice Strategy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team will continue to actively review our identification of underrepresented groups and those with associated characteristics in higher education. From 2022 - 2023 we will 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. This will orientate and empower staff to objectively explore equality, diversity and inclusivity outcomes and engage with improvement strategies where relevant.

Walsall College 2021-2024 Corporate Strategy

Our corporate strategy focuses on seven pledges which help establish our direction as an organisation during its duration.

Pledge 1 - Work with an employer and business connection in every curriculum area to endorse and enhance the provision and provide a line of sight to work.

Pledge 2 - Build a culture that celebrates and priorities excellence and innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

Pledge 3 - Develop the maths, English and digital skills of all our students in order to prepare them for the world of work by embedding skills seamlessly into every programme.

Pledge 4 - Become a truly innovative digital college.

Pledge 5 - Proactively engage and upskill the regional workforce be helping people learn throughout their lives.

Pledge 6 - Create a high quality and seamless experience for all stakeholders, which is sustainable and accelerates the way for a greener future.

Pledge 7 - Promote rapid progression between levels and settings with an aim to increase numbers at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

The Higher Education and Training Strategy 2021-2024

The College's Higher Education and Training Strategy 2021-2024 outlines key strategic drivers for access and participation together with assuring high quality student experience, attainment and progression. We also signal an ambition for HE growth that outlines our wider commitment in supporting people into higher levels of study and jobs. Career readiness and growth, we know does not always follow a specified lane of study. Many people who are enjoying career success, can look back on a multitude of experiences, training and development throughout their journey to date. If the corporate ladder represents how people *used* to think about professional growth, the career lattice is its successor. A lattice of opportunity allows for vertical, horizontal, and diagonal movement across training programmes and different 'types' of study (and at different modes).

We aspire to continue to revisit the makeup of the College's HE provisions in order take full advantage of a wider range of opportunities both available and emerging, adapting to local and regional need whilst also valuing student choice and the potential for social mobility. We intend to help to address the government's demand for more high-quality degree alternatives to boost adult skills and job prospects. With national multi-million-pound investments to allow more people to gain higher level technical skills, the College is set to explore opportunities as they emerge in skill areas to be covered by the new approved Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs).

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. Forming a clear commitment within our HE Strategy, the plan outlines our commitment to:

- Offer courses on a part-time basis, working with employers.
- Deliver technical and professional education with a clear line of sight to work.
- Offer local choices in one of the UK's highest areas of deprivation (and cold spots).
- Provide an alternative to large universities, with courses that often involve small class sizes, with more individual tutorial support and progression from FE courses.
- Provide 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).

Internal Progression

The majority of students at Walsall College are internal progression students from level 3. The College Marketing department is developing new techniques to ensure progression from various avenues. In November 2021, the College will hold its first Creative Industries Progression Conference for students to approach tutors regarding internal progression to HE. The Aspire to HE funding has also provided HE 'Mingles' for all curriculum areas to mix Level 3 Uni Connect students with Level 4 and 5 to have lunch and visiting speakers to encourage internal progression routes.

HE Parents Admissions Evenings

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, though 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. 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 increased social mobility, that has further benefits that can be passed onto 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 ask more specific questions around these concerns.

Our teaching, learning and support services take due regard to the needs of different groups and adapt practices in order for those needs to be met, in order to give every individual student the greatest opportunity to succeed. Where it is appropriate to do so, we take legitimate positive action to encourage participation and to equalise success rates, and will use specialist advice from outside the organisation where our expertise in supporting different groups of students needs to be enhanced. Inclusive teaching practice is an approach we adopt to our teaching that recognises the diversity of students, enabling all students to access course content, fully participate in learning activities and demonstrate their knowledge and strengths at assessment. Our inclusive practice is embedded into our curriculum and values the diversity of the student body as a resource that enhances the learning experience.

Quality Assurance Monitoring

A number of quality assurance processes are in place to monitor teaching and learning, such as unannounced Developmental Observations, walk-throughs and Deep Dives. The findings from these processes are used to develop individuals, managers and provision to ensure that all students are receiving the best possible experience. Themes relating specifically to equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) are captured and analysed and individual observation action plans are agreed for all delivery staff, with the option to refer to a Learning Development and Innovation Coach or Advanced Practitioner. Deep Dives identify strengths and areas for development, including EDI actions by curriculum area or theme. These time-bound actions are assigned to the relevant management leads and reported to the Senior Management Team and Governing Body.

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.

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. The College will more formally and systematically deliver 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 find success.

Our HE students, 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 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.

3.3 Student Consultation

Presently, the Student Union President and Governor (a HE student), with other HE representatives ensure representation at every level. The feedback mechanisms mentioned above enable students to inform strategy and policy making and operational processes to enhance their learning experience. Whilst developing this Access and Participation Plan, the findings are presented at the HE Representative meeting and students have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback by the Higher Education Development Manager. They also receive a copy of the minutes, which gives them a further opportunity to review and evaluate the APP in their own time.

HE Student Representatives provide ways for the College to improve successful outcomes for students. Their contribution has resulted in a new Student HE Deck, new degree qualifications, software upgrades, sustainability ideas, Freshers Week development, Student Voice re-brand and mental health support services for students. Students have been consulted through HE Representative Meetings (held half termly), where APP progress is discussed as a standing agenda item. HE representatives are from HNC, HND, Degree Apprenticeship and Level 6 Top Up courses (24 in total), representing a range of backgrounds. The students are consulted regarding APP plans and targets to create a sense of belonging and autonomy in our predominantly FE community.

Students can feedback throughout their time at the College using the Student Voice process, which enables feedback in various forms. We undertake continuous feedback from students regarding the effectiveness of support and the work of the College through online methods such as the HE Induction Survey, the Teaching and Learning Survey (that mirrors the NSS), the Student Voice Action Plan, active governorship roles, the Student Voice Committee and in person through our Student Conference or the Student Union. This feedback is collated through an online Student Voice Action Plan and individual actions are assigned to lead managers for response. This is then feedback to students through periodic reports which are sent to them by email and uploaded to the Student Homepage. The outcomes of all of this work have been used to inform the Academic Board (attended by the Senior Management Team). This enhances the quality of the student experience at Walsall College.

Where progress is worsening, there are a number of Quality Assurance processes that can be instigated, such as Deep Dives, Audits, Course Monitoring and Periodic Reviews. Progress against any actions and recommendations identified is then monitored through the central Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

3.4 Evaluation Strategy

The evaluation strategy will outline the activities to be undertaken, the forums where this will take place and responsibilities for co-ordinating and undertaking effective evaluation. Our evaluation strategy demonstrates a commitment to support an evidence-based approach to eliminate inequality in higher education.

A strengthening of our evidence-based approach links to our desire to improve intervention by embracing a culture of change, where change is seen as positive and progressive.

Overarching theory of change which demonstrates an evidence-informed approach

Based on assessment of the College's performance against the target groups, our aims and objectives are set out with a theory of change model to align our actions towards each goal. Utilising a theory of change model as a strategic planning tool to ensure long-term goals are defined and understood, we have for this Access and Participation Plan, redefined our goals through more precise aims and associated objectives, with clear commitments regarding how we will achieve them across the five-year period in scope. Maintaining a focus on the desired outcomes, the model provides a clear rationale for how short-term activities are connected to longer-term improvements and maps back to interventions designed to achieve the desired end goals. The plan allows the College to focus on reducing gaps in access, success and progression for under-represented groups and to improve practice. The long-term outcome of our planned activities is to raise attainment and to reduce gaps in access, success and progression for underrepresented groups and those with associated protected characteristics.

The College's Quality Assurance Strategy includes a specific quality cycle for our HE provision which embraces a whole lifecycle approach to access, success and progression. The Higher Education Enhancement Cycle is firmly embedded across the organisation and includes teams involved in delivery, leadership, academic support and governance which are committed to addressing gaps in access, success and progression.

The College's HE provision is subjected to periodic auditing (through a contracted audit company) in terms of policy, practice and impact, using measurable outcomes which include access, success and progression data. We also replicate quality assurance 'Deep Dives', looking at student experience and outcomes through the lens of each curriculum area.

Within the College, HE provision is also subjected to termly Quality Summit meetings to examine continuation, student experience and progress. Outcomes are shared with the Senior Leadership Team (SMT) and form actions on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for HE.

The Colleges Governing Body chair a termly Learning and Quality Committee where specific reporting of Higher Education quality matters includes evaluation of our work to address gaps in access, success and progression.

The College's Board oversees:

- a clear strategy for promoting EDI throughout the organisation, including in its membership and practice.
- active ownership of this strategy is maintained, with regular and robust oversight of implementation.
- ensure that there is a focus on actions and impact, rather than just declarations of intent.

- ensure that there are appropriate arrangements and resources in place to monitor and achieve EDI plans and objectives.

The College's Board oversees a supportive role but also a role which challenges our ambition, strategy and policy around EDI. Recent examples of this is the suggestion to add 'inclusion' to what was a well-established 'Equality and Diversity' committee and team, and in introducing positive action where appropriate. The Board also challenge for example, around examples where teachers have or have not yet adopted reference to an anti-racist curriculum, or where opportunities to celebrate cultural heritage have not been not fully exploited.

More recently the Board have expressed that senior leaders review the College's stand on the use of pronouns, for example, or where there is low participation in events which explore different cultures. A current ambition from the Board is for wider reaching impact of EDI training, asking that the College generate a 3-year plan to train all staff in meaningful opportunities to explore EDI and utilise an increased confidence in the classrooms in terms of EDI conversations with students (this over and above compliance with the annual EDI mandatory on-line training package).

The Governing Body receive updates through Corporation meetings, where they receive a Higher Education update from the Higher Education Development Manager. A formal report is produced in advance of the meeting and provides the opportunity for Governors to challenge the Higher Education Development Manager and the Assistant Principal for Quality and Higher Education.

Where progress is worsening, there are a number of Quality Assurance processes that can be instigated, such as Deep Dives, Audits, Course Monitoring and Periodic Reviews. Progress against any actions and recommendations identified is then monitored through the central Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

The College subscribes to membership of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), an independent charity working to benefit students and higher education, and one of the world's experts in quality assurance. The quality and performance of the College's higher education provision are evaluated by national quality assurance agencies and many other stakeholders having various objectives and interests.

The HE provision is potentially in scope for review by the Designated Quality Body in England (DQB) which is operated on an arms-length basis by QAA. It is the body designated by the Secretary of State to provide assessments for the Office for Students (OfS) on quality and standards in higher education in England.

Through our HE Enhancement Cycle and associated quality assurance policies, strategies and practice, we share and learn from compelling evidence about what works to eliminate inequalities in higher education.

The Access and Participation Plan identifies areas as requiring improvement and further development, which we will seek to review moving forward. We have however, recognised and recorded areas for further improvement to our evaluation, 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 involves 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 judges our effectiveness to improving widening participation and eliminating gaps in access, success and progression, therefore the APP acts as a vehicle to bring into focus, the activities and interventions that will be implemented to deliver the aims and objectives across the lifetime of the plan.

3.5 Monitoring progress against the delivery of the plan

We have acknowledged that the College's evaluation can be further enhanced identified through the development of a detailed HE data dashboard, combining the range of relevant information in a disaggregated view from which to more specifically identify gaps in the Student Lifecycle.

Monitoring the precise targets within the plan through our HE Quality Assurance Cycle, evaluation will more precisely review the effectiveness of interventions and the impact of specific elements of those interventions on improvements made.

We have identified that we need to centralise a range of HE 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 specific data sets needed to analyse our HE performance across the Student Lifecycle in more detail. For example, data from external sources such as NSS fail to recognise the specific types of HE Students we cater for, resulting in information which in not representative of our provision In many ways this demonstrates how HE external drivers often fail to recognise the differences between HE delivered within an FE setting 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 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.

To sit alongside this APP, the College will produce an action plan, clearly identifying what we aim to achieve and how and when this will be undertaken (and who will be responsible for the intervention). Fundamentally driven by Directors of Faculty and Curriculum Delivery Managers, outcomes are reported at both the Higher Education Academic Board, the Governing Body Learning and Quality Committee (and Corporation) and shared at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on a termly basis. At specific times of the year (when data becomes available) we will introduce the specific evaluation-based findings, for example access, attendance, continuation (retention) and attainment (achievement) data, outcomes of surveys, focus groups or feedback from student representatives and progression data.

The annual publication of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report is shared more widely with our stakeholders and community (as published on our website). Our learning from effective 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.

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 an Aspire to HE/Uni Connect lead but also includes CIAG staff and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team and Pastoral Officers. Our performance against the APP actions and our systems for evaluation will form standing items in meetings.

We have clearly identified the indicators and measures and agreed the deliverables for 2022 and across the subsequent five-year period in this APP. We have more clearly defined our targets for what will be delivered and have also outlined intentions to strengthen our focus for specifying and agreeing the impact evaluation plans.

Furthermore, as a result of undertaking this APP, we have agreed to identify development opportunities for enhancing our evaluation practice, with the HE Development Manager being overall co-ordinator and sponsoring a dedicated champion in each curriculum area in regards to access and participation performance.

4. Provision of information to students

Information regarding bursaries, financial support and H.E fees can be found on https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/financial-help/. HE fees (both full time, part time and partnership course fees) are displayed for each course on the Walsall College Course Search site, and furthermore cites payback mechanisms (such as instalment plans), and documentation required to enrol onto H.E courses. The site also presents information regarding inflationary increases, and additional costs the students may incur, and our OFFA agreement. The Disabled Student Allowance has a link for students to apply.

The 2022/23 'The Future is Yours' H.E prospectus also reflects this information. Additionally, course fee information is available on the UCAS course search for Walsall College courses.

Staff are available to provide advice and guidance regarding fees and bursaries on H.E Open Days, Induction, interviews and during the enrolment process. The Academic Regulations and HE Course handbooks also refer to HE fees. The College also has a specific HE Customer Service Coordinator to assist with fee applications and queries who can be reached through the Customer Advice Support Centre (CASC) desk, and is available on a face to face, telephone or by email. The Marketing Team uses social media to promote courses and financial information and attend local school open evenings for Year 13 to also promote this information.

The Access and Participation Plan is published and is available to all prospective and active HE students via 'Policies and Procedures' section of the Walsall College website.

References:
https://www.walsallintelligence.org.uk/overview/
https://www.walsallintelligence.org.uk/home/demographics/deprivation/
https://www.nnecl.org/resources/32-
data#:~:text=Based%20on%20the%20Destinations%20of,72.5%25%20for%20other%20degree%2
0graduates

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).

Access and participation plan
Fee information 2022-23

Provider name: Walsall College

Provider UKPRN: 10007315

Summary of 2022-23 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2022-23 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Media & Computing Science - validated by the University of Staffordshire	£7,500
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND		£5,900
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2022-23

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

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2022-23 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND		£2,995
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	PGCE - validated by BCU	£4,500
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2022-23

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
2022-23 to 2026-27

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Total access activity investment (£)	£60,462.00	£61,671.00	£62,904.00	£64,162.00	£65,445.00
Access (pre-16)	£17,210.00	£17,554.00	£17,905.00	£18,263.00	£18,628.00
Access (post-16)	£20,604.00	£21,016.00	£21,436.00	£21,865.00	£22,302.00
Access (adults and the community)	£22,648.00	£23,101.00	£23,563.00	£24,034.00	£24,515.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£65,953.00	£66,664.00	£67,375.00	£68,002.00	£68,648.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£13,134.00	£13,396.00	£13,664.00	£13,937.00	£14,216.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£70,500.00	£72,000.00	£73,500.00	£75,000.00	£75,000.00
Access investment	40.8%	40.6%	40.3%	40.1%	40.7%
Financial support	30.2%	30.1%	30.1%	30.1%	30.7%
Research and evaluation	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	6.8%
Total investment (as %HFI)	77.7%	77.4%	77.1%	76.9%	78.2%

Targets and investment plan
2022-23 to 2026-27

Provider name: Walsall College

Provider UKPRN: 10007315

Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group (optional)	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 character	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on how milestones/targets were calculated (500 characters maximum)
											2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	
Increase Asian student access proportions to reflect to reflect all HEI access proportions	PTA_1	Ethnicity			To increase the percentage proportion from 2% to 17% for the duration of the plan (to reflect other HEIs)	No	The access and participation dataset	2019-20	Percentage	2%	4%	4%	5%	6%	8%	The information has been taken from the OfS individual Performance data. Compared to all other HEIs, the College needs to increase Asian access proportions. Over the five-year period, we would encourage 2% baseline to increase to 17% to display equality of proportions.
Increase Black student access proportions to reflect all HEI access proportions	PTA_2	Ethnicity			To increase the percentage proportion from 2% to 8% for the duration of the plan (to reflect other HEIs)	No	The access and participation dataset	2019-20	Percentage	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%	The information has been taken from the OfS individual Performance data. Compared to all other HEIs, the College need to increase Black access proportions.
	PTA_3															
	PTA_4															
	PTA_5															
	PTA_6															
	PTA_7															
	PTA_8															
	PTA_9															
	PTA_10															
	PTA_11															
	PTA_12															

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group	Comparator group	Description (500 character	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	Yearly milestones					Commentary on how milestones/targets were calculated (500 characters maximum)
											2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	
To close the continuation gap (from 2019/20) between Q1 and Q5 of Deprivation IMD (2019)	PTS_1	Low participation neighbourhood (LPN)	POLAR quintile 1	POLAR quintile 5	We have an aim to close the 20.0pp between the continuation (retention) of IMD of the most represented (Quintile 5) and least represented (Quintile 1) students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2019-20	Percentage points	20.0	16.0	12.0	10.0	8.0	6.0	As the data before 19/20 is supressed, it is likely that the continuation gap will continue to close until the dashboard is updated with further information, and will provide a truer picture of retention. It must also be noted that many of our courses are one year validated courses, so data presented on the dashboard will be for a small amount of students. By 2026/27 we hope to represent other HEI's with a 6.0pp figure.
To close the ppt achievement gap between students from areas of widening participation and students that are not.	PTS_2	Low participation neighbourhood (LPN)	POLAR quintile 1	POLAR quintile 5	We have an objective to close the 3.81% ppt gap between the achievement (attainment) of the most (Quintile 5) and least participation (Quintile 1) groups on HE across the five-year period of the plan. As this is a small gap, we anticipate that this achievement (attainment) ppt gap will continue to close.	No	Other data source	2021-22	Percentage points	3.81	3.00	2.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	There is a visible achievement gap between students that are and are not Widening Participation for 2021/21 of 3.81%. The achievement (attainment) and overall pass grades for Walsall College HE students from Widening Participation backgrounds are increasing. The dataset used was from Walsall College Equality and Diversity Impact Report 2021 – 2022.
To close the percentage point gap (from 2019/20) for continuation of Black students.	PTS_3	Ethnicity	Black	White	To close the statistically significant continuation gap of 31.0pp in 2019/20 between Black and White students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2019-20	Percentage points	31.0	25.0	20.0	15.0	10.0	5.0	The amount of black students has fluctuated over time, due to teaching at the LCCA campus. By 2026/27, our 5.0pp will display similarities to other HEI's.
Increase achievement (attainment) of BAME students over the duration of the plan.	PTS_4	Ethnicity	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	There is an achievement (attainment) ppt gap of 4.2% for BAME students. We aim to close the gap over the duration of the plan.	No	Other data source	2020-21	Percentage points	4.20	4.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	0.00	Although the achievement gap has previously decreased from 11.3%, there is still a gap of 4.3% that needs to be addressed by the College. As this is our own data, we use the BAME description, as we cannot dissagrate ethnicity further. The data has been taken from Walsall College Equality and Diversity Impact Report 2021 – 2022.
To reduce the statistically significant continuation gap between mature and young students.	PTS_5	Mature	Mature (over 21)	Young (under 21)	To close the statistically significant continuation gap of 26.0pp in 2019/20 between mature and young students.	No	The access and participation dataset	2019-20	Percentage points	26.0	20.0	15.0	12.0	10.0	7.0	The data for 19/20 displays that there is a statistically significant gap between the continuation (retention) of mature students. By 2026/27 7.0pp will represent the same gap as other HEI's.
To close the retention (continuation) gap of students with a disability that are studying HE at the College over the duration of the plan.	PTS_6	Disabled	Students with disability	Students with no known disability	There is a 12.41 ppt gap in retention (continuation) of disabled students and students that are not known to be disabled. We aim to close this ppt gap to 5 ppt by 2026-2027.	No	Other data source	2021-22	Percentage points	12.41	10.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	We aim to close the ppt gap for retention (after six weeks on the course) of disabled students, as it is clear, compared to students that are not disabled, that they leave before the course finishes. This data was taken from the Walsall College Equality and Diversity Impact Report 2021 – 2022.

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group (optional)	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 characters	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Commentary on how milestones/targets were calculated (500 characters maximum)
To close the achievement (attainment) ppt gap between students that have reported a disability against those who have not recorded a disability.	PTS_7	Disabled	Students with disability	Students with no known disability	There is a significant achievement (attainment) ppt gap of 23.76% between students that have reported a disability and those who have not.	No	Other data source	2020-21	Percentage points	23.76	20.00	18.00	15.00	10.00	7.76	There is a ppt gap in achievement (attainment of HE qualifications) between disabled students and students reported as not disabled. It is also important to note however, that the number of students with a disability is small in proportion, at just over ten for 2019/20, therefore the base number offers further context to this aim. The data has been taken from Walsall College Equality and Diversity Impact Report 2021 – 2022.
To address and increase the rate of achievement (attainment) for students who have declared a disability over the duration of the plan.	PTS_8	Disabled	Students with disability	Students with no known disability	The achievement (attainment) rate of students with disabilities has decreased over time. We aim to increase the rate of achievement over the duration of the plan.	No	Other data source	2020-21	Percentage	66.67%	68.00%	70.00%	72.00%	74.00%	74.43%	There is a decline in achievement rate (attainment of HE qualifications) for disabled students between academic years. This will be addressed throughout the duration of the plan, over the next five years. The data has been taken from Walsall College Equality and Diversity Impact Report 2021 – 2022.
	PTS_9															
	PTS_10															
	PTS_11															
	PTS_12															

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Underrepresented group (optional)	Comparator group (optional)	Description (500 character	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Commentary on how milestones/targets were calculated (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the ppt gap between BAME and Non-BAME students into positive destinations after graduation.	PTP_1	Ethnicity	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	BAME students are not going into as many positive destinations as white students.	No	Other data source	2019-20	Percentage points	9.00	7.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	There is a 9 ppt gap between the positive destinations of BAME and non-BAME students. Data taken from Walsall College Destinations Data: Higher Education (2019/20), 2019-20 Destination Data Tool. As this is our own data, we use the BAME description, as we cannot dissagrate ethnicity further.
	PTP_2															
	PTP_3															
	PTP_4															
	PTP_5															
	PTP_6															
	PTP_7															
	PTP_8															
	PTP_9															
	PTP_10															
	PTP_11															
	PTP_12															