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Portsmouth is a large University with over 16,000 Home/EU full-time undergraduate students in 2018/19 and 25,000 students overall. Our success in promoting widening participation, social mobility and diversity is reflected in our student profile. Our full-time undergraduate population includes a high proportion of students from state schools (96%), Black, Asian & minority ethnic (BAME) students (29%) students from low-income households (30%) and students from low-participation neighbourhoods (30%).

The University's mission states that

. We are proud of our longstanding success in widening access to HE and we work in partnership with our students to provide transformational, high quality educational experiences for our diverse student population. Our performance in this regard was recognised in our gold rating in the Teaching

For the last five years we have consistently exceeded the sector average in terms of recruitment of students from POLAR4 quintile 1, comprising the least represented neighbourhoods in HE. In 2017/18 15.3% of Portsmouth students came from POLAR4 quintile 1 compared to the sector average of 12%. The University also performs strongly on access using IMD as a measure, with 12% of Portsmouth students in 2017/18 coming from IMD quintile 1 compared to 8% of the total population in the Southeast region. Our strength in promoting access to low participation communities is confirmed by our OfS Transparency return 2019. 17% of full-time undergraduate entrants in 2018/19 were from low participation neighbourhoods (using IMD³) compared to 14% of applications. This demonstrates our commitment to widening participation through our approach to recruitment and admissions, including active use of contextual information and offer-making.

In terms of student continuation our performance gap was just over 1% in 2016/17. The gap was widest in 2013/14, at 4%, from which point it has narrowed year-on-year to current levels. Portsmouth performs better than the sector average, where the 2016/17 gap was over 4%.

The gap in attainment of 'good' degree outcomes between Q1 and Q5 students was 2.5% in 2017/18 which is not statistically significant. This gap has narrowed from its widest point in 2015/16. The equivalent gap within the sector for 2017/18 was 9%, so Portsmouth performs markedly better than the sector as a whole. However, as Q1 students have performed below Q5 students for five years we will set a target to remove unexplained differences in attainment.

The current gap between students from Q1 and Q5 progressing to professional occupations or further study is 5%, which is in line with the

Our proportion of BAME students has increased steadily from 23% to 29% between 2013/14 and 2017/18, which is in line with the national increase over the same period. Our population in 2017/18

This data demonstrates good practice at the University in successfully recruiting and supporting mature students to achieve their potential. We will build on this good practice, in a culture of continuous improvement.

The University of Portsmouth's mission focuses on widening participation into higher education. Unlike some providers we do not have a specific mission to significantly increase the proportion of mature students in our university. We are committed to continuing to support mature students' access to higher education at around the current level, through, for example, our new Adult Nursing course introduced in 2016/17 and through expansion of our range of Level 7 degree apprenticeships. Nursing is attractive to mature entrants, including women returning to study, often via an Access to HE qualification, unfortunately, recruitment to this course has been significantly affected by the Government's decision to end student bursaries and introduce payment of tuition fees by student nurses. We anticipate that new degree apprenticeship programmes will be attractive to mature students, in part for financial reasons.

More generally, recent market research commissioned by the University from DataHE consultants has identified that the rise in participation amongst 18 year olds in our region over the last 15 years is leading to a significant decline in potential mature entrants - as there are fewer adults in the regional population without experience of HE. For these reasons we are content that our current position in terms of mature access is appropriate and we do not plan to set a target of increasing the proportion of our students that are mature. We will focus on our clear strengths in recruiting and supporting other under-represented groups including BAME, disabled and POLAR 4 Q1 entrants. We will review this position if a significant gap in the proportion of mature students should occur in future.

Disabled students' continuation rates improved between 2012/13 and 2016/17. The 93% continuation rate for disabled students in 2016/17 exceeded that of students with no disability and saw the performance

Within the BAME grouping, outcomes for Black male students from deprived areas are lower, with 52% achieving a good degree outcome. This indicates that ethnicity is the biggest factor in the statistically significant underperformance of male students from deprived areas.

Based on OfS advice regarding appropriate use of IMD (see section 1.1) we have not included a specific target in this respect. We have included separate targets to reduce BAME and LPN performance attainment gaps instead, which will incorporate the type of students covered by this intersectional data.

An evaluation of our financial support package was undertaken, using the OfS-defined approach and statistical tool. This evaluation established that there is a significant difference in continuation between students with low household income (under £25,000) who received bursaries and those who did not.

It is not currently possible for us to test the impact of financial support on student recruitment, as there is no control group.

Low income n

The University's overarching strategic aim is to ensure that students have a consistently outstanding and valuable experience and that we eradicate unexplained gaps in access, performance and outcomes. We aim to be 'open' to students on the basis of their future potential rather than past experience. We aim

group. Should such a gap emerge, we will set specific measurable targets, in collaboration with the OfS, to remedy the situation and ensure that we deliver our overarching strategic aim in the period covered by this Plan.

In relation to priority B - Access for students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods. The analysis in section 1 demonstrated that the University of Portsmouth consistently recruits a higher proportion of students from quintile 1 than their proportion of the HE population as a whole (15.3% compared to 12% in 2017/18). We have included LPN access as a strategic priority as we are fully committed to continuing to widen participation in higher education. We aim to improve our performance where possible, although we have considerably less headroom for improvement in this regard than many other Universities, given our current position in the top third of universities in terms of widening participation. We have included a target for LPN access in our associated Targets and Investment Plan.

We have reviewed our position in relation to the national key performance indicators set by the OfS:

Eliminate the gap in participation at high tariff providers	Portsmouth is a mid-tariff provider	Not applicable
Reduce the gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups (POLAR4 quintiles 5 and 1)	No significant gap between the most and least represented groups, with a gap of 1% in 2016/17 compared to the sector-wide gap over 4%.	Incorporated into Focus on maintaining and enhancing our position
Reduce the gap in degree outcomes (1 st or 2:1s) between white and black students	Statistically significant and growing attainment gap of 26% for black students compared to white some of which is explained by lower average tariff on entry of black students.	for the University of Portsmouth
Reduce the gap in degree outcomes (1 st or 2:1s) between disabled & non-disabled students	The attainment gap is apparent, but not statistically significant.	for the University of Portsmouth

The University of Portsmouth will eradicate unexplained gaps in performance and outcomes. We are developing a University Vision to 2030, supported by a more detailed Strategy 2020-2025, which will set out our commitment to making performance gaps a thing of the past by 2030. We have set the following targets in order to make considerable progress by 2025:

	with a particular focus on black students and males from the most deprived areas
	Our Targets and Investment Plan shows the annual phasing of these targets

	Detailed targets are specified in the associated Targets and Investment Plan. We will remove unexplained attainment gaps by 2025.

In 2019/20 we will develop an internal model to identify the 'unexplained' elements of attainment gaps, enabling us to contribute to the OfS target of eliminating such gaps by 2025. Our ambitious and stretching target of reducing the BAME attainment gap to 10% will be reviewed and updated if appropriate next year, once this internal model is available.

We have adopted a 'theory of change' based on devolution and transparency, in order to deliver our ambitions. This is the most appropriate approach, as there is variation in performance between subjects, so it will promote evidence-based action in the relevant departments. It will also support the

identification and sharing of good practice internally. Our devolved approach will be evaluated through comprehensive internal monitoring embedded into our core quality assurance processes and supported by learner analytics and risk-based alerts to personal tutors.

Our internal monitoring processes include annual review of an internally benchmarked dataset for each course, which incorporates information about performance of priority group

– We have identified stretching activities spanning the whole institution, recognising that we need to make considerable progress in this area. Plans are based on sector good practice, experience from our existing change projects, including two OfS-funded projects on the BAME attainment gap, and feedback from our students.

– Our plans focus on improving access and removing performance gaps for other priority groups through continuous improvement across the University, building on our track record to date, and recognising the need to regularly refresh our approach, addressing the needs of the specified priority groups.

– Based on the analysis in section 1.7 and extensive feedback from UPSU and our wider student body about the importance of financial support, we will continue to offer bursaries of £750 per annum to all English Home fee-paying full-time & sandwich undergraduates, with household income of £25,000 or less. Bursaries will be paid to eligible students on OfS-supported courses, paying £9,250 fees, including previously NHS-commissioned courses, Master of Architecture and other Integrated Masters courses. Full-time and sandwich students paying lower fees, including franchised, sandwich and year abroad students, will not be eligible. The

This engagement and consultation with our students and the Students' Union resulted in the following key steps in developing the content of this Access and Participation Plan:

The University initially considered scaling back and re-focusing student bursaries. Representations from the Students' Union about the importance of bursaries to continuation, combined with our analysis of the impact of financial support (see 1.7) led us to rethink this and retain our existing bursary model.

We also considered targeting bursaries at supporting attainment, by allocating bursaries to eligible students in year 2 of their course onwards who had achieved results equivalent to a 1st or 2.1 in the previous academic year. Student feedback raised concerns about the impact of this potential approach on BAME students, due to the current performance gap. Consequently we agreed that it would not be appropriate to make this change at present.

Feedback from students who attended the Students' Union 'Race in your face' event and who contributed to our drop-in and online consultation informed our approach and priorities. In particular, the strategic measures set out in section 3 were shaped by student feedback on their experience and priorities, alongside research and evidence of good practice in the sector.

The statement by the President of the Students Union (page 2) confirms the tangible outcomes and benefits of our partnership approach to developing this Access and Participation Plan.



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Smoothing the transition to HE for BAME students

Transition can be particularly challenging for BAME and male students e.g. student feedback about a pre-existing sense of exclusion as a result of their experience at school



. This table is structured using the student lifecycle from application to graduation. The priority groups most affected by each issue are identified in the first column, using our APP priority groups identified in section 2.1.

Expectations are limited by comparatively low level 2 & 3 qualifications in our local community	Historic issues regarding quality of schools and expectations, with progression to HE below 25% across Portsmouth	Leadership role in establishing a new all-levels Multi-Academy Trust in Portsmouth, incorporating the University Technical College Support schools via staff acting as Governors and training & development by our School of Education and Sociology	MAT established and operational by September 2020 Contribution to improved leadership in local schools	Increased access to high quality education for our community from 2022/23 onwards, with a major drive to increase HE progression from the MAT	Improvements in school attainment and resulting opportunities for progression to HE
Looked after children and estranged young people are less likely to progress to HE	Can include limited role models, lack of family support for raising expectations and limited financial and practical support	Sign up to, and actively imple			

	A lack of understanding of HE and the benefits it can deliver	<p>Roll-out of Portsmouth Scholars scheme beyond Portsmouth College, providing an active mentoring and support cascade into local schools</p> <p>Partnership with Portsmouth Football Club, 'Pompey in the Community' and the City Council facilitated 'Portsmouth Education Partnership'</p> <p>Work in collaboration with the Southern Universities Network (SUN) to deliver the National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP) and support the development of the 'outreach hub'</p>		<p>Increase applications and take-up of offers from engaged schools and colleges</p> <p>Increase applications and take-up of offers from under-represented groups</p>	<p>Increase the proportion of POLAR4 quintile 1 entrants by 2025</p> <p>No significant gaps in performance for other priority groups in terms of access</p>
Improving progression routes to HE for under-represented groups	<p>Opportunities to progress to HE can be unclear if taking non-A level qualifications & for mature returners</p> <p>Inadequate advice re level 3 choices can restrict opportunities to progress to HE</p>	<p>Building closer partnerships and new progression routes into HE via our regional FE College network</p> <p>Introduce new Foundation Years for students without appropriate qualifications</p> <p>Further expand degree apprenticeship provision</p>	<p>Introduce a range of new franchised courses from 2019/20 onwards</p> <p>Each of our five faculties to have a Foundation Year or HND route and degree apprenticeship programmes by 2020/21</p>	<p>Local access to high quality HE via franchises and progression to top-up degrees at Portsmouth</p> <p>Strong take up of flexible access routes to high quality HE programmes including degree apprenticeships</p>	
Under-representation of children of military families in HE	Factors include disrupted schooling, fewer extra-curricular activities and emotional issues e.g. due to deployment	Jointly lead a Service Children's Progression Hub (with Winchester) to develop understanding of specific issues faced by service children a			



Note: As above, measures outlined in relation to BAME students will also benefit other priority groups, therefore this table focuses on other developments.

Encourage more explicit focus on and engagement with progression opportunities within our courses	Student feedback has endorsed an even more explicit focus within the curriculum to build understanding of opportunities	Work with students to explore additional ways of promoting our matrix-accredited Careers and Employability Service, including more flexible, online support Greater use of mentors including alumni, with a focus on diversity to promote positive role models	Engagement by all students in career enhancing activities		
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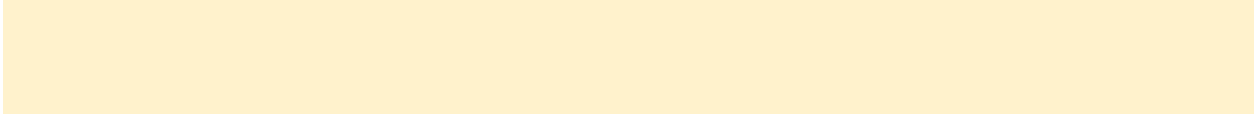
The two main routes for overarching evaluation of this Plan will be via relevant academic committees and the APP Project Board (chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor). Key academic committees are Student Experience Committee (SEC), which oversees the Student Success project and implementation of the

We are implementing a new annual monitoring process (EQuIP),

pre-entry liaison visits to support transition for students with complex cases including autism. They also advise disabled applicants and students on the specific financial support available.

Both our Student Finance Centre and Careers and Employability Service have successfully gained accreditation to the improved Quality Standard. This standard demonstrates and recognises our commitment to the delivery of high quality information, advice and guidance by continual review, evaluation and development of our service. We continue to work closely with our regional contact at Student Finance England to share information, best practice and event opportunities, and training and financial updates.

In addition to the work outlined above which is targeted at particular groups, the University will continue to ensure compliance with OfS and CMA compliance advice on publishing information on fees and financial support. We will publish our Access and Participation Plan once this is approved and also publish clear and accessible information for applicants and continuing students on tuition fees and financial support available to them.



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.

	£4,500,000.00	£4,550,000.00	£4,600,000.00	£4,650,000.00	£4,700,000.00
	£1,350,000.00	£1,365,000.00	£1,380,000.00	£1,395,000.00	£1,410,000.00
	£2,025,000.00	£2,050,000.00	£2,070,000.00	£2,090,000.00	£2,110,000.00
	£675,000.00	£680,000.00	£690,000.00	£700,000.00	£710,000.00
	£450,000.00	£455,000.00	£460,000.00	£465,000.00	£470,000.00
	£3,318,500.00	£3,294,250.00	£3,304,000.00	£3,290,500.00	£3,291,250.00
	£150,000.00	£155,000.00	£160,000.00	£165,000.00	£170,000.00

	£41,558,480.00	£41,361,040.00	£41,308,595.00	£41,299,340.00	£41,299,340.00
	7.7%	7.9%	8.0%	8.1%	8.2%
	8.0%	7.9%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
	16.0%	16.2%	16.3%	16.5%	16.6%

