



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by The University of Leeds against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

The University of Leeds's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Our ambition is to deliver continuous improvement in all areas of our provision. Our work to date is to accelerate our progress at every stage of the student lifecycle and we have increased proportional investment across the board. This is particularly noticeable in student success and progression.

Our commitment to widen participation is embedded within the University of Leeds Strategic Plan and all other strategies flow from this. Our strategy for engaging with WP students is well established and was developed in collaboration with colleagues from Educational Engagement (who lead our engagement with young students) and the Lifelong Learning Centre (which leads our mature learner engagement), and in consultation with services including Equality and Inclusion professionals and academic staff across faculties. The resulting Education Engagement Strategy articulates our commitment to fair access, and student success. Our institutional key performance indicators for widening participation are incorporated into the annual refresh of the Educational Engagement Strategy's action plan. This helps guide our work at a strategic level by identifying areas for focus and areas of success each year.

Underpinning and complementing this is our evaluation strategy which articulates our approach towards continuous improvement. It is embedded into every stage of our fair access and participation work. Our monitoring and evaluation programme runs throughout the year using formative and summative evaluation to inform programme development and monitor progress against our targets.

Our collaborative approach is well established and includes partnership work with local schools and employers, through Excellence Hubs, Realising Opportunities, Go Higher West Yorkshire and Uni Connect. We work with employers to support our recruitment, success and progression of students to Leeds.

Our targeting is informed by our evaluation and monitoring team and other teams which deliver and report on the impact of their programmes of activity on a regular basis. As standard, our work targets: low income students; LPN students (mature and young); disabled students; students from particular ethnicities; care leavers; estranged students; first generation students; refugees; and low socio economic classification students. This work is undertaken across the student lifecycle. Our target groups have been highlighted either because we intend to accelerate progress against existing milestones or because we have identified a group where interventions would be valuable).

When designing our APPs, the University adheres to the principles of equality and diversity as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Two of our strategic targets relate to people with protected characteristics (disabled and mature students) and equality considerations are embedded throughout our access activity. Our Equality and Inclusion work is essential to the recruitment of and support for students with protected characteristics. These students are statistically over represented within lower socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods. We continue to support and recruit students with protected characteristics through a variety of approaches which help demonstrate how our equality and inclusion agenda is embedded within our access work.

In light of Disabled Students Allowances (DSA) and sector changes, the University continues to transform its approach to the assessment of and support for disabled students. We are moving from a funding led, individual 'reasonable adjustments' model to a proactive, student-centred and guided model, supporting the University's vision for embedding inclusivity across its culture, systems, and structures.

We have long consulted our students in the formation, monitoring and delivery of WP activity and have historically engaged with them in decision making processes at all levels of the institution.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by The University of Leeds of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of The University of Leeds's 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	First year full time home/EU students (under 21) from NS SEC 4-7.	2013-14	21	24.5	25	Percentage	2019-20	23.6	Limited progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Mature entrants with no previous HE experience and from low participation neighbourhoods	2009/10	16.8	16.8	17.2	Percentage	2019-20	15.1	Limited progress
T16a_03 (Student success)	Non-continuation of all first degree full-time home/EU young and mature students	2012-13	3.6	3.1	3	Percentage	2018-19	3.7	Limited progress
T16a_04 (Access)	Participation of students who are in receipt of the Disabled Students Allowance	2013-14	5.7	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16a_05 (Student success)	Internal (University of Leeds own measure) non-continuation rates for full-time home/EU undergraduate students from NS SEC 4-7	2013-14	6.8	4.2	4	Percentage	2019-20	2.4	Expected progress
T16a_06 (Access)	First year, full-time home/EU students (under 21) from Low participation neighbourhoods.	2014-15	7.8	9	9.2	Percentage	2019-20	8.1	Limited progress
T16a_07 (Access)	Internal (University of Leeds' own measure) of percentage of students declaring a disability at Leeds,	2012-13	8.7	12.3	13	Percentage	2019-20	14.4	Expected progress
T16a_08 (Student success)	Non-continuation of mature students with no prior HE experience	2013-14	16.3	14.4	13.7	Percentage	2018-19	13.5	Expected progress

T16a_09 (Student success)	To exceed our 2011/12 HESA non continuation benchmark for young students from LPNs (our most challenging benchmark over the last five years) by 1.5% by 2019/20	Other (please give details in Description column)	4.9%	3.6	3.4	Percentage	2018-19	5.5	Limited progress
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Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Working with young people and their influencers to raise aspirations and achievement towards higher education and the University of Leeds	2013-14	74599	79000	80000	Headcount	2019-20	52462	Expected progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Place 1000 students as ambassadors in schools and other educational settings	2012-13	736	1000	1000	Headcount	2019-20	478	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Working in an intensive long term partnership with schools identified by less than 45% GCSE A*-C (or equivalent) pass rate and by 66% of population from the lowest super output areas	2009/10	5	10	10	Headcount	2019-20	5	No progress
T16b_04 (Access)	95% of young people we work with in years 5-8 are aware of higher education.	2013-14	88	94	95	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_05 (Access)	95% of young people we work with in years 9-11 will see university study as a realistic option.	2013-14	92	95	95	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_06 (Access)	90% of young people we work with in years 12-13 will consider the University of Leeds or other higher education institutions	2013-14	88	90	90	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_07 (Access)	Working in partnership across the City, we will provide bespoke support for young people in public care and those with a disability. Of these, over 60% view higher education positively and see it as a possible option for them in the future.	2013-14	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_08 (Access)	Of these young people we work with through the Projects, 95% have increased confidence through exposure to new and challenging experiences.	2013-14	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress

T16b_09 (Access)	We take a long term approach in engaging adults from low SEGs in LPN to explore the journey to higher education, starting with non formal adult education	2011-12	314	500	550	Headcount	2019-20	538	Limited progress
T16b_10 (Access)	Of those engaged, 330 will indicate an interest in higher education	2011-12	193	300	330	Headcount	2019-20	323	Limited progress
T16b_11 (Access)	We work with adults who are studying at FE Level 2, engaging in progression activities e.g. summer schools, HE taster days and campus study days	2011-12	297	420	430	Headcount	2019-20	432	Expected progress
T16b_12 (Access)	To support the 'most-able least-likely' to apply we will work intensively with young people in years 11, 12 and 13 to support them in applying to a research intensive University	2009/10	300	800	800	Headcount	2019-20	751	Expected progress
T16b_13 (Access)	Of those we work with through Thomas Transition in Year 11, 60% will progress to level 3 qualifications 2016/17	2012/13	0	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_14 (Access)	Of those we work with through such talent spotting schemes, 45% will apply to a research intensive university and 35% will register at the University of Leeds	2009/10	45% and 35%	45% and 35%	45% and 35%	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress
T16b_15 (Access)	Expand the number of direct applications through Access to Leeds	2015-16	1673	1975	2000	Headcount	2019-20	3048	Expected progress
T16b_16 (Access)	Expand the number of students registering through Access to Leeds	2014-15	609	790	820	Headcount	2019-20	1214	Expected progress
T16b_17 (Access)	For adults who have achieved FE level 3/HE Level 0 or equivalent we will seek to expand our successful applications to the University of Leeds	2009/10	165	205	210	Headcount	2019-20	217	Expected progress
T16b_18 (Access)	Expand the number of successful mature student applications to other HEIs, through collaborative outreach activity undertaken in LPNs regionally	2012-13	267	275	280	Headcount	2019-20	284	Expected progress
T16b_19 (Other/Multiple stages)	Support our scholars and vulnerable students through a series of bespoke targeted	2014-15	1070	2650	2760	Headcount	2019-20	3797	Expected progress

	retention, success and progression measures								
T16b_20 (Access)	Recruit students to Realising Opportunities, a collaboration with 14 other research intensive universities.	2013-14	62	60	60	Headcount	2019-20	81	Expected progress
T16b_21 (Access)	Across the partnership of Excellence Hubs (a collaboration with the Universities of Sheffield, Hull and York) we will provide IAG decision making conferences for years 8/9, 11 and 12 students.	2011-12	800	2150	2200	Headcount	2019-20	781	Limited progress
T16b_22 (Access)	The partnership between the University and IntoUniversity supports young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (below the age of 13) in East Leeds. The scheme currently works with 11 primary schools with more than 35% Free School Meals and has an aim to work with 900 students from East Leeds by 2016/17 and a further 900 from South Leeds by 2017/18	2014-15	450	1800	900	Headcount	2019-20	1688	Expected progress
T16b_23 (Student success)	Increase the proportion of Access to Leeds students achieving a 1st or 2:1 in their degrees at the University of Leeds	2016-17	79.7	80%	80.4%	Percentage	2019-20	84.8	Expected progress
T16b_24 (Access)	Of those we work with through Thomas Transition in Year 11, 80% of participants will report improved self-confidence and self-belief in ability to progress to HE	Other (please give details in Description column)	80%	80%	80%	Percentage	2019-20	81	Expected progress
T16b_25 (Access)	Working in partnership across the region, Go Higher West Yorkshire will provide bespoke support for young people in public care, aged 5 – 18, through sustained engagement.	2014-15	115	131	136	Headcount	2019-20	146	Expected progress
T16b_26 (Access)	The young people in public care and care leavers with sustained engagement in activity via Go Higher West Yorkshire will increase in confidence through	2013-14	83	90	90	Percentage	2019-20	94	Expected progress

	exposure to new and challenging experiences									
T16b_27 (Access)	Working in collaboration with partners, including HE providers, Go Higher West Yorkshire will engage learners from areas and regions with low participation rates in sustained engagement	2015-16	47	110	120	Headcount	2019-20	123	Expected progress	
T16b_28 (Access)	Of those we work with through such talent spotting schemes, (%TBC) will apply to research intensive universities (RFE)	Other (please give details in Description column)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress	
T16b_29 (Access)	Of those we work with through talent spotting schemes, (%TBC) will register at research intensive universities (RFE)	Other (please give details in Description column)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress	
T16b_30 (Access)	%TBC of young people we work with will believe that it is likely that they will apply to university	Other (please give details in Description column)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Percentage	2019-20	84	Expected progress	
T16b_31 (Access)	%TBC of young people we work with will believe that it is likely that they will enter higher education	Other (please give details in Description column)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Percentage	2019-20	82	Expected progress	
T16b_32 (Student success)	The proportion of disclosed students who choose to register/engage with Disability Support and Assessment Service	2017-18	52%	60%	63%	Percentage	2019-20	60	Limited progress	
T16b_33 (Student success)	The proportion of disclosed students who then access support;	2017-18	78%	79	80	Percentage	2019-20	81	Limited progress	
T16b_34 (Access)	Improved academic performance of intervention group compared with control group.	Other (please give details in	N/A	not available	0.25% positive difference in academic attainment over control group	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress	

		Description column)							
T16b_35 (Progression)	Close the gap in graduate prospects between Access to Leeds (A2L) and non-A2L students	2014-15	10.2%	not available	not available	Percentage	2019-20		Expected progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£3,686,700.00	£3,642,000.00	-1%
Financial Support	£13,427,338.00	£12,658,000.00	-6%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected The University of Leeds has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_01	As the HESA T1a NS-SEC data was replaced by the new T1a LPN indicator, which is more robust than the NS-SEC measure, we are using target T16a_06 as a proxy for this measure. Therefore our commentary for this milestone is detailed against T16a_06.

<p>T16a_02</p>	<p>The actions we will take to improve access for full-time Mature students are outlined in our new University Access & Student Success Strategy, launched in November 2020. We will provide flexible learning opportunities to support access for diverse students by committing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously improve our foundation programmes and focus on expansion in key areas • Increase flexibility of delivery for full-time and part-time learners, including flexible CPD opportunities for Mature learners • Engage prospective students in online and face-to-face academic tasters and online courses to introduce them to life as a student at Leeds and develop a sense of belonging • Provide clear and bold messaging about the opportunities for students from under-represented groups to study at Leeds with a contextual offer • Focus on sustained and evidence-based outreach • Partnership-working with a range of local adult education and skills providers • Pre-entry Information, Advice and Guidance Service for Adults (Matrix accredited) <p>Further details can be found within the strategy: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/access-and-student-success</p>
<p>T16a_03</p>	<p>We have identified a number of actions in our University Access & Student Success Strategy, specifically aimed at improving continuation for all student groups. At high-level these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued investment in learner analytics to develop an in-depth understanding of all our students and identify students facing greater barriers to continuation. Learner analytics will be fully incorporated into institutional decision-making and integrated into academic tutoring and supervision so students are understood and feel a sense of belonging to our university. - Providing proactive and culturally competent mental health and wellbeing support through personal tutors and supervisors to accessible services. <p>Further details can be found within the strategy: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/access-and-student-success</p> <p>We have also set stretching forward targets in our 2020/21-2024-25 APP to ensure continued effort in improving our continuation and attainment rates for mature students. Additionally we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue ongoing research and data analysis to aid understanding of the structural and unexplained gaps in non-continuation amongst this group - Review and make changes to curriculum, assessment and feedback to provide an inclusive curriculum to our increasingly diverse community of students - Improve capacity to enable early identification of students at risk using additional datasets and staff - Resource - Implement our recently designed Mature Student Success Framework which outlines interventions and transitional activity to support retention and achievement throughout the learning journey

	<p>We have provided additional actions we will take to address non-continuation in our commentary for T16a_09.</p>
T16a_06	<p>Our Access and Student Success Strategy to 2025 identifies a number of actions we will take to improve access for Young entrants from LPNs. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build sustained and evidence-based outreach interventions with schools, colleges and community organisations drawing on internal and external partnerships, fostering a sense of belonging for prospective students - Build strong and sustained links with Leeds' communities, locally, nationally and globally for mutual benefit - Drive teams throughout the University to innovate and test new initiatives to stay ahead of prospective students' changing needs - Evolve our admissions policies to allow fair opportunities to study at Leeds - Provide clear and bold messaging about the opportunities for students from under-represented groups to study at Leeds with a contextual offer - Provide flexible learning opportunities to support access for diverse students - Continuously improve our foundation programmes and focus on expansion in key areas - Engage prospective students in online and face-to-face academic tasters and online courses to introduce them to life as a student at Leeds and develop a sense of belonging

T16a_09	<p>We will continue to develop and enhance our co-creation and co-delivery approach with students via focus groups and the evolution of our Patient and Public Involvement based approach, ensuring students from underrepresented groups across the student lifecycle are heavily involved in our access and student success work at all stages.</p> <p>From 2020/2021, pre-HE engagement with schools and students will support prospective students holding BTEC and Access to HE qualifications to ease transition to University. This will be complemented by the findings from a research fellowship in the Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence on induction and transition which will inform recommendations, relevant to all students but particularly those at risk.</p> <p>As part of our new Access and Student Success Strategy we will be further tailoring student support to accommodate diverse backgrounds, including expanding our Plus Programme to engage with a wider range of students, and supporting smoother transitions through the student journey by designing induction and transition with the needs of underrepresented students at the forefront.</p> <p>Further actions we will take to improve non-continuation rates are detailed in the actions commentary for target T16a_03.</p>
T16b_03	<p>Increasing the number of schools isn't our immediate priority and we are investigating working with Year 10 students in our current schools to increase the timeframe for attainment raising. We are also looking to increase our attainment raising activities, in partnership with other third party organisations.</p>
T16b_09	<p>Further partnering with local adult education, job and skills and community providers to deliver mutually beneficial activity. During 19/20, we learnt a great deal delivering online activities and are currently sharing that practice and expertise with partners to support them address issues around digital exclusion and engaging with learners who lack confidence in online learning. Our Information Advice and Guidance service is connecting with statutory and voluntary sector partners who work with unemployed adults and those being made redundant.</p>
T16b_10	<p>We are working towards further blending our approaches to adult outreach, utilising online activity. This is enabling engagement and allowing for greater flexibility with some new cohorts of target learners alongside, Covid guidance permitting, more traditional forms of partnership-working. This approach will ensure that we can address issues around digital exclusion.</p>
T16b_21	<p>See previous column</p>
T16b_32	<p>As previous cell</p>
T16b_33	<p>As previous cell</p>

5. Confirmation

The University of Leeds confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
The University of Leeds has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Professor Simone Buitendijk
Position	Vice-Chancellor

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

The University of Leeds's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>As the HESA NS-SEC indicator was discontinued we have generated our data internally for this milestone using NS-SEC data from UCAS for our new entrants.</p> <p>As the HESA T1a NS-SEC data was replaced by the new T1a LPN indicator, which is more robust than the NS-SEC measure, we are using target T16a_06 as a proxy for this measure. Therefore our commentary for this milestone is detailed against T16a_06.</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>As the HESA T1a NS-SEC data was replaced by the new T1a LPN indicator, which is more robust than the NS-SEC measure, we are using target T16a_06 as a proxy for this measure. Therefore our commentary for this milestone is detailed against T16a_06.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_02
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>We have made progress year-on-year on this target, from 11.3 in 17/18 and 12.9 in 18/19 to 15.1 for 19/20. Additionally, we are performing above the HESA benchmark of 10.9%, which is positive. However we acknowledge that although we have made progress, particularly for 19/20, we are not where we wanted to be when these milestones were set. Our own analysis of the OfS dataset revealed a widening in access between Young and Mature students between 2013/14 and 2017/18; our performance improved in 2018/19, and this gap is an issue we are committed to addressing.</p> <p>The proportion of our part-time Mature entrants remains high and we are ahead of the sector for this measure in 2018/19 at 97% (87.8% English HE sector average: OfS dataset).</p> <p>Mature students are a key part of our access strategy and we are targeting this group using a range of measures, including incorporating IMD data into our analysis. The work of our Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) continues to focus on pre-entry interventions with Mature learners and we have also focussed on the admissions process for Access to HE candidates.</p> <p>We know our Mature students may not have the same access to pre-HE qualifications, or there may be barriers to full-time study. Data analysis has demonstrated that our Mature learners often have additional indicators of social disadvantage in addition to lower prior attainment. This has informed the growth our diverse programme portfolio, providing opportunity to study at foundation level and via part-time options. The University offers six Higher and Degree Apprenticeships developed in collaboration with businesses and organisations.</p> <p>We developed our first apprenticeship programme, aimed at Mature learners in partnership with local NHS Trusts. This initial Assistant Practitioners Higher Level apprenticeship had a cohort of 21 in its first year (18/19), 95% of which were Mature learners with no prior higher education and 76% coming from LPNs. The programme is delivered by our LLC. We have</p>

expanded a new initiative introduced in 2019, working with armed forces veterans; a key group of low SEC, predominantly male Mature learners. Over 50s army personnel and veterans have received specialist, targeted advice and information on progression to HE study and we are continuously looking at how we improve this collaboration and have also expanded the role of our Mature Student Learning Champions.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Our in-year monitoring activities suggested that we would exceed this target milestone, although this is a difficult target to monitor as the number of students measured is low (65 in the latest HESA data), which means a small change to the numbers can have a significant impact on our percentage figure. We will therefore be conducting further data analysis (looking at additional datasets) to ensure we are considering a range of measures in our in-year monitoring to better identify any progress issues at an early stage.

This work will be augmented by our new Access & Participation Plan Data Analytics Hub (APPDAH), formulated in late 2019/20 to enhance the monitoring of our onward, five-year APP. This group of cross-institutional data specialists are assisting with monitoring and reporting on the progress of our 2020/21-2024/25 APP targets, in addition to a range of supplementary datasets that indicate how well we are meeting our access, participation and progression commitments and ambitions as an institution. Analytical expertise is drawn from across our University.

Historically at times of high unemployment, there is an increase in the take-up of adults learning. The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on employment, then, could have an impact on mature student recruitment in 2021/22. However our Lifelong Learning Centre found that adults who were beginning to think about higher education demonstrated a reluctance to commit for 20/21 entry, due to the amount of uncertainty caused by the pandemic. We continue to engage with prospective Mature students during the pandemic period to gather their input and feedback.

Target reference number: T16a_03

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Over the course of this plan period we developed our whole-institution, evidence based approach to student success, culminating in the completion and publication of our new University Access and Student Success Strategy to 2025. Whilst the latest available HESA non-continuation data for 18/19 entrants shows we have regrettably not met our target milestone for this monitoring return, our provisional internal data suggests a step change in improvement for 19/20 entrants where we look set to exceed our target (provisional figure of 2.8). We expect non-continuation to improve for all full-time, first degree entrants across the longer term as we begin to see the tangible impact of work initiated and developed during the plan period.

As part of our Student Success Project, our Student Success Team have worked in partnership with academics, practitioners and students, using business intelligence along with existing processes knowledge, to help create an environment for students to have the greatest chance of being successful in their studies and post-graduation. This work will inform the development of more inclusive curriculums, widening participation, student support delivery, and system enhancement.

The core project team are currently providing links with academics, Faculties, Schools, Services, Educational Engagement and Student Support to share data and research to support the assembly of an accurate and timely picture of 'at risk' students to create a better understanding of the most effective means of supporting them.

We have done a great deal of data analysis on our non-continuation rates, particularly looking at additional intersections of disadvantage to identify at-risk groups. Whilst we traditionally perform well within the sector for non-continuation we recognise we can improve in this area and have identified increasing gaps that we are working to address, particularly between both POLAR4 and IMD Q1 and Q5 students. As a result of our enhanced analysis and evaluation we will be proposing additional targets for our APP 2020/21-24/25 for IMD Q1 students (as detailed in our Monitoring Return, section 5.2).

We have met our separate target for non-continuation specifically aimed at Mature students (T16a_08). Through enhancing our data capability and evidence and evaluation based-practice, we are now able to better identify and analyse particular groups of mature students who are more vulnerable to non-completion such as those progressing from Access2HE Diplomas and other non-traditional routes. We have made available additional resource for pre-entry preparation activity with those cohorts and developed and implemented a number of interventions at critical points of the student lifecycle.

We undertook work to ensure targeted interventions are taking place during 'critical moments' of the Mature student journey. This includes a range of flexible support to deal with mature student issues such as the probability of greater complexity in their lives, nurturing their sense of belonging and addressing imposter syndrome, all of which can be barriers to continuation.

Our work on specific commitments related to this target with reference to underrepresented groups is further detailed in our commentary response to target T16a_09.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

We know from research across the sector and the success of our Plus Programme that early identification of students at risk of lower engagement in learning enables timely interventions to support and encourage students in their daily interactions. We aim to replicate this through enhanced use of data and have trialled employment of dedicated Student Success Officers within Faculties, with a mature model of delivery in place by 2021/2022.

Our Student Success Project is developing a number of interventions in order to increase retention of Mature students, including: resit revision sessions, bespoke sessions on requested aspects of academic skill delivered at times most suitable for mature students, 1-1 sessions and intensive support in maths. An online study guide has been collated specifically for mature students during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Our LLC has also increased its pastoral support activity to address student concerns at this time.

Our Sense of Belonging work has heightened and accelerated due to the impact of the pandemic and a number of new approaches were implemented, including providing digital Transition events (as detailed within our Monitoring Return, section 5). Two new Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence (LITE) Fellowships have also been introduced in collaboration with our Educational Engagement team to explore the link between sense of belonging and the student experience.

LITE have additionally launched a number of Fellowships and Student Catalyst Projects during the plan period to enhance student learning and teaching practice at Leeds, contributing to enhancing student continuation and success.

We have piloted activity to ascertain the effectiveness of support aimed at ensuring a high level of continuation and attainment for Mature students. We have focussed on academic support for Mature students, including building capacity and confidence in numeracy skills. Both areas have been highlighted as benefiting Mature students in an ongoing qualitative longitudinal survey of Lifelong Learning students' life cycle.

Further objectives were identified during this plan period to improve our data analysis, research and evaluation work with regards to gaining a better understanding of the structural and unexplained gaps in non-continuation amongst Mature students. The first phase of this work will formally commence in 2021.

Analysis during the pandemic period has indicated that non-continuation has fallen this academic year. This can partly be attributed to the fact that we guaranteed progression for students going from 19/20 to 20/21, reducing the number of students not continuing due to 'academic failure'. However, we also saw a distinct fall in non-continuation attributed 'other personal reasons', not linked to academic performance, which is positive. We will continue to carefully monitor and evaluate the impacts of Covid-19 on our continuing students to ensure issues stemming from measures put in place during the pandemic do not manifest in future years and a Task and Finish Group is in place to explore how longer-term improvements can be made to progression, particularly from Foundation to Level 1 and Level 1 to Level 2. This will also explore if we should continue to suspend automatic resits in coming years.

See also commentary for T16a_09 for further additional steps taken to address non-continuation in underrepresented groups.

Target reference number: T16a_06

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Whilst we are making progress against this target and perform well within the Russell Group, we had recognised that we were not progressing as quickly as hoped, and the gap between the proportion of POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students remains wide with fluctuations. We have taken steps to accelerate our progress and our internal data for 19/20 onwards shows a marked improvement, as we begin to see the impact of our longer-term recruitment strategies.

Our Access to Leeds (A2L) scheme continues to be our primary route of recruitment for young full-time students from underrepresented groups. It annually shows proportionally greater progress at recruiting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students than the University and the sector. A2L and our foundation year programmes both provide opportunity for students to demonstrate potential through more than grades alone. Each year we analyse our recruitment data at granular level to position the progress of our fair access in the context of the University and the country, identifying groups who are benefitting from A2L and those where more work is required.

A great deal of work was done during the last admissions cycle to increase the pool of students applying, however we do acknowledge more work is needed to increase our entrants from LPN backgrounds. We have increased offers to students from LPNs and undertaken additional work at Faculty level, including monitoring work to look for gaps in LPN recruitment.

Our offer making to LPN students increased across all but two of our academic Schools.

We acknowledge that the change from POLAR3 to POLAR4 methodology has impacted our milestone performance, with comparable data from 2016/17 and 2017/18 showing a drop in performance for POLAR4 figures compared with POLAR 3 (8.1 POLAR3 to 7.6 POLAR4 and 8.3 POLAR3 to 7.9 POLAR4 respectively). Despite this change, it is unlikely we would have met our 19/20 milestone for this target under POLAR3. However, our provisional internal data for 20/21 does show a noteworthy improvement (9.1 POLAR4).

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Evaluation of our internal data revealed that whilst many students from under-represented groups' progress to the University through A2L and our foundation year, a significant minority choose to apply via the standard route. We have made the following changes to admissions to improve LPN entry, targeting a wider breadth of applicants:

- Confirmation & Clearing targeting of POLAR 4 Q1 LPN – 19/20 entry
- Additional offer consideration for students from POLAR 4 Q1 LPN – 20/21 entry
- Formal one grade reduction for POLAR 4 Q1 LPN at Confirmation & Clearing (externally promoted) – 20/21 entry
- One grade reduced offer for POLAR 4 Q1 LPN - 21/22 entry
- A2L 'low progression area' eligibility extended to Q2 POLAR and IMD – 21/22 entry

The following will also be enacted as part of this package of admissions changes:

- One grade reduced offer for IMD Q1 LPN – 22/23 entry

We also now have a better understanding of the numbers of POLAR LPN students we are recruiting via Clearing: 49 in 2019/20 with an increase to 79 in 2020/21, indicating that our advertised Clearing grade reduction strategy above is having a positive impact.

As detailed in section 5.2 of our Monitoring Return, through data analysis and evaluation we have identified intersections in student characteristics between our POLAR4 Q1 and IMD Q1 students. As a result of this evaluation we are expanding our Access activities to target IMD Q1 students, in addition to POLAR4 Q1 students. This will ensure greater numbers of students from LPNs are supported in accessing our University, as well as throughout their studies.

We conducted a thorough review and impact assessment of our attainment raising activity and will be implementing a new investment and action plan of activity as a result of this work, ensuring resource is given to interventions evidencing the greatest impact. The next steps will be scaling up activity with existing partners, looking at activity we can deliver ourselves and building attainment raising activity into initiatives such as Reach For Excellence.

Our strategy to maximise access from LPN and A2L students was not adversely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. During Confirmation and Clearing we offered greater flexibility for LPN students and advertising of new entry requirements was clearly publicised on our web pages. The number of LPN students we recruited this year has increased, now at 620. The ratio between Q1 and Q5 entrants also improved and now stands at 4.7:1 for 2020 entry. Recruitment via A2L remained strong with 1248 entrants recruited in 2020, a marked increase on previous years.

Due to Covid-19 we adapted our outreach work to provide digital provision and anticipate this will have a lasting impact on the way we deliver outreach activity. We are currently

investigating how we reach as many underrepresented and widening participation students as possible as part of our future outreach plans.

Target reference number: T16a_09

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Whilst the latest available published HESA non-continuation data for 18/19 entrants reveals we have not met our milestone, our provisional internal data for 19/20 entrants suggests we will meet this milestone with a figure of 3.2 predicted.

The work of the Plus Programme has been successful in engaging students who progress via Access to Leeds, estranged students and care leavers and the impact includes positive non-continuation rates and degree attainment in line with peers. We have built on this by testing the rollout to additional groups of students including BTEC and Quintile 1 students who opted not to progress via A2L. This work includes pre-HE engagement with all groups referenced.

Our Plus Programme also received the NEON Widening Access Initiative (Retention and Progression) Award in 2019. The programme provided evidence of how the initiative has made a tangible impact on either the student experience of learners regarding learning and teaching, learner attainment, student retention and progression of learners to employment or postgraduate study.

As advised in our 19/20 plan, we developed a suite of targeted interventions and peer support for a subset of our Plus Programme students with multiple dimensions of disadvantage, in this case students from the following ethnicities: Asian British – Pakistani had the highest rate of non-continuation, other Black background, Black or Black British – African, Black or Black British – Caribbean. The scheme launched in 18/19 supporting students to enhance their academic skills and access extra-curricular activities to enhance their transferable skills.

Building on existing work, we prioritised developing curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to ensure that learning is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. A project on inclusive curriculum design commenced in the Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence with the objective of designing more inclusive curricula across the University, increasing belonging, and narrowing the attainment and non-continuation gaps for students from lower socio-economic groups and BAME backgrounds. Curriculum change pilots took place in five university Faculties during the plan period to measure how module course, content and design has become more inclusive, surveying and interviewing both academics and students. Baseline standards will be developed during this academic year. These will monitor progress on the initiative with improvements expected in 2024.

New programme design work was conducted to test models such as degree apprenticeships. Their impact on non-continuation will inform our approach from the current academic year onwards.

We have continued to honour our commitment to invest in targeted work supporting continuation amongst BTEC students, including ensuring these students receive pre-entry webinars, induction events and further support to complete the study skills modules. For staff, we have held a series of awareness/impact sessions with academics to ensure the specific challenges experienced by these students are understood and to share good practice. Work will continue on outputs in this area as we continue to be driven by our evidence and

evaluation.

We have continued to offer our means-tested WP scholarships. The scholarships are worth £3k per year (for 3 years). These are valuable as they are target WP students who are most in need of support (e.g. care leavers and estranged students). The selection criteria of these awards takes in account a range of indicators which may show an applicant is from a less advantaged background. Evaluation of our funding package suggested that students in receipt of £3k and above are proportionally more likely to progress from year 1 to year 2 than non-LFS recipients. It also found that students with a financial award ranging from £2001-£3000 are proportionally more likely than non-bursary students to achieve a first or upper second, therefore our WP Scholarships extend to £3,000.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

Our continued data analysis and internal research and evaluation has identified key factors that influence non-continuation across all under-represented groups and informed our approach to supporting the most disadvantaged students across the University.

As part of our Student Success Project referenced herein, our new Student Success Officers based in Faculties have been gathering, analysing student data to examine support and recommend improvements in processes. This data will be used to benchmark current performance to trial new initiatives to ensure that the University closes the gaps in outcomes which may exist between specific groups of students in terms of non-continuation rates and degree attainment.

An audit of the work of our Student Success Officers is also underway to ensure we are robustly evaluating and continuously improving our practices.

In early 2020 we also began running regular focus groups (which moved online during the Covid-19 pandemic) with a range of Plus Programme students from different backgrounds and across the student lifecycle, to learn and understand any issues and difficulties they are facing during their studies. We adopted a 'student-led' approach, allowing students to shape how this programme of activity would be conducted and developed. Feedback is relayed to relevant Services and committees for action and has already generated a number of new areas of work and deep-dive research initiatives which we hope will lead to further enhancements in student continuation. We will continue to expand this work, as well as the range of students involved, and are inviting students from this group to comment on our progress against this plan and into future APPs.

We have also created and recruited to a new post specifically to work with widening-participation and underrepresented students based on approaches pioneered through Patient and Public Involvement in healthcare research, ensuring students are involved as partners in our access and student success provision and in contributing to the development, evaluation and monitoring of our APPs and targets.

Our Plus Programme has continued to support over 3,500 widening participation students, offering a bespoke menu of on-course support activities, developed to support students most at risk of withdrawing their studies early. Our innovative programme works cross-institutionally, with significant numbers of participants. We engage students at the application stage and support them throughout their studies at Leeds.

See also commentary for T16a_03 for further additional steps taken to address non-continuation.

Target reference number: T16b_03

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

We have concentrated on working with a smaller number of schools to ensure we gather robust evidence of hard to reach students progressing to our post-16 sustained engagement programmes and to allow us to shift our focus to attainment raising activities with the TTP students, working in collaboration with the Tutor Trust. The success of the attainment raising, allied with clear progression to post-16 activity is now the focus of this project rather than expansion.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

We have concentrated resources on ensuring there are dedicated places for TTP students on our post-16 Reach for Excellence programme and raising attainment to ensure TTP students are eligible for progression.

Target reference number: T16b_09

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This target milestone was not met due to the difficulty of undertaking outreach during the Covid-19 lockdown. The regional picture mirrors national data which highlights the issues that community adult learning and other voluntary sector activity have had in transferring to online provision. Adult learning provision in Leeds and surrounding areas has been decimated. This provision is a key pipeline for our ability to engage with adults from LPNs. Digital exclusion has been also a barrier to engaging with adults from groups under-represented in higher education. However due to the work undertaken prior to lockdown and followed by innovative online activity, the target for the preceding year was overtaken.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

During the year we undertook a number of innovative online activities using a variety of platforms to reach our audience. Using our database of contacts and social media communication with local partners, we delivered 35 online events between March and July, 2020 with over 70% of participants from LPNs.

Target reference number: T16b_10

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Due to the pandemic related disruption in adult outreach activity, this target was not achieved, although only by 7. The numbers indicating an interest in progression to higher education however did increase from our 18/19 target. Not only had intensive work been undertaken prior to the pandemic, but the subsequent online activity helped to develop awareness and interest in HE pathways.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

See commentary above in column W (target T16b_09)

Target reference number: T16b_21

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Before the Covid-19 restrictions began, we delivered 29 collaborative events, engaging 781 students from across 71 schools. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the many of our Excellence Hub events were cancelled. We continued to support schools and colleges through a monthly newsletter featuring online provision delivered by individual partner institution

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

See previous column

Target reference number: T16b_32

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

This target, alongside T16b_33, was created in support of Strategic level target T16a_07, for which we have exceeded our milestone. Our Disability Service has determined that the impact of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our ability to meet the target milestone this year. This is as a result in slower than normal processing of information due to online and remote working, with additional issues with students being unable to obtain the required supporting disability evidence. The Service feels that it has been able to manage both these circumstances far better in the current academic year and expects to make greater progress in terms of target attainment.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

As previous cell

Target reference number: T16b_33

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

As above, this target was created in support of T16a_07, for which we have exceeded our milestone. We are also just 1% short of meeting this milestone for this year. Our Disability Service has determined that the impact of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our ability to meet the target milestone this year. This is as a result in slower than normal processing of information due to online and remote working, with additional issues with students being unable to obtain the required supporting disability evidence. The Service feels that it has been able to manage both these circumstances far better in the current academic year and expects to make greater progress in terms of target attainment.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

As previous cell

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

The University of Leeds's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	Target T16a_06 is used as proxy for this milestone, due to discontinuation of HESA NS-SEC measure.
T16a_02	This milestone was set using previous POLAR methodology, however we have determined that whilst the change to POLAR4 has not had a significant impact on our milestone results and would not have led to a change in our assessment of progress as 'limited' had we re-baselined this target. Additionally, our forward targets for our five-year APP are not impacted by the changes as all POLAR targets were set using POLAR4. If the POLAR methodology changes again over the course of our five-year plan, we will re-baseline.
T16a_03	
T16a_04	This target was superseded as detailed in column P
T16a_05	
T16a_06	This milestone was set using previous POLAR methodology, however we have determined that whilst the change to POLAR4 methodology has decreased our performance slightly it has not had a significant impact and would not have led to a change in our assessment of progress as 'limited' had we re-baselined this target. Additionally, our forward targets for our five-year APP are not impacted by the changes as all POLAR targets were set using POLAR4. If the POLAR methodology changes again over the course of our five-year plan, we will re-baseline.
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	This milestone was set using previous POLAR methodology, however we do not feel the change to POLAR4 has made a significant impact or altered our assessment of progress as 'limited'. Therefore we have chosen not to re-baseline this target.
T16b_01	Although numbers have decreased we have made progress as expected . Activity recorded in CRM before Covid-19 pandemic restrictions shows we were on track (Aug 2019 – March 2020) = 38,494 following lockdown our Online Delivery Hub Activity Report was reduced as expected (May 2020 – Aug 2020) = 13,969
T16b_02	Student Host/EOF activity also reduced as a result of Covid-19 restrictions
T16b_03	
T16b_04	This target has been superseded. It was noted in our approved 19/20 Plan that this target would be replaced.

T16b_05	As above.
T16b_06	As above.
T16b_07	This target has been superseded by T16b_25 as indicated in our approved 19/20 Plan
T16b_08	This target has been superseded by T16b_26 as indicated in our approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_09	
T16b_10	
T16b_11	
T16b_12	We have assessed this milestone as 'expected progress' as we are only slightly under our target headcount for 19/20 and feel that our recruitment to the relevant specialist programmes is well on-track and as expected, despite the difficulties caused by Covid-19. We would have anticipated exceeding this target if it were not for the pandemic disruption to activities.
T16b_13	This target has been superseded as noted in column P and detailed in our approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_14	This target has been replaced as noted in our approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_15	
T16b_16	
T16b_17	
T16b_18	
T16b_19	
T16b_20	
T16b_21	
T16b_22	Due to Covid-19 restrictions a number of activities had to be cancelled from March 2020 onwards. Although we have met our target, Covid disruptions have caused a year-on-year decrease and our headcount figure for 18/19 was 2,689.
T16b_23	
T16b_24	
T16b_25	
T16b_26	
T16b_27	The proxy for this measure was previously participation in residential activity however, due Covid-19, most planned residential activity was cancelled. An alternative approach was used and has fed into our reporting here. This involved counting those who participated in activity which met the following criteria: 1. Taking place over several days (not necessarily consecutive) with the same group of students attending each time; 2. Part of a programme with several connected

	elements to it, e.g. with the Engie Housing Project there is a site visit, design activity etc. – not just one kind of activity.
T16b_28	New target - baseline data yet tbc. Student destination data will be available within HEAT moving forward. Noted in approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_29	New target - baseline data yet tbc. Student destination data will be available within HEAT moving forward. Noted in approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_30	84% has been collated from evaluation data to form the baseline figure for a new target
T16b_31	As above.
T16b_32	Our full response was initially written in column V as columns W and X seemed to still be locked.
T16b_33	Our full response was initially written in column V as columns W and X seemed to still be locked.
T16b_34	Baseline data and project findings/ recommendations to be disseminated on completion of programme pilot phase as noted in approved 19/20 Plan.
T16b_35	Target not included due to gap in DLHE reporting, as noted in our approved 19/20 Plan.