

Birmingham Metropolitan College

Access and participation plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Birmingham Metropolitan College is a large Further Education college, with Higher Education provision. The College offers a broad curriculum ranging from full-time courses for school leavers including A Levels and vocational qualifications, full-time Access to Higher Education courses, part-time adult professional development, entry level and recreational courses as well as full and part-time degree level study. The College has a range of specialist and community sites serving local communities in Birmingham and the Black Country. We have significant employer relationships and employer-sponsored academy provision in a range of sector-areas including construction, engineering, rail, business and professional services, ICT and health-related professions such as podiatry. The College supports students from some of the most deprived communities in the UK with over half of all students in the highest band of deprivation; two-fifths of our learners are from Black and Ethnic Minority communities.

The College's ambition is clear: that it wishes to be recognised as a leading College in Birmingham and the city region, to inspire all students and staff to enrich their college experience by creating an inspirational and innovative environment. The College continuously seeks to improve opportunity and enable all students to make progress, succeed and meet future challenges through a high-quality personalised teaching, learning and assessment experience. The College's Access and Participation Plan articulates our strategic ambition for enhancing social mobility, the inclusive approach we are adopting to strengthen our position, and the plans we developed for our Journey to Excellence whilst embracing diversity.

1. Assessment of performance

The College's assessment of performance provides detailed analysis of our current performance on access, participation and success of all students. BMet has a long-standing commitment to access and widening participation. We have systematically examined the data available to us, in order to assess our current access and participation performance, and to establish where we need to make progress. Our assessment considers underrepresented groups where national data indicates significant sector wide equality gap, to include where the gaps are widest within the context of our own institution. Wherever we identify an area that requires attention, we have set ambitious targets to accelerate our progress in closing such gaps and identified outcomes that will ensure we achieve our targets.

We have reviewed the performance of our own student population across their whole lifecycle and our role in the national picture in relation to the OfS access and participation key performance measures and the College's Key Performance Indicators. Our approach to understanding and analysing our performance considers a range of evidence to include, the OfS access and participation dataset, internal qualitative and quantitative data, academic evidence, relevant TEF Metrics and HESA data.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

The College recruits successfully from areas that have low participation indices entering Higher Education. An analysis of our dataset shows that in 2017/18 BMet attracted 47% FT and 40% PT students from POLAR4 quintiles 1_2. This compares positively with national trend of 27.7% FT and 38.2% PT from similar low participation neighbourhoods (OfS Dataset).

Table1. Percentage of Full Time new entrants from POLAR4Q1_2

	2013/14			2014/15			2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance
POLAR4 Q1-2	44	26.6	17.4	32	27.2	4.8	47	27.4	19.6	25	27.5	-2.5	47	27.7	19.3

Source: OfS Dataset 2019

When assessing some intersections of characteristics, ethnicity and sex from LPN, the figures show that the College's performance for these underrepresented group of students is above the national trend. There is a positive difference of 12% for POLARQ12_BAME and a positive difference of 20% for POLARQ12_male in our full-time recruitment in comparison to sector data in 2017/18. Analysis of our data over the past five

years, suggest that the College's performance for access of students from low participation neighbourhood, is significantly above the national benchmark. This reflects some of the focussed efforts to engage schools and learners in these areas. We are committed to maintaining our performance in access of students from this underrepresented group. We will continuously monitor our performance for the duration of this plan in this area and will set targets when gaps are highlighted.

Success

Non-continuation

The College has a strong commitment to student success; however we are aware that our non-continuation rates are not at the level that we aspire to. Students are at the heart of everything we do, and we are aware of our obligations to them. We are embedding a culture of support across the college, aiming to provide support for all our students with a targeted approach where necessary.

The non-continuation rates are proportionally spread across all student groups and vary across disciplines and programme of study. There is no significant gap in underperformance across underrepresented groups in comparison to their peers.

There has been no significant variance in the non-continuation gap between IMD quintiles 1_2 and quintiles 3_5 in 2016/17 for FT students at the College. However in comparison with the sector benchmark there is a 7 percentage point gap for IMDQ1_2 and 12 percentage point for IMDQ3_5.

Further analysis of the non-continuation data indicates a 50 percentage point gap for IMDQ1 part-time students in comparison with IMDQ5 in 2015/16. We will, therefore set a target to reduce the non-continuation gap of this underrepresented group.

In some categories of under representation the College's data has been either statistically too low to draw any strong conclusions concerning student success or the information has otherwise been suppressed for data protection reasons. The non-continuation data has been considered in isolation of other factors for all students including subject variation, prior attainment, and entry requirements that will warrant further investigation to understand the context. However analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data points towards success challenges for all full-time students and we will be seeking to monitor the performance of all students and will target all students to reduce non-continuation for our students.

Targeting and monitoring all students will enable the College to create a comprehensive dataset against which to identify and measure underrepresented students' data. Understanding the whole picture will enable us to identify activities which have benefited all students and then drill down to how activities have benefitted students in underrepresented groups, who will be clearly identified within our data, on a year to year basis.

We will provide opportunities for individual students to identify their own success challenges and will provide support and focussed interventions to promote success. In the case of non-continuation rates, this might include increased 1 to 1 support, skills development, and financial support for individual students from underrepresented groups.

We will employ a twofold approach to identify the impact of activities which are undertaken in this way;

- By segregating and analysing the data to identify how the activities have e.g. improved the continuation of students in underrepresented groups
- By segregating feedback gathered through a range of 'student voice' activities such as evaluative surveys and focus groups

Aggregation and segregation of data and evaluation of impact will take place at key intervals throughout each academic year and for the lifetime of the Access and Participation Plan. We are committed to monitoring and analysing the performance of all underrepresented groups of students and we will set targets for this group of students if any gaps are highlighted during the lifespan of this plan.

Attainment

The number of degree qualifying students at the College is significantly low, and there has been a decline in the recruitment numbers onto our Level 6 programmes since 2013/14. In 2017/18 this cohort comprised 6.3% of BMet's student population; therefore it has been challenging to draw any strong conclusions in relation to attainment gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between those underrepresented student groups and their peers at the College. Further, in some cases the data has been suppressed for data protection reasons particularly for students from lower participation neighbourhoods. We will further enhance our data collection tools and dashboards to review and analyse the performance of this underrepresented group by 2022/23, and set targets if any significant gaps are highlighted by 2023/24.

Progression to employment or further study

The College is committed in supporting students into employment or progression to further study. Our students' participation in the DLHE survey has been significantly low, therefore the progression indicators of the survey have not met the response rate threshold required, and limited data is available to the College. In 2017/18 only 47.5% of our students had a recorded internal data for progression and out of those 28% progressed to further studies, either at the College or at other HEIs, and 16.5% entered employment. Further analysis of the data suggests that a lower percentage of students from POLAR4Q12 progressed to employment or further studies in comparison to students from POLAR4Q3_5. We have a similar pattern in terms of availability of progression data for all underrepresented groups.

Through this assessment, we have identified the need to ensure that we have reliable data for our higher education students across different cohorts for progression to employment/further study and progression to highly skilled employment as listed in the guidance. Currently we do not have data available for progression to skilled employment. We will further develop our widening participation datasets and educational dashboards that will enable us to monitor the student journey of all cohorts, enabling us to target support and evaluate the impact of interventions more effectively. The developments of dashboards for progression data are scheduled to be completed by 2021/2022. Following further analysis of the data and identification of any gaps, targets will be set for underrepresented groups in 2022/23.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

BMet regularly reviews participation by ethnicity to ensure entrants continue to be attracted from BAME groups. The proportion of full-time BAME students at the college has been consistent over the past five years and was 46% of the student population in 2017/18, 14.9% above the national benchmark. The college recruits mainly from the city region. When comparing with the local community (2011 census) which shows a representation of, 22% Asian residents in Birmingham City, Black (7%) and White 53%, the College's recruitment is a fair reflection of the local community representation (table 2). The college has explored access outcomes based on the intersection of ethnicity through the OfS dataset, where data indicates BMet is performing well against comparator national trends.

We are committed to maintaining our performance in access of students from this underrepresented group. We will continuously monitor our performance for the duration of this plan in this area and will set targets when gaps are highlighted.

Table2. Percentage of Full Time new entrants from POLAR4Q1_2

	2013/14			2014/15			2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance	BMet	Sector	Variance
BAME	49	26.2	22.8	47	28.4	18.6	47	29.5	17.5	36	30.4	5.6	46	31.1	14.9
White	51	73.8	-22.8	53	71.6	-18.6	53	70.5	-17.5	64	69.6	-5.6	54	68.9	-14.9

Source: OfS Dataset 2019

Success

Non-continuation

Non-continuation gaps between particular ethnicity groups has been analysed at the College, and this continues to fluctuate year on year with no significant gap in performance of full-time BAME students in

comparison to white students. However in 2015/16, there was a gap of 31.3 percentage point between part-time BAME students in comparison white students. We will, therefore set a target for this underrepresented group of students.

The College will act to further explore gaps in non-continuation of BAME and white students; reviewing the inclusivity of teaching, learning and assessment and the effectiveness of academic and pastoral support. BMet will therefore, continue to target the non-continuation gap of all FT students. This will include a range of activities including exit interviews, targeted focus groups, targeted surveys and development of a more comprehensive data dashboard to enable considerations of a wider pastoral and academic support for individual students. We will analyse and segregate the results of these activities at key intervals in the academic year and throughout the lifespan of the plan. While we do not anticipate that such activities would cease, we commit to informing OfS if they do.

The data dashboard will be fully operational in 2020/21. Improved monitoring will lead to more accurate identification of individuals and their needs; this will allow targeted intervention and development planning which will be monitored through fortnightly tutorials. Following further analysis of the data and identification of any gaps, further targets will be set for underrepresented groups as appropriate through the lifespan of this plan.

Attainment

BMet's data for attainment has been suppressed and, in some instances, not included due to small numbers. Due to the small number of black students we have not been able to draw any strong conclusions on attainment gap between white and black students. We will further enhance our data collection tools and dashboards to review and analyse the performance of this underrepresented group by 2022/23, and set targets if any gaps are highlighted by 2023/24.

Progression to employment or further study

As explained, the available data for progression is significantly low in particular for BAME students; therefore for data protection reasons we are unable to report the gaps between this group and white students in absolute terms in this plan. We are aware that the patterns for progression vary for different student groups at the college and we will plan accordingly. By 2020/21 the College will devise an HE specific Employability Strategy which will take into account the removal of any barriers to progression for underrepresented groups. By further analysing the data if gaps were identified, targets will be set for this underrepresented group in 2022/23.

In terms of progression to further study, we will improve our exit interviews and surveys to ensure that we have better data regarding aspirations to and confirmed further study by 2021/22. We will also continue to promote our HE offer to underrepresented groups to enable further progression to study with the College, our partners or other appropriate providers.

1.3 Mature students

Access

The College is committed to making Higher Education accessible to mature students. Our recruitment data for 2017/18 indicates that 37% of our FT students and 57% of PT students were mature. This demonstrates the flexibility of the programmes on offer, allowing ease of access to mature students. BMet has shared in the national decline in mature students which shows a decline of 53% PT students in 2017/18 since 2008/09 (Briefing Paper: Part-time Undergraduate Students in England). HESA data shows that in 2016/17, 92% of undergraduate part time students were mature students compared with 23% of full-time students. Tables 3 and 4 present a comparison of the percentage of our mature and young students with the sector over the past 5 years.

Table 3: Percentage of full-time mature and young new entrants

	2013/14			2014/15			2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce
Age 21+	40	24.7	15.3	48	26.4	21.6	51	26.9	24.1	58	27.4	30.6	37	27.8	9.2
Age Under 21	60	75.3	-15.3	52	73.6	-21.6	49	73.1	-24.1	42	72.6	-30.6	63	72.2	-9.2

Source: OfS Dataset 2019

Table 4: Percentage of part-time mature and young new entrants

	2013/14			2014/15			2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce	BM et	Sect or	Varian ce
Age 21+	70	88.9	-18.9	55	88	-33	44	87.7	-43.7	60	87.4	-27.4	57	87.4	-30.4
Age Under 21	30	11.1	18.9	45	11.9	33.1	56	12.3	43.7	40	12.6	27.4	43	12.6	30.4

Source: OfS Dataset 2019

Mature learners are more likely than younger learners to have characteristics associated with disadvantage and under-representation in higher education. NUS 2012 found that mature students are more likely to be from lower socio-economic status backgrounds, have caring responsibilities, be disabled, and be from black and minority ethnic groups. We are committed to maintain our performance in access of part-time mature students and seek to remove barriers for mature students accessing Higher Education. We will implement effective identified enablers such as flexible modes of delivery, tailored information, advice and guidance including 1-1 interviews and support to integrate with the student population. We will provide opportunities for mature, part time students to identify barriers in order that we can make any reasonably practicable changes to support their access to our courses. Anonymised data will be gathered by course in order that we can measure the impact of these changes. These activities will run throughout the life span of this plan.

Success

Non-continuation

In 2015-16 65% of part-time mature students achieved their awards which was a 10% increase from 2012-13 (3.2% above national benchmark). There has been a 5% improvement in non-continuation of full-time students in 2016-17, however there remains a 4.8 percentage point gap in comparison to national benchmark. Our part-time mature students have a significantly higher non-continuation rate than young students with a 14.2 percentage point gap in 2015/16. The College will target PT mature students to reduce non-continuation gap for this group of students. We will support this group of students to enable them to increase their engagement and sense of belonging with the wider HE community e.g. through enrichment activities. We will also offer tailored induction, additional academic support (in recognition that mature students are more likely to be from disadvantaged backgrounds and have non-traditional qualifications, targeted financial support and regular tutorial sessions including a termly progress review. These activities will continue throughout the lifespan of this plan.

Attainment

BMet's data for attainment has been suppressed and, in some instances, not included due to small numbers. Internal quantitative data available to the college reflects these small numbers, which has resulted in an unreliable statistical analysis. We will further enhance our data collection tools and dashboards to review and analyse the performance of this underrepresented group by 2022/23, and set targets if any gaps are highlighted by 2023/24.

Progression to employment or further study

Progression data available to us for this group of students is significantly low and due to data protection reasons; we are unable to provide details in absolute terms in this plan. The developments for progression data are scheduled to be completed by 2021/2022. Following further analysis of the data and identification of any gaps, targets will be set for underrepresented groups in 2022/23.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

There has been a significant increase in the number of full-time students who have declared a registered disability at the College with a 9% increase since 2013/14. The college will continue to review the barriers that may exist for students to declare a disability, including how accurately internal recording mechanisms are capturing declarations and establishing mechanisms to ensure that further opportunities are given to

students to disclose or students who may not have a disability when they enrol but acquire one during the course of their studies.

The data collection and development of a more accurate dashboard will be completed by 2020-21. We will also complete further research including into the Social Model of Disability and models of support for disabled students in HE and how they can facilitate improved access by 2021-22. We will set targets for any identified gaps by 2022-23.

Success

Non-continuation

BMet has a growing population of students with a declared disability and we are aware of the success challenges our students are facing and we will be setting targets to reduce non-continuation gaps for all students. We will further develop and enhance our student analytics and dashboards for students with disability, providing data that is disaggregated by specific disability on outcomes across the student lifecycle. These will be available at departmental and college level and inform strategy development. The development of the dashboard will be fully completed by 2020/21. This will enable us to identify gaps and barriers and develop a tailored response which is appropriate to individuals in this underrepresented group and make any reasonable practicable adjustments at an organisational/course level accordingly. We will continue this activity for the lifespan of this agreement and set targets accordingly. .

Attainment

The number of disabled students qualifying for degree qualifications is significantly low and suppressed for data protection reasons. The College is committed to support students with a declared learning difficulty and has several support mechanisms in place including additional tutorials, IT and Study Skills Support. We will further enhance our data collection tools and dashboards to review and analyse the performance of this underrepresented group by 2022/23, and set targets if any gaps are highlighted by 2023/24.

Progression to employment or further study

Progression data available to us for this group of students is significantly low and due to data protection reasons; we are unable to provide details in absolute terms in this plan. The developments of dashboards for progression data are scheduled to be completed by 2021/2022. Following further analysis of the data and identification of any gaps, targets will be set for underrepresented groups in 2022/23.

1.5 Care leavers

Access

Access performance for care leavers remains disappointing for BMet with no entrants identified in 2017/18. We acknowledge that we need to further improve the collection, accuracy and evaluation of our care-leavers' data. We will enhance the College's enrolment processes to identify this underrepresented group and use the data which UCAS collects in the application process to identify care leavers before they enrol from 2020/21.

We have already increased our efforts in accessing care-leavers through Propel and have a strong commitment to this group of students. This has not, however, made the difference we were hoping for. Further analysis and research is required to understand and improve the access trajectory for this under-represented group. We will develop a strategy for supporting access, success and progression of Care Leavers by 2020/21 and set an access target for this underrepresented group in 2022/23. The College will sign up to the Care Leaver Covenant to help ensure that students who have been in care receive the best possible support to access and succeed in higher education by 2021/22.

Success

Currently there are no students at the College who have declared to be care leavers.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

We are aware that underrepresentation, poor success and progression in higher education is fundamentally multi-dimensional in nature which means that taking a singular sectional approach can exclude the groups that may be most affected. We acknowledge that for example, a focus on ethnicity and gender alone might fail to identify disadvantage where as a review of ethnicity, gender and social/economic status will highlight the poor representation of white males from low participation neighbourhoods. Disabled people are nearly four times more likely to be unemployed by age 26 than their non-disabled peers (Department for Work and Pensions, 2013). For those who have a learning disability, the gap is even higher, with only 6% in paid employment (Public Health England, 2016). Graduates with a social/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) condition are least likely to be in full-time employment and most likely to be unemployed.

The College has used intersections of characteristics when assessing our performance, to identify more accurately gaps in access, success and progression, where data has been available. The cross cutting of data is imperative for the College to establish trends and enhancement to our dataset will be incorporated in our strategic approach for improving success and progression data collection at BMet by 2020/2021.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

There are complex issues related to ethnicity which create barriers and can be structural, organisational, attitudinal, cultural and financial. The College is committed to undertaking further analysis of the student population to look at gaps in participation and success amongst BAME groups. We will further enhance our data collection tools and dashboards to review and analyse the performance of BAME students on access and success by 2020-21, and set targets accordingly in 2022/23. We recognise that students continue and achieve best when they have a very clear idea of their progress and what they need to do to improve. We will therefore ensure that our student analytics system (ProMonitor), currently used effectively to track and monitor progress for our FE students, is utilised consistently by our HE delivery staff for under-represented groups by 2020/21. This will enable us to identify more effectively BAME students who are 'at risk' of non-continuation and to provide personalised support and targeted intervention for them appropriately. In addition we will look into the Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador Programme, and adapt the model appropriately to further promote wellbeing and increase improved outcomes for our BAME students by 2022/23.

'Minority stress' appears to be a feature for individuals/groups that are underrepresented and there are clear links with race and mental health, and LGBT+ and mental health. There can be issues around difficulties making friends with students from other groups and difficulties forming relationships with academic staff due to differences in background. We are aware that lack of cultural connection in the curriculum can further exasperate a sense of exclusion. Individuals from some ethnic backgrounds or students who live further away from their place of study are much more likely to live at home during their studies which can prove a barrier to forming relationships. We are aware of such barriers and will ensure that we seek to find ways of removing such barriers for our students.

In line with our Diversity and Inclusion action plan, we will utilise the D&I tab in our enrolment app to ensure that we are able to identify students who are from under-represented groups and may require more support. We will also ask students to indicate if there are aspects regarding their beliefs, culture, background or gender identity which they would like us to take into account in facilitating their learning. These will be implemented by 2020/21.

We understand that some students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have concerns about disclosing their ethnicity. We will be reviewing our data collection methods and adding 'Roma' as a data collection tool ready for 2020/21. We will review our induction programmes with a view of having more inclusive activities which will enable us to build trust with underrepresented groups, allow open and honest conversations and ensure we act on any concerns highlighted. We will be providing training for staff to increase their understanding of these groups, their culture and norms. We will be reviewing our curriculum where appropriate to include issues relevant to this underrepresented group. Where possible we will facilitate distance learning, ensuring students will have access to the necessary tools such as the appropriate technology, and that they can engage with the wider higher education community. The activities will be maintained over the duration of this plan and OfS will be informed if they cease.

BMet recruits successfully from underrepresented groups. However, it may be that students from these areas have no knowledge base from which to prepare for entering and succeeding in higher education. Furthermore, we recognize that students are more likely to commit to and remain in an environment in which they have a sense of 'belonging'. We will deliver a series of meaningful induction activities which

demonstrate and promote belonging, while recognizing and celebrating diversity. This package of 'welcome' activities will include

- familiarisation sessions covering expectations, aspirations and concerns
- reflective activity to create a one page profile to be shared with academic staff/tutors to establish how best to meet that individual's needs
- exploring the possibility of a HE buddy/mentor
- bespoke D&I sessions to link in with the college's 'Ready, Respectful, Safe ethos

This sense of belonging and inclusivity will then be continued throughout the students' tenure, for example through allowing students the space and time to reflect on and influence curriculum design and content.

Further analysis will be monitored through the diversity and inclusion group and specific actions relating to individual targeted groups will be integrated into the diversity and inclusion plan referred to on page fifteen of this plan. The effectiveness of these actions will be evaluated as part of the college's HE quality assurance mechanisms and reported to the senior leadership team and governors on an annual basis. The activities will be maintained over the duration of this plan and OfS will be informed if they cease.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

We value being a diverse organisation and highly dedicated to enhancing widening participation and social mobility through higher education. The College is committed to delivering a fairer society in which every student, from whatever background, can grasp opportunities and realise their dreams.

We have made good progress in enhancing our widening participation approach and improving equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education to employment/further study over the life-span of our previous Access Agreement Plan. A detailed and robust assessment of our performance has identified gaps in different parts of our students' lifecycle and we are not where we aspire to be. We acknowledge in order to deliver transformational change and to achieve our strategic aims, which contribute to equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups nationally, we need to strengthen and accelerate our approach.

In the context of the changes to external and internal environs, in-depth assessment of our performance and resources available to us, we have chosen to minimise our targets from our 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan. Our refreshed strategy is in the autonomy and context of our institution and the focus of our outcomes are based upon our strategic aims. We will be focusing on areas that we have identified most challenging for the College. Our efforts and investments available to the College will be directed towards the areas that we can make the most impact upon.

We are committed to ensure that our ambition is bold and is reflected through our strategy which is student-centred, evidence led and targeted. The refreshed strategy and our approach are endorsed by college leadership and governance. We will be embedding our strategy and core priorities throughout our institution at all levels.

2.1 Target groups

The rigorous analysis of our performance has highlighted the areas that we must focus on most, to improve practice towards equality of opportunity for all students from all backgrounds. In our assessment we have considered the importance of intersections of disadvantage such as age, ethnicity, deprivation and multiple disadvantages. We have set ambitious targets aiming at closing gaps amongst underrepresented student groups and their peers throughout their lifecycle. Through the assessment of our performance on access and participation across the student lifecycle, we have demonstrated our success in widening access but an underperformance on student success. We have been successful in attracting students from low household incomes, BAME students, white students from LPN and male students. We are committed in maintaining our performance in access of underrepresented student groups and will continue to monitor our progress against access performance for all underrepresented groups and will set targets if any gaps are highlighted.

We will have a greater strategic focus on retention and continuation, where we know we have work to do; therefore our first set of targets on success will be on improving non-continuation for all HE students over the period of the Plan. Our analysis with respect to non-continuation in the context of the College shows a complex and mixed picture with no significant gap in performance of disadvantage groups. We do however

have persistent gaps for all our HE student groups in comparison to the national benchmark, with some significant gaps in relation to part-time students.

We wish to focus our efforts on setting ambitious targets to improve non-continuation gaps for all HE students with a significant focus on underrepresented groups, towards the HE sector average over the period of this Plan. Our strategic measures will have a positive impact for underrepresented groups.

The College's targets reflect our ambition for securing continuous improvements in outcomes for all students by reducing gaps in all stages of students' lifecycle and support the broader national widening participation mission. The targets we have set are well-defined, out-come based and stretched within the context of our institution's core priorities, student population, locality, resources available, and map to sector wide challenges. We have taken a balanced approach, focusing on targets that address the biggest challenges for the College whilst supporting national priorities specifically on non-continuation, for all students from all backgrounds. We will continue to monitor and analyse BMet and sector data to address intersections of disadvantage in the whole student lifecycle and set targets as appropriate.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Access

Aim :

To widen access at BMet for all student groups with the ability and aspiration to engage with Higher Education, particularly, students from low participation neighbourhoods; mature students; and students from lower socio-economic groups; and through this process ensure equality of outcome for all students

Objectives:

- To monitor and maintain the College's access performance for students from underrepresented groups throughout the life span of this plan and to set targets if any gaps are highlighted
- To enhance data collection and research on access of disabled students by 2020/21 and set targets as appropriate by 2022/23 for this underrepresented group
- To enhance the College's data recording processes to identify care leavers by 2020/21
- To develop a Care Leaver's strategy by 2020/21 and to set an access target for this underrepresented group by 2022/23
- To monitor and further investigate access for part-time mature students and part-time students from low participation neighbourhood by 2022/23 and set targets as appropriate through the lifespan of this plan

Success

Aim:

To have a truly inclusive physical and virtual working, learning environment in which all students, whatever their background, are able to achieve their full potential

Objectives:

- To reduce non-continuation for all full-time young students by 12% by 2024/2025
- To reduce non-continuation gap between part-time mature and young students by 14.2% by 2024/2025
- To reduce non-continuation gap between part-time students from regional IMD Q1 and IMD Q 5 by 15% by 2024/2025
- To reduce non-continuation gap between part-time BAME and white students by 15% by 2024/2025
- To further enhance and develop the College's non-continuation data dashboards by 2020/21
- To closely monitor and evaluate non-continuation performance of underrepresented groups throughout the lifespan of this plan and set targets for this group of students if any gaps are highlighted
- To review and analyse attainment performance of underrepresented students by 2022/23 and set targets if any gaps are highlighted for this group of students by 2023/24

Progression

Aim:

To ensure that all our continuing students' progress to further study or graduate level employment

Objectives:

- To devise a Higher Education Employability Strategy by 2020/21
- To further develop progression data dashboards by 2021/22
- To further analyse and review the progression performance of underrepresented group of students and set targets as appropriate in 2022/23

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

In the context of access and participation we will take a whole provider strategic approach, embedded at all levels of the College. Our practice will be evidence-led, taking a holistic approach to the student lifecycle with the aim of supporting all students to gain a positive experience and outcome. Our approach will extend from pre-entry support, to on course success and progression to employment/further study. We have a commitment to widening participation and this is reflected in our institutions' mission, referred to in our policies, reinforced by the leadership team and practiced throughout the College. We will create an inclusive approach to widening participation for all students from all backgrounds by consistently aligning our organisational strategies, resources and practices towards our educational purposes and student characteristics across the College for the benefit of all students. An inclusive student experience is pertinent in the context of our students' well-being, academic experience, professional development and financial support, which we have developed.

Our strategic methodology is to further develop our whole institution approach to widen access, improve student success and enhance progression across the student experience, involving all staff to ensure that all students benefit. Our aim is to adapt the whole institutional approach to WP alignment model developed by Thomas, 2017.

The College has approved a Marketing and Schools Engagement Strategy that supports outreach activities with schools and the community. We will build upon our strategic partnership with schools that meet a range of widening participation criteria to extend the reach of our activity, particularly at years 12 and 13.

The College has a good track record of working collaboratively with employers mostly within the regions covered by the Black Country and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships. There are significant relationships with large employers such as BMW, Mondelez and JLR. At BMW in Oxford the College has established on-site learning academies staffed and managed by the College in partnership with the employer. Feedback from employers identifies that the academies are highly valued.

The College works with seven key employers in Birmingham City Centre who sponsor the Greater Birmingham Professional Services Academy. The Academy provides opportunities to business and finance students for work experience, internships, mentoring and specialist expert lectures.

The College will aim to work in collaboration with employers to recruit part time and mature students into HE. The College is confident in its ability to offer a more agile and affordable alternative to traditional HE, one where the links with industry and business will drive more vocationally relevant provision delivered in ways that better suit employers and individuals. The College will set a target to work with 3 new large employers to deliver HE courses designed to support their workforce and targeting mature and part time study by 2020-21.

The College works in strategic partnership with four local universities; Birmingham City University; University of Derby; University of Wolverhampton and the University of Worcester. These partnerships include validation, franchise and progression arrangements.

The College is one of 4 partners leading on the Aim-higher West Midlands NCOP Urban Strand through a devolved collaborative management group. The essential features of the group are:

- To meet expectations in one urban area FE College assuming responsibility and accountability for reporting on the Urban FE strand and associated funding/deliverables, and for this to be subject to a formal agreement with the University of Birmingham as Lead HEI for the consortium.
- Programme delivery funding is a collaborative resource. The College leading the Urban FE strand has developed an operational plan with other College partners, illustrating how their use of the fund would meet the principles outlined above for Management Group approval.
- To ensure the NCOP programme was impartial in its content and delivery, widening participation at sector rather than institutional level and promoting access to all forms of HE.
- To use NCOP funding equitably and effectively, to ensure that delivery partners and beneficiary schools/colleges had the capacity to engage and that delivery funding reflected the distribution of the NCOP cohort.
- To be innovative, adding value to existing outreach activities and ensuring the programme provides opportunities to explore new and emerging pathways e.g. Higher and Degree Apprenticeship developments and the implications of the IoT and Skills Central Training.
- To ensure consistency across the consortium in terms of branding/communications, the targeting of beneficiaries and the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the programme's activities.
- To retain flexibility, enabling members of the consortium to play to their strengths and address the challenges of delivering across a geographical and socio-economically diverse territory.

The NCOP Urban Strand project is a time bound activity and the project is currently anticipated to complete by the end of academic year 2020/21.

Our other whole provider strategic approach activities are anticipated to continue for the lifespan of the plan; we will notify OfS if any of these activities cease.

Alignment with other strategies

Diversity and Inclusion is vital to BMet's organisational culture and success. It underpins our vision, values and goals, enabling us to deliver a great student and staff experience. Diversity and Inclusion is about each and every one of us. We value all the differences that make our students unique and that enrich and strengthen our communities. We ensure that all our students can fully participate as who they are and are supported to be the best that they can be.

The College celebrates differences and aims to be recognised as a leader in diversity and inclusion by ensuring that its environments are Ready, Respectful and Safe. We are committed to maintaining our high-quality teaching and learning standards by ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all students in a safe and respectful environment.

Integrating diversity and inclusion into our culture underpins our organisation's vision, values and goals. It will enable us to:

- deliver great student and staff experience
- attract, support and develop staff who are outstanding at what they do
- meet the needs of our communities where students are at the heart of everything we do
- support and challenge all students to make progress
- 'live' our rules and values such as 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'
- increase productivity, creativity and innovation
- enhance our reputation and market an inclusive corporate image
- support positive relationships and enable cohesion
- provide safe environments where everyone is able to be who they are and the best they can be
- enrich experience and lives

The College's Diversity and Inclusion strategy has set out objectives and a comprehensive action plan to ensure improvement in access and participation of underrepresented groups; these actions are detailed in the strategic measures section of this plan. The strategy gives due regard to the Equalities Act 2010. The context of our strategy promotes a whole organisation approach that requires everyone to play their part. The objectives of our Diversity and Inclusion strategy are aligned to our widening participation strategy as follows:

1. understand and more effectively meet the diverse needs of our students, promoting engagement and cohesion, addressing under-representation and closing achievement gaps;
2. have truly inclusive physical and virtual learning and working environments;

3. have inclusive leadership at all levels of the organisation;
4. have a progressive, diverse and supported workforce.

The aim of our Journey to Excellence plan is to improve opportunity and enable all students to succeed, make progress and meet future challenges through a high-quality personalised teaching, learning and assessment experience. We have an overarching mission to achieve high standards in all areas of College activity, in line with our strategic goals, resulting in consistently good teaching, learning and assessment, consistently good progress, continuously improving outcomes for learners and excellent stakeholder satisfaction ratings. This is underpinned by several objectives and aligned with our access and participation strategy. The key focus of the plan centres on 'good progress'. The aspects that influence student progress are multi-faceted and interconnected. Broadly, however, the key influencing factors can be separated into three key elements or strands: Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Tutorial and Personal and Professional Skills Development and Academic Progress. It is the intention of the plan to enable the following strategic aims to be realised:

1. To be recognised as a leading College in Birmingham and the city region
 - a. Inspire our students and staff to enrich their college experience by creating an inspirational and innovative environment
 - b. Improve stakeholder engagement: develop the brand and perception of BMet and the four Colleges
 - c. Respond rapidly and provide excellent service to employers who offer high quality commercial opportunities
2. To deliver outstanding education and employment outcomes for all
 - a. Advance the craft of teaching, delivering consistently unmissable lessons
 - b. Provide great information and data to improve performance in the classroom and workshop
 - c. Add value to each student journey by supporting progress through the year
3. To be a great place to work
 - a. Implement strong performance management
 - b. Drive culture change
4. To be financially strong and invest in learning
 - a. Increase recruitment, with a focus on Apprenticeships and progression
 - b. Deliver a balanced budget

The College has a standalone quality assurance and improvement process for its HE provision. The HE Academic and Quality Standards Policy details the processes by which the College can be assured that academic standards are maintained, and continuous quality improvement is achieved. Curriculum course teams self-assess each year and their annual monitoring reports are rigorously monitored by the Academic Standards Committees, overseen by the HE Academic and Quality Standards Board. Key Enhancement Objectives (KEO) for improving student success are identified and included in the HE Cross College Annual Monitoring Report (HE CCAMR) and action plan. The identified priorities and targets to address the gaps in achievement and continuation from underrepresented/disadvantaged groups will also be included in HE CCAMR and action plan. The HE CCAMR and action plan are monitored by the Corporation and Executive Board. The details of the action plan are in the strategic measures section of this plan.

The College is committed to working with the College Careers Team and local employers to improve the employability skills of its students ensuring they gain relevant employment or progression in their current career.

The College will develop a HE employability strategy by 2020/21. We will commit to increasing the delivery of employability skills across provision which will inevitably include multiple indicators of disadvantage including mature, part time and students from deprived areas. A series of activities to support progression into higher study and or employment; these will include HE fairs and Employer Fairs; Guru Lectures and work experience activities.

The accountability for delivering the College's Access and Participation Plan is as follow:

- The Corporation sets the strategic direction for fair access and participation.
- The Executive Team owns and leads on strategic actions included in the HE CCAMR and action plan; Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan and the Marketing Strategy and reports progress to the Corporation.
- The Leadership team in general and the Assistant Principal for Higher Education (AP HE) in particular communicate fair access priorities and targets
- All teams drive and support the implementation of the APP.

Strategic measures

The College has developed a range of activities, outcomes and strategic measures to enable delivery of its aims and objectives across the whole student lifecycle. We have strategically considered the desired changes we wish to achieve and mapped our inputs, outputs and outcomes to our stated aims, objectives and targets. Our approach has been evidence-led, influenced by research and underpinned by Theory of Change. Our measures map across three areas of support to widen access to higher education, support students in academic studies to success and progress to employment/further study if they desire to do so. It includes our approach to the curriculum, pedagogic and student support, employability and collaboration.

Access

The College aims to widen access at BMet for all student groups with the ability and aspiration to engage with Higher Education, particularly, students from low participation neighbourhoods; mature students; and students from lower socio-economic groups; and through this process ensure equality of outcome for all students.

We have long developed strategic relationships with schools and committed to foster outreach collaborations that lead to the provision of high quality, sustained engagement activities. To achieve our aim of widening access for students from low participation neighbourhoods and lower socio-economic groups we will expand our outreach to schools and internal level 3 students to ensure they recognise Higher Education studies as part of their future. Research has indicated that widening-participation activities have the greatest impact if they are delivered in a sustained way. We will further enhance our strategic partnerships with schools that meet a range of widening participation criteria and increase our sustained engagement approach to achieve our access objectives and targets.

Our long-term outcome, through collaboration with schools, is to widen access and improve chances of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who do not typically engage with higher education to get into higher education. Our medium-term focus is to help students grow their self-esteem, become aware of their capabilities, become more confident and informed in applying to higher education, and to improve behaviour and independent working. Our short-term outcome is to improve knowledge and understanding of higher education, understanding of financial planning, and having greater expectation of self. The outputs are linked to students completing work placement schemes at the college, taking part in programmes such as Aspire to Be, Big Bang Fair, and taster days. These activities involve input from our schools team, academic departments, HE Outreach Advisor, and student engagement.

The College's curriculum departments are dedicated to outreach, setting and taking ownership for equality objectives to include specific targets to increase participation where participation is low. Positive Action and widening participation projects will be enhanced and implemented to remove identified barriers to ensure objectives and targets for widening access are met by 2025. Our proposed outcomes for Positive Action and Widening Participation groups are:

1. Remodelling of the curriculum to allow greater access for part time study by mature students. New modes of delivery to be adopted that include flexible and evening, part-time, modular and credit-based pathways, and virtual or distance learning. Changes to timetables will be made to allow mature students with dependents greater flexibility.
2. Working collaboratively with the College's Access to HE Diploma course to increase continuation of adult students at level 3 ensuring greater opportunities to progress into HE.
3. Organising and implementing increased outreach and marketing activity into a range of communities to target underrepresented groups.

The College's Marketing and School Engagement Strategy sets out activities that will support the access of underrepresented groups, recognising that many groups, including mature students, are a non-captive audience and require targeted, focused channels of communication. The College will ensure all public information is assessed as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to ensure increased representation of all groups of students and in particular targeting those from the identified underrepresented groups.

The College has well established curriculum-based Level 3 Academies in Business, Digital and Rail; these are all operated through employer boards. The Academies provide opportunities to high-flying students for work experience, internships, mentoring and specialist expert lectures. The College will work in collaboration with these and other employers to develop provision that will attract part time and mature students into HE. The College is confident in its ability to offer a more agile and affordable alternative to traditional HE and will

continue to develop its curriculum to attract more part time mature students. This will include the expansion of part time routes for all HE qualifications, the development of distance learning and the delivery of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.

Success and Progression

The College aims to have a truly inclusive physical and virtual working, learning environment in which all students, whatever their background, are able to achieve their full potential.

Excellence in teaching quality, student satisfaction and continuous improved achievements for all students are core to the College's success. Students are at the heart of our institution and we inspire them to be the best that they can be. The College is committed to achieving its success ambition for students, by reducing non-continuation rates and enhancing academic attainment. Our approach to enhancing the success of our students is based on robust data collection and analysis and our methodology is evidence-led.

To achieve and improve our non-continuation and attainment targets the College has developed an HE Quality Improvement plan, based on the Teaching Excellence Framework that sets out inputs required to achieve our Success Key Enhancement Objectives (Table 5). Our Diversity and Inclusion action plan also sets out targets that aim to reduce achievement gaps (Table 6). We will further enhance our approach by investigating the macro, meso and micro structural factors that influence disparities in our student outcomes in order to develop and implement most effective interventions to improve student engagement, belonging, retention and success.

The College's widening participation targets are focused on improving access and success strategic measures; however our strategy encompasses a whole lifecycle approach which also focuses on progression. Our aim is to ensure that all our continuing students' progress to further study or graduate level employment. The College's vision for careers education and guidance is to further enhance the learner journey by promoting equality of opportunity and inspiring future ambitions through high quality careers guidance to support students to compete in social and economic markets. We will be enhancing the current career provision at BMet by working with employers, HEI's, businesses, public sectors and careers advisors to build skills and knowledge for the changing environment. We will develop all students to use a broad range of data and technology to broaden their knowledge of careers opportunities by using Labour Market Intelligence and job profiling to build career pathways. BMet has a subscription for the EMSI Licence and students are able to and encouraged to access up to date Labour Intelligence Market data. We also hold the licence for Job point machines which advertises graduate vacancies at our college's and easily accessible to students. .

Our work with employers aims to allow the College to understand the challenges faced by employers and to facilitate collaborative sharing of skills, knowledge and vision. We continually strive to work with employers to understand their needs in order to proactively boost the skills and competencies of our students to further enhance their job prospects. BMET are currently developing a bespoke employability strategy for HE students which will be in place from 2020/21. We aim to work in collaboration with our HE partners and other key stakeholders to deliver this.

BMET are current members of AGCAS (The Association Of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) All Careers Advisers are qualified to level 6/7 and will give timely quality careers education and guidance to HE students. Careers staff are also members of the Careers Development Institute and follow their code of professional ethics. BMET hold the QiCS quality standard (Quality in Careers standard) and deliver quality CEIAG incorporating the 8 Gatsby benchmarks.

We will develop a stable careers programme for HE students and train curriculum staff to deliver it by 2020/2021. This will include employability skills i.e. employability assets (knowledge, skills and attitudes), deployment (career management skills including job search skills), presentation (job getting skills) and personal circumstances (e.g. local opportunities in the labour market).

We aim to continue to increase local employer involvement in all BMET HE courses as visiting speakers as well as encouraging work shadowing and placement opportunities.

Alongside the Graduate Outcomes Survey, we will complete exit interviews and early leaver surveys to build a more comprehensive data set for our alumni and early leavers.

Our strategic measures for access, success and progression will continue for the lifespan of the plan and we will notify OfS if any activities cease.

Table 6: Diversity and Inclusion Plan- Success Measures

Objective 1 <i>Understand and more effectively meet the diverse needs of our students, promoting engagement and cohesion, addressing under-representation and closing the achievement gap</i>	
Objective	Action
1.2 Take targeted action to address any inequalities in participation, achievement and/or outcomes through positive action projects and widening participation initiatives.	Curriculum areas to set, and take ownership for, equality objectives to include specific targets to increase participation where participation is low; including women and men in non-traditional occupations; BME and disabled people into Apprenticeships.
	Curriculum areas to set equality objectives to include specific targets to close achievement gaps including consistent underperformance of White/Black Caribbean learners.
	Develop guidance/training on supporting trans* staff and students.
	Monitor engagement and outcome of pastoral support and engagement activities, including 'learner voice' through analysis of evaluation mechanisms.
	Determine areas where positive action and widening participation projects may be required to address gaps.
Objective 2 <i>Have truly inclusive physical and virtual working and learning environments</i>	
2.1 Ensure accessibility of BMet's service provision for all in the structure and organisation of College facilities and in all key policy frameworks.	Support teaching staff to utilise Moodle to improve accessibility of course content
	Develop and implement 'Disability Confident' action plan.
	Create 'easy read' versions of key literature for students e.g. induction handbook, student conduct policy.
2.2 Develop an inclusive curriculum offer and ensure all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment integrate D&I.	Review curriculum offer, lesson planning, teaching methods and materials to ensure D&I moves beyond tokenism and is meaningfully embedded.
	Develop D&I toolkit for teaching staff.
	Deliver training specific to needs of curriculum areas.
	Conduct learning walks which have a focus on D&I.
	Ensure D&I inclusion in induction for new curriculum staff.
	Review student induction process to ensure integration of D&I.
	Ensure learning support is in place and effective at the start of a student's journey where timetables are finalised and disclosure has occurred

Source: BMET's Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Table 5- Quality Improvement Plan- Success and Attainment Measures

Aspect of Quality	Reference	Criterion	Action to achieve
Teaching Quality	Student Engagement	Teaching provides effective stimulation, challenge and contact time that encourages students to engage and actively commit to their studies	Develop and implement lesson observation strategy that is linked to HE Professional Standards
			Teachers use students starting points to plan lessons, which provide individual support
			Teachers to identify strategies on group profiles that are being used to support individual students
			Improve the quality of target setting and the use of targets within lessons to ensure progression
			Teachers to increase the amount of active learning, collaborative learning and independent learning to provide stimulation.
			Teachers use monitoring tools to record, track, monitor and report student engagement
			Teachers to facilitate opportunities for students to interact and engage with work
			All courses have a time-tabled tutorial.
	Valuing Teaching	Institutional culture facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching	Develop training sessions for staff on how to implement actions in their areas to be valued
			Scope relevance of subscription to Higher Education Academy.
			Supporting Staff in gaining HEA Fellowships.
			Develop opportunities for staff to engage in scholarly activity.
	Rigour and Stretch	Course design, development, standards and assessment are effective in stretching students to develop independence, knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect their full potential	Course leaders to review formative assessment to check for appropriate levels of challenge
			Conducting themed lesson observations and themed walk throughs to assess levels of challenge
			Teachers to identify and implement strategies to ensure rigour and stretch are embedded in lessons
	Feedback	Assessment and feedback are used effectively in supporting students' development, progression and attainment	Course leaders to review assessment and feedback process to ensure timely feedback
Teachers to improve assessment for learning, including questioning and written feedback to			
Develop training course for staff to raise awareness on effective use of feedback procedures relating to assessment practices.			

3.2 Student consultation

The College has found that the diverse nature of the HE student population spread over a range of sites has presented a challenge to engaging fully with the HE student body. However, the College has overcome these challenges and ensures that students are, in line with our values, at the heart of everything we do and that students are enabled to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance as far as practically possible. The College has developed a range of communication and governance mechanisms by which the HE students are able to engage in the process of continuous enhancement. There has been an increase in student representation at a strategic level including a Student Governor. The Academic and Quality Standards Policy detail the expectation that student course representatives attend Course Management Committee meetings.

There has been an increase in the level of student engagement at the College, each of the four main College sites creates and maintains an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience. Student representatives attend College student committees that are for both FE and HE students. These are forums to discuss issues or suggest initiatives for enhancement.

Student representatives from a range of backgrounds have been involved in the design of this plan through discussions and focus groups, and will be involved in the implementation and evaluation of the plan. Student engagement is crucial for the College to understand the experience of students at different stages in their lifecycle. We are taking steps to act on our students' views and feedback from the consultation.

From consultation with the students we will be forming a Widening Participation Committee which will include student representation from underrepresented groups. This will actively increase collaboration of the College with students and will include student representatives in decision-making processes. We have reviewed our feedback mechanisms and will be creating additional channels for HE student feedback. We will be introducing HE specific training for student representatives such as equality, diversity and inclusion training, to enable them to make meaningful contributions. We will be involving students from underrepresented groups in forming and devising our HE Employability Strategy and Evaluation Strategy in 2019/2020 by including students from underrepresented groups in the committees we will form for this. We will be forming a working group and include students, which will evaluate the College's student engagement strategies in 2019/20 to further enhance and develop our student engagement processes.

A student representative sits on the annual subject level Academic Standard Committees. We will review our HE Academic and Quality Standards Policy to ensure student representation on the HEAQSBS. This ensures that there will be student representation at all levels of review and monitoring of the APP.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

The College's Access and Participation Plan reflects our ambition and commitment in creating an outstanding educational experience for all our students, enabling them to fulfil their potential in achieving their goals. Our institutional strategic aims and objectives of the plan have been framed and driven by the ambition of enhancing outcomes for all students. We acknowledge that evaluation is integral and crucial for an evidence-led, strategic approach to access and participation. We have used the OfS's self-evaluation tool to review our evaluation plans and methodologies with a view to identify strengths and areas for development.

The College has key strengths in its evaluation strategy which is embedded in our processes. The core priorities of our Journey to Excellence Curriculum and Quality Plan along with the objectives of our Diversity & Inclusion strategy, demonstrate our methodology in supporting an evaluation culture in our institution. We robustly monitor and review the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and tutorial practice and use this to inform and refine performance management strategies and mechanisms. Through our continuous Quality Improvement Plans we constantly measure and evaluate the impact of our activities and seek to improve practice.

We conduct honest and accurate self-assessment processes that lead to targeted improvement to the student experience. We improve engagement through effective internal and external Stakeholder Voice Mechanisms which are consistently used to target improvement activities.

We have further developed our Management Information Systems to create readily accessible data which is constantly used for evaluation and reporting that supports improvement planning. We will further develop

and enhance our student analytics and dashboards to include admissions, retention, attainment and destination, providing data on outcomes across the student lifecycle. These will be available at departmental and college level and inform strategy development. The development of the dashboard will be fully completed by 2020/21.

Our self-assessment has identified where we need to focus our efforts to develop and strengthen the quality of evaluation in order to drive improvements in our access and participation activities. The College is committed to investing in its evaluation capability, using an evidence-led approach to inform and design activities to improve the impact of our widening participation outreach. We will be using standards of evidence to evaluate the impact of our outreach, our interventions and practices, and to improve delivery and performance of our access and participation. A key priority for 2019/20 is to enhance our evaluation strategy using the Five-point Framework model developed by the OfS.



From, Access and Participation Plans, Evidence and Evaluation, 2019, OfS

We recognise the importance of continuous improvement and have identified developmental opportunities to enhance our evaluation practices in the strategic context of our institution. We will extend the remit of our Higher Education Forum to include discussion and sharing good practice of evaluation. We will review our Course Management Committee meetings to develop a common protocol for evaluating impact of access and participation programmes with common measures of success and outcome for recruitment, teaching, learning, assessment and progression across all departments.

We intend to share our evaluation findings with the Mixed Economy Group (MEG), Association of Colleges (AOC) West and East Midlands HE Network group and our HEI partners.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Monitoring oversight of the College's performance and provision of this Access and Participation Plan is the responsibility of the Corporation and Executive Board. The College has reviewed its widening participation and access governance model to maximise whole institutional approach and to ensure synergy exists between strategic and operational planning. As part of this review and enhancement of the structural and cultural frameworks of our institution we will form a Widening Participation Committee, with representatives from different departments within the College and including student representatives. This committee will be responsible for monitoring progress against the plan and will take necessary actions if progress is not being made at the rate desired and will report directly to the Academic Standards and Quality.

In addition, the disaggregated course level targets and milestones will be reviewed termly at each of the Course Management Committees (CMCs) as set out in our HE Academic and Quality Standards Policy which is reviewed on an annual basis. The course team reports on the progress and impact against targets and milestones from CMC's will feed into the Widening Participation Committee and their Annual Monitoring Report. Course Specific Annual Monitoring Reports will form part of the Cross College Annual Monitoring Report to the Executive Board and Corporation.

The plan will also be monitored as a provision type strand in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy; other strands include apprenticeships, adults and 16-18. Many activities in the College and Diversity and Inclusion action plan have informed the actions set in our Access and Participation Plan.

Output and impact of delivery of the Diversity and Inclusion action plan will be monitored through schedule outlined below:

Activity	Date and Frequency	Lead	Reported to
Annual Report <i>(informed by lesson observation review, QAR Data report and QDP Survey review, Curriculum Strand Report)</i>	January Each year	D&I Advisor	Corporation
D&I Policy review	January Each year	D&I Advisor	Senior Leadership Team
D&I Strategic objectives	April Every four years	Senior Leadership Team	Corporation
D&I Self-Assessment Report	August Each year	D&I Advisor	Quality
Student Council <i>(Standing agenda item at each of four main sites)</i>	Termly	Assistant Principal	D&I Advisor
D&I Data Dashboard <i>(To include complaints, conversion of applications to enrolments, withdrawals, in year retention, achievement and destinations)</i>	Termly	D&I Advisor	Senior Leadership Team

4. Provision of information to students

The College is committed to providing accurate and accessible information to prospective students and students on fees and financial support. Information on fees and financial support is provided in printed material and on the College's website.

The College updates course pages regularly to ensure accuracy of information. This includes a review of information on fees and financial support. We ensure that prospective student and students can easily access the information in the format that is clear and appropriate and supports students in their decision making.

The College ensures that clear information on our fees is provided to prospective and current students, UCAS, and Student Loan Company in a timely manner. We review our fees on an annual basis and with effect from September 2020 we intend to apply an annual increase in fee levels (below fee cap of £9000) for continuing students in line with the RPI-X index (Office for Budget Responsibility forecast). This information will be clearly articulated in the information that we publish to students and the fees they are charged for the duration of their course. .

Our approved 2020-21/2024-25 Access and Participation Plan will be published on our website.

In case of exceptional financial hardship, additional funds are available to BMet students. The College only offers HE Hardship Fund as a means of financial support. Eligibility for the Hardship Fund is restricted to home fee status students who have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the start of their course and registered on a course at the College. Awards from the Fund are income assessed and in form of a grant or loan. They are intended to help with day-to-day expenses and course related costs. Awards from the fund are needs-related and assessed on an individual basis. The HE Hardship fund at the College is inclusive and available to all directly funded students; however the following students will be prioritised with a total College expenditure of £15,000 available annually:

- Student with children, especially single parents
- Mature student with existing financial commitments
- Student from a low-income family
- Students with disability
- Student that was previously in care (a 'care leaver')
- Homeless or living in a foyer

All HE students, including those from underrepresented groups can access details regarding the HE Hardship Fund and other sources of financial support on the College's website and also receive this information on their invitation letter to attend enrolment. Students who have applied and been granted

financial support through the HE Hardship Fund will receive detailed information of the support they will receive in each year of their studies.

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	BSc (Hons) Degree Podiatry	£9,000
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	Year 1 HNC/D	£5,500
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	Level 6 (Top Up) BA (Hons) Degree	£7,100

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	All Year 1 students except FD Engineering (all Pathways) courses	£4,700
Foundation degree	FD Engineering (all Pathways) Year 1 students	£5,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Birmingham Metropolitan College

Provider UKPRN: 10006442

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£67,016.16	£67,016.16	£67,016.16	£75,000.00	£80,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£11,771.49	£11,771.49	£11,771.49	£13,173.87	£14,052.12
Access (post-16)	£26,110.83	£26,110.83	£26,110.83	£29,221.49	£31,169.59
Access (adults and the community)	£29,133.84	£29,133.84	£29,133.84	£32,604.64	£34,778.29
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£36,500.00	£41,274.00	£45,895.00	£51,131.00	£54,981.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£68,887.00	£68,887.00	£76,387.00	£91,387.00	£91,387.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£180,900.00	£194,900.00	£217,000.00	£237,000.00	£251,300.00
Access investment	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%
Financial support	16.0%	16.0%	16.0%	16.0%	16.0%
Research and evaluation	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Total investment (as %HFI)	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%

