

1. ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Background

1. Durham University is a globally prominent, highly selecting institution, with demanding degree programmes. Durham recognises that many of its indicators of success can also be barriers to students traditionally under-represented in higher education. Demanding entry standards and a perception of high cost may discourage students who are already likely to become disaffected with formal education or lack confidence in their academic ability.
2. The following analysis looks at each of the under-represented groups through the three undergraduate student lifecycle phases of access, student success and progression, and then looks at intersections between the groups. Unless otherwise indicated the analysis takes its data from the OfS access and participation data set.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, socioeconomic status:

Access

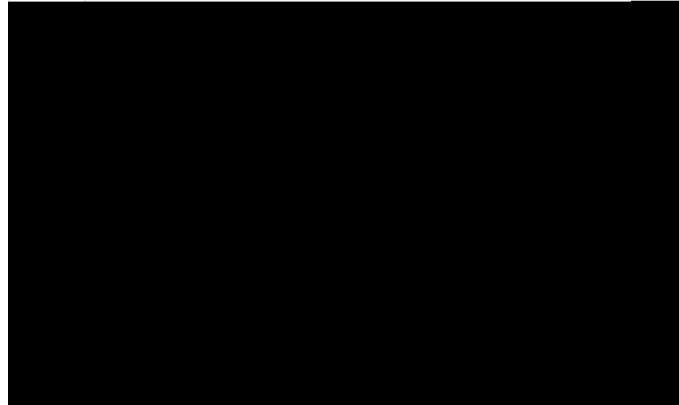
3. For Durham, along with other high tariff institutions, the most significant access challenge is the participation of students from areas of lower higher education participation (LPN), lower household income and lower socioeconomic status groups. In recent years we have worked hard to increase the proportion of students from ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) categories 4 and 5, rising from 7% in 2012/13 to 13.4% in 2018/19 (internal data). That said, we have a large enrolment gap between the most and least represented groups

7. We cannot achieve the change through contextual offer making. Our internal data show that the ratio between quintiles 5 and 1 at the application stage is above 8:1, and even with the concerted effort of the current cycle, contextual offer making will not be enough to achieve 3:1
8. Undoubtedly, we need to generate more quintile 1 applications. Doubling the number of LPN students would bring Durham close to the average LPN population for universities in the North East, but we will have to go further to close the ratio to 3:1. We have to grow the proportion of students across quintiles 1 to 4.

Success

9. If we look at Durham's percentage point gap in non-continuation and at

13. The small gap in attainment was at its narrowest in 2018.



Progression

14. There is no gap in progression by ethnicity. About 80% of both white and BAME graduates enter highly skilled employment or higher level study. In the particular case of black students, there was only one year with a statistically significant gap, when black students progressed to highly skilled employment or higher level study at a higher rate than white students.

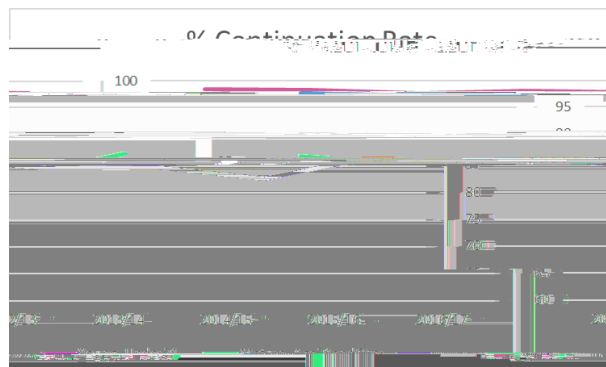
1.3 Mature students

Access

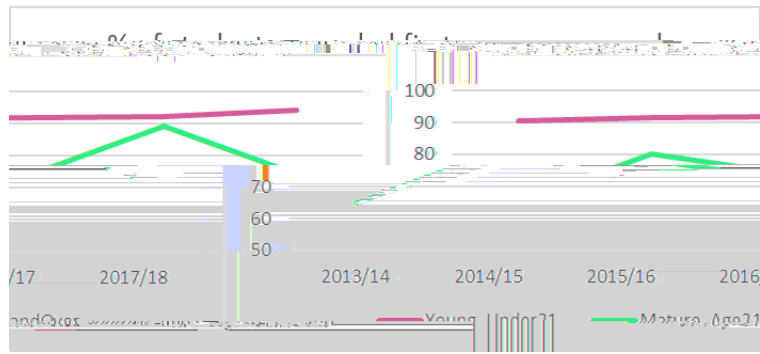
15. The University has reduced its proportion of mature students as a consequence of a policy of focussing our Foundation Programme recruitment on mature students with other under-represented characteristics rather than mature students in general. The proportion of mature student entrants has fallen from 5.7% in 2013/14 to 4.4% in 2017/18.

Success

16. Durham offers a student experience that is designed overwhelmingly for young people and we have to consider how to adapt this for mature students. Historically, we have not given enough attention, beyond the foundation year, to the academic support of traditional mature entrants, as the analysis on success shows. We have to be sure that the offering is appropriate, reducing the gap in continuation and attainment, before growing the number of mature students



17. One of the reasons for the success gap is the intersection between mature students and other under-represented characteristics. Many mature students come from contexts of LPN, ACORN 4/5, disability and diverse ethnicity. Of all our target groups it is therefore the most urgent cohort for intervention in student success. The problem has not been ignored. To alleviate the stark challenges faced by mature students who enter through the Foundation Programme, the Programme has developed a more sophisticated admissions process, allowing us to better assess the varied support needs of students who typically have not taken A-levels, and has introduced a suite of formative assessments very early in the first term to inform early interventions with students facing difficulties.



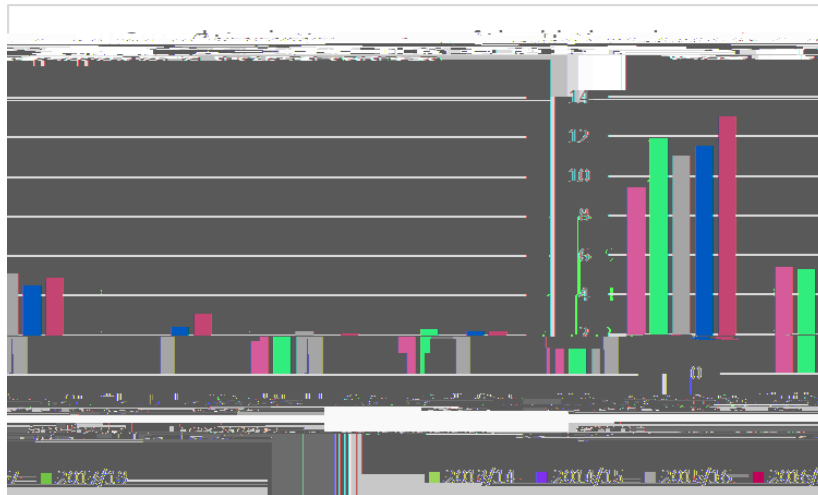
Progression to employment or further study

18. Mature students who complete their degree programme have a very high rate of progression into highly skilled employment or higher level study and it exceeds that of young students

1.4 Disabled students

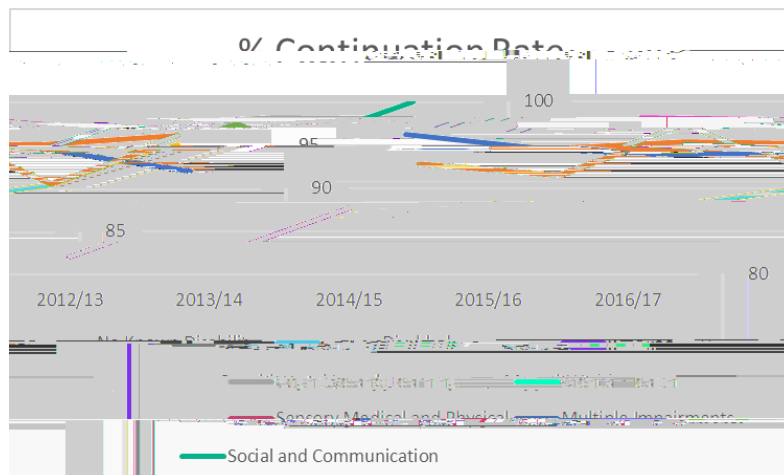
Access

19. Durham has seen a fairly consistent growth in the proportion of disabled students among the home student population and this is driven particularly by students with mental health issues, as the following graph illustrates.



Success

20. We have invested significantly in our mental health support in the University in recent years which has impacted directly on the continuation rate of students with this form of disability. Otherwise whilst the gap in attainment is not consistent, it is nonetheless an issue to be addressed



Progression to employment or further study

21. The outcomes achieved by Durham graduates are outstanding, and this extends to disabled students.

22. The small gap between disabled and non-disabled students in their progression to highly-skilled employment or higher level study is so small that in most years it is statistically insignificant. In TEF 3 metrics we had positive flags for every year and for every represented student group including disabled students. Therefore in a benchmarked context, this is a strong performance, but not one about which we can be complacent.

1.5 Care leavers

23. We recognise that many children in care have experienced a disrupted education which affects their academic performance. The numbers at Durham are too small to be subject to statistical analysis so instead we have used national research published by the National Network for the Education of Careleavers (NNECL) and the Centre for Social Justice to inform our support for these students. We have also looked at the work and recommendations of the children in care and careleavers charity Become. Our approach is also informed by our work with other North East universities through the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP) and we have established

particularly for a university like Durham with our high entry requirements being less attractive to a group more likely to have weaker qualification profiles.

Success

25. We note

38. Durham is aware of the challenges that it faces across access, students and progression,

Interim indicators of success: **Increase in applications/enrolments monitored by UCAS, HESA KPs and internal data.**

47. We will have particular regard for mature students characterised by intersecting indicators of disadvantage and under-representation, such as socioeconomic disadvantage or disability. It is mature students in these intersections who are our target group. With this in mind we will take a holistic view of the mature student experience to ensure proposed measures for support, where possible, are effective regardless of age.

CARE LEAVERS

Stage of lifecycle targeted: Access.

Measurable objective: To increase the percentage of care leavers in the North East progressing to HE

Timescale: To reach 9% by 2024/25.

Interim indicators of success: Year on year increases according to Department for Education statistics.

Commentary

48. A number of our strategic measures will support care leavers more generally and this has been considered in their design. As the numbers of care leavers progressing to HE are so small we will work with NERAP to create regional solutions to access. This will include the Choice Together programme for looked after young people as well as exploring a partnership with First Star Academy UK, which has an ambition to increase the participation rate of care leavers to 12% by 2024⁵

3. STRATEGIC MEASURES

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

49. The 2020/21 Access and Participation Plan has been formed through workshops and consultations that involved a large number of stakeholders drawn from across the University and including staff and students. This inclusive, whole institution approach is important to embedding a culture that understands the needs of under-represented students. Overall responsibility for Durham's widening participation policy, and approval of this Access and Participation Plan, lie with the University's governing body, University Council, advised by Senate, both of which include representatives of the student body.

Alignment with other strategies

50. Access and participation is an essential goal of the University's ten year strategy. A new Access and Admissions Subcommittee of Senate was created in 2018 to ensure that Durham's access and participation work was strategically

efforts to ensure that everything we offer is welcoming to students of all backgrounds, beliefs and values. Durham University Islamic Society and the Durham People of Colour Association (DPOCA) about outreach activity.

54. The University has a process in place which ensures that equality impact assessments (EIAs) are undertaken on key policies and procedures. A full assessment will be made on this plan.
55. The University collects, collates and publishes annual admissions statistics that include ethnicity, sex, declared disability and age group. Through this the University can monitor its admissions process to ensure that there is fairness and consistency of treatment for applicants from all backgrounds and that admission decisions are made on academic grounds.

Regional Context

56. The strategic approach taken in this plan is shaped by distinctive features of the North East within which Durham University operates. In particular, the North East has limited ethnic diversity, the lowest secondary school attainment in the nation, and the lowest HE progression rates in the nation. The plan takes account of this institutional context and commits to distinct regional and national interventions to improve access and participation

Strategic Measures to Regional Access

Durham Mathematics School

57. We are exploring the feasibility of establishing a Durham Mathematics School (DMS) in 2022. Serving approximately 150 students in years 12 and 13, DMS will offer exceptional teaching in a dynamic and diverse learning environment. Students will be introduced to mathematics in a world-class university, and belong to a socially and culturally supportive community that nurtures a sense of confidence, achievement and innovation. We anticipate a significant number of LPN students will matriculate at Durham from the Durham Mathematics School each year, and work with schools and local authorities. DMS will improve mathematics standards in the region.
58. Monitoring and evaluation will be a key 11.09F1 11.04T6 1 0 0 1igg57W* n>.yt

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Access	Regional x Durham Mathematics School	National
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through joint representation activity in both primary and secondary schools and at regional events. In 2019/2020, NERAP will align with the North East Collaborative Outreach Programme as part of the development of a Outreach Hub. Through NERAP we are able to have more impact with groups that in our own institution are found in small numbers and are therefore hard to engage with. NERAP will be particularly important for our continued support for care leavers

104. The North East Collaborative Outreach Program (NECOP) is a partnership of the 5 universities and 15 colleges in the region funded by the OfS, working together to support NCOP target students to progress to higher education. Phase 2 of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme will enable the Partnership to capitalise on our existing collaborative infrastructure in support of a coherent framework to join up and transform HE outreach provision in the region to enable more students to benefit.

105. Durham also takes advantage of collaboration through its work with the Sutton Trust. The Trust supports evaluation and enables us to monitor and refine our summer school programme through communication with other Sutton Trust summer school providers. It is also a valuable opportunity to share good practice and evidence with other providers.

106. Durham is one of 24 leading universities that fund Advancing Access. This is a collaboration that allows us to interact with teachers across the UK by providing CPD resources and events.

School Governors Scheme

107. In our 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan the University stated its intention to support school attainment and governance by using the expertise and experience of Durham staff as volunteer school governors in local schools and colleges. The University recognises that it must make links with schools at a fundamental level if it is to support the most disadvantaged students. We are currently only one of three universities that holds Governors for Schools Gold status.

Engagement with employers

108. We engage with graduate employers, directly facilitating over 300 campus based employer events a year and creating student access to 6,000+ vacancies. Opportunities for under-represented groups are flagged for easy student visibility, and diversity and access discussions are a regular part of employer liaison activity. We also support students to gain work experience by engaging with the University through targeted internships or financial support in the form of scholarships.

109. The University recognises the importance of regional employment to the regional access agenda. We engage with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, with membership on both the innovation and business growth boards. Durham University and Durham County Council has a memorandum of understanding which sets out how both organisations will work together to raise the profile of the region. The ERDF funded Durham Internships and Collaborative Enterprise projects support County Durham businesses to harness the knowledge and enterprising skills of Durham University students and recent graduates through a 50% funded internship programme. The paid internships introduce students and graduates to the opportunities available to them.

3.2 Student consultation

110. Almost all outreach activities involve undergraduate students working as mentors and role models. Many of these students come from under-represented groups and, through their participation in Progression or Sutton Trust summer schools.

¹⁹ Participation and Fair Access? New Insights from Leading Thinkers. *LEP/Brightside*, pp. 122

and Bathmaker, M., Ingram, N., & Waller, R. (2013). Higher education, social class and the mobilisation of capitals: recognising and playing the game. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34(2), 3743.

²⁰ Violet Kunovš X ~îîîô•X tZ E4i ĀP]μ CE o /v•]PZš š <]vP[•[U <]vP• }oo P >}v }v
<https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/johnworne/2016/01/21/nudge-behaviouralinsightat-kings>

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Trust.

Office for Students. Access and Participation Effective Practice/Work Experience and Internships
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/work-experience-and-internships>

²² Office for Students. Access and Participation, Effective Practice/Employability
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/employability>

Evidence shows that there is a relatively small difference in degree outcomes based on attainment at A-level (83% 1st and 2:1 for those with BBB, 91% for those with AAA⁵), especially for some students with contextual offers, there may be additional factors which can impact academic achievement. As a result, support (both academic and pastoral) is particularly important for those students.

Why this is important ;

Specific groups of students, such as BAME students, may also benefit from specialised support, which may take the form of a more inclusive curriculum, to maximise potential outcomes.

Success in this area would include ;

- x Focused academic support programmes through DCAD for recipients of contextual offers of all backgrounds.
- x Specialised resources made available via DCAD to departments on curriculum reform to increase inclusivity for BAME and other groups (such as some curricular
- x)XUWKHU GLUHFV VXSSRUW IRU WKH)LUVW *HQUHDWLF students.

4. More specific cross-referencing of data to identify disadvantage

Background ;

Data sets such as POLAR (both POLAR3 and POLAR4) and ACORN are vital in helping universities to target access work to most effect. However, larger amounts of data is becoming available at an ever more granular level.

Why this is important ;

POLAR and ACORN are, without doubt, useful tools with which to identify disadvantage, however to ensure that those in the most need receive support and access opportunities, there should be greater use of more specific, data to identify disadvantage more clearly and target interventions precisely.

Success in this area would include ;

- x Use of metrics such as Free School Meals (FSM), in line with research conducted by Dr Vikki Boliver, in an expansion of the existing 20-school pilot programme
- x Recognising that, while this may not be a particular indicator of disadvantage, disaggregating currently held data on school type (i.e. identifying types of state school previously attended by students) holds value for the purpose of developing wider cultural change in the University
- x Use of up to three indicators (from a wider selection of indicators) to inform recruitment planning and outcome analysis ±D IXUWKHU H[WHQVLRQ RI W own analysis of how different sources of disadvantage intersect

- x Identification of other potential indicators beyond those currently used.
- x Other examples : Cambridge has a broad spectrum of datasets it lists, in which use R I 3 X S W P measures, is cited as a specific goal.

5. Disaggregating disabled students group

Background ;

' LVDEOHG VWXGHQWV DUH FXUUHQWO\ UHFRJQLVHG DV D V separating them out by different declared disabilities.

Why this is important ;

We would like to disaggregate that group, as per the sub-groups defined i Q WKH 8QLYHUVI own statistics releases⁷.

Better disaggregation of this group in the APP would enable greater targeting of interventions, particularly to identify outcome gaps for students with particular disabilities.

Success in this area would include;

- x Identify those sub- JURXS V ZLWKLQ WKH EURDGHU KHDGLQJ R

Tuition fees have increased three times this amount and the conditions attached to student loans have been revised (in particular, maintenance grants no longer exist) since the quoted research was conducted, and a new methodology and research must be applied to be considered current data. It would be disingenuous to suggest that the £1900 impact level remains relevant to current and future students. The study also warns in its findings that different types of financial support will be equally effective.

Success in this area would look like;

- x Inclusion of alternative research into direct financial support for students to inform bursary scheme at Durham.
- x Increased upper limit of financial support available to Durham students, in line with the 2018-19 was £3,700).

7. Leadership on Culture Change

Background;

Access and participation plan

Provider name: University of Durham

Provider UKPRN: 10007143

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

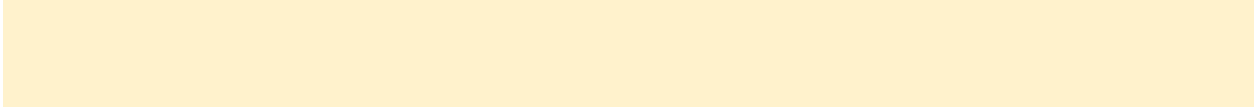


Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

Full-time course type:

Additional information:

Course fee:

First degree



Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: University of Durham

Provider UKPRN: 10007143

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 investment in student success and progression in the access and participation plans and therefore investment in these areas is not recorded here.

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Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	£4,235,000.00	£4,235,000.00	£4,235,000.00	£4,235,000.00	£4,235,000.00
	£500,000.00	£500,000.00	£500,000.00	£500,000.00	£500,000.00
	£3,000,000.00	£3,000,000.00	£3,000,000.00	£3,000,000.00	£3,000,000.00
	£700,000.00	£700,000.00	£700,000.00	£700,000.00	£700,000.00
	£35,000.00	£35,000.00	£35,000.00	£35,000.00	£35,000.00
Financial support (£)	£5,300,000.00	£5,510,000.00	£5,560,000.00	£5,560,000.00	£5,560,000.00
	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HF1%)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	£34,513,450.00	£34,337,605.00	£34,624,510.00	£35,244,595.00	£35,833,830.00
	12.3%	12.3%	12.2%	12.0%	11.8%
	15.4%	16.0%	16.1%	15.8%	15.5%
	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
	27.7%	28.4%	28.3%	27.8%	27.4%

Provider name: University of Durham

Provider UKPRN: 10007143

Table 2a - Access

						2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25			
To reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups.	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Ratio in entry rates for POLAR4 quintile 5: quintile 1 students	No	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	2018-19	10:1	9:1	8:1	7:1	4.5:1	3:1	N.B. Baseline is taken from internal data rather than HESA for greater accuracy.
To enrol an additional 100 UK black undergraduates to Durham University.	PTA_2	Ethnicity	The percentage of UK black undergraduates enrolled at Durham University, indicating an increase of 100 students	No	Other data source	2018-19	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.9%	2.1%	Based on internal data using HESA groupings.
To reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups.	PTA_3	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	The percentage of POLAR4 quintile 1 students.	No	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	2018-19	5.5%	5.8%	6.4%	7%	9.8%	12.2%	N.B. Baseline is taken from internal data rather than HESA for greater accuracy.
To reduce the gap in participation between the most and least represented groups.	PTA_4	Other	The percentage of POLAR4 quintile 2 students.	No	Other data source	2018-19	9.1%	9.8%	10.7%	11.6%	13.4%	15.3%	Based on internal data.
To increase the percentage of care leavers in the North East progressing to HE	PTA_5	Care-leavers	The percentage of Care Leavers currently at an HE institution aged 19, 20 and 21 who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday including some time after their 16th birthday.	Yes	Other data source	2017-18	7%	7%	7.5%	8%	8.5%	9%	Measured by government national statistics published by the Department for Education. The target will be achieved through the NERAP collaborative Choices Together programme for looked after people.
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

						2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25		
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To reduce the gap in attainment between disabled students and non-disabled students

						2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25		
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