

# David Game Higher Education (DGHE)

## Access and participation plan

**2023-24 to 2027-28**

David Game Higher Education (DGHE) aims to promote the joy of knowledge and learning while maintaining rigour and quality of teaching, curriculum and assessment. Our students recommend DGHE because of the quality of teaching which has a global reputation. Small class sizes and individual attention enable us to help students from all backgrounds to gain the qualifications needed to maximise their higher education and career prospects. Our mission is to provide exceptional learning, encouraging students in developing their spirit of inquiry in order to realise their personal and professional aspirations, and potential, through quality education in a culturally diverse and inclusive environment.

DGHE offers a range of programmes of study. These include BTEC Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Diplomas (HNDs) at levels 4&5. We also teach Bachelors and Top Up Degrees (at level 6), for our franchiser partner universities. DGHE HNC/Ds are typically more specialised, focusing on the specific skills needed to pursue a career whilst providing entry into higher education study should students wish to continue to a degree.

The DGHE Centre is a diverse, inclusive and professional academic community that respects individuals and enables them to strive for success in order to contribute positively and sustainably to the local region, the international economy and wider society in general. Consequently, students at DGHE can be confident that they have joined an institution that is serious about education and one that strives to deliver courses of the highest quality within an environment that ensures an outstanding student experience to those of all backgrounds.

### 1. Assessment of performance

#### Context

Prior to this Plan DGHE has been working to our Access and Participation Statement, from which this Plan builds. DGHE is a small, specialist institution and only started enrolling its own students in 2019-20. We have a strong commitment to access and participation, however we are at the start of our journey and this is reflected in this Plan.

#### Our data

We are drawing on data from our own DGHE registered students only, who are studying on our HND courses. Whilst we teach students on degree and top-up courses, for this provision we are a franchise teaching partner to New Buckinghamshire University and Gloucestershire University and therefore these students are covered under the Access and Participation Plans of our partner universities.

Coupled with the context of DGHE only being in its second year of enrolling its own students and being new to the regulatory environment, the current small size of our undergraduate student body brings significant challenges with respect to our performance assessment, evaluation, and target setting. We have not historically collected some of the data that OfS requires for access and participation, and there are consequently some gaps in our analysis.

For some underrepresented groups there is insufficient data to inform statistical analysis at the disaggregated level, which means we must rely on appropriate groupings of data. Intersectional analysis is also very difficult as cohort sizes become very small in this context. Gaining statistical significance in many areas is not possible. We have seen large fluctuations in the performance outcomes of certain target groups, given the percentage data is quite volatile given the small base cohorts. To help mitigate the issue of small datasets, in our Evaluation Strategy below, we highlight a commitment to using qualitative approaches to enhance our evaluative capabilities both to address the limitations of our small

datasets in understanding our performance and impact over time, and to better understand the trends and correlations we observe, building a body of evaluated type 1 evidence.

#### Access

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We do not have data prior to 2019-20 when we started enrolling our own students. We have provided data from 2019-20 to 2021-22.

#### Success

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DGHE recognise the need to improve continuation rates across its whole student population. Data we have available relates to 2020-21, and we commit to ensure ongoing tracking and monitoring of data in this area into the future to inform continuous improvement.

Our data for attainment have been derived from students who completed a HND course in 2019-20 and 2020-21. These are the only data available at this time. For the purposes of assessing good attainment outcomes, we have determined that a Distinction or Merit outcome constitutes a positive attainment outcome<sup>1</sup>.

As DGHE continue to expand our provision, we commit to tracking and monitoring attainment data, particularly in relation to target groups, over and beyond the life of this Plan.

#### Progression

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DGHE does not yet have any data relating to progression. We commit to collecting progression data into and over the life of this Plan, and will use it to monitor performance for target groups and, should gaps emerge, set targets for performance improvement.

## **1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status**

Due to our location in London, we consider that a socioeconomic measure is more appropriate in this area (rather than POLAR4) given the lack of POLAR4 Quintile 1 areas in the London boroughs. We have therefore explored the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Also, given that a large percentage of our student population are mature learners (21 and over), we have used Adult HE measure. Analysis has been undertaken on the available data; i.e. the numbers of our cohort with returned measures in the respective categories.

### **Access by POLAR4**

DGHE have consistently attracted the majority of its students from POLAR4 Quintiles 4 and 5 backgrounds. The proportion of learners from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2 remain relatively low over time, with Quintile 1 learners comprising 4.1% in 2021-22. However, overall cohorts are small, which makes trends very difficult to assess.

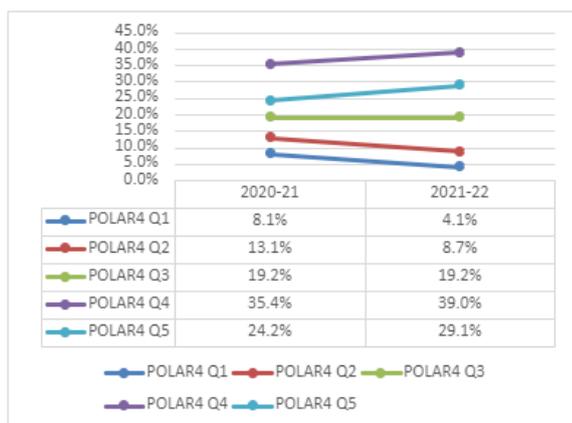
The gap in participation rate between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 in 2021-22 amongst DGHE-registered students is 25 percentage points. This is worse than the average sector data, where the gap in participation in 2020-21 is 17.7 percentage points<sup>2</sup>. However, of this population 91.9% are mature learners, (2021-22) meaning that the Adult HE measure is more relevant. We will therefore use the Adult HE measure only going forward.

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<sup>1</sup> For degree programmes, OfS determine a good attainment outcome as a First or 2:1. However, HNDs are not assessed using these classifications.

<sup>2</sup> OfS A&P Data Dashboard, latest data available for comparison.

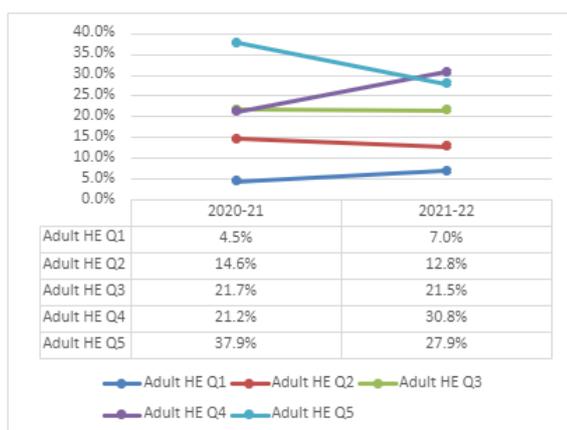
## Percentage of students from POLAR4 areas enrolled with DGHE



## Access by Adult HE

Again, DGHE have consistently attracted<sup>3</sup> the majority of its students from Adult HE Quintiles 4 and 5 backgrounds. The proportion of learners from Adult HE Quintiles 1 and 2 remain relatively low over time, with Quintile 1 learners comprising 7.0% in 2021-22.

## Percentage of students from Adult HE areas enrolled with DGHE



The gap in participation rate between Adult HE Q1 and Q5 in 2021-22 amongst DGHE-registered students is 20.9 percentage points.

Whilst we will monitor performance in respect of the Adult HE measure, as previously noted DGHE is located in Aldgate, in the City of London, which has very good Adult HE participation (majority Quintiles 4 and 5). 91% of our recruitment is London based, and we do not have a current strategy to significantly change our reach. Therefore, the deprivation measure is more meaningful to our context going forward and we do not propose to set targets in relation to either POLAR4 or Adult HE at this time. We commit to reviewing our situation by 2024-25.

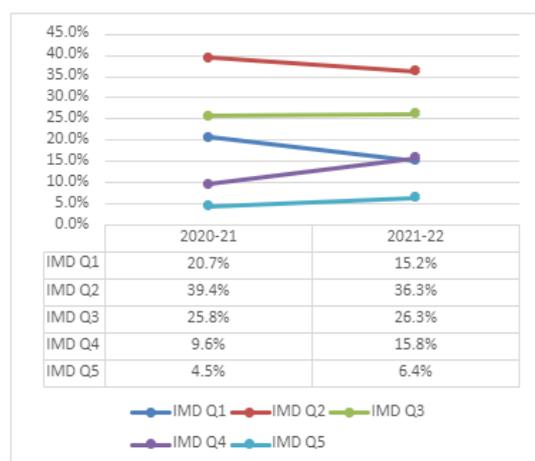
## Access by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

DGHE have consistently attracted<sup>4</sup> the majority of its students from IMD Quintile 2 backgrounds, with good proportions also from Quintile 1, comprising 15.2% in 2021-22. This is just short of the sector average participation for IMD Quintile 1, at 21.7%

<sup>3</sup> Prior to 2019-20, all students were registered with other institutions. In 2019-20 onwards, DGHE started registering its own students.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## Percentage of students from IMD areas enrolled with DGHE



The gap in participation rate between IMD Q1 and Q5 in 2021-22 amongst DGHE-registered students is positive, at -8.8 percentage points. This area is therefore not a concern under this Plan.

### Success

#### Non-continuation by Adult HE

The overall Adult HE Quintile 1 continuation rate is 68.8% in 2020-21. This is in comparison to Adult HE Quintile 5 student continuation at 65.7%, representing a positive -3.1 percentage point gap in favour of Q1 students. This outperforms the sector average, where the gap is 3.8 percentage points in 2019-20<sup>5</sup>.

	2020-21
<b>Adult HE Q1</b>	68.8%
<b>Adult HE Q2</b>	60.0%
<b>Adult HE Q3</b>	50.9%
<b>Adult HE Q4</b>	61.8%
<b>Adult HE Q5</b>	65.7%
<b>Gap Q1-Q5</b>	<b>-3.1pp</b>

#### Non-continuation by IMD

In 2020-21, the overall IMD Quintile 1 in continuation rate is 51.1%. This is in comparison with IMD Quintile 5 continuation at 36.4%, representing a positive -14.7 percentage point gap in performance. We perform much better than the broader sector average, where the gap in continuation between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 is 6.5 percentage points (2019-20)<sup>6</sup>.

#### Attainment by Adult HE

In 2020-21, the attainment rate for students from Adult HE Quintile 1 is 25.0%, compared to Quintile 5 at 32.8%. The gap in performance between Q1 and Q5 is 7.8 percentage points. DGHE recognise the need to improve attainment rates overall, and commit to do so with particular attention to Adult HE Quintile 1 learners.

	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Adult HE Q1</b>	22.2%	25.0%

<sup>5</sup> OfS APP Data Dashboard (2019-20)

<sup>6</sup> OfS APP Data Dashboard (2019-20), latest data available

<b>Adult HE Q2</b>	35.3%	32.1%
<b>Adult HE Q3</b>	30.0%	35.0%
<b>Adult HE Q4</b>	25.0%	45.1%
<b>Adult HE Q5</b>	26.6%	32.8%
<b>Gap Q1-Q5</b>	<b>4.4pp</b>	<b>7.8pp</b>

#### Attainment by IMD

In 2020-21, the attainment rate for students from IMD Quintile 1 is 23.7%, compared to Quintile 5 at 50.0%. this represents a large gap, at 26.3 percentage points. However, we note the effect of small cohorts here and the dramatic swing in trend from the previous year, where a large positive gap was observed (-19.9 percentage points).

	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
<b>IMD Q1</b>	31.0%	23.7%
<b>IMD Q2</b>	27.8%	29.7%
<b>IMD Q3</b>	22.9%	48.0%
<b>IMD Q4</b>	33.3%	44.0%
<b>IMD Q5</b>	11.1%	50.0%
<b>Gap Q1-Q5</b>	<b>-19.9pp</b>	<b>26.3pp</b>

#### Progression to employment or further study

DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any data relating to progression. We have considered the sector average gap in progression outcomes between the most and least deprived (7%), and the most and least represented (6%, using POLAR4) (2016-17, last DLHE data). We will monitor further sector data emerging from the new Graduate Outcomes measure, from 2017-18 data onwards.

Going forward under his Plan, from 2023-24, we commit to ensuring we capture our data on progression to employment/ further study and progression to highly skilled employment by target groups, and monitor our performance in this area. Should any gaps emerge in terms of progression to employment/further study and progression to highly skilled employment, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Data for ethnicity has some gaps, where ethnicity has not been provided or has been refused by students. The following analysis is based on all available data where it has been provided.

#### Access

DGHE has consistently registered lower proportions of minority ethnic students.

#### Percentage of BAME learners enrolled with DGHE

In 2020-21, the percentage of BAME learners was 8.7%, but in 2021-22 this was slightly lower at 7.7%. This is in comparison to the broader sector average BAME intake at 32.3% in 2020-21, and a local population context of 18.5% Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Mixed White and Asian, Any other Asian background; and 13.3% African, any other Black/African/Caribbean background, Mixed White and Black African and Mixed White and Black Caribbean background<sup>7</sup>. This means there is a 23.1 percentage point

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/british-population/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/lates>

gap between our enrolment of BAME learners and our local BAME population (2020-21). We will continue to monitor our own enrolment data going forward under this Plan, as our cohorts grow. Improving access for BAME learners is a concern under this Plan.

## Success

### Non-continuation

In 2020-21, the overall BAME continuation rate is 50.0%. this is in comparison with white student continuation at 61.7%, representing a 11.7 percentage point gap in performance.

Assessment at the disaggregated ethnicity level is difficult due to extremely small cohort sizes (<5 in many categories), which make percentage data particularly volatile. However, while numbers are too small to specifically report, DGHE has found that the continuation rate is particularly lower for Asian learners. This is in comparison to the average sector gap between Asian and white student continuation, which is positive at -0.2 percentage points (2019-20).

We have considered our data in comparison to the broader sector average, where gaps for all ethnic groups except Asian are observed, with the gap for Black students being most prominent at 4.7% (2019-20). DGHE have a positive gap between white and black students in 2020-21. Again, we note the impact of small cohorts.

### Attainment

The overall BAME attainment rate is 33.3%. This is in comparison to white student attainment rate, which is 37.6%, leaving a gap for BAME attainment at 4.3 percentage points. Assessment at the disaggregated ethnicity level is again difficult due to extremely small cohort sizes (<5 in many categories). However, while numbers are too small to specifically report, DGHE has not found that any particular ethnicities have larger attainment gaps.

	2019-20	2020-21
<b>BAME % attainment</b>	28.6%	33.3%
<b>White % attainment</b>	26.8%	37.6%

Whilst DGHE wish to improve our attainment levels on our HND programme overall, we are not concerned at this stage about a gap in outcomes for BAME learners. We will continue to monitor this data closely over and beyond the life of this Plan.

Our data is considered in comparison to broader sector average data, where a gap in attainment outcomes occurs for all ethnicities and is particularly concerning for Black students, at 18.3% (2019-20).

### Progression to employment or further study

DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any data relating to progression. We have considered the sector average gap in progression outcomes between BAME and white learners, at 2.9% (Mixed); 3.8% (Asian and Other); and 4.7% (Black) (2016-17, last DLHE data). We will monitor further sector data emerging from the new Graduate Outcomes measure, from 2017-18 onwards.

Going forward under his Plan, from 2023-24, we commit to ensuring we capture our data on progression to employment/ further study and progression to highly skilled employment and monitor our performance in this area. Should any gaps emerge, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

## 1.3 Mature students

## Access

DGHE have consistently registered high proportions of mature learners, with 93.0% mature learners enrolled in 2020-21 and 91.9% mature learners enrolled in 2021-22. This is in comparison to the broader sector average, at 32.8% mature learner access in 2020-21<sup>8</sup>.

### Percentage of Mature learners enrolled with DGHE

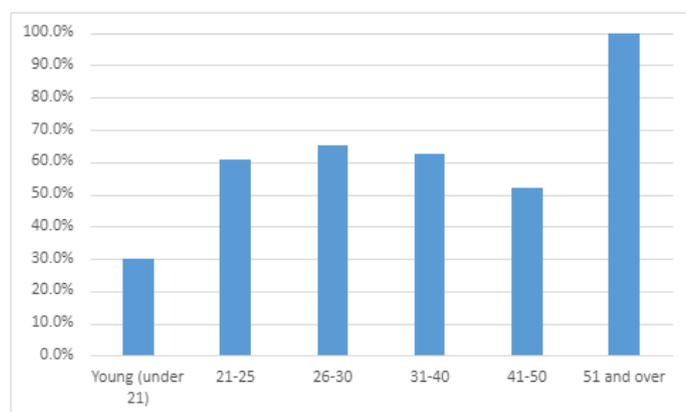
	2020-21	2021-22
<b>Young (under 21)</b>	7.0%	8.1%
<b>21-25</b>	17.4%	23.1%
<b>26-30</b>	23.4%	17.9%
<b>31-40</b>	40.8%	38.2%
<b>41-50</b>	10.9%	12.1%
<b>51 and over</b>	0.5%	0.6%
<b>Mature</b>	<b>93.0%</b>	<b>91.9%</b>

## Success

### Non-continuation

In 2020-21, mature (21 and over) learners at DGHE continued at a much higher rate (62.2%) than their young counterparts (30.0%), leaving a positive gap of 32.2 percentage points. Mature learners comprise the majority of our student body and therefore disaggregation and assessment into the more granular age brackets is possible, as per below:

### 2020-21 Percentage continuation rate by age group



There are no gaps in continuation rates observed for any mature age group in comparison to their young counterparts. In terms of gaps DGHE outperforms the sector average, where a gap for mature learner continuation is observed, at 7.5 percentage points (2019-20).

### Attainment

In 2020-21, the overall attainment rate for mature learners is 35.6%. This is in comparison to young students attainment rate, which is 50.0% representing a gap of 14.4 percentage points, however this is based on a young cohort of <5 learners (compared to the mature learner cohort of over 150 learners), which does not provide a reliable measure or any statistical significance. Assessment at the disaggregated age band level shows that mature learners in the 41-50 and 26-30 age groups tend to

<sup>8</sup> OfS APP Data Dashboard 2020-21

perform better in 2020-21, at 40.7% and 39.6%, respectively. Improving attainment levels generally is a concern under this Plan.

	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Mature % attainment (HNDs)</b>	25.8%	35.6%
<b>Young % attainment (HNDs)</b>	66.7%	50.0%

Our data is considered in comparison to the broader sector average data, where a gap in attainment outcomes (9.5 percentage points in 2020-21) is observed for mature learners in comparison to their young counterparts<sup>9</sup>.

#### Progression to employment or further study

DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any data relating to progression. We have considered the sector average gap in progression outcomes between young and mature learners, at -3.4% (2016-17, last DLHE data) in favour of mature learners. We will monitor further sector data emerging from the new Graduate Outcomes measure, from 2017-18 onwards.

As part of this Plan, from 2023-24, we commit to ensuring we capture data on progression to employment/further study and progression to highly skilled employment and monitor our performance in this area. Should any gaps emerge, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### Access

DGHE have consistently registered<sup>10</sup> lower proportions of disabled learners, although we note a slight increase over the past year.

#### Percentage of disabled learners enrolled with DGHE

1.5% disabled learners enrolled in 2020-21, increasing to 4.6% disabled learners enrolled in 2021-22. This is in comparison to the broader sector average, at 17.0% disabled learner access in 2020-21. It is also lower than the national average for those accessing non-degree level Higher Education at Alternative Providers, which was 8% (2018-19)<sup>11</sup>.

We have set a concern under this Plan to improve access for disabled learners; however, it is of note that various social and cultural factors influence self-reporting of a disability given the profile of our students being mature and largely born outside the UK. This means that we could have enrolled students with an undeclared disability, which is an area we will explore further in 2022-23 and beyond.

### Success

#### Non-continuation and attainment

DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any internal data available for attainment for this target group. We have limited continuation data for 2020-21, where 100% of disabled learners continued, compared to 59% for non-disabled learners. This represents a positive gap of 41 percentage points. Going forward under this Plan, we commit to ensuring we capture this data and monitor our performance in these areas. Should any gaps emerge, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

We acknowledge the average sector gaps of 1.2 percentage points (2019-20) in continuation between disabled and non-disabled learners, and the 1.1% (2020-21) gap in respect of attainment outcomes. We are aware of the OfS national key performance measure in relation to closing the gap in degree outcomes for disabled learners and will exercise vigilance in this area in our monitoring. We have also provided

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/16-01-2020/sb255-higher-education-student-statistics/numbers>

commitments with regards inclusive curriculum and effective support in our strategic measures, targeted at disabled learners.

#### Progression to employment or further study

DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any data relating to progression. We have considered the sector average gap in progression outcomes between disabled and non-disabled learners, at 1.8% (2016-17, last DLHE data) and we will monitor further sector data emerging from the new Graduate Outcomes measure, from 2017-18 onwards.

Going forward under his Plan, from 2023-24, we commit to ensuring we capture data on progression to employment/ further study and progression to highly skilled employment and monitor our performance in this area. Should any gaps emerge, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

### 1.5 Care leavers

#### Access

DGHE started collecting care leaver data for its registered students in 2020-21. In 2020-21 and 2021-22, whilst specific data is too small to report, we attracted a small number (<5) of care leaver students in both years. These data are too small to conduct meaningful analysis or set targets at this time. However, we commit to continuing to collect and monitor care leaver data into the future.

#### Success and progression to employment or further study

Again, DGHE have not historically systematically collected this data and we do not have any internal data available for continuation, attainment or progression for this target group. Going forward under his Plan, we commit to ensuring we capture this data and monitor our performance in these areas. This will start from 2023-24. Should any gaps emerge, we will seek to set additional targets through subsequent Plans.

We have considered sector data and research highlighting that the disadvantage care leavers experience often impacts their life chances. We acknowledge that reasons for attrition are often multi-faceted, including complex mental health needs (Harrison, 2017). Due to care leavers also often experiencing disrupted schooling, we are aware that attainment levels for this group are also generally lower (Flynn, Tessier and Coulombe, 2013). The support and work-based learning opportunities we provide in relation to employability and careers make us well-placed to enable care leaver students to develop the skills, experience and confidence they need to be successful in their studies and progress into employment/ further study and highly skilled employment.

### 1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

Given the very small cohorts and difficulties arising in data analysis when these very small numbers are disaggregated further, DGHE does not propose to provide further analysis here, nor set targets at this time.

Given our student body is predominantly mature learners (a target group), our performance assessment generally deals with intersections. We are cognisant that mature learners are more likely than their younger counterparts to have characteristics associated with underrepresentation in higher education and are more likely to face a range of barriers<sup>12</sup>. Research shows that mature students are more likely to be black, Asian or minority ethnic, have disabilities, and have non-traditional qualifications<sup>13</sup> and this informs our development of support strategies for our cohort.

We will start to explore our data on intersections for our student population from 2023-24, to help to inform our work to support student access, success and progression under this Plan.

### 1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/mature-students/>

<sup>13</sup> Million+ and NUS (2012) Never too late to learn <https://www.millionplus.ac.uk/policy/reports/never-too-late-to-learn>

DGHE does not currently collect any data on other groups most likely to experience disadvantage. DGHE will explore opportunities to collect and analyse a range of additional data as this Plan is implemented, from the 2024-25 academic year.

## 2. Strategic aims and objectives

DGHE is committed to promoting and ensuring equality of opportunity to participate and succeed in higher education for all prospective learners, regardless of background. DGHE aims to ensure it supports and facilitates access and success for all learners who meet admissions criteria and wish to study at DGHE, and to do so in ways that promote equality and overcome potential barriers caused by disadvantage.

### 2.1 Target Groups

DGHE will focus on the key gaps identified in the Performance Assessment section of the Plan, while contextualising target-setting based on our emerging context as we grow and register more of our own students. Even where specific targets are not set as part of this Plan, DGHE will remain vigilant of, and will continue to monitor, national priorities in relation to access and participation, while testing our data against relevant sector benchmarks and priorities. This is to ensure that equality of opportunity is maintained, and further gaps do not emerge across the whole lifecycle. We consider this particularly important as our data in respect of access and participation is not complete and requires building over time. To this end, we will strengthen data collection and analysis and monitor our data as it emerges over the life of this Plan.

Based on assessment of its performance, DGHE targets will be as follows:

Target group	Access	Success (continuation)	Success (attainment)	Progression
IMD Q1			X	
Black, Asian and minority ethnic	X	X		
Disabled	X			
Mature			X	

DGHE is broadly committed to a whole of life-cycle approach to access, success and progression, and continued monitoring of access, success and progression areas will be in place and strengthened particularly as we seek to improve our performance as per these targets.

### 2.2 Aims and objectives

#### Access Targets

As determined by its performance assessment, DGHE's targets are:

1. **Aim:** To increase the proportion of undergraduate students at DGHE who are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. **Objective:** increase the proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic entrants, from 7.7% in 2021-22 to 20% by 2027-28.

DGHE Baseline 2021-22	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
7.7%	9%	11%	13.5%	17%	20%

2. **Aim:** To increase the proportion of undergraduate students at DGHE who are disabled. **Objective:** increase the proportion of disabled entrants from 4.6% in 2021-22 to 12% by 2027-28.

DGHE Baseline 2021-22	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
4.6%	6%	7%	9%	11%	12%

### Success Targets

3. **Aim:** To reduce the gap in continuation between BAME and white students. **Objective:** for undergraduate students enrolled at DGHE, reduce the continuation gap between BAME and white learners to 5 percentage points (pp) by 2027-28, from baseline of 11.7 percentage points in 2020-21. In this context of improving overall performance, paying particular attention to closing the current gap between Asian and white learners.

DGHE Baseline 2020-21	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
11.7pp	11pp	10pp	9pp	7pp	5pp

4. **Aim:** To increase the attainment rate for mature students. **Objective:** for mature learners (21 and over) enrolled on the DGHE HND course, increase the attainment rate to 50% by 2027-28, from baseline of 35.6% in 2020-21.

DGHE Baseline 2020-21	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
35.6%	37%	39%	42%	45%	50%

5. **Aim:** To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 5 and 1, respectively) on HND courses. **Objective:** for DGHE enrolled students on HND programmes, reduce the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) from a baseline of 26.3 percentage points in 2020-21, to 10 percentage points by 2027-28.

DGHE Baseline 2020-21	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
26.3pp	24pp	21pp	18pp	15pp	10pp

### Progression Targets

Given our lack of data in this area, we do not propose to set targets here at this stage. As mentioned in our performance assessment, we commit to collecting and monitoring our data into and beyond the life of this Plan, and will seek to set targets from 2025-26, should gaps emerge.

## 3. Strategic measures

### 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

David Game Higher Education (DGHE) is committed to improving access and working to continuously improve outcomes in success and progression for an increasingly diverse student body. DGHE's mission includes activities that demonstrate a commitment to increasing the diversity of the student and staff base and ensuring that under-represented students achieve comparable outcomes to their peers in relation to continuation, attainment and graduate outcomes. DGHE sees this as a valuable component of our institution as well as a commitment to supporting broader social mobility outcomes.

Considering our Performance Assessment, DGHE will direct a range of work across the lifecycle to make progress in relation to our access, continuation and attainment targets. While we have not set targets in relation to progression outcomes at this time, nevertheless we recognise work relating to this area is valuable during the course of study and can contribute to continuation and attainment outcomes (Hughes

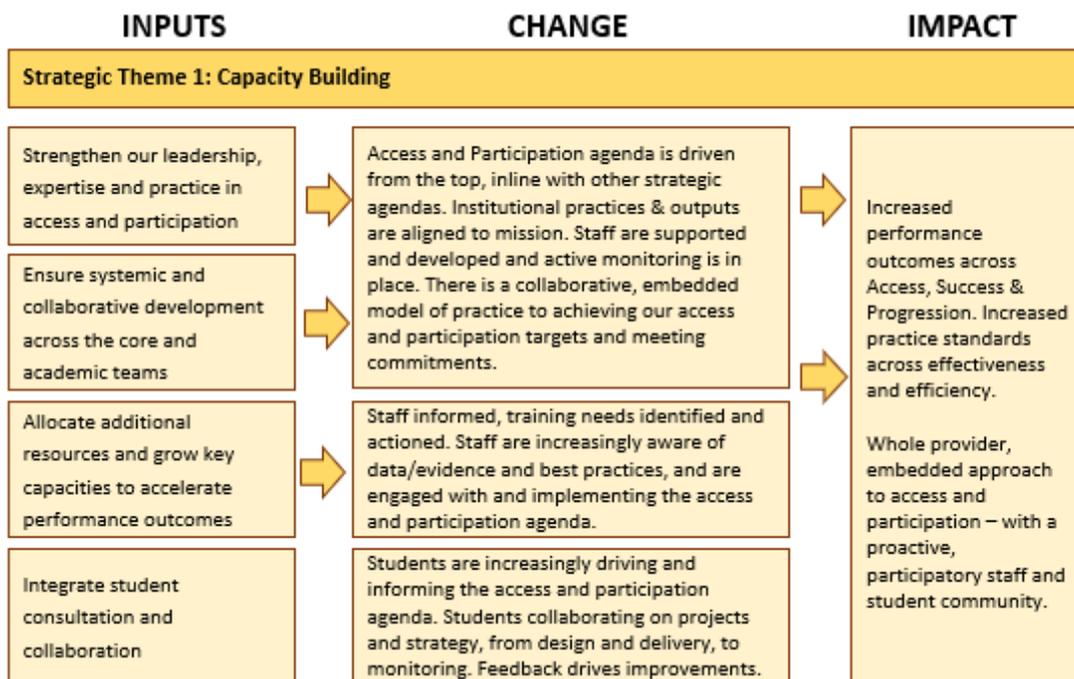
et al 2016; Harrison and Waller 2018; Bennett et al 2016<sup>14</sup>). Careers and employability activity will therefore be included in our delivery. However, given our small student numbers and limited resources, we will concentrate effort and investment where it can be most effective, with the balance of our investment and institutional focus being weighted towards supporting student success, reflecting the areas for improvement identified through our assessment of performance. Our work includes:

- A new outreach and recruitment strategy
- Developing inclusive curriculum, teaching and learning
- Effective student support and development
- Employer and industry opportunities, integrated with curriculum

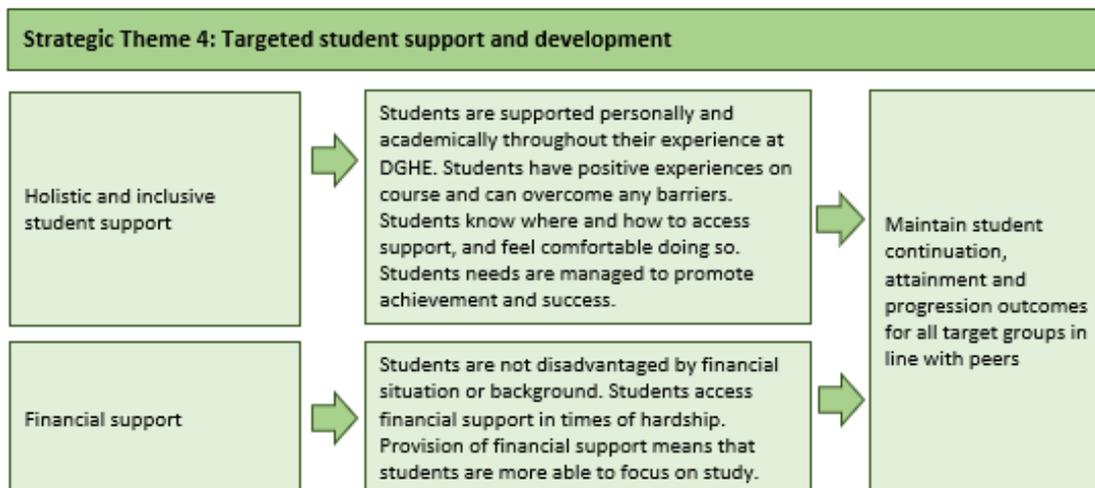
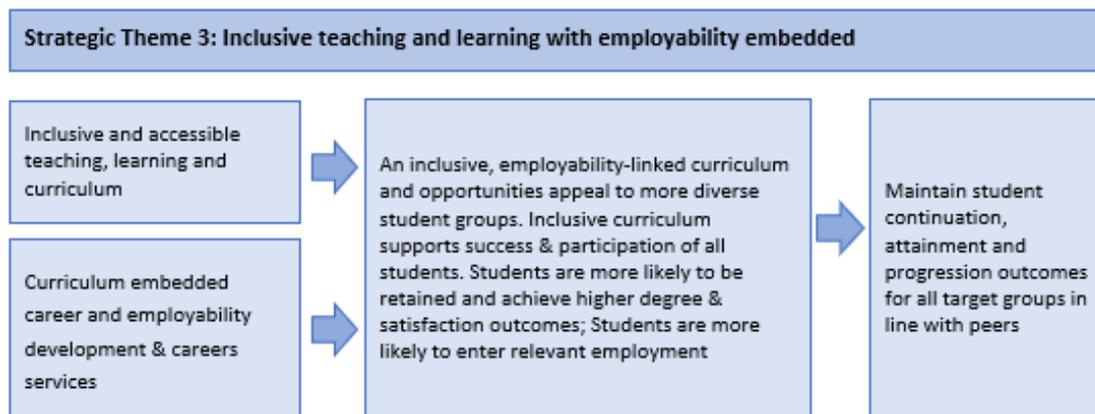
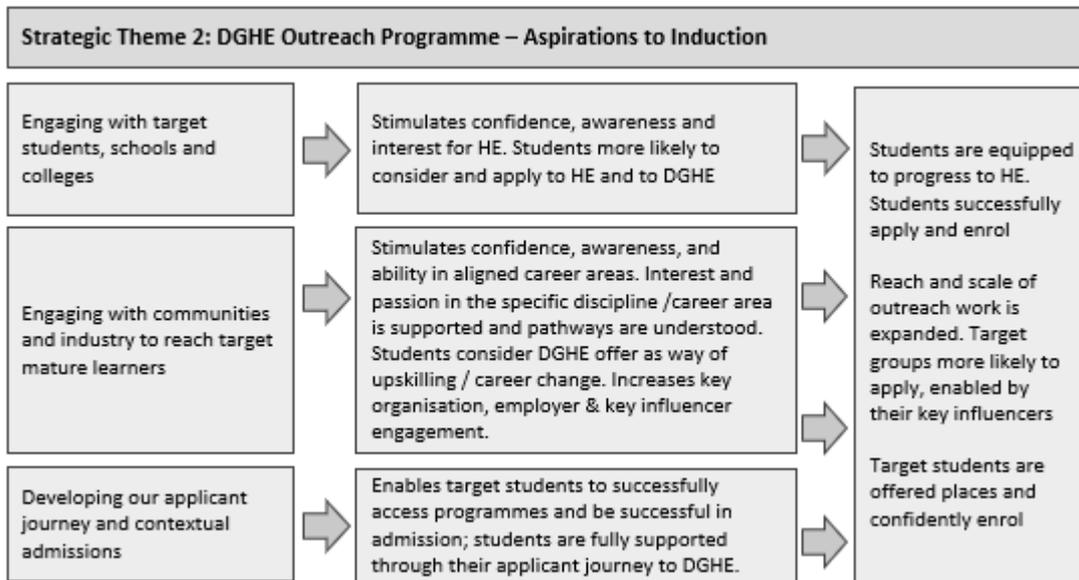
Engagement with target learners in the access area is proposed via the development of our outreach activity, as we start to work with schools, colleges and community to reach our target learners. Internally, we will ensure our success and progression activity reaches our target learners through use of our data and via close community with our students which is possible due to our smaller size. DGHE recognise a need to improve our outcomes in continuation and attainment broadly, and that our size lends itself to a whole-community approach to our activity. We will therefore take an integrated approach that benefits our whole population as well as targeting activity for under-represented groups. This provides a safe, inclusive environment, raising broader awareness of support services and building a positive culture of inclusion, equality and diversity.

Given access and participation work at DGHE is in an early development stage, DGHE commits to institution-wide awareness raising and capacity-building. To facilitate continuous improvement, we will also work towards an increasingly evidence-based, data-driven approach. We will continually build a culture of awareness and understanding in respect of fair access and participation, presenting ourselves and raising our profile as such.

Our institutional Theory of Change sets our framework for achieving our aims, objectives and targets:



<sup>14</sup> Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S.-A., Baldauf, B., & McKeown, R. (2016). Careers education: International literature review. *Education Endowment Foundation*, 1(July), 1–115; Harrison, N., & Waller, R. (2018). Challenging discourses of aspiration: The role of expectations and attainment in access to higher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 44(5), 914–938; Bennett, D., Roberts, L., & Creagh, C. (2016). Exploring possible selves in a first-year physics foundation class: Engaging students by establishing relevance. *Physical Review. Physics Education Research*, 12(1), 010120.



**Alignment with other strategies**

DGHE believes in the principle of freedom from discrimination for everyone, regardless of their age, gender, disability, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sexual orientation, social background or religious beliefs, or of being part of any other group which may have experienced discrimination. We aim to provide a real equality of opportunity for all existing and future learners and staff and support the same

for the wider community. This Plan is aligned to and is supported through a number of other policies and strategies<sup>15</sup>, as follows.

### Single Equalities Policy (2021-22)

Our Single Equalities Policy (SEP) details our commitment to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation, can work within a safe environment, free from any form of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

Our aim is to foster a sense of community in which all students are valued and can thrive regardless of any of these characteristics, and counter and discriminatory practices. We also commit to take steps to ensure that students appreciate racial and cultural diversity. This is in alignment with the commitments in this Plan, particularly in respect of student success.

Principles in our SEP are also aligned to the strategic measures in this Plan, being:

- All learners are valued, and their contributions recognised
- Diversity is recognised and respected
- Everyone is welcomed and made to feel comfortable within our community
- We will recognise and address inequalities and barriers that already exist

The SEP promotes consideration for others and a commitment by DGHE to ensure that our community is aware of the importance and celebration of every individual. We detail our high standard of teaching and curriculum provision, that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values and builds students' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them. This includes use of materials that reflect diversity within society and opportunities for discussing issues of identity and diversity, which are integrated across the curriculum. We have similarly set aspirations further developing inclusivity in our curriculum under this Plan.

In line with the student consultation and collaboration aspirations in this Plan, the SEP also commits to ensuring an effective voice and involvement of students in the governance and organisation of DGHE in a way that teaches them to participate in and make a difference in College, in their local community and beyond. As we seek representation from our target groups under this Plan, the SEP details our aim to provide opportunities for interaction between students from different backgrounds in wider settings. In the SEP, we group our work as follows:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – to teach students to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.
- Engagement and ethos – to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different Colleges and communities locally, across the country and internationally.

In developing this Plan, we also consider and have regard for the Equality Act (2010), noting the interplay between this Act and the concerns of this Plan. We are committed as an organisation to a zero tolerance approach and eliminating discrimination, and actively promoting diversity and inclusion under the commitments of this Plan to advance equality of opportunity. We are cognisant that the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) overlap with targets under this Plan, and therefore see these areas in alignment.

### Learning and Teaching Strategy

Aligning with our success measures for curriculum, teaching and learning and employability under this Plan, our Learning and Teaching Strategy (LTS) sets our over-arching vision to provide the opportunity

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<sup>15</sup> All policies can be found at <https://www.dghe.ac.uk/college/policies>

for all students to realise their full potential during their studies and in their later lives as professionals and role models in society. The LTS strategic areas for teaching and learning development are fully aligned to this Plan, and include inclusivity, student engagement, learning and assessment, employability and careers, teaching and support and technology and infrastructure. We have drawn on these measures in this Plan to align and embed our access and participation work.

The ambition under this Plan is further reflected in the LTS principles, which include having a learner-centred approach and accommodating diverse backgrounds and needs to students, delivering programmes that are responsive to those needs.

Our aim to introduce a formal contextual admissions policy, and to ensure flexible access to our programmes, is supported by the LTS which commits to formally recognise prior learning where it is educationally appropriate. This provides a foundation for further work.

### Disability Adjustments Policy

Our Disability Adjustments Policy sets out our support for disabled students and cements our commitment to ensuring disabled students and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with students and applicants who are not disabled. This is in full alignment with this Plan, which provides for equality of access and outcomes for disabled learners.

The Policy includes:

- Commitments to make reasonable adjustments where teaching and/or assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled
- Ensuring that the curriculum, including assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures should be designed to:
  - Proactively consider accessibility for disabled students in the design and conduct of the assessment
  - Allow reasonable adjustments to provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. This may involve making adjustments to the type, scheduling or marking of the assessment in the context of maintenance of academic standards.

The provisions to enhance and develop our inclusive curriculum practices as part of the strategic measures in this Plan aligns with these commitments.

### Student Welfare Policy

Our Student Welfare Policy recognises that in order for students to develop and succeed, both pastoral and academic support services need to be comprehensive and accessible. It recognises that student welfare can only be assured when the culture and environment of the institution recognises equality, diversity and equal opportunity. This is in alignment to this Plan, where we have indicated the importance of support services and committed to further development, particularly in target areas. While this Plan sets our intention to respond to target groups, it does so in the context of broader support which benefits the whole community, and so embeds with the intent of the Policy. A whole community approach has positive outcomes for target learners in terms of inclusivity, raising awareness and reduction of potential stigma. As per the Student Welfare Policy, this puts students at the heart of our higher education provision.

The Policy reaffirms our welcome of applicants from a diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, recognising, as per this Plan, that this enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for today's world. The Policy reflects the success targets and measures in this Plan, in its commitment to concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

## Student Engagement Policy

Our Student Engagement Policy highlights the value of the student voice, and our commitment to leveraging and embedding student voice and collaboration in our development. Reflecting our aim to continue to strengthen student voice and engagement under this Plan, the Policy sets our approach whereby the views of students, individually and collectively, should inform quality systems with the purpose of improving the student educational experience both for current and future cohorts.

The Policy sets a whole lifecycle approach to student consultation, with multiple channels for engagement for example student representatives, the student staff liaison committee, student representation on other committees and boards, group chat and forums, and organised events. This Plan draws on these mechanisms to embed access and participation concerns.

The Policy is also reflective of the intention in this Plan to ensure feedback drives practice improvements, acknowledging that student feedback facilitates constructive dialogue between students and college staff, which, in turn, enhances the level of student experience and the quality standards of the institution as a whole. As such, the Policy indicates that student feedback informs Academic Board, Module Reports, Annual Course Reviews, You Said – We Did (College’s responses on student issues raised), Higher Education Management Team, College Leadership Group and the Governance Advisory Committee.

## Careers Strategy and Employer Engagement Strategy

As part of the strategic measures in this Plan, we have provided for development of careers and employability as embedded in curriculum, to best support students continuation, attainment and progression outcomes. This considers that most of our learners are mature and choose to study for career change or progression. The Careers Strategy recognises that careers provision is imperative, as learners adapt to new challenges in education, employment and training; as well as recognising its contribution to developing aspirations and raising attainment.

The Careers Strategy therefore commits to providing high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance for all students to prepare them to progress into sustainable education, training and employment. The College promotes a “guidance community approach”, where all stakeholders are responsible for the service throughout the college although the DGHE Careers Service will take the lead. We have drawn on this approach as part of the whole-institution, embedded measures in this Plan, as well as the key principles of the Strategy which state that CEIAG is differentiated and supports individual progression, empowering students to make fact based, well-informed decisions and manage their life choices to sustain employability throughout their lives.

The Employer Engagement Strategy reflects the embedded-in-curriculum and student engaged approaches detailed in this Plan. It commits to canvassing lecturers in terms of how they currently embed employability skills in the curriculum and how they can be supported to increase the quantity and quality of this work. Students are also a key focus, with commitments to involve and actively promote student representatives in the identification and engagement of employers. The Strategy cements the value of the student voice, with a commitment to seek student views regarding which organisations they would like to engage with, how they would like to interact with employers and what they would hope to gain from such interactions.

## Strategic measures

Considering our Performance Assessment and in alignment with our institutional strategies and context, we have identified 4 Strategic Measures to progress our targets and improve our performance.

### Strategic Measure 1: Capacity building

DGHE recognise the development work that needs to be undertaken to ensure the institution and staff are equipped and effective in delivering our new access and participation agenda. Current understanding is relatively under-developed, and a capacity and awareness building measure is therefore a critical part

of this Plan. This measure includes implementing effective and distributed leadership; building our data and evidence capacity; implementing processes and allocating resources for effective delivery and management of the agenda; and, building institutional awareness and understanding. We consider these components essential for continuous improvement across the whole lifecycle, in a whole-provider approach<sup>16</sup>. It therefore relates to all our targets, aims and objectives, which all need effective processes and leadership in place to be progressed and achieved. The focus on building data and evidence as part of this strategic measure is critical to all our aims, objectives and targets, given that better data, understanding and insights will drive performance improvements and allow us to refine our activities in order to make faster progress towards our targets.

Strengthening governance and leadership is of key importance. A core steering group for access and participation will be established to oversee the delivery and monitoring of the agenda. Over the life of this Plan, we will:

- strengthen our leadership, expertise and practice in access and participation
- ensure systemic and collaborative development across the core and academic teams<sup>17</sup>
- allocate additional resources and grow key capacities to accelerate performance outcomes
- integrate student consultation and collaboration (Matthews and Dollinger 2022; Natzler 2021)<sup>18</sup>

Increasing staff understanding of the access and participation agenda supports engagement of staff and embedding into core practices. A communications and training programme will be implemented which allows staff to understand our performance gaps and what is required in terms of targets and improved practices based on current performance, theory of change models and good practice and research. For example, we currently train all staff who interview applicants in the areas of course provision, qualification equivalents and availability of / student eligibility for financial support; however in the first year of this Plan we will expand training to include access, equality and diversity considerations and unconscious bias.

Central resources, such as evaluation tools, theory of change models, and planning, reporting and monitoring materials, are being developed and will be available to staff across DGHE. The new Steering Group and leadership team will use this Plan and our targets to drive a whole institution approach, across the whole lifecycle. Targets will inform institutional KPIs to ensure access and participation is integrated into other core agendas and work areas. Improvements in the engagement and development of key stakeholders will be realised through strengthened internal communications, an embedded leadership model and staff training. This includes an annual series of training workshops in key topics for access and participation.

DGHE also recognises its current data limitations, and the need to grow monitoring and evaluation capacity<sup>19</sup>. To this end, DGHE has already appointed an additional staff member (June 2022) to support data and systems, who will be involved with data relating to this Plan. Developments will enable exploration and monitoring of gaps while reflecting on the challenges and impact of small cohorts. Over the life of the Plan as we build our data, we expect to begin to identify any patterns, correlations or trends and we will draw on national data to compare our performance. We will improve our understanding of our student body and any gaps for underrepresented groups. This will enable more effective and nuanced targeting of activity and improved understanding of our performance and our student experiences in context.

Our current data capture, collation and analysis capacity will be strengthened to support an increasingly data-driven, evidence-based approach. We will also collect qualitative data about the impact of our activities through student interviews and focus groups, as well as collecting structured reflections from staff. Qualitative, deeper dive evaluation is particularly important in our context of small cohorts, as often quantitative analysis is not possible and/or is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Summary-report-final-no-crop-1.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> *Action by core and academic teams* is one of the four areas in the approach used by “What Works?” Model of Working <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Summary-report-final-no-crop-1.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Matthews, K.E and Dollinger, M. (2022). Student voice in higher education: the importance of distinguishing student representation and student partnership, *Higher Education*. [n.p]; Natzler, M. (2021). What Is the Student Voice? Thirteen Essays on How to Listen to Students and How to Act on What They Say. HEPI Report 140. *Higher Education Policy Institute*.

<sup>19</sup> *Use of data, evaluation and feedback* is one of the four areas the approach used by “What Works?” Model of Working <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Summary-report-final-no-crop-1.pdf>

DGHE expects to achieve these outcomes over the first two to three years of this Plan.

## Strategic Measure 2: DGHE Outreach Programme – Aspirations to Induction

DGHE is committed to exploring ways to attract students from a wider range of backgrounds, particularly students from our target Black and minority ethnic backgrounds and disabled students. This strategic measure therefore supports our access targets, drawing on research and good practice regarding targeted outreach and collaboration with key stakeholders to reach target learners. This is part of a broader recruitment shift, which is intended to see our intake of young UK students increase. Our outreach activity will be developed and integrated with the marketing and recruitment strategy and plans, which have been under review. Development of the recruitment strategy will move DGHE from an agent-based model to institution-driven recruitment. This is a major challenge for DGHE and we have accordingly invested additional staff resource to ensure we meet the recruitment challenges before us and deliver on our access targets. We will build on effective existing work at DGHE and integrate good practice from sector outreach activity, strengthening our approach and developing new activity in response to our targeted performance gaps. We expect this work to include developing collaborations with schools, colleges and other partners to reach target learners. In 2022-23, the foundations for effective practice will be built, with a clear focus on the identified gaps in participation. Our emerging evidence base and priorities will then continue to direct our practice.

Activities include engaging with target students, schools, colleges, community and industry (Formby et al 2020; Helyer 2008; Fowles-Sweet and Barker 2021; Zacharias and Mitchell 2020.<sup>20</sup>) to support application and enrolment to DGHE, and to inspire and stimulate broader interest in the subjects and pathways we offer. We also have ambitions to better engage with our local and business community, to establish DGHE as a contributor to our community. For example we have recently instigated communications with two charities 100 Black Men and Toynbee Hall. Discussions are ongoing on how the college could provide members of these organisations with access to learning, careers and well-being services. These organisations have a role to play in contributing to the access agenda, through partnerships that maximise use of resources and help to provide equitable opportunities to access higher education (Moore et al, 2013). As we have not traditionally collaborated with these stakeholders in respect of our recruitment, it is expected that we will need to develop our programme over the first two years of this Plan, seeking to work with up to 5 targeted stakeholders in first instance. Key measures will be targeting the stakeholders with whom we would like to work to progress our access milestones; running a communications and engagement plan; and developing and delivering a programme of activities with target learners, particularly from the young UK market. Regular review of collaboration and partnership activity will inform further and ongoing work with a range of stakeholders. We have also recently engaged with an external organisation which is a local business association - Aldgate Connect, which has already come into the college for events and added members of our marketing team to their board.

As the majority of our learners are currently mature and access higher education for career progression or career change reasons (Lavender 2020; Swain and Hammond 2011; Stevenson and Clegg 2013<sup>21</sup>), our outreach programme will be designed accordingly and by 2023-24 will include:

- Experiential, discipline-focused outreach activities in colleges, community and on DGHE campus, linked to career pathways and outcomes. These activities will draw on current good practices in our existing open days and taster / practical sessions.
- Awareness-raising activities that concentrate on:

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<sup>20</sup> Formby, A., Woodhouse, A., Basham, J., & Roe, F. (2020). 'A presence in the community': developing innovative practice through realist evaluation of widening participation in West Yorkshire. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 22(3), 173–186; Helyer, R. (2008). Employer engagement: the new widening participation? *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 10(3), 14–21; Fowles-Sweet, W., & Barker, J. (2018). Widening Participation and Social Mobility: Encompassing and Integrating Learning Opportunities. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 20(2), 69–95; Nadine Zacharias, & Geoffrey Mitchell. (2020). The Importance of Highly Engaged School-University Partnerships in Widening Participation Outreach. *Student Success*, 11(1), 35–45.

<sup>21</sup> Lavender, K. (2020). Mature students' experiences of undertaking higher education in English vocational institutions: employability and academic capital. *The International Journal of Training Research*, 18(2), 141–154; Swain, J., & Hammond, C. (2011). The motivations and outcomes of studying for part-time mature students in higher education. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 30(5), 591–612; Stevenson, J., & Clegg, S. (2013). 'My past is a double edge sword': temporality and reflexivity in mature learners. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 35(1), 17–29.

- Familiarisation with DGHE (Canovan and Luck 2018; Fleming and Grace 2015<sup>22</sup>), our attributes as a small specialist provider and our vocational offer
- Pathways to higher education and non-traditional entry routes, including recognition of prior learning and experience and application advice
- Financial support and financial literacy for higher education
- Student support at university, including disability, wellbeing and skills development (particularly supporting return to learning)
- Aspirations and careers activities that concentrate on:
  - The value of a degree in relation to career opportunities
  - Career pathways and progression from DGHE and the subjects we offer
  - Work experience and career development as part of studying
- Student Ambassadors scheme (Gartland 2013; Gartland 2015; Austin and Hatt 2005<sup>23</sup>), providing role models and authentic insights into study life and learning at DGHE
- A range of online resources and sessions, and other digital activity particularly through social media campaigns to reach target groups and offer flexible, broader and targeted engagement.

In conjunction, in order to meet our ambitions to broaden our reach into the young UK market, with a focus on our target groups under this Plan, in 2022-23 we will start to explore a strategy for and build relationships with a small number (approximately 3-5) of targeted schools. Noting new OfS priorities for supporting raising attainment in schools, our initial conversations with target schools will explore possible activities and contributions to attainment in relevant subject areas to our offer. Our approach will be collaborative with the schools we engage with, to allow for practice that best meets the needs of those schools. We commit to exploring and creating a programme offer with 2-3 target schools by 2024-25, which will have a focus on supporting attainment in school. We will also offer a range of information, advice and awareness raising activities and tasters, with opportunities to visit DGHE and engage with our current students (acting as ambassadors) and staff (Gartland 2015; Fleming and Grace 2015; Robinson and Salvestrini 2020; Burgess et al 2020<sup>24</sup>).

As part of our exploratory work, we will also reach out to our local Uni Connect Partnerships with a view to participating in this network and offering activities via the partnership. We will establish contact in 2022-23 and would hope to be contributing to the programme offer that year, with increasing activity over 2023-24 and 2024-25. The Uni Connect Partnership will enable us to reach a wide network of target schools, with a particular focus on low participation and ethnic minority students. Given our target group of black and minority ethnic students, and our limited resources as a small specialist provider, we envisage that this network will provide good opportunities to make faster progress in our access efforts.

Black and minority ethnic and disabled student target groups will be considered in the placement, delivery and evaluation of activities. In respect of target students we are informed by the literature, which considers that inclusive teaching and learning practices in the classroom, and setting high expectations for all learners are critical for access and success; and, that early experiences and integration with higher education helps to build a sense of belonging<sup>25</sup>. As part of the outreach programme, we will provide support and advice on the application process, including support for personal statement writing, to prepare learners for admission and transition-in.

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<sup>22</sup> Canovan, C., & Luck, C. (2018). Seeing for yourself: how 'ambient information' shapes parental attitudes to higher education. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 20(4), 148–168; Fleming, M. J., & Grace, D. M. (2015). Eyes on the future : The impact of a university campus experience day on students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. *The Australian Journal of Education*, 59(1), 82–96

<sup>23</sup> Gartland, C. (2013). Marketing participation: Student ambassadors' contribution to widening participation in engineering and medicine at two contrasting universities. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 14(3), 102–119; Gartland, C. (2015). Student ambassadors: 'role-models', learning practices and identities. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36(8), 1192–1211; Austin, M., & Hatt, S. (2005). The Messengers are the Message : A Study of the Effects of Employing Higher Education Student Ambassadors to Work with School Students. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 7(1), 1–8.

<sup>24</sup> Fleming, M. J., & Grace, D. M. (2015). Eyes on the future: The impact of a university campus experience day on students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. *Australian Journal of Education*, 59(1), 82–96; Robinson, D., & Salvestrini, V. (2020). The impact of interventions for widening access to higher education: A review of the evidence. London: TASO; Burgess, A. P., Horton, M. S., & Moores, E. (2021). Optimising the impact of a multi-intervention outreach programme on progression to higher education: recommendations for future practice and research. *Heliyon*, 7(7), e07518–e07518.

<sup>25</sup> Masika, R., & Jones, J. (2016). Building student belonging and engagement: Insights into higher education students' experiences of participating and learning together. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(2), 138-150; Mere Berryman & Elizabeth Eley (2019) Student belonging: critical relationships and responsibilities, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.

We will also develop our applicant journey with a view to integrating personalised experiences and touch points. This will promote smooth transition in and identification (Kift, 2014) with the DGHE community, building early sense of belonging, which is particularly important for mature students and those returning to learning (Meehan and Howells 2019; Meehan and Howells 2018; Greer and Tidd 2006<sup>26</sup>). We expect to have a full applicant journey model mapped (enquiry – conversion – enrolment) by the start of 2023-24, with particular considerations for target groups and the potential barriers they are more likely to face, such as belonging and identity, alternative entry qualifications, financial hardship, mobility and competing responsibilities / pressures (family and/or employment). Differentiated support and information for various target groups will be integrated accordingly. We are also able to deal with leads in a very hands-on, tailored way according to different applicant characteristics, providing for a very personalised experience and meeting students 'where they are' (Sunderland 2013; Hockings 2010; Thomas 2011; Stentiford and Koutsouris 2021<sup>27</sup>) e.g. via social media. Investment in our new CRM database and student records system (Quercus) will enable us to undertake this work and capture our data along the pipeline.

As part of enhancing our admissions processes and facilitating access for our target groups, we will consider implementation of a more formal contextual admissions<sup>28</sup> process, which builds from our current model of interviewing all students, by 2023-24. This will be made possible as DGHE starts to provide its own degrees rather than franchised offers, which hold us to partner processes. These practices are relevant for effective longer-term impact on retention and attainment outcomes<sup>29</sup>, as well as promoting access.

DGHE also recognise the importance of the transition-in phase (Kift, 2012) and already have an induction programme in place. However, this has been under recent review, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has driven online engagement. This has provided DGHE opportunity to implement learning from the Covid-19 phase and take what works for induction via online provision further. For example, students can now access a pre-induction 'Starter Pack' via Moodle which they have to complete before induction, which provides key information and support relating to attendance, student finance, timetabling, advice and wellbeing, library services, academic life and assessment and careers and employability services. Students can also get access to automated tours with various accessibility features for disability, etc. These features help ensure successful transitions and are particularly valuable for under-represented groups who are less likely to have prior information. In the first year of this Plan, we will continue this development journey with specific focus on our target groups and the barriers they are more likely to face, to refine our induction practices and ensure positive transition experiences.

Finally, we will enhance our broader communications and information, including advertisements and social media, ensuring that communications are effective for all target groups. DGHE information in all formats will be reviewed on an annual basis and where practicable will be developed continually throughout the recruitment cycle, being informed by the stakeholders with whom we work and including feedback from students as part of the broader student consultation agenda. Particularly, we are conscious that our marketing materials need developing to highlight the support we offer to disabled students, which includes financial support for access to assessments. We will therefore develop our materials by 2022-23 and increase the visibility of our services, highlighting the opportunity to apply for DSA. We also believe that socio-cultural issues could be a factor in the under-reporting of disability (Eccles et al 2018;

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<sup>26</sup> Meehan, C., & Howells, K. (2019). In search of the feeling of 'belonging' in higher education: undergraduate students transition into higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43(10), 1376–1390; Meehan, C., & Howells, K. (2018). 'What really matters to freshers?': evaluation of first year student experience of transition into university. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 42(7), 893–907; Greer, L., & Tidd, J. (2006). You Need Someone to Share With: taking the fear out of the transition into higher education for mature students. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 8(1), 1–8.

<sup>27</sup> Sunderland, M. E. (2013). Taking Emotion Seriously: Meeting Students Where They Are. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 20(1), 183–195. Hockings, C. 2010. "Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research." EvidenceNet HEA. [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusive\\_teaching\\_and\\_learning\\_in\\_he\\_synthesis\\_200410\\_0.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusive_teaching_and_learning_in_he_synthesis_200410_0.pdf); Thomas, L (2011) (ed) *Institutional Transformation to Engage a Diverse Student Body*, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2011; Lauren Stentiford, L. & Koutsouris, G (2021) What are inclusive pedagogies in higher education? A systematic scoping review, *Studies in Higher Education*, 46:11, 2245-2261.

<sup>28</sup> Harrison, N., Davies, S., Harris, R., & Waller, R. (2018). Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students' well-being, flourishing and success. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 48(6), 677–695;

<sup>29</sup> Jones, S. (2016). Expressions of student debt aversion and tolerance among academically able young people in low-participation English schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, 42(2), 277–293.

Mngomezulu 2019; Matthews 2009; Soorenian 2018<sup>30</sup>) and therefore our Student Welfare team will become more active in highlighting the disability services we offer and engaging with target students.

### Strategic Measure 3: Inclusive teaching and learning with employability embedded

This measure specifically relates to our targets to reduce the continuation and attainment gaps between BAME and white students; increase attainment levels for mature learners; and reduce the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged students. Activity in this area is aligned to our broader work in teaching and learning, including curriculum and assessment review and development coupled with a focus on embedded employability.

DGHE is developing activity to improve continuation and attainment outcomes, particularly for identified BAME, mature and disadvantaged target groups. We are adopting changes to education and pedagogy to be more student focused, providing inclusive and tailored experiences and curriculum to meet student needs. Measures include developing inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, drawing on research and good practice in inclusive curriculum and pedagogy (for example, considering recommendations from the Disparities in Student Attainment (DiSA) research, 2014 from Wolverhampton University); enhanced monitoring<sup>31</sup> and implementation of enhanced assessment and feedback practices that have been shown to be effective for non-traditional students; and student support measures (including study skills and financial support). Inclusive practice contributes to building a sense of belonging and engagement with the learning experience<sup>32</sup>, which is particularly relevant to mature learners who may have been out of learning for some time, and to our disadvantaged and BAME target groups who are better engaged if they can identify with the curriculum (Daddow 2016; Lawrie et al 2017; Lim 2022<sup>33</sup>).

Driven by the move from further education to higher education provision, DGHE has started development work in teaching, learning and curriculum. This work includes an expanded offer with curriculum pathways to full degree programmes, improvements in student engagement with learning, and embedded employability and industry perspectives. These approaches can help to foster interest, inclusion and achievement for our target groups and employability is particularly relevant to our mature target group (Busher and James 2020; Gordard et al 2006; Baker 2020). As such, integrated employment, industry and workplace experiences and learning are a core component of teaching and learning. This also helps to address a key concern for target groups, particularly those from disadvantaged and under-represented areas, regarding the value of a degree in respect of career outcomes (Behle 2020; Gorard et al 2016), providing a through-study approach to student career development and management. Access to industry, employers and professionals through the curriculum (as well as extracurricular activity) provides exposure and connections for target groups who are less likely to have existing professional networks (Thompson 2017; Clarke 2018).

Activity under this strategic measure includes:

#### *Inclusive and accessible teaching, learning and curriculum*

- Establish new 3-year degree and other courses that are more innovative and relevant, expected to be in place by 2022-23
  - We are exploring bridging different disciplines to create competitive niche courses; for example, art and health (art therapy) and health and social care and business for

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<sup>30</sup> Eccles, S., Hutchings, M., Hunt, C., & Heaslip, V. (2018). Risk and stigma: students' perceptions and disclosure of 'disability' in higher education. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 20(4), 191–208; Mngomezulu, S. (2019). Delayed disclosure of disability related needs: Experiences of "at-risk" students in a South African university. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 29(3), 270–274; Matthews, N. (2009). Teaching the 'invisible' disabled students in the classroom: disclosure, inclusion and the social model of disability. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14(3), 229–239; Soorenian, A. (2018). Disability disclosure: categorical and cultural difficulties HETL Scotland 2017. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 10(2), 182–19

<sup>31</sup> Hockings, C. (2010) *Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research*, London: Higher Education Academy. Available at <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/inclusive-learning-and-teaching-higher-education-synthesis-research>

<sup>32</sup> Harrison, N., & Waller, R. (2017). Evaluating outreach activities: overcoming challenges through a realist 'small steps' approach. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 21(2-3), 81-87.

<sup>33</sup> Daddow, A. (2016). Curricula and pedagogic potentials when educating diverse students in higher education: students' Funds of Knowledge as a bridge to disciplinary learning. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(7), 741–758; Lawrie, G., Marquis, E., Fuller, E., Newman, T., Qiu, M., Nomikoudis, M., ... van Dam, L. (2017). Moving Towards Inclusive Learning and Teaching: A Synthesis of Recent Literature. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, 5(1), 1–13; Lim, H.-J. (2022). Case Study: Enhancing the Learning Experiences of BAME Students at a University: The University Role. *Social Policy and Society : a Journal of the Social Policy Association*, 21(1), 134–141.

pathways in health / NHS management. Pathways from HND to top-up and degree will be available.

- These vocationally aligned programmes are of particular interest to mature learners and link to career aspirations, which supports continuation and attainment outcomes (Welsh 2020; Lavender 2020; Swain and Hammond 2011; Stevenson and Clegg 2013<sup>34</sup>).
- We are exploring programme structures so that modules run smoothly and students are provided the best chance of achieving the required number of credits to progress to the next year of study.
- Increasing inclusivity and access through programme design which includes flexibility of provision via online programme options, choice in assessment modes (Nieminen 2020; Morris et al 2019<sup>35</sup>), and a range of flexible progression pathways (recognising our mature learner recruits who are more likely to rely on recognition of prior learning and experience) and support structures by 2023-24.
- Continuing with our rolling intake (September, January/ February and May) to facilitate access that better fits our diverse student body.
- Embedding and continuing to strengthen inclusive approaches to curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment. By 2023-24, DGHE will have undertaken a full review of its programmes which will include specific focus on inclusivity and relevance. This includes expanding curriculum, teaching and learning to integrate and reflect broader perspectives (Daddow 2016; Gormally et al 2009; Zepke et al 2009; McDuff et al 2020<sup>36</sup>), ensuring ongoing relevance to industry (Woodside 2019; Plewa 2015<sup>37</sup>) and exploring flexibility in provision to appeal to a diverse range of learners. Broader perspectives will focus on ensuring cultural diversity and industry relevance will particularly support mature learner and black and minority ethnic student success.
  - We will also consider how to meet students where they are; i.e. how to recognise and capitalise on the skills and experiences students come in with, reflecting these attributes in teaching and learning and appropriate assessment models which promote student outcomes via, for example, multiple assessment modes (Lawrie et al 2017; Florian and Linklater 2010; O'Donnell 2016<sup>38</sup>).
- Review of assessment and feedback practices with a focus on those that best support learner success (Deeley et al 2019; Winstone and Boud 2022; Miller 2009<sup>39</sup>). Assessment modes, timing and choices will be explored as well as improvements to feedback practices. We will drive formative feedback and sharing of good practice amongst our academics, as well as providing training where required.
- Provision of study skills development, which start from the point of exploring students' skills base to enable students to recognise where their strengths and weaknesses lay to inform how they approach their assessments and when they consider seeking support. It is expected that, by

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<sup>34</sup> Welsh, S. (2020). 'This is the plan': mature women's vocational education choices and decisions about Honours degrees. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 25(3), 259–278; Lavender, K. (2020). Mature students' experiences of undertaking higher education in English vocational institutions: employability and academic capital. *The International Journal of Training Research*, 18(2), 141–154; Swain, J., & Hammond, C. (2011). The motivations and outcomes of studying for part-time mature students in higher education. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 30(5), 591–612; Stevenson, J., & Clegg, S. (2013). 'My past is a double edge sword': temporality and reflexivity in mature learners. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 35(1), 17–29.

<sup>35</sup> Nieminen, J. H. (2022). Assessment for Inclusion: rethinking inclusive assessment in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*; Ceri Morris, Emmajane Milton, & Ross Goldstone. (2019). Case study: suggesting choice: inclusive assessment processes. *Higher Education Pedagogies*, 4(1), 435–447.

<sup>36</sup> Daddow, A. (2016). Curricula and pedagogic potentials when educating diverse students in higher education: students' Funds of Knowledge as a bridge to disciplinary learning. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(7), 741–758; Gormally, C., P. Brickman, B. Hallar, and N. Armstrong. 2009. "Effects of Inquiry-Based Learning on Students' Science Literacy Skills and Confidence." *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 3: 2; Zepke, N., Leach, L., & Prebble, T. (2006). Being learner centred: one way to improve student retention? *Studies in Higher Education (Dorchester-on-Thames)*, 31(5), 587–600; McDuff, N., Hughes, A., Tatam, J., Morrow, E., & Ross, F. (2020). Improving equality of opportunity in higher education through the adoption of an Inclusive Curriculum Framework. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 22(2), 83–121.

<sup>37</sup> Woodside, J. M. (2018). Real-world rigour. *Industry & Higher Education*, 32(5), 285–289; Plewa, C., Galan-Muros, V., & Davey, T. (2015). Engaging business in curriculum design and delivery. *Higher Education*, 70(1), 35–53.

<sup>38</sup> Lawrie, G., Marquis, E., Fuller, E., Newman, T., Qiu, M., Nomikoudis, M., ... van Dam, L. (2017). Moving Towards Inclusive Learning and Teaching: A Synthesis of Recent Literature. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, 5(1), 1–13; Florian, L., & Linklater, H. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 40(4), 369–386; O'Donnell, V. L. (2016). Organisational change and development towards inclusive higher education. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 8(1), 101–118.

<sup>39</sup> Susan J. Deeley, Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Dimitar Karadzhev, & Elina Koristashevskaya. (2019). Exploring the 'wicked' problem of student dissatisfaction with assessment and feedback in higher education. *Higher Education Pedagogies*, 4(1), 385–405; Winstone, N. E., & Boud, D. (2022). The need to disentangle assessment and feedback in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education (Dorchester-on-Thames)*, 47(3), 656–667; Miller, T. (2009). Formative computer-based assessment in higher education: the effectiveness of feedback in supporting student learning. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 34(2), 181–192.

2023-24, students would be able to map out their study needs through the year, including how to allocate and prioritise time. This will also allow for more effective planning for student services.

- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are established with all 'at risk' learners where required
  - To facilitate service planning, Moodle has also been redesigned to better map service provision, with modules of support available along appropriate timeframes to avoid overload and overwhelm.
  - This will include early identification of students at risk of non-continuation or poor attainment outcomes, and will particularly focus on our target groups under this Plan. Identified students will be targeted for tailored support. Our student data system Quercus has flags to identify at risk students so that early intervention can be taken. This allows potential issues to be dealt with proactively; for example, ensuring progress towards achieving the requisite number of credits or ensuring students are on track to achieve required number of credits by end of year so they can progress. DHE also has a committee that focuses on identifying at risk students and determining proactive support interventions.
- Ongoing provision of academic drop-in clinics to support students with academic skills and assessments (Jacklin and Robinson 2007; Bornschlegl and Caltabiano 2022; Thomas 2012<sup>40</sup>).
  - Development of additional learning resources including digital and online delivery. Students will be key in providing input and feedback into ongoing development of teaching and learning and associated learning resources. Learning becomes more personalised and tailored to student needs (Serrano et al 2019; Armellini et al 2021; Castro 2019. <sup>41</sup>).
  - For example, we have already implemented dedicated additional computers for students to work on in a response to identifying that some target students do not have computers at home, which led to time on campus being used to work on the equipment instead of attending lectures.
  - Increasing academic resource to strategically develop programmes that provide a more cohesive offer and better student experience, with particular attention to teaching practices, learning spaces and target groups. As part of this, we will offer more opportunities for staff to engage with sector workshops, research, and interact with guest lecturers, etc. to improve practices and learn from the sector.
  - Introducing more outside teachers and role models from industry to work with and talk to students (Woodside 2018; Doherty and Stephens 2020.<sup>42</sup>)
  - Ensuring clear and accessible course information is provided to students and applicants, particularly regarding the requirements of the course, course structures and assessment expectations. This is particularly important for under-represented groups, providing opportunities to prepare and setting early expectations.
  - Leveraging our moodle VLE platform and the skills of our Digital Learning Technologist to collect and analyse such learning data to inform programme and material design and to give us an informed picture of the student journey. This is achieved through a better understanding of the touchpoints experienced by learners. As DGHE has a high proportion of learners returning to education after a study gap we want to be better informed particularly at the transition stage. In May/June 2022 we ran a pilot project with new learners, collecting data during this transition phase and we will use this experience to inform our support activities going forward.

### *Curriculum embedded career and employability development & careers services*

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<sup>40</sup> Jacklin, A., & Robinson, C. (2007). What is meant by 'support' in higher education? Towards a model of academic and welfare support. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 7(2), 114–123; Bornschlegl, M., & Caltabiano, N. J. (2022). Increasing Accessibility to Academic Support in Higher Education for Diverse Student Cohorts. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, 10, 1–18; Thomas, L. (2012). Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change. *Paul Hamlyn Foundation*, 100(1-99).

<sup>41</sup> Serrano, D. R., Dea-Ayuela, M. A., Gonzalez-Burgos, E., Serrano-Gil, A., & Lalatsa, A. (2019). Technology-enhanced learning in higher education: How to enhance student engagement through blended learning. *European Journal of Education*, 54(2), 273–286; Armellini, A., Teixeira Antunes, V., & Howe, R. (2021). Student Perspectives on Learning Experiences in a Higher Education Active Blended Learning Context. *TechTrends*, 65(4), 433–443; Castro, R. (2019). Blended learning in higher education: Trends and capabilities. *Education and Information Technologies*, 24(4), 2523–2546.

<sup>42</sup> Woodside, J. M. (2018). Real-world rigour. *Industry & Higher Education*, 32(5), 285–289; Doherty, O., & Stephens, S. (2020). The cultural web, higher education and work-based learning. *Industry & Higher Education*, 34(5), 330–341.

- DGHE are developing its career and employability agenda, and intends that this will largely be embedded in curriculum. This reflects our “guidance community approach”<sup>43</sup>, where all stakeholders are responsible for the careers and employability service, although the Careers Service will take the lead. This is important at DGHE for our vocationally orientated programmes. This approach ensures students build the necessary skills, practice and connections to promote successful graduate outcomes as part of their learning. The Careers team has been mapping out provision to integrate with curriculum from 2020-21, and this will continue to develop over the life of this Plan, exploring and addressing particular concerns for target learners. For example, by 2023-24:
  - We intend to have live employer challenges embedded as tasks in the curriculum (Lester and Costley 2010; Basit 2015; Gibson and Tavlaridis 2018.<sup>44</sup>)
  - We will be working with public services to better understand employer competencies and values, working these attributes into the curriculum
  - We will integrate industry and professional speakers into the curriculum to provide content and insight to career and employment opportunities (O’Leary 2013; Gill 2018; Mann et al 2018.<sup>45</sup>)
  - We will establish a range of digital badges, linked to curriculum learning outcomes, that will support students in their CV and skills building.
- Over 2022-23 and 2023-24 we will further develop our service (which includes careers counselling, CV and application writing workshops, industry talks and networking (both face to face and online), and a range of resources on our VLE) to focus on our target learners and ensure their progression outcomes. Given our targets in continuation and attainment in this Plan, we will continue to build practice that supports outcomes in these areas as well.
  - As per our Careers Strategy (2021), DGHE will provide differentiated support for individual progression, empowering students to make fact based, well-informed decisions and manage their life choices and sustain employability throughout their lives. Our tailored approach is well positioned to support specific concerns for our target groups, such as career change (mature learners) and disability support in the workplace (disabled learners).
  - A new Career Development Plan (CDP) model is being developed and was piloted in our Health and Social Care (HSC) programme in 2020-21. This will provide for more individualised, tailored support and will allow students and staff to map their trajectories and set goals (Hughes et al 2016; Strauss et al 2012; Taber and Blankemeyer 2015.<sup>46</sup>). This will keep a critical focus on career outcomes whilst studying, which supports ongoing engagement with learning and attainment. While this initiative will be rolled out to all students, we will prioritise target learners and ensure access to tailored support for these groups. It is expected that the CDP model will be in place across DGHE by 2023-24.
- Our employability and careers work critically involves engagement with industry (Mann et al 2018; O’Leary 2013<sup>47</sup>) to support student outcomes. As a smaller institution with limited resource, this has been somewhat difficult; however, in 2020-21 and into the life of this Plan, we are implementing a different approach by spotlighting the excellent attributes of our students to engage employers. One recent example is of a Public Services student currently working directly

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<sup>43</sup> DGHE Careers Strategy 2021

<sup>44</sup> Lester, S., & Costley, C. (2010). Work-based learning at higher education level: value, practice and critique. *Studies in Higher Education* (Dorchester-on-Thames), 35(5), 561–575; Basit, T. N., & u.a. (2015). Higher education institutions and work-based learning in the UK. *Higher Education*, 70(6), 1003–1015; Gibson, D., & Tavlaridis, V. (2018). Work-based learning for enterprise education? The case of Liverpool John Moores University “live” civic engagement projects for students. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 8(1), 5–14.

<sup>45</sup> O’Leary, S. (2013). Collaborations in Higher Education with Employers and Their Influence on Graduate Employability: An Institutional Project. *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences*, 5(1), 37–50; Gill, R. (2018). Building employability skills for higher education students: An Australian example. *Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability*, 9(1), 84–92; Mann, A., Rehill, J., & Kashefpakdel, E. T. (2018). *Employer Engagement in Education: Insights from International Evidence for Effective Practice and Future Research*. Education Endowment Foundation.

<sup>46</sup> Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S. A., Baldauf, B., & McKeown, R. (2016). *Careers education: International literature review*. Warwick Institute for Employer Research and Education and Employers Research, Warwick; Strauss, K., Griffin, M. A., & Parker, S. K. (2012). Future Work Selves: How Salient Hoped-For Identities Motivate Proactive Career Behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3), 580–598; Taber, B. J., & Blankemeyer, M. (2015). Future work self and career adaptability in the prediction of proactive career behaviors. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 86, 20–27.

<sup>47</sup> Anthony Mann, Elnaz Kashefpakdel, & Prue Huddleston. (2018). *Essays on Employer Engagement in Education*. Taylor and Francis; O’Leary, S. (2013). Collaborations in Higher Education with Employers and Their Influence on Graduate Employability: An Institutional Project. *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences*, 5(1), 37–50.

with the City of London Police to understand the current rules regarding the application process (immigration status). Our engaged employers provide activities and experiences such as internships to our students and support them in study, as well as informing practice and sharing networks. It is particularly important for disadvantaged learners, who are less likely to have existing professional and industry networks than their peers; and, to our target mature learners who often study for career progression or change. Over the life of this Plan, DGHE will build further collaboration with employers and industry (acknowledging the challenges of a post-Brexit economy). It is anticipated that, by the end of 2024-25, DGHE will have a robust network and partnerships to which we can signpost students.

#### Strategic Measure 4: Targeted student support and development

DGHE provides student support to ensure successful outcomes and a positive student experience for all learners. Following significant development of support provision over the last year, over the life of the Plan DGHE will further improve practice, driven by our data, evaluation and the evidence base from sector evaluation and research. This measure relates to our success targets, recognising that target students may require holistic support alongside their academic experience to ensure they can successfully continue in their studies and achieve good degree outcomes. DGHE has recently invested in its student support team, and will have two members of staff by the commencement of 2022-23. This expansion, which will build our service, is a strategic response to meeting demand and ensuring outcomes for our target learners, in line with our broader ambitions for improvement.

Holistic and inclusive student support will be further embedded alongside curriculum and through the institution, including training and development for staff and students as peer supporters (Brown 1992; Rientes et al 2013; Dawson et al 2014; Pye et al 2016<sup>48</sup>). Our approach is focused on self-help and resilience building, developing an empowered, supportive community.

Our support services are particularly cognisant of our mature learners and their needs, for example offering tailored support based on individual contexts and development requirements, which are often diverse given the multiple priorities that our mature learners must balance (e.g. Willans and Seary 2011; Waller 2006; Kahu et al 2014<sup>49</sup>). In line with demand, by 2023-24 we will introduce further specialist services for financial advice and medical advice, and will have peer-to-peer parental support groups established, acknowledging the large number of our mature learners who have children.

As previously detailed, we also have a strategic aim to promote access and self-selection for services, and reduce any stigma that can be attached to help seeking (Payne et al 2021; Ido et al 2011; Broglia et al 2021<sup>50</sup>). This has been a particular issue for the reporting of disabilities, which means we have students who are not declaring and are therefore not accessing the support available. Whilst we have a Dyslexia screening service available, which is advertised and promoted as part of induction, we nevertheless have under-reporting. We therefore have a priority to enhance awareness and communications, via a range of channels including social media.

Our support services include:

- 1-2-1 advice and wellbeing sessions

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<sup>48</sup> Brown, H. (1992). Staff Development in Higher Education - Towards the Learning Organisation? *Higher Education Quarterly*, 46(2), 174–190; Rientes, B., Brouwer, N., & Lygo-Baker, S. (2013). The effects of online professional development on higher education teachers' beliefs and intentions towards learning facilitation and technology. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 29(1), 122–131; Dawson, P., van der Meer, J., Skalicky, J., & Cowley, K. (2014). On the Effectiveness of Supplemental Instruction: A Systematic Review of Supplemental Instruction and Peer-Assisted Study Sessions Literature Between 2001 and 2010. *Review of Educational Research*, 84(4), 609–639; Gillian Pye, Susan Williams, & Linda Dunne. (2016). Student Academic Mentoring (SAM): peer support and undergraduate study. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*.

<sup>49</sup> Willans, J., & Seary, K. (2011). 'I Feel like I'm Being Hit from All Directions': Enduring the Bombardment as a Mature-age Learner Returning to Formal Learning. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 51(1), 119–142; Waller, R. (2006). 'I don't feel like 'a student', I feel like 'me!': the over-simplification of mature learners' experience(s). *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 11(1), 115–130; Kahu, E. R., Stephens, C., Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2014). Space and time to engage: mature-aged distance students learn to fit study into their lives. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 33(4), 523–540.

<sup>50</sup> Payne, T., Muenks, K., & Aguayo, E. (2021). "Just Because I am First Gen Doesn't Mean I'm Not Asking for Help": A Thematic Analysis of First-Generation College Students' Academic Help-Seeking Behaviors. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*; Roll, I., Aleven, V., McLaren, B. M., & Koedinger, K. R. (2011). Improving students' help-seeking skills using metacognitive feedback in an intelligent tutoring system. *Learning and Instruction*, 21(2), 267–280; Broglia, E., Millings, A., & Barkham, M. (2021). Student mental health profiles and barriers to help seeking: When and why students seek help for a mental health concern. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 21(4), 816–826.

- Workshops (online and face-to-face)
- 'Report and Support' programme targeting domestic abuse and violence
- Out-of-hours support on Saturdays and after 5pm
- Zoom events for peer sharing
- Student Assistance Programme (for staff as well) for out of hours helpline to counselling, which can offer up to 6 sessions of counselling in a range of areas – wellbeing, legal, medical, etc. Recognising that our target learners often have their own families, this service is available for any member of our students families.
- Online resources via an app and our VLE
- The TogetherAll services, which provides peer to peer support for mental health
- Help for students accessing support through GP /community as well.

Financial support is also provided under this measure. DGHE will provide a means-tested bursary to target eligible students, providing most support to students at most disadvantage.

Awards are based on eligibility relating to household income, as a proxy for disadvantage. This follows standard practice across the sector, and evidence such as Bachan 2014 and Kaye 2021<sup>51</sup> We have considered sector evidence that shows that financial bursaries and scholarships are most effective where used to support student success (Harrison et al 2018; Kaye 2021; Hordosy and Clark 2019; Mbah et al 2018)<sup>52</sup>. As we have a significant proportion of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, our bursaries are expected to support improved outcomes in continuation and attainment. We will evaluate the provision of financial support from 2023-24 and over the life of this Plan, which will provide further insights into the value of financial support and impact on student outcomes.

Bursary	Eligibility	Amount
Student Success Bursary	UK undergraduate students with household income £0-25,000	£750 per year
Care Leavers Scholarship	UK undergraduate students who have spent time in local authority care	20% fee waiver per year of study PLUS £1,000 bursary per year

DGHE also provides a dyslexia/dyspraxia contribution for full Diagnostic Assessment. Students who suspect they may have a Specific Learning Difference (SpLD) may request a free screening and may then be referred for a full assessment in order to apply for the Disabled Support Allowance (DSA). If students have difficulty meeting the cost they may be eligible for assistance of up to a maximum of £225 (full assessment cost is £325). Students not eligible for DSA can also speak with the Advice and Wellbeing Officer who may be able to provide some funding towards costs of reasonable adjustments, such as specialist software.

A Hardship Fund of £5,000 per annum to support students with specific financial needs is also available and allocated to students through an application and assessment process. This fund is promoted by staff who are supporting students individually.

### 3.2 Student consultation

DGHE recognises the importance and value of the student voice and we already gather feedback and input from our students through formal and informal mechanisms. However, we have further to go in developing student collaboration and consultation processes and ensuring students are part of driving our institutional development. Over the life of this Plan, DGHE will develop its existing student feedback practices, specifically to integrate considerations fair access and participation. This will ensure that the

<sup>51</sup> Bachan, R. (2014). Students' expectations of debt in UK higher education. *Studies in Higher Education (Dorchester-on-Thames)*, 39(5), 848–873; Kaye, N. (2021). Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence. *Educational Review (Birmingham)*, 73(6), 775–797

<sup>52</sup> Harrison, N., Davies, S., Harris, R., & Waller, R. (2018). Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students' well-being, flourishing and success. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 48(6), 677–695; Mbah, M., Eccles, S., & Frost, S. (2018). Student perceptions and institutional targets: the matches and mismatches of financial bursary support. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 20(4), 129–147. Hordósy, R., & Clark, T. (2019). Student budgets and widening participation: Comparative experiences of finance in low and higher income undergraduates at a northern red brick university. *Social Policy & Administration*, 53(5), 761–775.

mechanisms for student consultation in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of this Plan are in place.

Student representatives sit on our Higher Education Academic Team (HEAT) meetings and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee. DGHE also has a Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC), which meets termly. We will also invite two students to sit on the Access and Participation Steering Group, to ensure students continue to be engaged with the monitoring of performance and provisions of this Plan. These provide formal mechanisms for student collaboration across all programmes, and a safe space for issues to be heard and responses to be implemented. The SSLC receives reports from various services and students are able to comment on practices. DGHE also have student representatives for all programmes, who act as a channel for the student voice. By 2022-23, we will introduce a discussion board to facilitate ongoing student-staff engagement and management of any issues. This will also provide a feedback loop to ensure students are kept informed of resulting actions from their inputs.

Development of our student collaboration and engagement agenda will include more work in embedding student voice and direction into curriculum design and teaching and learning. We intend to develop our capacity to further integrate student voice over 2022-23 and 2023-24, and it will include listening to what students would like to study and the modules they would find more beneficial and interesting, particularly in respect of career outcomes.

Student voice and collaboration is therefore particularly important in respect of our developing careers and employability agenda, and this is reflected in our Careers Strategy and our Employer Engagement Strategy, which prioritise listening to the student voice. These strategies contain a commitment to ensure activity 'resonates with our students and fulfils their needs and career aspirations'. We commit to canvassing student representatives regarding the employers they wish to engage with and what types of interactions they would like to participate in. Feedback is also taken after each event, with findings from this evaluation being incorporated into future practice to ensure continuous improvement.

We will explore ways to engage with students digitally through online platforms as well as face-to-face, broadening the mechanisms for engagement. For example, we are doing more to ensure accessibility online by including ALT text in imagery for visually impaired audiences to access the content. We have introduced more technological support in our induction days in order to provide further support to those who are less comfortable with digital platforms in order to on-board students and assist them in navigating digital platforms through one-on-one tutoring. We are planning and implementing more internal events to build a stronger sense of in-person community between our students on campus, which provides opportunities to open direct lines of communication and feedback. We are also exploring more ways to engage our community online and offline, including more surveys and social media polls, field trips and further leveraging the new student ambassador programme.

Our students were consulted on the content of this Plan. Student representatives meet with staff on a termly basis at the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC). The Plan was shared with the members of the SSLC (approx. 45 students) and they were asked to review and offer comments on the content of the document. Approximately 19% of the SSLC membership is from a BAME background, 38% of the group are over the age of 35, 71% of them live in IMD deciles 1-5, and 5% of them have a declared disability. Therefore we feel that the group is a good representation of many of the target groups covered by the themes contained in the APP. The college received no requests or suggestions to amend any of the content and this was taken to be tacit approval of content. However, a further focus group with students was held as this Plan was being drafted. In drafting this Plan, student consultations led to a range of inclusions. Of note, students:

- Called for and support further flexibility in curriculum design, which we have included in this Plan with specific considerations for student contexts such as balancing work and study, and not being able to attend campus 5 days a week.
- Support the investment in student support services and comment on the supportive environment (from services and academics) as being essential for continuation and achievement, which has led to increased resourcing over recent times and further planned.
- Are keen to ensure continuation of an approach that recognises and understands the complexities of studying whilst balancing work and home life as mature students. We will do more to further understand these contexts in our evaluation and research, to continue to improve our services

- Recognised the value of a curriculum that has employability aspects included, given that career progression or change aspirations drive mature learner participation. DGHE has committed to further integrating careers and employability with the curriculum.
- Enjoy the way teaching allows for students to mix and build a sense of community, which they said is very important. Students acknowledged that this has been maintained through Covid-19 via online group chats, etc. and they wish for this practice to continue. We have included these aspects in the curriculum development agenda as part of this Plan.

Students will be involved in the delivery of access strategies in this Plan on an ongoing basis.

### 3.3 Evaluation Strategy

#### Strategic Context

As we are developing our practice we will design and implement a new evaluation model for our access and participation activity. This is a new area of activity for DGHE, but it will be a primary area of focus over the lifetime of this Plan and will be informed by OfS guidance and the standards of evidence. We will seek to strengthen our evaluation practices, processes, understanding and quality. This will include the development of evaluation tools to align with the Strategic Measures under this Plan. We will consider activity level theory of change models to drive the creation of evaluation tools that measure the intended objectives and the relationships between interventions and outcomes. Evaluation tools will be appropriate to the context and scale of the work. Our approach is designed to ensure that our evaluation activities:

- Take a full lifecycle approach and are embedded.
- Are supported by comprehensive theories of change.
- Support our goal in building an evidence base of the impact of our activities.
- Are supported by a regular feedback and review process that explicitly links our evaluation with the delivery of our activities and interventions.
- Include and are informed by externally available research and evaluation outcomes.

DGHE will look to the sector and the Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) centre for best practice and use sector research, evidence and evaluation approaches, applied to our context. We will share learning and outcomes through the sector where appropriate, contributing to network and sector discussion.

We have also become a member of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER)<sup>53</sup> service to add expertise and capacity and drive outcomes in evaluation and research. Our SEER membership enables us to work collaboratively with external experts and other related small specialist providers to develop effective, robust and calibrated evaluation approaches that will enable us to investigate the specific impacts of what we do. We are focused on ensuring good practices in qualitative evaluation given our small cohorts and need to provide deeper insights in smaller target areas.

In setting this context, we have used the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool to assess our current context for evaluation and findings suggest that we are 'emerging' across all areas. We have some evaluation foundations in place, but have areas for continued development, including the need to establish a regular feedback cycle and to fully integrate our evaluation into our activity delivery and design. The majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), with some type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS 'Standards of Evidence'.

#### Programme Design

We have work to do in developing theories of change for our activities and Strategic Measures, to ensure that our evaluation measures are reflective of relationships between interventions and evaluation outcomes. This work will be ongoing between 2021-22 and 2022-23, in preparation for the commencement of this Plan in 2023-24 when we anticipate that our programmes will therefore have appropriate evaluation mechanisms in place. As our evaluation practices grow, a continuous feedback

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<sup>53</sup> <https://collaborativehe.com/>

cycle will be established to inform and drive continuous improvements to programme design throughout and beyond the life of this Plan. As such, findings and insights from our data analysis, evaluation and research, and from broader research and practice across the sector, will be considered by the Access and Participation Steering Group and other relevant staff who are responsible for the delivery of access and participation activities and programmes. These considerations will result in the creation or acceptance of recommendations to improve the design of our programmes and/or as evidence to develop new programmes. Responsible staff will ensure that an action plan for development of the programme is then drawn up, which includes ongoing evaluation measures. Progress on developments will be monitored through regular operational reporting and quarterly updates to the APSG.

## **Evaluation design and implementation**

In our self-assessment, evaluation design and implementation were emerging or in development. We recognise our current limitations in evaluation, and we are therefore drawing on OfS guidance and sector practice in respect of developing our evaluation activity. DGHE is drawing on the SEER collaborative service to support development, design, implementation and analysis in the areas of evaluation and research.

Development of this Plan has driven a deeper dive into our student data in respect of our performance in outcomes for under-represented groups. Similar assessments will be conducted annually to monitor progress but also to inform our approach and ensure it is continually data-driven. This will increasingly be coupled with qualitative evaluation and deeper dive research, which are particularly critical given our small cohorts and the challenges that consequently arise with quantitative methodologies. Qualitative evaluation will enable us to triangulate and add understanding to the quantitative data which, due to our small cohorts, is limited. Qualitative evaluation will be undertaken using surveys, discussions, interviews and focus groups with students, and may in the longer term (2025-26 onwards) include action learning research and evaluation.

### Theory of Change

We are developing theories of change (ToCs) for our key interventions and we expect to have theory of change models in place for our major activities during 2023-24. Our ToCs set out our knowledge and assumptions about how and why the activities we deliver cause the outcomes we need to meet our APP commitments. Through a detailed focus on the specifics of delivery that cause the outcomes we wish to see, we can create the measures we should be using to assess our progress and the impact of our delivery. We consider it useful to take a small steps approach, breaking the impact of our interventions into smaller milestones that can be measured<sup>54</sup>.

We will also draw on the expertise of the sector, external agencies and third sector organisations to help us build our own frameworks and to draw on existing good practice. For example our membership to SEER provides access to specialists and training in ToC and evaluation design.

### Standards of Evidence

Developing our ToCs will enable us to ensure that all our evaluation activities will be rooted in (narrative) evidence, and that we have a clear model for how the activity works. We are working to deliver Type 2 (empirical enquiry) evidence and expect this practice to develop over 2022-23 and beyond. Our general approach to evaluation is wherever possible and appropriate to use a pre-/ post- activity design, which captures participant data before and after an intervention to assess the degree of change that has taken place. We will use a range of mixed method data collection approaches, including questionnaires, online polls and surveys, and collect additional qualitative data via interviews and focus groups with participants as well as other stakeholders (teachers, parents, student ambassadors etc.).

### Evaluation Methodology

To ensure a consistent approach that aligns with our APP commitments and strategy, we will work towards producing a range of core evaluation tools that can be used by staff delivering access and

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<sup>54</sup> Harrison, N., & Waller, R. (2017). Evaluating outreach activities: overcoming challenges through a realist 'small steps' approach. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 21(2-3), 81-87.

participation activities. As our cohort of HE students develops, we will develop further tools to assess the impact of inclusive learning and teaching practice, student support and careers and employability activities. These may include survey instruments, focus group and interview question and discussion frameworks, and standard processes for evaluation, We expect that these will be explored and developed over 2023-24.

We intend that our evaluation will be embedded in our activities as far as possible, to maximise response rates and minimise disruption to activities. Where we can, for example, we will use online or physical polls and response collection activities that are integrated in the activities themselves.

### Student Data and Activity Monitoring and Evaluation

As we build our data capability, we will be able to more accurately monitor and evaluate retention, attainment and assessment outcomes. This will give us data that can be segmented to examine impact at the individual level, course and department level to looking at whole year and cohort outcomes. We expect to be able to put this in place during 2023-24.

Output measures in respect of service and activity access are already being captured, although our data needs strengthening in respect of access and participation and engagement. Many activities have post-event surveys in place, for example our Induction starter pack. Surveys that reflect the NSS are also sent to students each term, with questions about specific areas of interest such as transition and applicant experience. We have further work to do in analysing these data by target group, and this will be developed over 2022-23 and beyond.

In terms of recruitment, we already track online engagement through analytics and have a communications survey for gathering feedback across the applicant journey. This work will be used as a foundation to develop further access evaluation inline with our developing access activity.

We expect that the evaluation of our access activity will include pre-/post-activity questionnaire designs, qualitative data collection via participant interviews and focus groups and stakeholder interviews (e.g. teachers, parents) and practitioner / student ambassador reflections. It will also include partnership evaluation to assess the strengths and intended outcomes of the partnerships we put in place. We expect to have this evaluation built in from the start of this Plan in 2023-24.

In success and progression, we will monitor student outcomes at module level. We will use student feedback and evaluation data with a focus on highlighting, understanding and addressing areas that have implications for disparities in outcomes for students with different characteristics and students who are target groups under this Plan. We consider it very important to use qualitative methods of evaluation and undertake deeper evaluation and case study practices, to add understanding to the quantitative data which, due to small cohorts, is limited. Qualitative evaluation will be undertaken using surveys, discussions, interviews and focus groups with students, and may in the longer term may include action learning research and evaluation. Again, this work will commence in 2023-24 with the start of this Plan.

We will draw upon our existing practices. Student support services are currently developing further evaluation measures, which are currently based on student surveys for feedback on services. More focus groups are intended, along with ensuring a model that closes the loop on student feedback. In respect of carers and employability services, we gather feedback from students, staff and employers who support career development activities to promote continuous improvement. Careers and employability questions are included in the termly student survey, and in our Staff Student Liaison Committee, which looks at different aspects of institution and services and has student reps on this to input and feedback. Development in this area will include building our evidence base and focusing on case studies and qualitative evaluation to better understand our student experiences and career outcomes.

These evaluation practices will enable us to understand what activities work for our students and prospective students in terms of closing gaps we have identified and increasing our intake of target students. We will ensure that this work commences with the start of this Plan in 2023-24.

### Evaluation of Financial Support

We will establish a consistent monitoring framework for our bursaries, involving qualitative feedback from students and where possible, quantitative analysis of student outcomes using relevant parts of the OfS *Impact of Financial Support* toolkit. This will allow us to monitor impact over time.

### **Learning to Shape Improvement**

Ongoing monitoring of access and participation targets and commitments, and a developing community of practice will facilitate improvements to sharing of findings from evaluation and implementation of findings into improving practice. We will bring together delivery and evaluation staff to review evaluation outcomes and the implications for delivery at regular appropriate intervals. Such work can be directed through relevant committees (see Section 3.4).

Shared practice across DGHE allows for review and feedback on evaluation findings and reports, and discussion regarding the improvements that could be made. More broadly, evaluation findings related to access and participation work will inform other agendas and practice, such as programme review, recruitment strategies and community engagement. A collaborative process will be used to set an action plan for the changes to activities made based on evaluation outcomes. This process will also take a self-reflexive approach to assess how relevant and useful our evaluation process has been in terms of developing our delivery and activities. As a small team we can ensure findings and recommendations from evaluation and research are applied directly into improving practice in a timely manner.

Externally, DGHE staff are involved in a range of roles within and beyond the higher education sector, which provide channels for sharing findings more broadly. Other external partners will be considered and communications developed over the first two years of this Plan, for example via TASO, SEER and Independent Higher Education (IHE). These will support national understanding and progress, particularly for similar institutions.

### **3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan**

This 5-year Plan will drive strategic thinking and processes and inform formal approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as access and participation. It provides a longer-term ambition and supports connectedness across the institution. DGHE will establish an Access and Participation Steering Group (APSG) to monitor progress against the targets in this Plan. The APSG will track and evaluate progress and enable sharing of best practice to ensure continuous improvement in strategic measures, processes and activities, and will maintain oversight of reporting and monitoring. We will invite two students to sit on this steering group, to ensure students continue to be engaged with the monitoring of performance and provisions of this Plan. There will be a loop back to the Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) from the APSG to gather further input and provide monitoring details to a broader student group.

Throughout the life of the Plan, the APSG will meet at least once every quarter, to monitor and input into practice and outcomes. If it is discovered that progress is worsening in any area, the APSG can determine whether to redeploy its resources to targeted improvement in specific areas, accelerating action as per the strategic measures in this Plan. Additional expertise or resource may be deployed if required. The APSG will also monitor expenditure in relation to the plan, and risk.

The APSG will report into the Higher Education Management Team (HEMT) who subsequently report to the Board of Directors. The HEMT is ultimately responsible for monitoring of the Plan. The APSG will provide regular updates to these groups, including progress on the Plan and its key projects, and any emerging challenges or risks. The Board of Directors will receive these updates twice per annum. The APSG will also be linked to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and we will explore the appropriate model for this prior to the commencement of this Plan.

The APSG will coordinate and review overall monitoring of institutional data as part of the annual programme monitoring cycle, to ensure continuous monitoring of outcomes for target groups. In particular, we will look for any gaps that may arise, and progress towards targets and milestones. Data capability will improve in the longer-term, which will lead to an enhanced monitoring and evaluation capabilities. Over the life of this Plan, we will get a better understanding of how students from under-represented backgrounds compare to their peers.

## 4. Provision of information to students

DGHE will ensure that information is presented in a clear way that is accessible to all. The Access and Participation Plan will be accessible through our website and paper copies will be available on request.

Prospective and current students are provided with information about the fees they will be charged for the duration of their course. The fees for regulated programmes and information on financial support, including the eligibility criteria and application process for financial support, is published on our website and information on fees for the duration of a student's course are set out in offer letters. We also have a monthly newsletter with updates on a range of key information. A range of information about DGHE, academic programmes, entry requirements, fees, financial support, student support, teaching and learning, and total costs are set out in the prospectus and on the website.

DGHE's Marketing & Communications Office endeavours to keep students well informed through monthly newsletters, daily social media content, posters hung around campus, direct emails reminding students of events and other information, more in-person events where students can socialise with fellow students and speak with staff, top-up workshops, classroom visits from support staff and other channels as needed.

## 5. Appendix

The OfS will append the following items from the fees and targets and investment documents when an access and participation plan is published:

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)
2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)
3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

### Summary of 2023-24 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

#### Inflationary statement:

We will not raise fees annually for 2023-24 new entrants

**Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2023-24 entrants**

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND		£8,900
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

**Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2023-24**

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 2023-24 entrants**

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	*	*

**Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2023-24**

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 2023-24 to 2027-28

Provider name: David Game College Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10015688

## Investment summary

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

### Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£48,000.00	£75,000.00	£80,500.00	£86,000.00	£89,000.00
Access (pre-16)	£5,000.00	£6,000.00	£7,000.00	£8,000.00	£9,000.00
Access (post-16)	£20,000.00	£33,000.00	£35,000.00	£37,000.00	£38,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£20,000.00	£33,000.00	£35,000.00	£37,000.00	£38,000.00
Access (other)	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£3,500.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£74,500.00	£75,500.00	£76,500.00	£77,500.00	£78,500.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£20,000.00	£27,000.00	£28,000.00	£30,000.00	£32,000.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£656,400.00	£1,230,750.00	£1,230,750.00	£1,230,750.00	£1,230,750.00
<b>Access investment</b>	7.3%	6.1%	6.5%	7.0%	7.2%
<b>Financial support</b>	11.3%	6.1%	6.2%	6.3%	6.4%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	3.0%	2.2%	2.3%	2.4%	2.6%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	21.7%	14.4%	15.0%	15.7%	16.2%



