

David Game Higher Education

Access and participation plan 2026-27 to 2029-30

1. Introduction and Strategic Aim

David Game Higher Education (DGHE) is a specialist provider of career-focused higher education based in the City of London. Established in 2013 as part of the David Game College Group, an educational group with over 50 years of experience, DGHE was created to provide exceptional learning, encouraging students to develop their spirit of inquiry in order to realise their personal and professional aspirations and potential through quality education in a culturally diverse and ethical environment. Its provision is unique in its approach to widen access to high-quality higher education as most of our students are mature, working, and underrepresented learners in London and beyond. Our founding ambition remains central to our efforts today: to empower diverse students to realise their personal and professional potential through inclusive, industry-relevant, and supportive learning.

1.1 Institutional Context

DGHE operates from a purpose-designed campus in the City of London, with excellent transport links and proximity to key employers, civic organisations and cultural institutions. We also serve students in South London through a small Croydon campus. Our facilities include specialist computing labs, library, classrooms and lecture halls, a canteen, careers hub and wellbeing support services, design studios and flexible hybrid learning spaces. We are part of the wider David Game College Group, allowing shared access to cross-institutional resources, staff expertise, and governance support.

DGHE offers a range of Higher National Diploma, Degree Top-Ups, CertHE, Foundation and soon post-graduate courses across Business & Management, Health & Social Care, Public Services and Criminology, Digital & Creative Technologies.

Our portfolio includes primarily Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) validated by Pearson, and this is the APP data we report on directly to HESA and OfS. However, we also offer Top-Up BA/BSc and BSc (Hons) degrees, as well as Foundation and CertHE courses in franchise partnerships with Buckinghamshire New University and the University of Gloucestershire. Our courses are regulated by the Office for Students (OfS), ensuring academic standards and sector alignment.

1.2 Student Body and Demographic Profile

DGHE serves approximately 500-700 students annually, with numbers expected to increase by 2027. The majority of our students are Mature learners aged 21 and over, many balancing work and family responsibilities. Our students tend to be from lower income households, IMD Q1 and Q2 areas, including ethnic minority communities, and often with lower prior attainment than typical university learners. Many are commuters, parents and carers who are investing in a career change, and may have limited exposure to traditional university pathways. A large portion of our students speak English as a second language and are less familiar with the 'hidden curriculum' of traditional British educational models. Our student body reflects the vibrancy and diversity of London, and our curriculum, support services, and delivery model are designed with this reality in mind.

1.3 Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities

DGHE's mission is to provide exceptional learning, encouraging students to develop their spirit of inquiry in order to realise their personal and professional aspirations and potential through quality education in a culturally diverse and ethical environment.

Our vision is to be widely recognised within the independent college sector as a 'first choice for students seeking a high-quality education.

We value a diverse, inclusive, professional academic community that respects individuals. It enables them to strive for success to contribute positively and sustainably to the local area, the international economy and the wider society in general.

Access, equity, and student empowerment are embedded across our institutional strategy. Our current strategic plan (2023–2026) includes the following key priorities:

- Support diverse student entry and success across the student lifecycle
- Embed flexibility, accessibility and relevance in teaching and curriculum
- Strengthen inclusive support structures and wellbeing services
- Enhance employability outcomes and progression pathways
- Improve data infrastructure and evaluation of impact across all areas

Our Access and Participation Plan aligns directly with these strategic priorities and helps drive our focus on equality of opportunity. As we continue to develop our strategic plan, our APP will feature in guiding our values, vision and mission going forward.

1.4 Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

DGHE is deeply committed to equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of our operations. This is reflected in our core values, institutional policies, staff makeup and development programmes. Our EDI Policy ensures protection from discrimination and promotes equity for all students and staff, particularly those from historically marginalised or underserved groups.

We embed inclusive practices in our admissions, curriculum design, student support, and staff development. Students participate in EDI governance through representation on the EDI Committee and through formal and informal consultation. Our institutional leadership, including the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Access, Participation Steering Group (APSG) and EDI Committee, treat EDI as a strategic imperative and a shared responsibility across the organisation.

1.5 Key Achievements to Date

DGHE's commitment to widening participation and student success has already led to measurable progress. In our latest progress report based on data up to March 2025, the proportion of new entrants from minority ethnic backgrounds increased to 25% in 2024–25, up from just 7.7% in 2021–22. This significant change to our student body has been achieved through a rethink of our entire recruitment plan and mindfully ensuring that different communities learn about DGHE and are encouraged to apply. As a result, we have chosen not to retain ethnic diversity as a formal target in our next Access and Participation Plan. However, we remain fully committed to maintaining an ethnically diverse student population that reflects both sector benchmarks and the demographics of the local communities we serve.

Our progress on targets from our existing APP has seen some positive results thus far:

- The percentage of new students identifying as disabled rose to 10.7% in 2023-24 (when including those we supported through assessments to identify their disability after starting to study at DGHE – since a significant portion of our students do not identify their disability until later in their studies).
- 43% of mature students achieved Merit or Distinction grades on HND programmes in 2023-24, a 7.4pp increase on the baseline (35.6%, 2020-21) and 4pp above our target of 39% for 2024-25.
- Our attainment data shows better performance for IMD Quintile 1 students than IMD Quintile 5 students in 2023-24 and 2024-25, reversing the attainment gap of our baseline data in 2020-21 (26.3pp).

These achievements result from targeted interventions, flexible and inclusive course delivery, expanded financial support, and consistent efforts to listen and respond to our student voice.

1.6 Inclusive Practice Highlights

Across our institution, we have embedded inclusive practice in our marketing and community outreach, academic teaching and curriculum, student support services and flexible hybrid delivery. Our recruitment and outreach targets primarily East London boroughs, including free taster events for mature students and partnerships with local sixth forms and adult learning organisations. Teaching and curriculum development focus on small class sizes, one-on-one personalised support, integrating careers advice in lessons, and offering staff training in inclusive pedagogies. We continue to improve our student support services by expanding our wellbeing team, investing in more academic coaching, offering extra support with study skills, IT and English proficiency, providing neurodiversity assessments, bursaries and hardship funding. We are making education more accessible to underserved mature, ethnic minority and low-income students who juggle lessons with work and care duties by enhancing our hybrid online learning options, virtual learning environment (Moodle) and assistive technology, and simplifying our application processes.

1.7 Strategic Aims of this APP

This APP builds on our institutional foundations and advances our overarching strategic aim: to support students to realise their personal and professional aspirations and potential through quality education. We do this by ensuring that students from underrepresented groups can access, succeed in, and progress from higher education with parity of opportunity and outcomes.

Our key aims under this Plan are to improve access and entry rates for disabled learners and to reduce continuation and attainment gaps for Ethnic Minority, IMD Q1, Disabled and Mature students. We also intend to raise overall attainment levels among our majority mature, commuter, and working student body, and to embed inclusive, evidence-based and student-informed practices across the whole provider.

This Access and Participation Plan outlines the targeted actions, evaluation methods and collaborative strategies through which DGHE will continue advancing equity in higher education.

2. Risks to equality of opportunity

To understand where risks to equality of opportunity may be present at David Game Higher Education, we have completed an assessment of performance (Annex A), which explores enrolment, continuation, completion, academic outcomes and progression to employment for our students over the last 5 years. We have used the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation dataset as our primary data source, supplemented with internal data and other external datasets and evidence where appropriate. We have also considered information and data from our student body. We have considered the data against the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) and we have identified two key risks. As a small, specialist provider, we have considered which risks are likely to be the most pertinent to our student body and which we can reasonably seek to mitigate and make a positive impact on an institutional and sector level. Our intervention strategies seek to address the risks we have identified as a priority for us.

Access

2.1 Risk 1 – There is a risk that disabled students are experiencing inequitable access to pre-entry knowledge acquisition, information, advice, and guidance and other barriers to entry.

We have identified one indicator of risk which suggests this risk may be occurring.

Disabled students

The enrolment rate for disabled students at DGHE is 10.4% (3-year aggregate 2022-23 to 2024-25), which is below the most comparable sector average currently available of 17.3% disabled entrants (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23).

We have found that our mostly Mature students tend to under-report disabilities, and benefit from further awareness raising, removing the stigma and offering assessment and support to help students identify and manage their existing needs. We do this through our Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) and Internal Communications channels. We also find that it takes time for students to identify their disabilities and receive support, so sometimes this process begins during their HND and students reap the benefits around the time that they are finishing these courses and moving onto either a top-up degree or into the workforce.

2.1.1 Links to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)

Along with education sector and industry evidence (see Annex B), our institutional experience and student consultations suggest that these differential enrolment rates may be a result of EORR Risks 1 to 3.

- **Risk 1 (Knowledge and skills):** There is a risk that some students do not have equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to successfully enter and complete higher education, particularly affecting our target students. Evidence shows that prior attainment, limited exposure to higher-level study, and inconsistent access to support services all impact progression and success (e.g. Newman-Ford et al., 2009; Croll and Attwood, 2013; Newman et al., 2021). This is supported by national findings linking academic underperformance to both access gaps and on-course experiences. Our student

feedback tells us that some of our disabled students and others struggle with digital skills and academic writing, as well as confidence and agency, which may be creating barriers to entry for potential disabled and other students.

- **Risk 2 (Information and guidance):** Target students may face inequality of opportunity in their access to appropriate information and guidance about higher education, including higher education choices, study modes, expectations, and access pathways; as well as linked information about careers and employability. This is especially felt by our mature students who often lack the support systems that younger students have in school and college to access clear information and guidance. For our disabled students, there can be a lack of knowledge about how to access Disabled Students' Allowance and other support for studying, which may discourage them from applying to a higher education course.
- **Risk 3 (Perception of higher education):** Students who are qualified for higher education may not feel that it is a space for them, either because of their identity, background, age or lived experience. This is particularly acute among mature students, ethnic minority, and disabled applicants, who may not see themselves reflected in the sector or feel confident applying to higher education providers. DGHE's outreach work has revealed uncertainty and low confidence among prospective students, especially older adults, about whether they 'belong' in higher education.

On Course

2.2 Risk 2 - There is a risk that a lack of access to a range of appropriate support, and other capacity issues, may be affecting continuation, and good degree outcomes for students from various backgrounds targeted by the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register.

In Annex A, we have provided analysis across continuation, completion, attainment and progression over the last 6 years where possible, focusing on differential outcomes for students with particular characteristics. Data is particularly challenging due to the size of our cohorts, which lead to low statistical certainty and confidence and fluctuations in year-on-year data, swinging from 'good' to 'poor' performance over time. We have supplemented our assessment with observations on broader sector performance.

We developed our own metric for "good degree" attainment data, which refers to students on our HND courses achieving a Merit or Distinction, because there are no publicly available sector wide data available to make a direct comparison with other HND outcomes in the sector. We use the current available OfS attainment sector data for undergraduate degree courses as a comparator, as the OfS data can be used to understand trends in degree attainment and potentially infer some insights about HND grades compared to degree classifications. However, we are aware that this is not a direct comparator as the learners and curricula are different. This may in part explain why our HND data differs from a university sector average for degree attainment.

We have determined the following indicators of risk as priorities for David Game Higher Education at this time, although we commit to closely monitoring and supporting outcomes for all target students.

Disabled students

The attainment rates for disabled students and non-disabled students are below the sector average (80.3% and 80.5% 4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23) although the sector average for degrees is not perfectly comparative to HNDs. We have found a gap between disabled and non-disabled students getting a “good degree” (which we define as achieving Merit or Distinction in HND) of 8.4pp in the last 2-year aggregate, which is larger than the sector, in addition to a lower than sector attainment rate as a whole, so we are introducing a new target in this area.

Ethnic Minority students

The continuation rate for Ethnic Minority, when compared with white students shows a gap of 11.7pp (2-year aggregate, 2022-23 to 2023-24). The sector gap is 2.6pp (4-year aggregate, 2018-19 to 2021-22). Whilst there has been some improvement in the gap, reducing from 14.8pp in 2021-22 to 2022-23 (2-year aggregate), we aim to continue this target and reduce the gap further.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

The gap in attainment between IMD Q1 and Q5 students appears to be closing, year on year. There is significant variability from year to year given our small student numbers so individual students make a big change in the data, and we have a very small cohort of Q5 students. The attainment gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 was 58pp in 2022-23, reducing to a –1pp positive gap in favour of IMD Q1 students in 2023-24. Our incomplete data for 2024-25 shows a –35pp positive gap in favour of IMD Q1 students. The 4-year aggregate gap is 25.5pp (2021-22 to 2024-25). We are looking at this gap in an aggregate to account for the fluctuating data and small student numbers which can significantly affect percentages. The sector gap between Q1 and Q5 is 17.1pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). Our focus on this target aims to minimise the gap on a longer-term, more consistent basis.

Mature students

The attainment rate for mature students at DGHE is 45.5% (2-year aggregate, 2023-24 to 2024-25), which is below the university sector average for degrees of 72.5% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). However, there is no published data for comparable sector averages for HNDs. For the purpose of our APP, we chose to consider ‘Merit’ and ‘Distinction’ as comparable to 1st and 2nd Degrees. This metric has been rising over time, with our internal data showing 48% of Mature students achieving Merit or Distinction in the 2024-2025 academic year as of March 2025.

Whilst we can see in our data that our Mature students perform better than our Young students, we have focused on raising the attainment of our majority Mature student cohort, as this is still below the university sector average. As the Office for Students considers Mature students to be an underserved population in higher education, we consider this to be an appropriate target as a small and specialist provider with the potential to improve attainment for this group through our tailored education delivery and interventions.

2.2.1 Links to the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)

Along with education sector and industry evidence (see Annex B), our institutional experience and student consultations suggest that these differential outcomes may be a result of EORR Risks 6, 7

and 10. These risks may be present in different combinations and to varying extent for each identified target group.

- **Risk 6 (Insufficient academic support):** There is a risk that target students are unable to access academic support when required, particularly as many of our students are mature students with work and family obligations to balance alongside their studies. Whilst our small class sizes and close staff-student relationships can be beneficial, we recognise that addressing academic support needs in a flexible and tailored way is a priority for our target students' success. Our students tell us they need to fit their studies into busy schedules.
- **Risk 7 (Insufficient personal support):** There is a risk for our target students that they are unable to access appropriate personal support when required. This is important within the context of increasing pressures on students regarding costs, mental health and wellbeing and the institutional capacity and flexibility for support as student needs change. Our majority mature cohort, with intersectional experiences of disability, socioeconomic background, and ethnicities, can face particular challenges in these areas. Our students often have not identified or received support for needs like neurodiversity and disabilities until after they begin studying at DGHE and meet our Advice and Wellbeing (AWS) team.
- **Risk 10 (Cost pressures):** Increased financial strain can significantly affect a student's ability to continue or succeed in higher education. Although most students access student finance, some are self-funding and most will study while working, supporting dependents, and face rising housing, transport, and childcare costs. We recognise cost pressures that can affect all students, particularly in the cost-of-living crisis, with significant impacts often felt by our target students which can impact their ability to achieve their academic outcomes. Our students have asked for our help when they cannot afford a laptop, the cost of childcare, transport, or face emergencies with overdue rent or health crises in the family.

1.2. Other risks and challenges

- **Small datasets:** When determining which risk areas to prioritise in this APP, we considered our context as a small and specialist provider. Our smaller scale means we work with limited cohort data, constraining our data analysis and the statistical significance of our conclusions. This also impacts our capacity to make precise evaluations and interpretations, particularly when examining disaggregated data and intersections of underrepresented characteristics. We have conducted a full assessment of both publicly available and internal datasets and opted to focus on areas where we aim to make the most meaningful impact.
- **Ongoing impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic:** We note the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, as acknowledged in the EORR Risk 9. The pandemic has affected the way we deliver education as outlined in this Plan – particularly a heightened need for flexibility, such as hybrid/online classes, and the ongoing financial sensitivity of our students, many of whom have experienced career changes in recent years. While Risk 9 is not one of our identified priority risks, we will remain vigilant to the ongoing effects of the pandemic going forward, closely monitoring relevant data to ensure that any emerging gaps throughout the student lifecycle are identified and addressed. We will aim to better understand these risks, which we know disproportionately affect underrepresented and

socioeconomically disadvantaged students, through ongoing evaluation and our collaborative work with other similar providers.

3. Objectives

From the assessment of performance (Annex A) and consideration of Risks (above, and Annex B), we have identified the following objectives that are our priorities under this Plan.

Table Reference (Table 5d, Annex C)	Objectives	Intervention Strategy
PTA_1	To increase the proportion of HND students at DGHE who are disabled, achieving 8.1% disabled entrants by 2029-30.	IS1, IS2, IS3
PTS_1	To reduce the gap in continuation between Non-White and White students, closing the continuation gap between Non-White and White learners to 3 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.	IS3, IS4, IS5
PTS_2	To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 1 and 5, respectively) on HND courses, reducing the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) to 17 percentage points by 2029-30.	IS3, IS4, IS5
PTS_3	To increase the attainment rate of mature students on HND courses to 60% by 2029-30.	IS3, IS4, IS5
PTS_4	To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between disabled students and non-disabled students on HND courses, closing the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 2.5 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.	IS3, IS4, IS5

4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention Strategy 1 – Supporting access to higher education for disabled learners by promoting opportunities to engage

Objectives:

To increase the proportion of HND students at DGHE who are disabled, achieving 8.1% disabled entrants by 2029-30.

In setting our target for this objective, we recognise that many of our students only identify their disability after entry when our Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) provide awareness and assessments; therefore they are not included in our initial entry data, so the real number of students we support with disabilities tends to be higher.

Targets: PTA_1 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risk to Equality of Opportunity: Risk 1 Knowledge and skills; Risk 2 Information and guidance; Risk 3 Perception of higher education; Risk 10 Cost pressures.

Evaluation: Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2026, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below.

Publication Plan: We are dedicated to sharing the evaluation findings. Publication plans are indicative and will expand as dissemination opportunities arise. Relevant evaluation outcomes will also inform and drive ongoing practice improvements. We will be following the same publication plan across all of our intervention strategies and associated activities.

Format of findings	Sharing of findings
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on progress with our target milestones. 2. Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities across our Intervention Strategies based on the achievement of intended outcomes. <p>Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website, and through collaborative industry meetings or publications.</p> <p>Findings will also be shared internally to relevant committees and forum groups, to inform practice and decision making. See 'Evaluation Strategy' section.</p>	<p>Progress 'highlights' of what works, our progress towards our targets, and lessons learned will be shared annually.</p>
<p>We will produce an Evaluation to Date or End of Project Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and potentially other channels.</p>	<p>4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2029) and/or at the conclusion of projects. For Financial Support evaluation, this may be every 2 years, from 2027-28.</p>
<p>We will also contribute at conferences and through workshops and events hosted by networks we partake in such as IHE, SEER, Aldgate Connect BID, UniConnect, etc.</p>	<p>At minimum every 2 years, starting from 2026-27.</p>
<p>We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.</p>	<p>As they arise – at a minimum every two years</p>

Intervention Strategy 1 – Activity Plan

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Targeted outreach and community engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach activities in Tower Hamlets, Hackney and IMD Q1 areas. Targeted outreach and marketing for disabled and mature students Awareness campaigns in local community networks Website improvements to simplify access to information Awareness-raising outreach activities to promote disability support and flexible learning Participate in partnerships with relevant industry and community organisations, aiming to collaborate with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Marketing/ & Comms Events & Outreach Officer Academic & administrative staff support Web development team Targeted advertisement costs Event activity costs Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and awareness of HE. Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process. Improved self-awareness and support to assess and identify as having a disability Improved knowledge and awareness of flexible learning options. Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection process. Improved confidence in their ability to progress to higher education Improved motivation and engagement in learning. Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. (Partners) Increased awareness of DGHE offer for progressing to HE study. Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved sustained relationships with local partners 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis: Number and % of people attending activities with target characteristics (T1). Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1). Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder (practitioner and student) experiences and perceptions (T2). Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring interim outcomes and perceptions of improved skills and knowledge outcome (T2). 2-3 student focus groups or reflective activity at minimum every two years from 2027-28, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) Input and feedback from Advice and Wellbeing team on progress made and lessons learned (T2).

approximately five partners by the end of this Plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications to HE • Offers from HE providers • Enrolments in HE • Improved attainment in HE 	
Strategic partnerships and advocacy for target students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to local authorities, industry bodies and charities • Adult education advocacy and engagement in community events • Regional education and disability access partnerships • We aim to collaborate with approximately five partners by the end of this Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Marketing/ & Comms • Events & Outreach Officer • Careers Advisor • Head of Centre • Administration and resource 		

Cross intervention strategy: IS2, IS3

Total costs of activities

We estimate a cost of £169,000 over four years to implement these intervention activities, considering required staff support and other administration and resource.

Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, in addition to a range of other research and best practice references. Evidence suggests that delivering outreach in partnership with community organisations can help respond to the diversity of needs and barriers to accessing higher education for target students (CFE Research, 2023), informing our outreach activities and commitment to working with industry partners and community organisations around London. Information, advice and guidance can help alleviate student concerns and misconceptions about the value and cost of higher education (BIS, 2015) which is particularly important for our prospective student cohort of mostly mature students. Evidence suggests that the most effective partnerships for outreach to reach underrepresented groups are focused on organisations collaborating on engagement activities in areas with high representation of our target groups (Brilliant Club, 2019; Martikke et al., 2015), which is a priority for our targeted outreach and strategic partnership activities.

A more comprehensive review of our evidence base relating to these activities is available in the Annex B.

Intervention Strategy 2 – Embedding inclusive admissions practices to break down barriers to access

Objectives:

To increase the proportion of HND students at DGHE who are disabled, achieving 8.1% disabled entrants by 2029-30.

Targets: PTA_1 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risk to Equality of Opportunity: Risk 1 Knowledge and skills; Risk 2 Information and guidance; Risk 3 Perception of higher education.

Evaluation: Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2026, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below.

Publication Plan: We are following the same publication plan across all of our intervention strategies and associated activities, see the publication plan for Intervention Strategy 1 for more details.

Intervention Strategy 2 - Activity Plan

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Inclusive admissions practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextualised admissions for mature students Continual development of formal contextual admissions policy Staff training on inclusive admissions Rolling intake (September, January/February and May) Application redesign for accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Admissions Senior Admissions Manager Registrar Head of Centre Head of Advice & Wellbeing Head of Marketing & Comms Web design team Technical tools Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and awareness of DGHE and contextual admissions policy (Staff) Increased knowledge and awareness of contextual admissions policy Improved experience completing application Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of applications from target students Increased enrolments of target students 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: number and % of applicants with target characteristics (T1). Data Analysis: number and % of applicants receiving an offer from target groups (T1). Data Analysis: number and % of new entrants with target characteristics (T1). Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student survey to understand experiences of entering through the contextual admissions system (T2).
Cross intervention strategy: IS1, IS3			

Total costs of activities

We estimate a cost of £24,000 over four years to implement these activities, considering required staff support and other administration and resource.

Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have drawn on research on the effectiveness of contextual admissions to inform our continued commitment to considering contextual offers for target groups. Research suggests that using contextual admissions is a recommended approach to improve access to higher education for students from underrepresented backgrounds (OfS, 2019; Boliver et al., 2021). We have been informed by the evidence in considering which student characteristics we will consider under our contextual admissions approach and how their backgrounds will be accounted for in admissions decisions (Boliver et al., 2017; Gorard et al., 2018). This is particularly important in our context of being a mature student recruiter, as some of our mature applicants may have educational qualifications which may not be sufficient to understand their full lived experience, background, and potential to succeed at David Game.

A more comprehensive review of our evidence base relating to these activities is available in the Annex B.

Intervention Strategy 3 – Pre-entry and transition support for target students

Objectives:

To increase the proportion of HND students at DGHE who are disabled, achieving 8.1% disabled entrants by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in continuation between Non-White and White students, closing the continuation gap between Non-White and White learners to 3 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 1 and 5, respectively) on HND courses, reducing the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) to 17 percentage points by 2029-30.

To increase the attainment rate of mature students on HND courses to 60% by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between disabled students and non-disabled students on HND courses, closing the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 2.5 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

Targets: PTA_1, PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risk to Equality of Opportunity: Risk 1 Knowledge and skills; Risk 2 Information and guidance; Risk 3 Perception of higher education; Risk 6 Insufficient academic support; Risk 7 Insufficient personal support.

Evaluation: Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2026, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below.

Publication Plan: We are following the same publication plan across all of our intervention strategies and associated activities, see the publication plan for Intervention Strategy 1 for more details.

Intervention Strategy 3 – Activity Plan

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Pre-entry and transition support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended induction and bridging support with IT and other individual needs Pre-sessional and In-Sessional English classes Peer mentoring and student ambassadors Welcome packs and digital resource access Early needs assessment, provision of information and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Admissions Student Services Officer Head of Centre Advice & Wellbeing Services Head of Marketing & Comms Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence in starting DGHE course Timely referral to more support with Disabilities, Finances, English, IT and study skills Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of applications from target students Increased enrolments of target students Improved continuation of target students Improved attainment of target students 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: number and % of applicants from target groups (T1). Data Analysis: number and % of new entrants from target groups (T1). Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre and post- induction surveys to measure change in confidence during transition (T2). Student surveys or focus groups to share transition experiences and make recommendations for support (T2).
Cross intervention strategy: IS1, IS2			

Total costs of activities

We estimate a cost of £59,000 over four years to implement this strategy, considering required staff support and other administration and resource.

Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, in addition to a range of other research and best practice references. We have chosen to focus on developing our induction and transition offer as evidence highlights the positive effects that pre-enrolment and induction activities can have on students (TASO, 2023; Beard, et al., 2023). We are aware of the importance of student integration into higher education and the impact this can have on continuation (Scottish Framework for Fair Access, 2024; Tinto, 1988) as well as student feedback that an extended induction can be beneficial to help them adjust to the new information and environment. Our student consultations also highlighted the importance of induction for disabled students knowing how to access support from the beginning of their educational journey.

A more comprehensive review of our evidence base relating to these activities is available in the Annex B.

Intervention Strategy 4 – Flexible and inclusive academic environment to improve on-course experience and outcomes for diverse learners

Objectives:

To reduce the gap in continuation between Non-White and White students, closing the continuation gap between Non-White and White learners to 3 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 1 and 5, respectively) on HND courses, reducing the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) to 17 percentage points by 2029-30.

To increase the attainment rate of mature students on HND courses to 60% by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between disabled students and non-disabled students on HND courses, closing the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 2.5 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 – See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risk to Equality of Opportunity: Risk 6 Insufficient academic support; Risk 7 Insufficient personal support.

Evaluation: Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved.

The strategy will commence from September 2026, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below.

Intervention Strategy 4 - Activity Plan

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Supportive academic delivery and study skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic writing and referencing support Online pre-sessional and in-session English 1:1 study skills drop-in sessions Extra IT skills training for digitally excluded students Individual Learning Plans supported by personal tutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English for Academic Purposes Tutor Digital Learning Technologist Student Services Officer Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. Improved motivation and engagement in learning. Improved academic and study skills Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Improved assessment grades Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation rates for target students Increased attainment rates for target students 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students engaging and % of students with target characteristics. (T1) Output analysis: Number of sessions run (academic writing, study skills, IT skills). (T1) Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions. (T2) Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of academic skills (linked to Educational Gain project). (T2) 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2026-27, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students. (T2)
Flexible and accessible education delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moodle redevelopment for hybrid access Self-paced online catch-up tools Scheduling designed for adult learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registrar Head of Data & Digital Strategy Digital Learning Technologist VLE Officer Digital Learning Technologist Head of Academic Delivery & Development 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of timetable accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP Manager • Head of Admissions • Administration and resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible: Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with (extra-curricular) academic support and those who have not. (T2 & T3) 	
<p>Inclusive teaching with careers integrated into the curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive curriculum development and review • Employability skills embedded in modules • 1-1 careers advisory support • Outreach to industry partners, career mentors and employers • Partner-delivered placements and workshops • Staff peer support for inclusive teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Centre • Head of Academic Delivery & Development • Academic Programme Managers • Careers Advisor • Head of Marketing & Comms • Head of Advice & Wellbeing • Programme Managers • Administration and resource 	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills. • Increased level of professional networks and contacts. • Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies. • Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. <p>Longer-term outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved attainment rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis: Number and % of students engaging and % of students with target characteristics (T1). • Output analysis: Number of sessions run (career advisory support, partner-delivered workshops) (T1) • Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions (T2). • Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriate and effective, and to explore challenges. (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of career development and management / employability skills and professional networks. (T2)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved progression rates for target students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2026-27, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) Data Analysis: attainment by target students. (T2) Data analysis: progression into employment and into highly skilled employment or post-graduate study pathways for target students.
Cross intervention strategy: IS5			

Total costs of activities

We estimate a cost of £196,000 over four years to implement this strategy, considering required staff support and other administration and resource.

Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, in addition to a range of other research and best practice references. We have focused our on-course activities around academic support and employability. Evidence emphasises the importance of developing academic skills, particularly to support the attainment of students from our target groups (Thomas, 2012; Parker et al., 2017). We also have focused on developing our flexible and accessible education delivery, drawing on evidence which suggests that flexible learning can enhance student outcomes, including continuation, attainment, and overall satisfaction (Soffer et al., 2019; Page et al., 2021; OfS, 2021). This is particularly important for our student base of mature students from non-traditional backgrounds, as evidence shows that flexible education provision can be particularly effective for these students (OfS, 2021; HESA, 2019; TASO, 2023).

We have also prioritised in-curricula delivery of careers and employability support, to develop student's employability skills, confidence, and readiness for work. Following sector best practice and the evidence, we will design a cohort tailored, needs-based support to employability programme which is associated with the most effective development of employability skills (Scott and Willison, 2021; Moore et al., 2013; Pegg et al., 2012). Our student consultations have reinforced this, as students want tailored opportunities to engage with careers information and taster days that feel relevant to their studies and future career ambitions.

A more comprehensive review of our evidence base relating to these activities is available in the Annex B.

Intervention Strategy 5 – Holistic student support provision to improve on-course experience and outcomes for diverse learners

Objectives:

To reduce the gap in continuation between Non-White and White students, closing the continuation gap between Non-White and White learners to 3 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 1 and 5, respectively) on HND courses, reducing the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) to 17 percentage points by 2029-30.

To increase the attainment rate of mature students on HND courses to 60% by 2029-30.

To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between disabled students and non-disabled students on HND courses, closing the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students to 2.5 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.

Targets: PTS_1, PTS_2, PTS_3, PTS_4 - See Annex C, Table 5b.

Risk to Equality of Opportunity: Risk 7 Insufficient personal support; Risk 10 Cost pressures.

Evaluation: Evaluation for this intervention strategy will generate OfS Type 1 (T1) and Type 2 (T2) standards of evaluation, which will establish whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The strategy will commence from September 2026, with publication and sharing of findings as per the Intervention Strategy below.

Intervention Strategy 5 - Activity Plan

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
Financial support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various bursaries available to at-risk student groups Hardship funding available for students in financial need Support navigating SLC loans processes Financial wellbeing check-ins Proactive communications about financial support with those who may be eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Student Finances Senior Student Finance Officer Advice & Wellbeing Services Head of Admissions Head of Marketing & Comms Admissions Team Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced financial pressures. Student financial needs are supported Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security Students are able to fully participate in the DGHE student experience, positively impacting sense of belonging Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation rates for target students Increased attainment rates for target students 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students receiving bursaries (T1), analysed by student characteristics (where possible). Output Analysis: Total spend of bursaries, including by student characteristics. (T1) Poll gathering bursary recipient experience and perceptions of the process and allocation (T2). Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per relevant parts of the OfS Evaluating the Impact of Financial Support toolkit, every two years from 2026-27 (T2).
Wellbeing services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 wellbeing and academic coaching Subsidised neurodiversity and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Advice & Wellbeing Advice & Wellbeing Officer Head of Student Finances Head of Centre 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students wellbeing needs are supported Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students engaging with service and % with target characteristics (T1). Output analysis: Number of sessions run (1:1 coaching) (T1)

<p>disability assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral system for mental health and disability Support to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance Speak Up – report and support programme TogetherAll services offering further mental health support Student Assistance Programme counselling helpline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration and resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved motivation and engagement in learning. Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Improved student emotional and mental well-being. Improved assessment grades <p>Longer-term outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation rates for target students Increased attainment rates for target students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs. self-sign, by student characteristics (T1). Data analysis: Number and % of students applying for and receiving DSA (T1). <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions of support and confidence in relation to outcomes (T2). Student interviews/focus groups every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys (T2). Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2). Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students (T2).
<p>Student voice, belonging and representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini-grants for student inclusion projects Equalities Rep role funded APP Student Reps & Focus Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Centre Head of Advice & Wellbeing Administration and resource 	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sense of belonging Improved connections and engagement between students <p>Longer-term outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation rates for target students Increased attainment rates for target students 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students engaging with projects and % with target characteristics (T1). Output analysis: Number of student inclusion projects funded. (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual student survey of student inclusion project participants exploring experiences and benefits of projects. (T2)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews/focus groups with Equalities Rep to explore experiences and benefits of role. (T2)
Staff development and inclusion culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion-focused staff training Embedding APP topics in staff induction Embedding inclusive practice in departments through Access and Participation Steering Group advocacy and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Advice & Wellbeing Advice & Wellbeing Officer Head of Centre APP Manager Human Resources Officer Registrar Head of Data & Digital Strategy Head of Academic Delivery & Development Student Reps Head of Admissions Careers Advisor Administration and resource 	Intermediate outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff awareness of inclusion and APP topics Improved staff knowledge and confidence in APP and EDI areas and effective support for students. Staff feel supported in training, their roles, and their professional development. Longer-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff confidence in embedding inclusion and EDI topics in their teaching and/or interactions with students Improved staff understanding of student experiences and challenges affecting student outcomes and opportunities to provide effective support. 	Process Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number of staff participating in training (T1). Output analysis: Number of training sessions run (T1). Data analysis: Monitoring student complaints data (T1). Post-training feedback survey (T1). Post-induction feedback survey (T1). Impact Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring confidence in inclusion and APP areas and in providing effective and tailored student support to meet diverse needs (T2). Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups (T2).

Cross intervention strategy: IS4

Total costs of activities

We estimate a cost of £349,000 over four years to implement this strategy, including direct financial support to students, required staff support and other administration and resource.

Summary of Evidence Base and Rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, in addition to a range of other research and best practice references. Our financial support commitments draw on evidence which suggests financial support can support disadvantaged students with continuation, ability to focus on their studies, and reducing the need to work during term time (Murphy and Wyness, 2015; Harrison et al, 2018; Hordasy et al., 2018).

Our wellbeing support activities have been informed by evidence suggesting that embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities can improve student mental health, coping mechanisms, and awareness of available support (Wavehill, 2022). Our continued disability support activities aim to provide support for disabled students to positively affect their continuation and attainment, as research recommends (Safer et al., 2020).

Student belonging is also important to this intervention strategy, incorporating evidence which suggests that feeling belonging to a course or higher education provider can affect student engagement, satisfaction, attainment, and mental health (Ahn and Davis, 2023; Davison et al., 2022, Hockings, 2010, Gopalan et al., 2022). Our students have told us in a recent focus group that they like to know there are opportunities to participate in activities designed to increase sense of belonging. We have also considered the evidence relating to staff awareness of inclusion, which suggests that staff development in inclusive practice can positively impact staff's motivation to enhance the inclusivity of their practice (Morina and Carballo, 2017).

A more comprehensive review of our evidence base relating to these activities is available in the Annex B.

5. Whole provider approach

5.1 Our institutional journey

We take a whole provider approach (WPA) to access and participation, which we have considered under this Plan via participation in emerging research on the WPA, working with our SEER colleagues and led by Professor Liz Thomas. We have evaluated our current WPA context and identified areas where we can go further, as part of the commitments in this Plan. The following provides a summary against the key domains in the WPA approach.

5.2 Our institutional and senior leadership commitment

DGHE's mission is to provide inclusive, supportive and empowering education. Our strategic plan identifies student diversity and success as core institutional values. Our Senior Management Team see this as core to developing our students' spirit of inquiry and full potential in a supportive, inclusive environment. Our senior leaders at DGHE bring deep expertise in student success and widening participation, with experience in student support, social justice and advocacy, and communications.

Institutional capacity for promoting access and participation is embedded through: a formal Access and Participation Steering Group chaired by the Senior Management Team, reporting to the David Game College Group Board; cross-department collaboration, with representatives from different departments and student reps; allocation of staff time and roles, including the dedicated APP Manager post, with responsibilities distributed across teams; and staff development. Staff development includes: APP topics integrated into new staff induction; inclusion-focused training sessions; peer learning on inclusive teaching practice; joint planning and evaluation through regular termly and annual reviews.

The APP Manager is responsible for overseeing implementation of this Plan, monitoring outcomes for underrepresented groups, and embedding APP commitments across the institution. The APSG meets regularly to review progress, advise on research, and escalate any issues to the SMT. The SMT in turn reports to the David Game College Group Board of Directors. Where necessary, the APSG may make recommendations to SMT to meet targets.

5.3 Our WPA student experience: Working across the student lifecycle and experience for all students

DGHE takes a lifecycle approach to access and participation, embedding targeted and inclusive practices from pre-entry through to progression into employment or further study. This approach is tailored to the needs of our student population, the majority of whom are mature, from underrepresented backgrounds, and often entering higher education later in life with significant personal and structural barriers.

Our support across the student lifecycle includes the following coordinated interventions:

- **Outreach:** We focus on outreach to local IMD Quintile 1 boroughs such as Hackney and Tower Hamlets, targeting mature and disabled learners through school engagement, targeted marketing and communications, public seminars and free taster events.
- **Accessible admissions:** We have implemented contextual offers and we are simplifying the application process for students and provide pre-entry support for applicants facing complex circumstances.
- **Transition and success:** Support includes study skills, pre-sessional and in-sessional English classes, IT skills development and digital access support, offering assessments for special educational needs, and designing personalised study plans.
- **Retention and wellbeing:** Students receive mental health referrals, 1:1 academic coaching, and access to financial support including bursaries and hardship funding.
- **Progression:** Employability is embedded across curricula, with access to career mentoring and support in navigating further study.

5.3.1 Inclusive and flexible delivery

To ensure success for our student body, many of whom are balancing work, caregiving responsibilities, and long absences from formal education, we offer a practical, flexible, and highly supportive learning environment. This includes: hybrid and online delivery models; small class sizes; individualised tutoring and mentoring; extra IT skills development; assistive technology and specialist disability support; dedicated advice and wellbeing services; and Personalised Study Plans

This tailored approach is especially valuable for students with low digital literacy, unfamiliarity with UK education systems, and those facing cultural stigma around learning differences or mental health. Our small-scale tailored approach helps us respond quickly to the needs of each student and can be especially helpful to students who might otherwise fall behind due to special educational needs, struggling to understand a ‘hidden curriculum’, those experiencing difficulty with the cost of living, lacking resources, or coming from different cultural or educational backgrounds and experiencing additional challenges in adapting to higher education. Students report that “hands-on” guidance throughout the admissions and study process is key to their success.

5.3.2 Targeted outreach and public engagement

DGHE delivers outreach activities aimed at raising awareness of higher education and building confidence among underrepresented groups. These include:

- **Seminars and workshops** for local schools, sixth forms, and the general public, especially in East London.
- **Thematic symposiums**, such as our *Climate Matters* event in 2023 and *Back to Education Experience* taster series in 2025, designed to engage mature learners in subjects such as Business Networking, Cyber Security, and Public Health.
- **One-off partner lectures**, such as our Public Services and Criminology sessions inviting students from Haringey Sixth Form to seminars on our campus.

These events serve a dual purpose: offering skills and insight while inspiring participants to consider HE pathways.

5.3.3 Mental health and wellbeing

Our Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) provide wraparound care including: neurodiversity assessments and DSA support; access to *TogetherAll* and the Student Assistance Programme (SAP); ‘Speak Up’ safeguarding and harassment reporting system; and ongoing student-facing wellbeing counselling and awareness. In our 2025 National Student Survey (NSS) results, our students scored DGHE with a positivity rating of 99% for Mental Wellbeing, 16.7% above the national average.

Despite systemic delays in accessing DSA support, especially for mature learners and those with SpLDs, DGHE mitigates delays by offering interim study adjustments and personal support. However, stigma and time constraints continue to limit uptake, particularly among older students. We recognise that many of our students only officially identify as ‘Disabled’ later in their educational experience, and this affects our data, though as an institution we offer these learners support throughout their time studying at DGHE. Increasing awareness and early identification remain key goals.

5.3.4 Cross-institutional improvements identified

Through our whole provider self-assessment, we have identified opportunities to strengthen our WPA model:

- Increase awareness of APP goals among academic and administrative teams and students
- Embed APP more fully in strategic plans and governance documents
- Improve access to data and visibility of APP across departments

- Expand staff and student understanding of inclusive teaching and equity
- Improve user experience on our website and digital platforms
- Make the applicant journey more user friendly and considerate of Disabilities

We are also exploring ways to make our physical site more welcoming for first-time visitors, including street-level signage and greater visibility in the local community.

5.3.5 Addressing barriers to participation

DGHE's student population often faces intersecting barriers including language barriers, limited prior education, long-term health conditions, digital exclusion, and financial hardship. Many applicants are unfamiliar with UK education processes, have fragile IT skills, and are managing multiple responsibilities at home. Our approach responds to this through: personalised, human-centred support from pre-entry through to graduation; consistent contact from admissions, academic, IT and wellbeing teams; early intervention and signposting to AWS, Careers and Academic Support; and flexibility in responding to delays in SFE or DSA processes. Students consistently highlight that it is this "personal touch", rather than a single intervention, that sustains their engagement and success.

5.3.6 Uptake and Impact across the Whole Provider

We are beginning to track correlations between the use of support services and student outcomes, including the uptake of SAP and DSA. While our official APP reporting only covers our HND courses, we also provide the same services to our Franchise degree students who report under partner university providers and the majority of our HND students progress onto our franchised top-up programmes. We consistently find that student uptake of services like disability assessments lags and so their needs are identified later in their HND, then it is only as they progress onto a Franchise provider top-up degree that they can be officially identified as having a disability and be fully supported as a result. This affects our data collection and reporting but does not necessarily delay offering support to all students who need it in practice. Therefore, the full picture of our APP provision and impact is not fully captured within our direct reporting on HND but is integrated across our whole provider approach.

While our numbers of students with a declared disability at entry are still small, our aim is to see parity of achievement among those with SpLDs and other support needs. Improvements to monitoring and better data sharing (where consent allows) will help us strengthen this analysis. We will continue to monitor not only the number of students identifying as disabled at entry, but those who identify and receive support later in their academic journey, as we expect this number will be closer to sector averages.

We also recognise a need to better understand the needs of those who do not engage with support services and may struggle in silence. We aim to continue to improve proactive identification of students at risk and raise awareness of entitlements to support. This is in addition to continuing to encourage people with already known disabilities to come study and be supported at DGHE.

5.4 HEP structures that prioritise and facilitate widening access and student success

At DGHE, our institutional policies and processes are aligned to support access and participation objectives. Widening access and supporting student success are not only embedded in our

strategic aims but are reflected across key institutional policies, including equality, teaching, recruitment, and student support. Together, these structures enable a coordinated, inclusive, and student-centred approach.

Below is an overview of key institutional strategies and how they align with our APP commitments.

- Our values state that DGHE is 'diverse, inclusive, professional community that respect individuals' and our Mission is 'encouraging students to develop their spirit of enquiry in order to realise their personal and professional aspirations through quality education in a culturally diverse and ethical environment'. As we develop, we will continue to focus on providing undeserved students with access to quality, supportive education.
- Our EDI Policy outlines a clear institutional commitment to preventing discrimination and fostering equity in all areas of the student and staff experience. The policy includes anti-discrimination protections across protected characteristics, support for disabled students and those with long-term health conditions, and reference to APP-aligned activities, including inclusive teaching, DSA support, and tailored wellbeing services. The EDI Policy also underpins the work of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, where student representatives contribute to institutional oversight.
- DGHE's Learning and Teaching Strategy promotes inclusive pedagogies and accessible learning environments. The strategy is aligned with APP commitments through: flexible delivery models (e.g. hybrid, part-time, evening/weekend); small-group teaching and personalised academic support; emphasis on skills-based progression and industry relevance; and development of inclusive teaching practices through CPD and peer learning.
- Our Admissions Policy explicitly supports contextual admissions and inclusive practices. Key features include recognition of non-traditional qualifications and life experience, focus on mature, IMD Q1 and Disabled learners, pre-entry academic and wellbeing support for applicants with additional needs, and staff training to ensure fair and accessible decision-making.
- DGHE's Marketing and Recruitment Strategy is deliberately focused on mature learners, students from IMD Quintile 1 backgrounds, and those with disabilities or long-term health conditions, while continuing to diversify our student body. This includes targeted marketing and outreach in East London boroughs, promotion of inclusive support services, the use of relatable student stories and messaging focused on empowerment and flexibility, featuring our own real students in advertisements, and collaboration with trusted education agents, particularly for students unfamiliar with UK systems.
- Our wraparound student support services are a cornerstone of our APP delivery. These are coordinated across Advice and Wellbeing, Academic Administration, Careers, and Finance teams, and include: pre-entry digital access support and English language classes; neurodiversity screening, DSA assistance, and 1:1 wellbeing coaching; financial support through bursaries and hardship funding; and embedded employability services and career mentoring.

Each of these policies and strategies reinforces our whole-provider approach to access and participation. Together, they form a coherent and student-focused infrastructure that supports underrepresented students across every stage of their journey, from first enquiry to successful graduation and beyond.

5.5 Our use of data and evidence

At DGHE, data, evidence and evaluation play a central role in shaping our approach to access and participation. Our planning and interventions are informed by both internal monitoring and external datasets, enabling us to identify barriers, track progress, and respond adaptively to emerging needs. For the purpose of evaluating our progress since our last APP went into force in 2023, we have used a mix of internal data and that which was submitted to HESA, so we can assess a more recent picture using the latest internal data.

We have developed a guide and embedded system to continue gathering and reviewing data internally on a termly and annual basis to facilitate swift adaptation and remain agile in responding to our unique circumstances as a small provider.

5.5.1 Current data evaluation practice

We use a range of data sources to understand patterns in student access, success and progression. These include an analysis of internal data alongside HESA and OfS datasets. We focus on key indicators among new entrants, continuing and progressing students such as IMD quintile, age, ethnicity, disability, and intersectional disadvantages. Termly intake reports and annual reviews of continuation and attainment monitor our demographic trends and outcomes. We have also begun to monitor learning analytics from Moodle, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which helps identify at-risk students through their engagement with the platform, in addition to attendance, engagement and coursework submissions. We also integrate the student voice through regular surveys, focus groups, and student representative participation on the Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). Our Access and Participation Steering Group reviews data throughout the year to inform decision-making, make recommendations to the Senior Management Team and ensure the effectiveness of activities.

5.5.2 Commitments to strengthen

While our current use of data is robust, we are a small provider with limited capacity and committed to further developing our capabilities and insight. Over the 2025–28 period, we will continue to embed a system for data gathering, cleaning, and analysis, based on an internal guide and dedicated personnel. We have access to a new APP data collaborative dashboard in partnership with SEER to support cross-institutional monitoring and planning. We are working to expand our use of disaggregated data tracking across protected characteristics to better understand how intersecting identities impact outcomes. We are already monitoring data on a termly and annual basis, but we are now developing systems to enhance interim monitoring on emerging risks throughout the term, such as tracking engagement with English and IT skills support and our Moodle VLE. We are working to improve system integration between Quercus (student records), Moodle (VLE), and ActiveCampaign (CRM and automated communications tool) to enable more efficient and responsive data reporting. These improvements will strengthen our ability to evaluate impact, intervene early, and continuously refine our practices based on evidence.

6. Student Consultation

At DGHE, we are committed to systematically embedding the student voice in our institutional decision-making and governance processes. Student consultation is part of our processes in planning, delivery, and evaluation of access and participation work. We recognise and value the unique insights students bring, and we aim to ensure their voices shape our education experience.

DGHE employs a range of formal and informal mechanisms to gather student feedback and ensure it informs policy and practice. Institutional surveys are conducted twice annually to gather broad insights into the student experience. In addition, a permanent on-campus suggestion box and an open-door policy with staff ensure that students can provide input at any time. Students are also encouraged to engage via email, in person, or through institutional social media channels.

Each course group has the opportunity to elect a Student Representative, ensuring all subject areas and intakes are represented. These representatives participate in formal governance structures, including the Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. SSLC meetings are held at least once per term, and input from these discussions is incorporated into our academic and operational enhancement cycles.

While DGHE does not currently operate a traditional Students' Union – mostly because our student body is made up of many mature learners balancing work and care responsibilities, so are unable to participate in traditional extracurricular activities – we have developed alternative ways to ensure inclusive and meaningful participation. Notably, we have student reps and the SSLC. In addition, Students have been involved in both our recent QAA and TEF reviews, creating their own Student Submissions in each case.

The Senior Management Team reviews student feedback regularly and resulting changes are communicated back to students through monthly newsletters, our website blog and social media, Moodle announcements, and in-class updates. We also produce annual "You Said, We Did" posters and social media content to demonstrate the impact of student feedback and encourage ongoing engagement.

Our National Student Survey (NSS) results consistently show that students feel their voice is heard. In the 2025 NSS results, when asked "How clear is it that students' feedback on the course is acted on?" Our positively rating was 96.3%. This compares to a sector average of 67.9%, scoring us 28.4pp above the average).

6.1 Student Involvement in the APP Process

Since launching our 2023 APP, DGHE has appointed compensated APP Student Representatives who are invited to all APP Steering Group meetings and are directly involved in reviewing and shaping our APP documents and strategic direction. We also gathered two dedicated focus groups involving both general course representatives and APP Student Reps to input on the development of this next APP. These sessions explored student views on barriers to access, continuation, and success, and gathered suggestions for how the institution could improve equity and support. Insights from these focus groups directly influenced our strategic interventions and the proposed activities. We are committed to maintaining a student voice on the APSG and integrating systemic student feedback in the implementation and monitoring of our APP.

Input from students which has informed and been embedded into the Plan included:

- Recognition that DGHE makes support services well known and central to the student experience, and encouragement to continue this.
- Some students noted that they would like to see DGHE advertised more widely so more potential applicants are aware of it as an option for them, which aligns with the goals of outreach and partnership work.
- Students were interested in the activities engaging industry partners and want DGHE to develop more careers-related placements and workshops. They are also keen on the idea of professionals delivering classes to embed employability skills in the curriculum.
- Students want more IT skills, Excel, and typing skills workshops, noting that these are areas some mature students struggle with.
- Suggestion to pilot a micro-grant scheme to support student-led wellbeing activities, as students said they want to have the opportunity to co-design these with staff.
- Some students noted feeling overwhelmed by an overload of information during the induction day and would appreciate this being spread out where possible. We committed to unpack our student induction programme to create a more extended period of communication through multiple channels about how to access available support services.

6.2 Future Ambitions

DGHE will continue to strengthen student collaboration across all areas of institutional planning, with a particular focus on embedding students in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of APP initiatives. While our representatives naturally reflect the diversity of our student population, many of whom are from underrepresented background, we intend to explore additional ways to support inclusive representation and ensure that equity is central to all aspects of our student voice strategy.

7. Evaluation of the plan

7.1 Strategic Context for Evaluation

Evaluation and research are part of our 'whole institution' approach to access and participation. Our academic, professional and leadership teams contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of targets, intervention strategies and activities in this plan through supporting and inputting on the range of evaluation measures. Our data team have skills in ensuring data capture is appropriate for the required monitoring and evaluation outputs, including designing new reports and processes to capture, collate and extract data for various evaluation and research questions. We also draw on the skills of staff responsible for the delivery of the Activities in this Plan, and our student representatives, to effectively incorporate evaluation.

In our assessment of our current context for evaluation, using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, we score as a mixture of 'emerging' and 'advanced' across the categories of evaluation practice. We have some foundations in place, but there are areas in which we can develop our practices, including embedding evaluation into activity design and delivery and ensuring feedback cycles into improving practice. Therefore, as we continue to build our cross-institution capacities for effective evaluation and the application of findings to improve practice, staff and student representatives will be supported with relevant training in Theory of Change and evaluation

methods, provided through our SEER membership. Students are important in this work, and we will work in partnership with students on the design and implementation of evaluation and research, particularly where this pertains to current students. SEER provides us with additional and specialist evaluation and research expertise to deliver our commitments in these areas. We will actively participate in this network, which provides us with opportunities to be part of collaborative research and evaluation projects and learn and share practice with other members and external stakeholders. SEER host an annual Symposium and regular workshops, roundtables and 'learning lunches' throughout the year, as well as providing us with opportunities to showcase our practice and insights. We will also engage with TASO and other relevant organisations in calls for evidence, conferences, events, and training.

7.2 Activity design

As detailed in the Strategic Measures section of this Plan, evaluation has been established at the start. We have built effective evaluation practice into our Strategies by establishing a range of evaluation attached to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each Strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are 'working' and which are not. We have taken a Theory of Change approach to the development of our Intervention Strategies, identifying clear intended outcomes (intermediate and end) and a supporting evidence base that has informed our activity development and challenged assumptions. We will continue to review, develop and strengthen our Theories of Change (ToC), adding to our evidence base as our evaluation findings emerge and developing enhanced activity-level ToCs where required.

7.3 Evaluation design

We have collaborated with SEER and drawn from OfS and TASO toolkits and guidance on effective evaluation approaches. We have considered how the outcomes of activities can be evaluated credibly. Employing mixed method approaches is particularly important, as we will need to rely on qualitative data to support our understanding, or fill gaps, in quantitative data. We will triangulate findings where possible and seek to deepen our insights through qualitative methods. Given the developmental stage of our evaluation practice, the majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), and type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS 'Standards of Evidence'. We have however noted that we will explore and consider where type 3 evaluation could be implemented in future.

Our evaluation approach has also considered the context and scale of the activities and, as we have proposed working with strategic partners in our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input, support and advice from partners. Our evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been formulated on the intended outcomes and objectives of our activities. Where appropriate and possible, we will consider and employ validated scales to our evaluation practices. We have also considered evaluation that spans (a) process and (b) impact, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how our activities are working. We will explore further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of target students and issues of equality of opportunity. For example, consultation with students as part of the development of this Plan supports the identification of risks relating to insufficient information and guidance available when applying to higher education and David Game Higher Education; however, we consider that there is further research that would add insight to this area.

7.4 Implementing our Evaluation Plan

We will collaborate internally across our team and with our strategic partners to deliver our evaluation plan. Our evaluation process will comply with institutional policies and complies with all legal requirements relating to data protection, following ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations. As noted above, we are members of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, with whom we will work in partnership to deliver our evaluation plan. A Data Sharing Agreement has also been established. SEER provides us with opportunities to collaborate on various evaluation and research items, including for example the evaluation of the impact of financial support, using the OfS toolkit. The design of our evaluation has also been heavily informed by intended and projected standardised outcomes being adopted by SEER across its membership base, which not only increases efficiencies but provides opportunities to increase the sample size and evaluation, helping to mitigate the issue of small datasets where these occur. SEER incorporate and draw on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations. As a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation and share practice and findings. We are also well-placed to respond with agility to interim findings and emerging data. We can be responsive in flexing our activity accordingly to help to keep us on track to achieve our objectives and targets, and continuously improve our practice.

7.5 Learning from and Disseminating Findings

We are committed to sharing our learning and findings internally, with our partners, within our close networks and with the broader sector, to develop a stronger and increased volume of evidence about what works and what can be improved. We are pleased to help to grow the evidence base for equality of opportunity in higher education and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS' repository of evidence as appropriate. In Section 4, we have set out our publishing plan, which includes publishing findings on interim and longer-term outcomes through a range of channels. In developing the format of our communications, we will consider creative and visual methods, and different audiences/purposes. We will ensure that our findings are open access.

We are a member of Independent Higher Education (IHE) and Specialist Education Evaluation and Research (SEER) at which we can share and present findings. It is anticipated that we will actively contribute to conferences, network events and publications. Where appropriate we will draw on existing networks to collaborate and engage with similar organisations. Other organisations we associate with include AccessHE, JISC, the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), the student services organisation AMOSSHE, and Health Assured which provide online AWS counselling services for students and staff.

Shared practice across the institution 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 and revalidation, communications and recruitment strategies and community engagement. We will publish the findings of our evaluation activities on our website and with sector bodies as appropriate. Further details about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in Section 4.

8. Provision of information to students

An accessible summary of this plan alongside this full version will be made available on our website.

We are committed to providing prospective and current students with clear, accurate, and accessible information about their courses, entry requirements, fees, and financial support throughout their student journey. We recognise the importance of transparent communication to support informed decision-making, particularly for students at risk of not experiencing equality of opportunity. Information is available to students and applicants through our website and internal student information platform. As well, friendly and knowledgeable staff are available for guests in our reception or via email, online chat and telephone. Scholarships and bursaries are subject to change; for the most up to date information on our scholarships and bursaries (including criteria) please refer to our website.

We also provide clear information about financial support programmes designed to reduce barriers for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Targeted characteristics include students residing in IMD Q1 areas and those with household income below £25,000, as well as mature students, disabled students, and those struggling with multiple challenges such as refugees, care leavers and veterans.

Students can check their eligibility for financial support based on whether they live in an area of disadvantage by using a postcode checker. We recommend students use the [English indices of deprivation 2019 data lookup tool](#) and use the Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile data to check for eligibility. Students in home postcodes from Decile 1 or 2 will be from our target group (IMD Quintile 1) and may be eligible for financial support if they also meet other criteria.

The following information table summarises our financial support programmes, their purpose and criteria for eligibility, the number of awards per intake, quantity and time period of support.

Financial Support Programme	Purpose	Criteria for Eligibility	Number of Awards	Level of Support	Level of Support in Subsequent Years of Study
Student Success Bursary (SSB)	To support students from under-represented backgrounds	New students in their first year of undergraduate study who reside in an area of disadvantage defined by postcode and have a household income of less than £25,000. Students can check their home postcode online (full details provided above) to see if they	Available first-come, first-serve up to 12 new students per intake.	£750 (cash)	£750 per year, if eligibility continues.

		reside in an eligible 'IMD Quintile 1' postcode area.			
Refugee Support Bursary (RSB)	To assist students with refugee or asylum status	New or continuing students with official documentation confirming refugee or asylum status in the UK.	Available to up to 2 new students per intake.	£750 (cash)	£750 per year, if eligibility continues.
Hardship Fund	To provide emergency support during financial crises	Enrolled students facing unexpected financial hardship. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis with supporting evidence.	Limited number, based on available funds.	Variable (case-by-case) up to £2,000.	Reassessed upon application in any academic year.

Annex A: Further information and analysis relating to the identification and prioritisation of key risks to equality of opportunity

APP PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

We have conducted a thorough performance assessment based on the latest OfS APP data release (July 2024) which covers up to the 2022-23 monitoring year. We have supplemented this with internal data where relevant and possible, to provide additional insights particularly where datasets are small or demonstrating developments since the implementation of our APP in 2023. From this analysis, we have determined our key Indicators of Risk, which we have explored further using supplementary information, data and evidence from internal and local sources; and, from the wider sector and sector bodies.

We considered performance across all APP measures, at each stage of the lifecycle:

- Access – enrolment
- Continuation – continuing students measured at 1 year and 15 days post initial enrolment
- Completion – students completing their course, up to 6 years after beginning their studies
- Attainment – achievement of a First or 2:1 degree outcome (HND equivalent of Merit or Distinction)
- Progression – progression into highly skilled employment or further post-graduate study

This assessment presents only the identified indicators of risk areas from our full analysis.

ANALYSIS PROCESS

1. The first layer of analysis explored the whole OfS APP dataset, identifying the Indicators of Risk for further consideration and inclusion in this Annex, as part of our Access and Participation Plan (APP) performance assessment and determination of target areas.
2. Supplementary data (internal and external) and questions are then added to further understand the context for the indicator of risk and the possible occurrence of risks to equality of opportunity.
3. Commentary on our consideration of the risks in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), and whether they are occurring in our context, is then provided.

SUMMARY OF INDICATORS OF RISK AND TARGET AREAS

The following table highlights all the indicators of risk we have identified from the full initial data analysis.

Table 1: Summary of Indicators of Risk and Priorities

Metric /Student Group	IMD Quintile 1	TUNDRA	Ethnic Minority	Disabled	Mature learners (21 & over)	ABCS	FSM-eligible learners
Access	Positive enrolment gap for Q1 though % remains below sector average. Continue monitoring.	Gap is present, but provider context makes this measure less relevant.	Enrolments increased significantly in most recent data; continue monitoring.	PTA_1	Positive gap present, no target required.	Very limited data available to understand gap. Continue monitoring.	Very limited data available and limited relevance to majority Mature cohort.
Continuation	Small gap present, but above sector average. Continue monitoring.	Positive gap present, no target required.	PTS_1	Positive gap present, no target required.	Positive gap present, no target required.	Very limited data available to understand gap. Continue monitoring.	Very limited data available and limited relevance to majority Mature cohort.
Completion							
Attainment	PTS_2		Gap is present, but below sector average. Continue monitoring.	PTS_3	PTS_4		
Progression	Gap is present but the data are very small. Continue monitoring.	Positive gap, though very small data.	Gap is present but the data are very small. Continue monitoring.	Gap is present but the data are very small. Continue monitoring.	Limited data available, not possible to analyse.	Gap is present but the data are very small. Continue monitoring.	

Key

	No data available		Priority Target (PT)
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PRIORITY TARGET AREAS

We have determined that the following priority areas will be of concern under our APP, with associated targets and milestones.

1. Enrolment of Disabled students.
2. Continuation for Ethnic Minority students.
3. Attainment for IMD Quintile 1 students.
4. Attainment for Mature students.
5. Attainment for Disabled students.

ANALYSIS - ACCESS

We have identified some risks to equality of opportunity at DGHE at the Access phase of the student lifecycle. Risks are likely the result of multiple factors and complex intersections, including for example, access to pre-entry knowledge and skills, and perceptions of higher education being less achievable for mature learners, who make up the majority of our student cohort.

Overall, David Game Higher Education (DGHE) has had a steady intake of students since data was first available in 2020-21. In 2020-21 there were 200 entrants, in 2021-22 there were 270, and 2022-23 saw 200 entrants again.

Where we have used some internal data to show more recent access trends, our 2024-25 data includes students from our September and January cohorts; this is incomplete as data from May cohorts was not available at the time of analysis. We are therefore treating this data with caution and awareness that it is not complete for our full cohorts.

Individualised institutional APP data (based on 3-year aggregates available for 2020-21 to 2022-23) shows that for some demographics, there are positive gaps where target groups have better access rates than their comparator groups:

IMD 2019 (INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION)

The difference in percentage enrolment rates between IMD Quintile 1 students and their comparator group – the IMD Quintile 5 students who are the least disadvantaged, shows that we have a positive enrolment gap in favour of Quintile 1 students.

Over the latest 3-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2022-23), the gap was -13.4pp. The sector gap between IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5 students is 2.8pp (4-year average 2019-20 to 2022-23).

MATURE LEARNERS (21 AND OVER)

We have a predominantly mature learner (21 and over) intake which has been slowly increasing since 2020-21; from 92.9% in 2020-21, to 94.4% in 2021-22 and 94.5% in 2022-23. The 3-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2022-23) of 94% mature intake is far above the sector 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) of 28.5%.

The remaining Access risk indicators associate with negative access rates and/or gaps in our data.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

TUNDRA is a Quintile-based risk indicator of participation in higher education by geographical area, where Quintiles 1 and 5 include students from areas with respectively the lowest and highest participation.

There is limited public data available for DGHE due to data suppression because of small numbers of students from TUNDRA Quintile 1. Individualised institutional APP data tells us that over the 3-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2022-23) there were 5.9% TUNDRA Quintile 1 students. For comparison, the sector rate of enrolment of TUNDRA Quintile 1 students is 12.2% (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23).

There is limited public data available for the DGHE enrolment gap between Quintile 1 and 5 students due to data suppression of Quintile 1. Our individualised institutional APP data tells us this gap is 45.2pp in favour of TUNDRA Quintile 5 students (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23). This is higher than the sector gap of 18pp (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Whilst this is a large gap, other contextual factors must be considered. DGHE is a predominantly local recruiter in London, which as a region has a higher rate of participation in higher education compared to other regions and fewer TUNDRA Quintile 1 areas. Therefore, the higher representation of Quintile 5 students is to be expected, and this context has been considered when reviewing this indicator of risk.

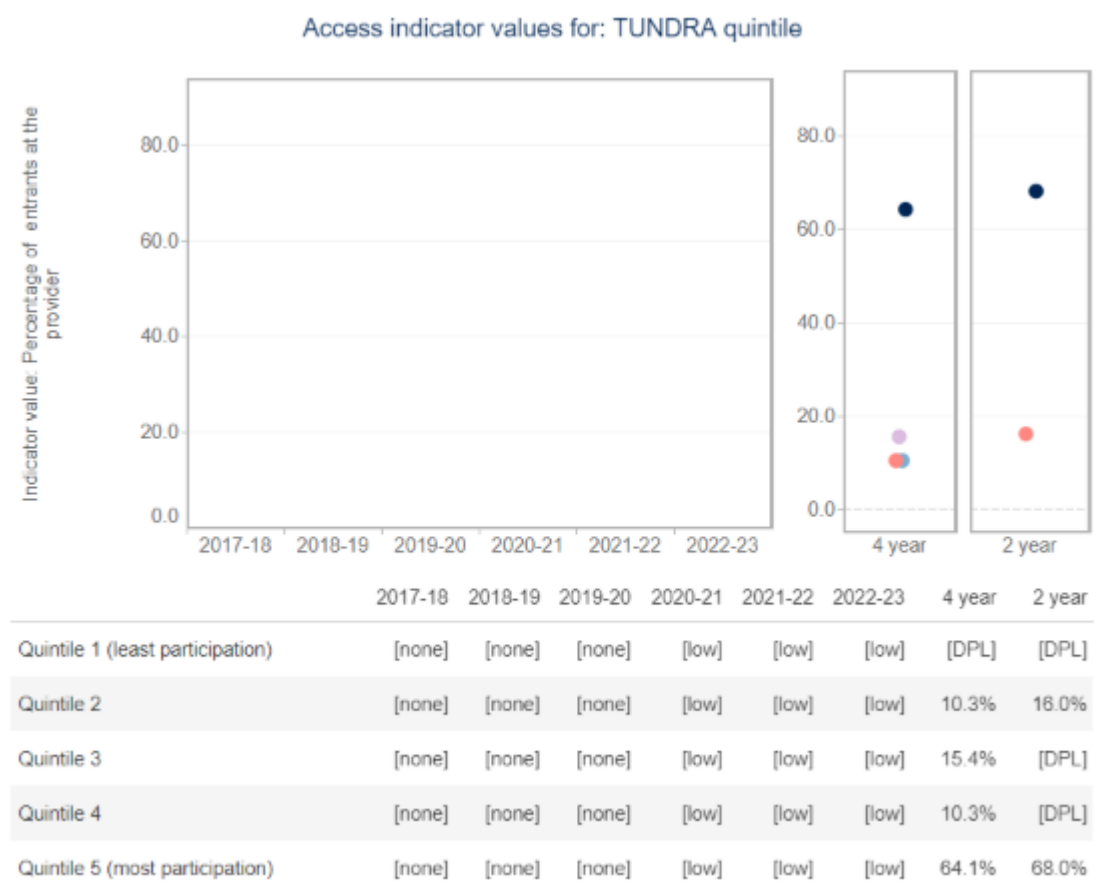


Figure 1 OfS APP dashboard access indicator values for TUNDRA Quintiles

Given this assessment, in the context of our London base and very small datasets, TUNDRA is not one of our priority targets for Access.

ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

The OfS APP data dashboard shows that DGHE has consistently seen an intake of predominantly White students at 92.3% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23), and a small intake of students from Ethnic Minority ethnicity groups over the last 3 years. The enrolment rates for all Ethnic Minorities at DGHE are 7.7% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23), which is far lower than the sector at 34.3% (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23).

DGHE's proportion of Ethnic Minority entrants has been below the population proportion for Ethnic Minority ethnicity groups, which sits at 18.3% in the latest 2021 census for England and Wales.¹ When compared to data for London, the predominant recruitment region for DGHE, the entrants from Ethnic Minority ethnicity groups have been below the population proportions. For example, DGHE's 3.2% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23) intake of Black students was well below the regional proportion of 13.5% Black residents.

The enrolment rate of Asian students has been particularly low, at 2.3% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23), which is below population parity² (9.3%) and significantly below the sector enrolment rate of 15.4% (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Black student enrolments, at 3.2% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23) of all DGHE entrants, were below the population parity (4%) and the sector enrolment rate of 10.6% (4-year aggregate).

Mixed heritage students have been particularly under-represented, with 0.8% (3-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2022-23), well below both the population parity (2.9%) and the 5.5% sector rate (4-year aggregate).

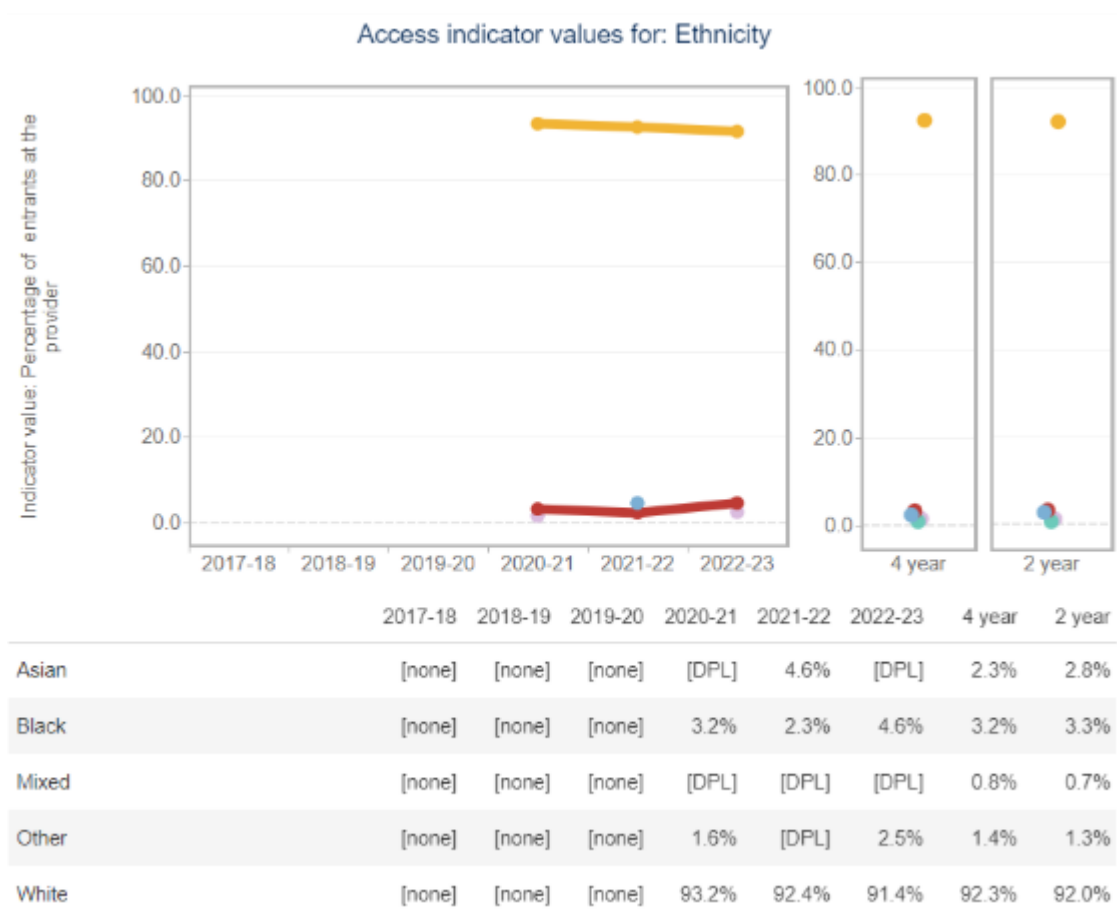


Figure 2 OfS APP dashboard access indicator values for Ethnicity

Key

- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- Other
- White

However, our more recent internal data capturing access data between 2022-23 and 2024-25 demonstrates an increase in the intake of students from Ethnic Minority ethnicity groups over the most recent 3 years. The enrolment rates for all Ethnic Minority ethnic groups at DGHE are now 31.7% (2-year aggregate 2023-24 to 2024-25). Whilst this is slightly lower than the sector's 34.4% average (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23), our individual years of data demonstrate a significant increase in Ethnic Minority enrolments. There was a 32.3pp increase in enrolments of Ethnic Minority students between 2023-24 (16.1%) and 2024-25 (48.3%). The increase is related to integrating ethnic diversification into DGHE's recruitment marketing strategy, improving community outreach in local communities and targeted advertising, and the opening of our new campus in Croydon, which has seen a predominantly Ethnic Minority intake. As we plan to maintain our marketing diversification strategy and the Croydon campus over the duration of our

APP, we expect these enrolment figures to continue to be similarly at parity or above the sector average across the lifespan of our APP.

Enrolment rates for David Game Higher Education by Ethnicity (2022-23 to 2024-25)

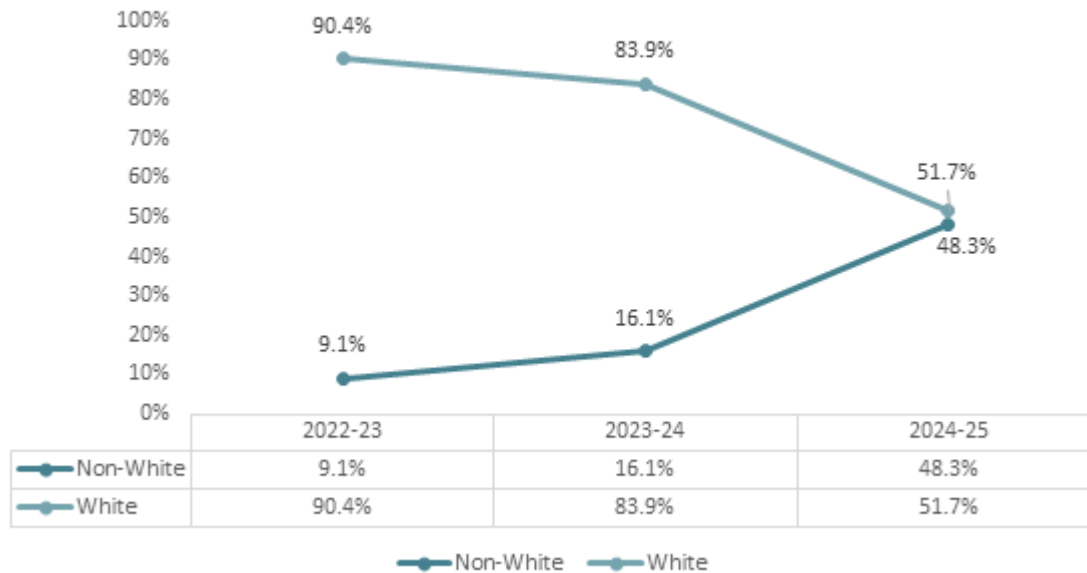


Figure 3 Internal data for enrolment rates of White and Non-White students

Therefore, we propose that as our marketing strategy and geographic provision has developed to better meet the needs of the local Ethnic Minority population we primarily recruit from, access for Ethnic Minority students is no longer one of our priority targets for Access. We will continue to monitor enrolment trends over time to track any emerging downward trends in accepting Ethnic Minority students, and take appropriate action if our enrolment rates return to below-sector average levels.

DISABLED STUDENTS

The OfS APP data dashboard for disabled entrants shows a 3-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2022-23) of 3.9% of entrants reporting a disability. This figure is far below the sector's 4-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2022-23) of 17.3% disabled entrants. The 3.9% relates to 30 total disabled students across the 3-year aggregate reporting a disability, highlighting the small numbers of disabled students referred to in the data.

There appears to be a slight trend of increasing numbers of students reporting a disability, as the percentages of disabled students rose from 2% in 2020-21 to 6% in 2022-23. This reflects some national trends of increasing disclosure of disabilities, and improved capacity to identify and serve these students within DGHE.

Data disaggregated by type of disability is very small, with some data suppression due to small numbers of students reporting social and communication impairments. Analysis is limited by the very small numbers, although there appears to be a slightly increasing intake of students with cognitive or learning difficulties, increasing from 1.5% in 2020-21 to 2.5% in 2022-23.

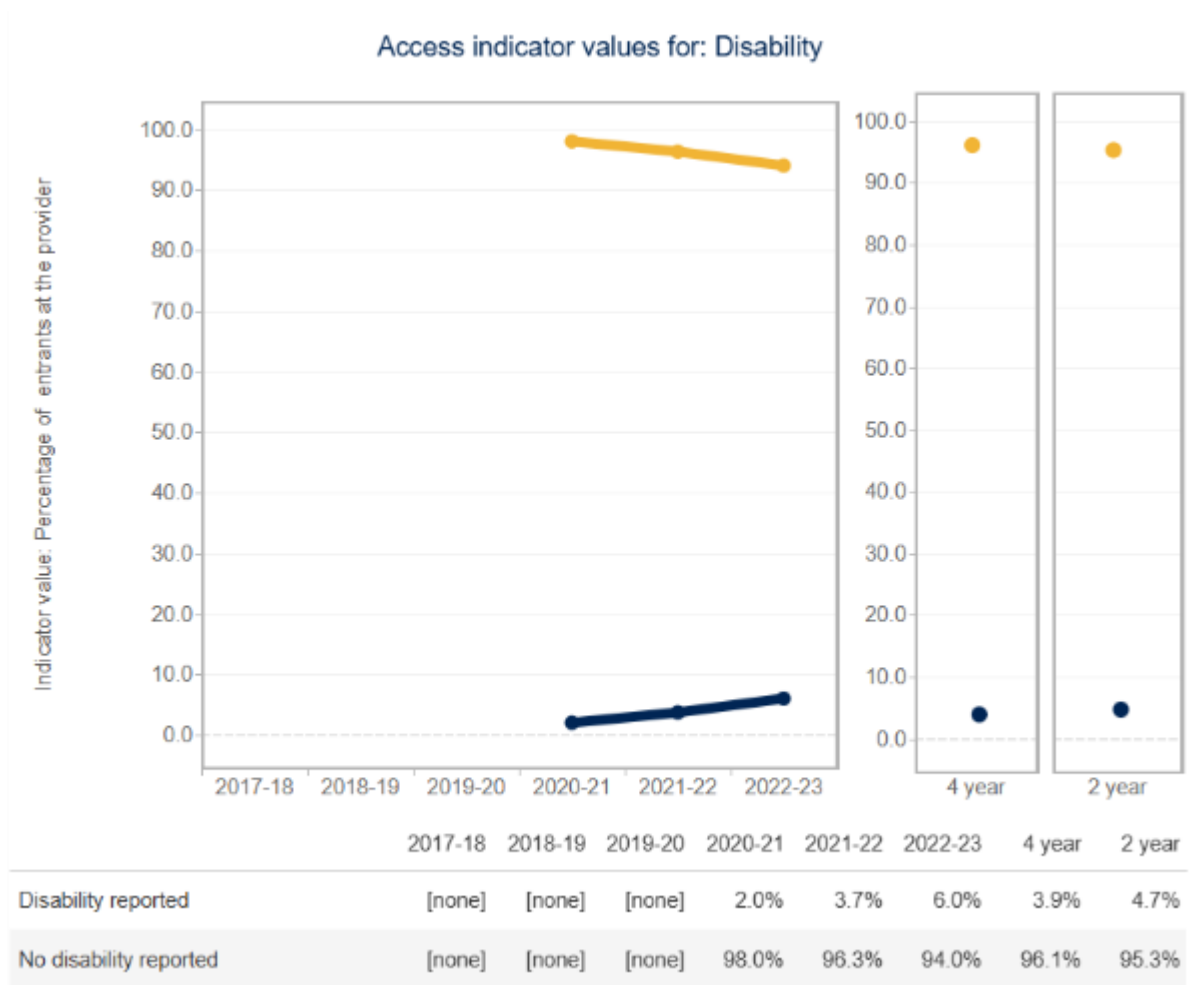


Figure 4 OfS APP dashboard access indicator values for Disability

Key
■ No disability reported
■ Disability reported

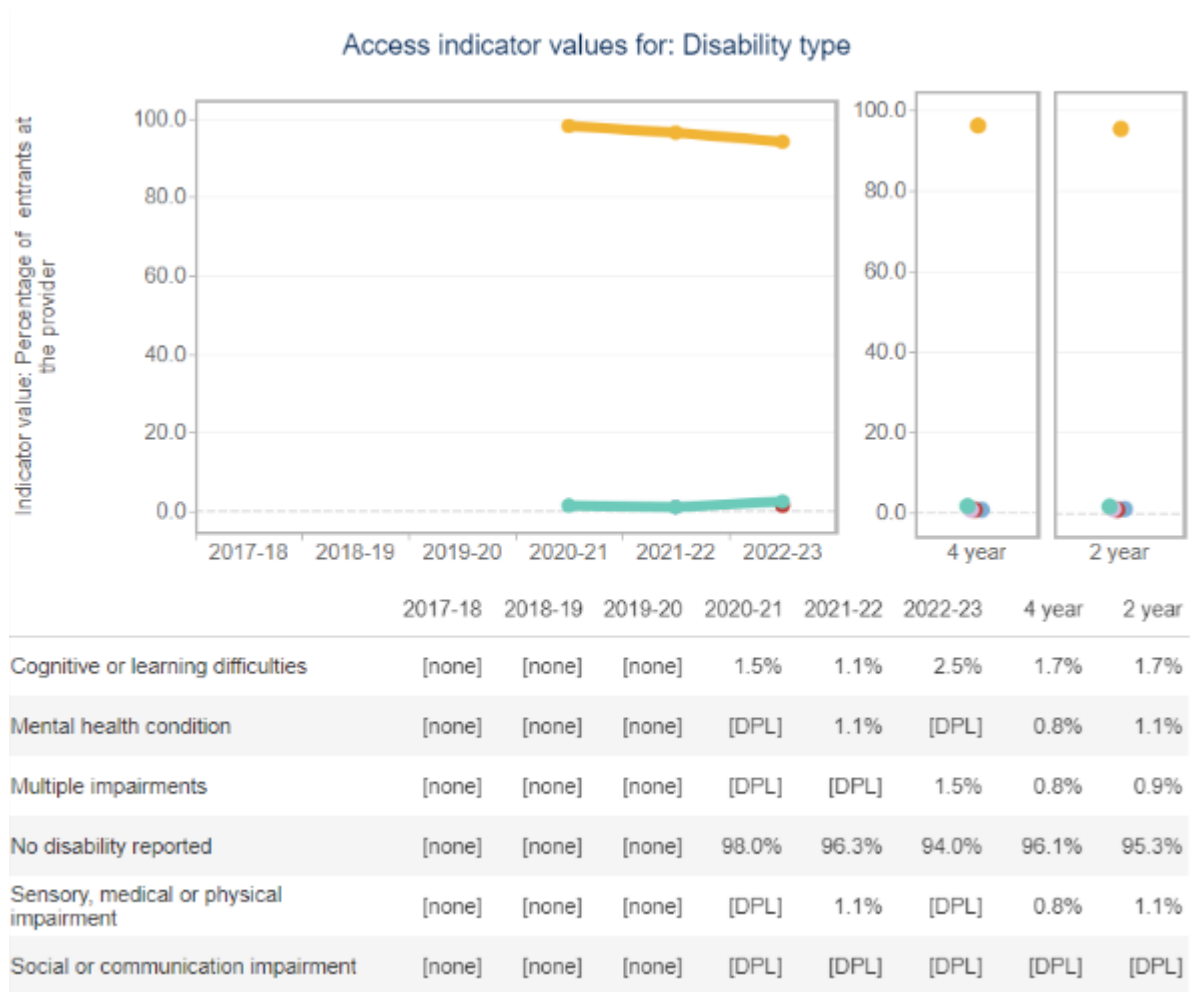


Figure 5 OfS APP dashboard access indicator values for Disability Type

Key

- Cognitive or learning difficulties
- Mental health condition
- Multiple impairments
- Sensory, medical or physical impairment
- Social or communication impairment
- No disability reported

Our more recent internal data capturing access data between 2022-23 and 2024-25 demonstrates a small increase in the intake of students reporting a disability over the most recent 4 years. The enrolment rate for disabled students at DGHE is 5.2% (4-year aggregate 2021-22 to 2024-25), which is an improvement on the publicly available data up until 2022-23 but still below the most comparable sector average currently available of 17.3% disabled entrants (4-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2022-23). The most recent 4 years of data demonstrates an increase in disabled entrants at DGHE compared to the data available in the OfS APP data dashboard of a 3-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2022-23) of 3.9% of entrants reporting a disability.

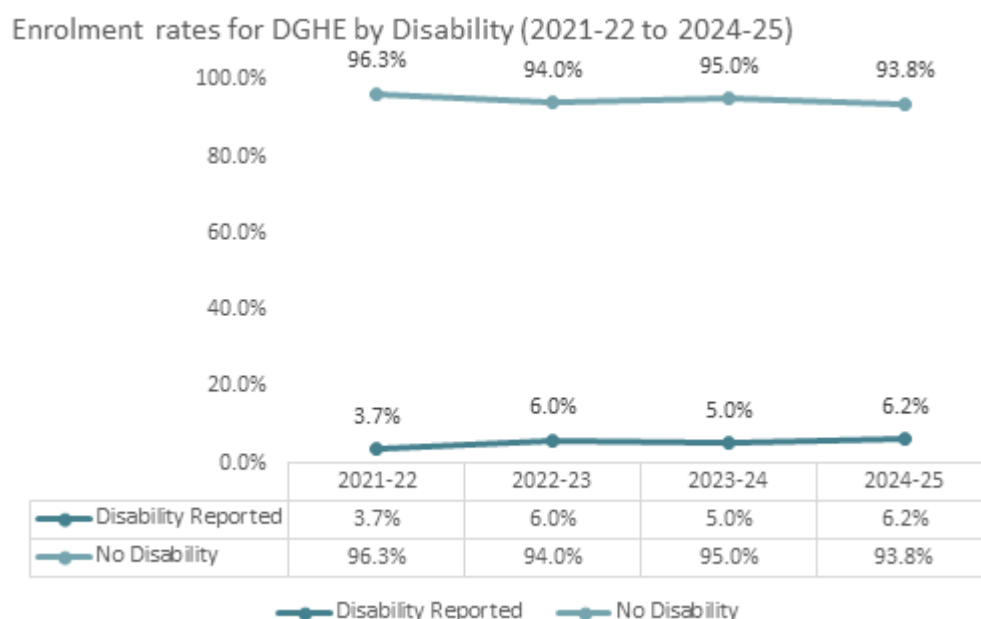


Figure 6 HESA reported data for enrolment rates by Disability Reported upon entry

Whilst our more recent data shows improved enrolment rates over the last few years, we have also considered our data more holistically. We have a majority mature cohort who can lack awareness of having disabilities or additional needs, may face additional stigma or do not understand how to declare their disability to access support. Therefore, we have seen a trend of many of our students not having their disability fully assessed and officially confirmed by DGHE until after they have been reported to HESA as a new entrant, which means our data on disabled entrants does not show the fuller picture of our disabled cohort. Our internal data, which has combined disabled entrants declared to HESA in their year of entry with those who were confirmed as having a reported disability after their year of entry, shows some increases in our representation of disabled students. Over a 4-year aggregate (2021-22 to 2024-25) this is 9.1%, a 3.9pp increase on our data which only accounts for students who have been reported with a disability in their year of entry (5.7%, 4-year aggregate 2021-22 to 2024-25). We have taken into account the context of our learners and are aware that our external data for our access rates for disabled learners may not reflect the realities of our students lives, which we will consider in our target-setting. We are also aware that our provision to support disabled students extends beyond those students with confirmed disabilities to also serve those who are still pursuing self-identification, assessment and confirmation.

Number of disabled entrants at DGHE after later discovery (2021-22 to 2024-25)

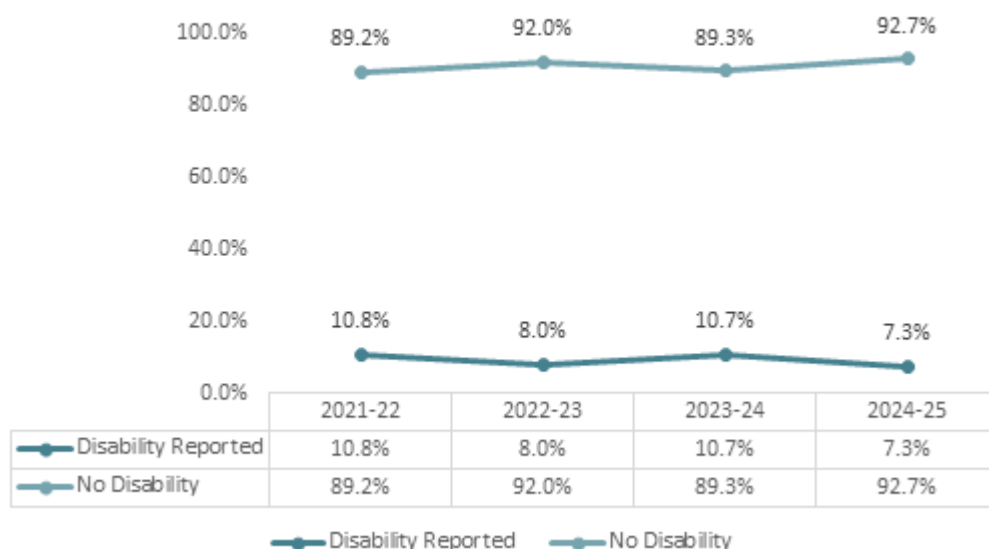


Figure 7 Internal data for number of disabled entrants after later assessment and identification

Whilst our most recent data shows some improvement from our OfS public data, this remains below sector average. Because our student often assess and identify their disabilities later in their studies, there is still a trend of decreasing enrolment numbers of disabled students between 2022-23 and 2024-25, although the 2024-25 data only includes internal data up to March 2025. There are also fewer students identifying as disabled in 2022-2023. Therefore, we have included Disability as a priority target area for Access.

CARE LEAVERS

DGHE do not currently collect care leaver data. We are cognisant that students who are care leavers, estranged from families and refugees often face significant challenges in higher education, including lower continuation and attainment rates compared to their peers.

While this risk indicator is not included in our priority target areas for Access, we will commit to collecting and monitoring internal data on care leaver enrolment where appropriate.

ABCS

The new ABCS (Associations Between Characteristics of Students) measure considers multiple student characteristics including ethnicity, free school meal (FSM) eligibility, gender, income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) index of multiple deprivation (IMD) and TUNDRA. It is a quintile measure, with ABCS Quintile 1 representing the most disadvantaged.

DGHE has very limited access to data available for all ABCS Quintiles, so it is not possible to make any meaningful analyses of this measure. Based on the lack of data available and the newness of the measure, we are not proposing setting a target for this group at this time for Access, although we will continue to monitor it closely and look to improve our data collection for this measure.

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) AT KEY STAGE 4

This measure explores access rates for students who have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Key Stage 4.

DGHE has very limited access to data available for FSM, so it is not possible to make any meaningful analyses of this measure. FSM as a measure is also not relevant for our majority mature intake. Based on the lack of data available and the limited relevance for our cohort, we are not proposing setting a target for this group at this time for Access, although we will continue to monitor it closely and look to improve our data collection for this measure.

CONTINUATION

This section provides our performance on student continuation for identified key risk indicators.

Continuation is measured as the proportion of enrolled students continuing into a second year of higher education study 1 year and 15 days post-enrolment or completing study and leaving with a higher education qualification.

Using the OfS APP data dashboard, overall continuation at David Game Higher Education in 2021-22 was 92.2%, an increase from 82.3% in 2020-21. These are the only years of data available (2020-21 to 2021-22), with a 2-year aggregate continuation rate of 88%. This is comparable to sector performance for 2020-21 (87.1% for the sector) and the sector's 4-year aggregate of 89.3%.

Individualised institutional APP data (based on 2-year averages available for 2020-21 to 2021-22) shows that for some demographics, there are positive gaps where target groups have better continuation rates than their comparator groups.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

For TUNDRA Quintiles continuation data, TUNDRA Quintile 1 students have a 90% rate of continuation in the 2-year aggregate (2020-21 to 2021-22), comparable to the sector rate of 90.5% (2-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2020-21).

The continuation gap between TUNDRA Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 students at DGHE is a positive gap in favour of Quintile 1 students, meaning it is smaller than the sector gap of 3.2pp (2-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2020-21).

DISABLED STUDENTS

Disabled students at DGHE have a continuation rate of 93% (2-year aggregate, 2020-21 to 2021-22), which is slightly better than the 88% continuation rate of non-disabled students (2-year aggregate, 2020-21 to 2021-22). This is a positive gap of -5pp, in favour of disabled students, and is therefore a smaller gap than the sector gap of 0.7pp in the comparable 2-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2020-21). These observations are based on extremely small numbers of individual students across the available years of data and should continue to be monitored over time.

MATURE LEARNERS (21 AND OVER)

Mature students at DGHE have a continuation rate of 89% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22), compared to the young students continuation rate of 79% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22).

This is a positive gap of -10pp, in favour of mature students, and therefore a smaller gap than the sector gap of 9pp in the comparable 2-year aggregate (2019-20 to 2020-21).

The continuation rate for mature students at DGHE is better than the sector average of 83.6% (2-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2020-21), whilst the continuation rate for young students is below the sector average of 92.6% (2-year aggregate 2019-20 to 2020-21).

There is limited data available for each risk to equality of opportunity due to small data sets available on the OfS APP dashboard. As such, we will continue to monitor our data but not set any targets for Continuation in the following areas, although small gaps may be present.

IMD 2019 (INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION)

The continuation rate for IMD Quintile 1 is 86.7% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22). This is better than the sector average for IMD Quintile 1 of 83.5% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22).

The continuation data for IMD Quintile 5 is suppressed on the OfS dashboard. Individualised institutional APP data shows the continuation rate for IMD Quintile 5 is 93% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22).

Whilst there is a small gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5, data is very small and our Quintile 1 continuation rate is above the sector. Therefore, we do not propose to set a target in this area, although we will closely monitor this over the life of this Plan.

ABCS

There is limited data available for continuation by ABCS Quintile, with ABCS Quintile 1 representing students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. Data is only available on the OfS dashboard for Quintiles 1, 2, and 3, with 4 and 5 being suppressed due to small numbers. The continuation rate for ABCS Quintile 1 students is 88.2% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22), which is higher than the sector continuation rate of 79.1% (2-year aggregate 2020-21 to 2021-22). There is some limited individualised institutional APP data available to review ABCS Quintiles 4 and 5, though these are such small numbers it is not possible to make any meaningful analysis or comparison with ABCS Quintile 1.

Due to very small datasets and the limitation of interpreting these, we do not propose to set a target. We will however continue to monitor data and, as our datasets build over time, may seek to set a target in future if gaps emerge.

Alongside the OfS APP data dashboard, we have used some internal data to assess our progress against continuation targets set in our previous APP. This has allowed us to look at continuation data by Ethnicity specifically, though other characteristics have not been possible to analyse at this time. We are reviewing internal processes so we can undertake more detailed analysis of other student characteristics in time.

ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

Internal continuation data for Ethnic Minority and White students shows a 4-year aggregate gap of 10.1pp (2020-21 to 2023-24). The most recent years of data show a gap of 11.7pp (2-year aggregate, 2022-23 to 2023-24). The sector gap is 2.6pp (4-year aggregate, 2018-19 to 2021-22). Whilst there has been some improvement in the gap, reducing from 14.8pp in 2021-22 to 2022-23

(2-year aggregate), the gap remains and we propose to set a Continuation target for students from Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

Continuation for Ethnic Minority and White students (2020-21 to 2023-24)

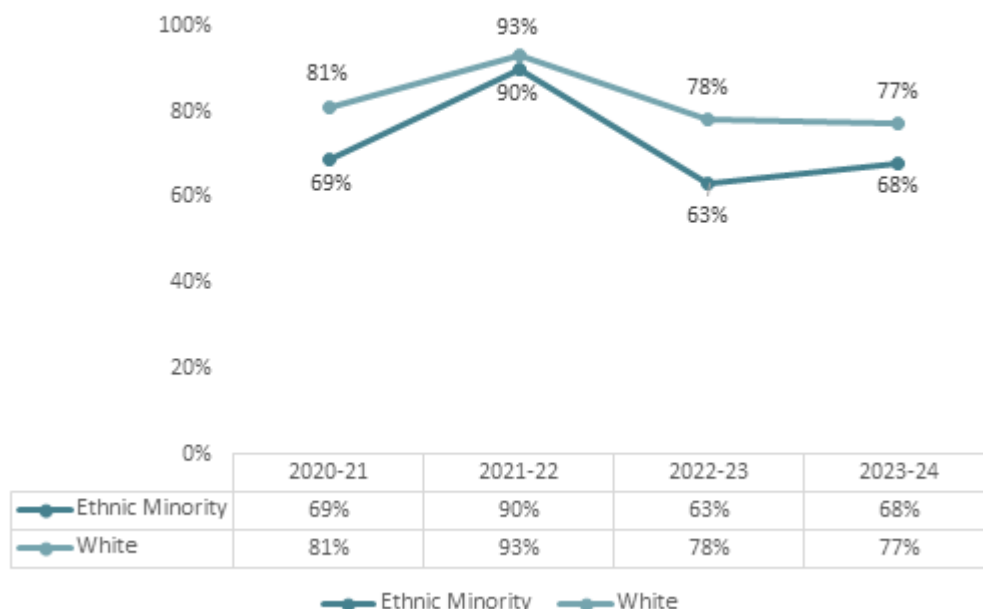


Figure 8 Internal data for continuation of Ethnic Minority and White students

Gap	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23 to 2023-24 (2-year aggregate)
Ethnic Minority vs White gap	12pp	3pp	15pp	9pp	11.7pp

Figure 9 Table of continuation gap between Ethnic Minority and White students

COMPLETION

This section provides our performance in student completion for the OfS key risk indicators and target groups.

Completion is measured as the proportion of students completing their course within 6-years from enrolment.

DGHE has no completion data available in the OfS data dashboard, as the most recent year on OfS is 2018-19 and the earliest DGHE data is from 2020-21. Therefore, it is not possible to record any completion data at this time. We will continue to track and monitor our completion data when available.

ATTAINMENT

This section provides our performance with respect to the attainment of our students from key target groups.

Attainment is measured as the proportion of students who achieve a 'good degree', i.e., a First (1st) or a 2:1 degree outcome.

DGHE has no attainment data available in the OfS data dashboard, as we record our HND degree outcomes differently to the OfS data collection. OfS measure attainment with degree classification (e.g. First, 2:1). As DGHE programmes are HNDs which use Credit/Merit/Distinction, this attainment data is not available in the OfS dataset. Instead, we have analysed our internal data by mapping our Merit and Distinction HND classifications onto the First and 2:1 'Good Outcomes' defined by OfS – although these qualifications are different so it is not a direct comparison. Therefore, our analysis below equates achievement of Merit or Distinction as 'Good Outcomes'.

Our 2024-25 data includes students from our September and January cohorts; this is incomplete as data from May cohorts was not available at the time of analysis. We are therefore treating this data with caution and awareness that it is not complete for our full cohorts.

ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

Attainment data for our Ethnic Minority students shows small fluctuations in attainment rates over the most recent years of data. The 2-year aggregate gap (2023-24 to 2024-25) in attainment outcomes between Ethnic Minority and White students is 8.9pp. The sector gap is 11.1pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). The DGHE attainment rate for Ethnic Minority learners in HNDs over the 2-year aggregate (2023-24 to 2024-25) is 36.8% compared to 45.7% for White students. The sector average for degrees is 73.5% attainment for Ethnic Minority students and 84.2% attainment for White students (4-year aggregates, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

Whilst there is a gap present, this is smaller than the sector average gap, and therefore we are proposing that this is not a priority concern for the Plan. We will continue to monitor this data in case the gap widens.

Attainment for Ethnic Minority and White students (2021/22 to 2024/25)

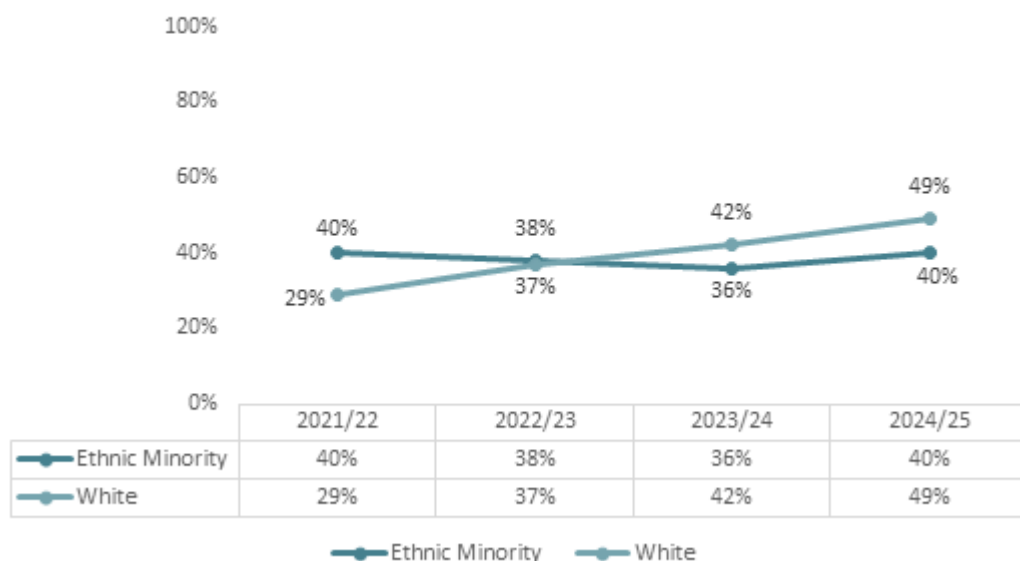


Figure 10 Internal data for attainment of Ethnic Minority and White students

MATURE LEARNERS (21 AND OVER)

Attainment data for our mature learners shows a steady increase in the attainment rate over the past four years. The attainment rate for 2024-25 is 48%, compared to a 60% attainment rate for young learners. Whilst a gap is present there, we have extremely small numbers of young learners, which does not provide a reliable measure or any statistical significance. The four-year aggregate attainment rate (2021-22 to 2024-2025) for mature learners is 38.6%, compared with 35% for young learners. When looked at as a two-year aggregate (2023-24 to 2024-25), the attainment rate for mature learners is 45.5%, compared with 41.7% for young learners.

Although mature learners are outperforming young learners, our attainment rate for mature learners studying HNDs is still below the sector average for degrees of 72.5% (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). Our mature student aggregate attainment rate of 38.6% (4-year aggregate, 2021-22 to 2024-25) is therefore 33.9pp below the sector average. We therefore propose that we consider a target in this area focusing on increasing the attainment rate of our mature cohorts.

Attainment for Mature and Young students (2021/22 to 2024/25)

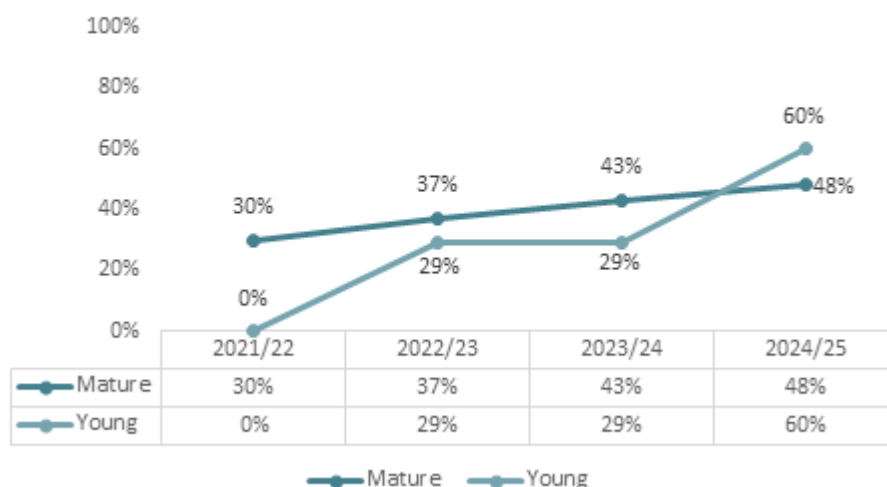


Figure 11 Internal data for attainment of Mature and Young students

IMD 2019 (INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION)

Attainment data for our IMD Quintile 1 learners shows a fluctuation in attainment rates, and gaps in performance compared with IMD Quintile 5 learners, over the past four years of data. Whilst our most recent data for 2024-25 shows a –35pp gap in attainment between IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5, our 4-year aggregate data (2021-22 to 2024-25) shows a gap of 25.5pp between these groups, due to the remaining years of data showing IMD Quintile 1 students performing worse than their Quintile 5 peers. This is higher than the sector gap of 17pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23).

The attainment rate of IMD Quintile 1 students across the 4-year aggregate (2021-22 to 2024-25) is 37.5% compared to 63% for IMD Quintile 5 students.

Our data presents a mixed picture, and concerns very small numbers of students, particularly from IMD Quintile 5. Whilst our most recent year of data appears to be showing an increase in the proportion of IMD Quintile 1 students achieving a good outcome, we consider this an area of concern under the Plan to minimise the attainment gap between IMD Quintile 1 and IMD Quintile 5 students more consistently over time.

Attainment for IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students (2021/22 to 2024/25)

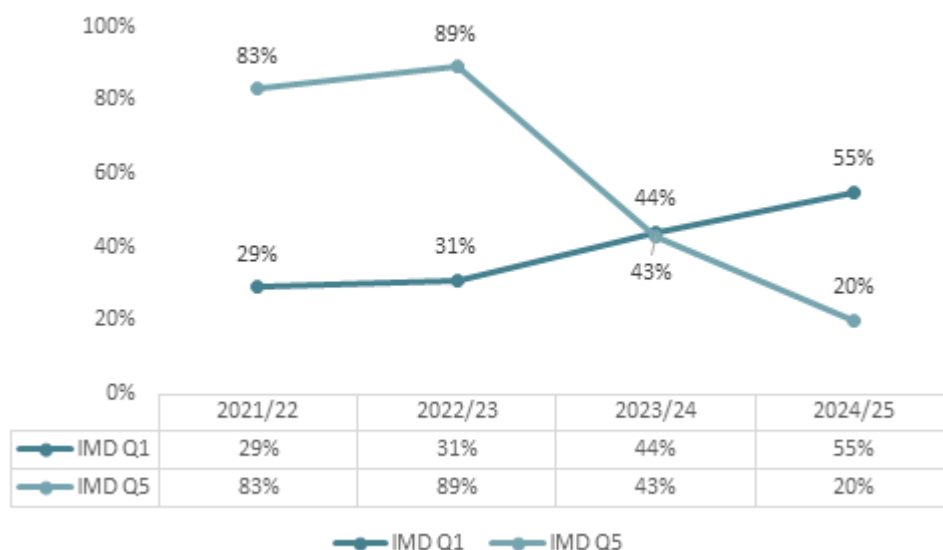


Figure 12 Internal data for attainment of IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students

DISABLED STUDENTS

Attainment data for our disabled learners shows a fluctuation in attainment rates, and gaps in performance compared with non-disabled learners, over the past four years of data. The attainment rate for disabled learners over the 4-year aggregate (2022-23 to 2024-25) is 39.2% compared to 38.4% for non-disabled learners. The gap is therefore -0.8pp. This is smaller than the sector average attainment gap of 0.2pp (4-year aggregate, 2019-20 to 2022-23). However, this positive gap is influenced by an unusual year of data for disabled students in 2021-22, based on extremely small numbers which skews this aggregate. When looking at a 2-year aggregate for the latest two years of data (2023-24 to 2024-25), there is an 8.4pp gap in attainment. This is more reflective of the continued performance of disabled students having a lower attainment rate compared to their non-disabled peers between 2022-23 and 2024-25.

As well as an attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled learners, we can also see that our attainment rates are well below the degree sector averages of 80.3% for disabled learners and 80.5% for non-disabled learners (4-year aggregates, 2019-20 to 2022-23) - though degree sector averages are not perfectly comparable to HND attainment, which is not publicly available. Therefore, we propose setting a target in this area under the Plan.

It should also be noted that we include internal data in Disability Attainment because typically more of our students identify as disabled later in their studies, after our HESA returns on new entrants – and we provide these students with extra support before their attainment is assessed at graduation.

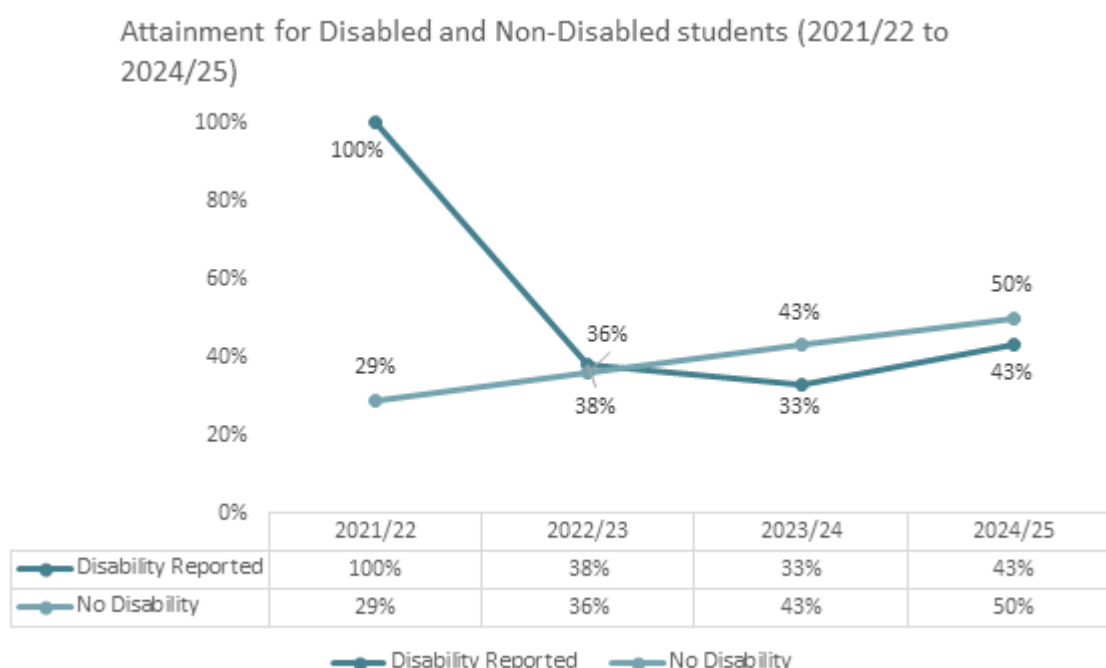


Figure 13 Internal data for attainment of Disabled and non-disabled students

PROGRESSION

This section provides our performance in relation to the progression of students from the OfS key target groups.

Progression is measured in terms of graduate destinations into the labour market or elsewhere that include being employed in a highly skilled professional or managerial job, or undertaking further study, or another positive outcome.

DGHE has progression data available for 2021-22 only, with an overall progression rate of 54.3%. This is significantly lower than the sector progression rates of degrees, which are 72.6% for 2021-22 and 72.4% over the 4-year aggregate. However, our data is more comparable to a sector average of 57% progression rate for “Other Undergraduate” students, which includes HNDs.

There is some individualised institutional APP data available to analyse gaps by student characteristics, following rounding and suppression guidelines.

It is not possible to investigate progression data by Age due to limited data availability.

As our overall progression data is below the sector average for degrees, this is something for us to consider within our provider context more broadly, and we will continue to collect and monitor our data. At this stage, it is not appropriate to consider any progression targets for our APP, though we will consider this data in other areas of our provision and whole provider approach.

TUNDRA (LOW PARTICIPATION NEIGHBOURHOODS)

Individualised institutional APP data shows that for the available year of data (2021-22), TUNDRA Quintile 1 students have a progression rate of 100% compared to 55.6% for TUNDRA Quintile 5 students.

Whilst this shows a positive gap, the data is based on very small response rates to the Graduate Outcomes survey, and extremely small student numbers for only one year of data. We will continue to monitor this data over time.

IMD 2019 (INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION)

Individualised institutional APP data shows that for the available year of data (2021-22), IMD Quintile 1 students have a progression rate of 60% compared to 75% for IMD Quintile 5 students. The 15pp gap is larger than the sector gap of 10pp for the same year (2021-22).

This data is based on small response rates to the Graduate Outcomes survey, and very small student numbers for only one year of data. Therefore, we do not propose to set a target in this area, although we will closely monitor this over the life of this Plan.

ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

Individualised institutional APP data shows that for the available year of data (2021-22), non-White students have a progression rate of 40% compared to 55% for White students. This 15pp gap is larger than the sector gap of 2.1pp for the same year (2021-22).

This data is based on small response rates to the Graduate Outcomes survey, and very small student numbers for only one year of data. Therefore, we do not propose to set a target in this area, although we will closely monitor this over the life of this Plan.

DISABILITY

Individualised institutional APP data shows that for the available year of data (2021-22), disabled students have a progression rate of 33.3% compared to 55.8% for non-disabled students. This 22.5pp gap is larger than the sector gap of 1.6pp for the same year (2021-22).

This data is based on small response rates to the Graduate Outcomes survey, and very small student numbers for only one year of data. Therefore, we do not propose to set a target in this area, although we will closely monitor this over the life of this Plan.

ABCS QUINTILES

Individualised institutional APP data shows that for the available year of data (2021-22), ABCS Quintile 1 students have a progression rate of 0% compared to 66.7% ABCS Quintile 5 students. This 66.7pp gap is larger than the sector gap of 16.5pp for the same year (2021-22).

This data is based on small response rates to the Graduate Outcomes survey, and very small student numbers for only one year of data. Therefore, we do not propose to set a target in this area, although we will closely monitor this over the life of this Plan.

SUMMARY OF TARGET AREAS

We have used the initial performance assessment above and the emerging indicators of risk (i.e. measures where our performance is weak) to signpost to the priority areas for further investigation and/or including as target areas in the new Access and Participation Plan (APP). In summary, these areas are:

ACCESS

1. Enrolment for disabled students.

CONTINUATION, COMPLETION, ATTAINMENT, PROGRESSION

1. Continuation for Ethnic Minority students.
2. Attainment for IMD Quintile 1 students.
3. Attainment for Mature students.
4. Attainment for disabled students.

AREAS FOR CONTINUED MONITORING

There are no priority areas for continued monitoring. Monitoring of all measures will continue.

RISKS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

We have considered the identified indicators of risk against the national Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). This highlights 12 risks that are of national concern, and which are more likely to affect students within our target groups (IMD Quintile 1 students, disabled students, mature students, and Ethnic Minority students).

ACCESS (PRE-ENROLMENT)

The first five (5) Risks on the EORR relate to the Access (pre-enrolment) area, and we note that all 5 risks are generally more likely to have an impact on outcomes for the target groups we have identified in relation to enrolment outcomes (disabled students). We have therefore considered all 5 Risks in relation to our context at David Game Higher Education, and in consultation with our community of staff and students. The following information provides a summary of our context in relation to each risk, and considerations of whether it is occurring and potentially the cause of the indicators of risk (i.e. poor performance) we have identified. Further information can also be found in references in the main Access and Participation Plan and in Annex B.

RISK 1 – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

It is noted that applicants from our target groups are likely to have had fewer experiences which support their knowledge and skill development to access higher education. As a provider with a majority mature learner cohort, we are aware that many of our applicants have been out of education for some time and may lack some of the necessary knowledge and skills to access our courses. We see this particularly in relation to applicant and student confidence with IT and digital skills, such as navigating Microsoft Office or attending online classes. Informal feedback and student performance data suggest challenges in digital literacy, academic writing, and balancing study with work and care duties, which disproportionately affect underrepresented groups.

Some of our applicants come to us from backgrounds of lower academic achievement in their previous education and may lack the required grades or educational background for entry. We also see a significant number of applicants with English as a second language, which can be a

challenge. For students who were previously educated outside of the UK, there can be a lack of knowledge of how the English higher education system works and how their earlier education may relate to potential opportunities to study here.

We use our contextual admissions policy to evaluate whether an applicant would be suited to studying a degree with us, recognising that knowledge and skills may be developed outside of traditional education settings. These students can then access our full academic support offer to ensure they are well-supported in the transition to higher education. For students lacking technology skills, our IT Support supports these students during induction to teach them how to access the virtual learning environment and course materials.

Recognising these challenges, we consider EORR Risk 1 highly relevant to our context and have developed strategies such as extended induction, academic skills support, flexible teaching models, and proactive identification of students needing additional help early in the term.

RISK 2 – INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Target students, and particularly our large mature learner base (a characteristic that intersects with ethnicity, disability, and disadvantage), often lack awareness of the expectations of study, their degree content and the potential career paths available to them, before enrolling. This may be the result of disrupted study or return to study, where the availability of information, advice and guidance has not been present. For our disabled students, there can be a lack of knowledge about disabilities and how to access Disabled Students' Allowance and other support for studying, which may discourage them from applying to a higher education course.

In our context, we are particularly aware of the multiple priorities that our students are balancing, as they navigate their own complex lives. The ability to absorb and utilise information and guidance is often disrupted by other priorities, and therefore an approach that is scaffolded, compassionate, relevant and timely to the phase of study, and across the timeframe of their study, is required. Our students report that the thing they value most in the application and admissions process is 'hands-on' support, and the high level of personalised support offered by DGHE is appreciated to help them navigate these processes.

In our outreach activity, we engage participants with information about studying at DGHE and offer opportunities for them to contact us if they are interested in studying with us. We highlight our small group teaching offer in our outreach and marketing, as well as our options for flexible timetables and additional support. Our current outreach involves some targeting of student groups, by engaging with organisations who cater for minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities, and geotargeting specific areas with a higher population of minority ethnic people and mature learners.

For students who were previously educated outside of the United Kingdom, there can be a lack of knowledge of how the English higher education system works and how different courses relate to their career aspirations. There may also be a lack of confidence and agency related to making career choices. This is particularly pertinent for our mature students who may have received their previous education in a different country and under a different education system, demonstrating further barriers to accessing and understanding important information and guidance. This is one focus of our outreach and marketing, to share knowledge about the various opportunities our courses can offer and encourage applicants to apply.

We consider Risk 2 to be an important risk to consider for our applicants, and our intervention strategies must include robust information and guidance opportunities for the applicants we interact with.

RISK 3 – PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Students who are qualified for higher education may not feel that it is a space for them, either because of their identity, background, age or lived experience. This is particularly acute among mature students, ethnic minority students, and disabled students, who may not see themselves reflected in the sector or feel confident applying to higher education providers. Higher education is still often conceived as being for young people, with expectations of students wanting to experience the residential model of university and attend directly after completing compulsory education. Mature students are more likely to be disabled (OfS, 2021) and have more complex needs than younger students, which may influence their belief that they would not be able to participate in higher education.

Through our outreach and marketing work, we aim to dispel limiting beliefs and concerns our diverse applicants may have about their ability to access our courses and succeed in them. Developing a sense of belonging is key to ensuring a successful transition from applicant to enrolled student. For example, we aim to reflect our ethnic diversity and large mature student population in our marketing to show applicants that people like them are studying with us; our real students are involved in our photoshoots and record video testimonials. We are aiming to improve the diversity of our cohort through our intervention strategies, and our access intervention strategies will utilise role models from a diverse range of backgrounds where possible to enable perceptions to improve.

We consider EORR Risk 3 a critical access risk and are expanding our inclusive marketing, peer ambassador programme, and pre-entry engagement with communities, adult learners, and employers.

RISK 4 – APPLICATION SUCCESS RATES

We utilise interviewing as part of our application process and recognise this can be a barrier for some applicants with limited interviewing experience. However, we frame the interview to applicants as an opportunity for us to get to know them, and for them to ask questions. The interview is intended to be an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate they have the necessary skills for successful completion of the course, evidence of motivation and the commitment to succeed. We check current qualifications and English language skills where necessary, as well as identifying and offering additional support for disabilities or IT needs. We offer in-person and online interviews to ensure these are accessible to as many applicants as possible. The process intends to support students to understand the different course options available to them, and we may suggest an alternative course that is more suited to their interests and goals after having a conversation with the applicant.

Our admissions process includes consideration of contextual admissions, which particularly supports mature students who may have relevant work experience but not full academic qualifications. We intend to develop this contextual admissions policy through our intervention strategy focused on developing our inclusive admissions practice.

RISK 5 – LIMITED CHOICE OF COURSE OR DELIVERY MODE

Students with work, health or caring responsibilities, especially mature students and those from IMDQ1, may not have equal opportunity to access higher education if flexible delivery options are not available. We are aware that the majority of our learners are mature and have other commitments, such as work and caring responsibilities. Therefore, we prioritise offering multiple choices of delivery mode across our courses. We offer timetables of teaching over either two days a week, or two evenings and Saturdays, and have some offers of one day of online teaching and one day of in-person teaching. These different options support our diverse student body to continue to study whilst balancing other life commitments. Student feedback highlights the importance of these evening classes, blended and online learning, and modular delivery that accommodates fluctuating life demands.

To address EORR Risk 5, DGHE is expanding online learning provision, increasing flexibility in course scheduling, and reviewing programme design to embed multiple assessment modes and hybrid learning opportunities.

ON-COURSE (STUDENT SUCCESS)

The remaining Risks on the EORR relate to the on-course and progression areas. We have therefore considered the risks in relation to our context at DGHE, and in consultation with our community of staff and students.

The following information provides a summary of our context in relation to each risk, and considerations of whether it is occurring and potentially the cause of the indicators of risk we have identified. Further information can also be found in references in the main Access and Participation Plan, and in Annex B.

RISK 6 – INSUFFICIENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds in higher education make up most of our student body. Many live locally and commute to and from the DGHE campus in Central London, have term-time work commitments, care responsibilities, or some type of disability. This presents a challenge to providing timely and sufficient academic and personal support, given our institutional and staff size limitations. However, we have robust support services in place to enable students can access support when needed.

When students are identified as being at-risk they are identified and offered additional academic support. We target this support based on their needs, rather than identity characteristics. Our academic support offer includes our one-on-one tutors, study skills, IT support, librarian, pre-sessional and in-sessional online English classes, and careers advisor. We can also facilitate free laptop loans to support students both academically and financially. Our students provide positive feedback about our academic support offer through NSS responses, student testimonies, and internal surveys. With smaller cohorts than larger institutions, we are able to build positive relationships with our students and offer a 'personal touch' which students appreciate, particularly in relation to academic support to help them continue with their studies.

One of the main challenges for our students is balancing study with their family and work obligations, particularly as the majority of our students are mature and have multiple competing responsibilities. Some of our students struggle with returning to education after having time out. There have been national calls for a need for greater choices of how to study and more flexible

course structure to benefit mature students (OfS, 2021), which we have implemented through our flexible course choices and evening classes. Our student consultation revealed that students highly value and rely on the flexibility of teaching, and the option to attend classes online where possible was important to ensure they could continue on their course. Our multiple delivery modes were praised highly in these consultations.

We recognise Risk 6 as a key risk to our target student groups (e.g. ethnic minority, IMD Q1, mature, and disabled) achieving their desired academic outcomes. Our intervention strategies intend to continue, and improve, our supportive academic delivery models and flexible and accessible education delivery to mitigate this risk.

RISK 7 – INSUFFICIENT PERSONAL SUPPORT

A large proportion of our students have complex personal backgrounds due to political turmoil in their home countries or difficult family circumstances. Many have parental responsibilities and at the same time have elderly care responsibilities, often abroad. Some of our students have long-term health issues or experience various mental health conditions and learning differences, which can affect their ability to complete their studies or achieve their desired outcomes. Due to some of these factors, a larger than average number of students may need support with health issues or learning differences that could affect their studies.

Despite our limited capacity as a smaller institution to deliver personal support, we have a range of personal support practices in place. Our Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS) are highly praised by our students – we achieved a 99% positivity rating on mental health services in our 2025 NSS results – and we have expanded this team by recruiting an additional staff member in the last two years. This service offers a variety of support, including neurodiversity assessments, psychological support and referrals, and 24/7 online mental health support through TogetherAll. We also support with Disability Support Allowance, technical and further support for learning differences, bursaries, and other support where needed. Our personal support and academic support are closely linked; for example, when students are seeking disability diagnosis with support from the Advice and Wellbeing Services, we alert their tutors and lecturers to the potential need for additional support on their course and support requests for additional time to finish assignments.

Our staff are aware of how to refer students to the Advice and Wellbeing Services and are generally sensitive towards mental health. We offer inclusion-focused staff training and ensure embedding of inclusive practice to ensure our students feel well supported by all staff at DGHE.

We recognise Risk 7 as a key risk to our target student groups (e.g. ethnic minority, IMD Q1, mature, and disabled) achieving their desired academic outcomes. Our intervention strategies intend to continue, and improve, our holistic student support provision, including our wellbeing services and inclusion-focused staff training.

RISK 8 – MENTAL HEALTH

There is a risk that students do not experience an environment conducive to good mental health and wellbeing. This applies especially to students experiencing anxiety, depression, or neurodivergence (e.g. ADHD, ASD, dyslexia), which may impact their ability to engage with and succeed in their studies alongside other life stressors.

Although mental health disclosure rates are relatively low in our datasets, support service uptake and qualitative feedback reveal widespread stress and personal challenges that complicate studies, especially among mature students and carers. We are also seeing students who would normally not consider themselves to have a mental health condition experiencing high levels of stress and worry due to the cost-of-living crisis. Many of our students come from backgrounds where mental health is stigmatised, and they can be slow to seek help when necessary. This is compounded with the beliefs some of our mature students have that they should be able to deal with issues on their own as adults, leading to less use of the services available to them.

Across the UK, the NHS mental health services are stretched with extremely high volumes of need, so our students may not be able to access the professional mental health services they need to cope with the requirements of study. We endeavour to support students with referrals to counselling where possible and improving access to counselling services is a priority for us.

To mitigate EORR Risk 8, DGHE has strengthened its Advice and Wellbeing Services (AWS), introduced peer support platforms (e.g. TogetherAll), expanded counselling access through the Student Assistance Programme, and embedded mental health considerations into curriculum and assessment design.

RISK 9 – ONGOING IMPACTS OF CORONAVIRUS

The ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will continue to affect both students and staff throughout the life of this Plan. As a mature learner majority provider, very few of our students have been academically affected by disruptions related to the pandemic prior to studying with us.

One positive impact of the pandemic has been the improvements in our online and flexible course provision, which have continued past the pandemic's enforced need for online learning. This has significantly benefitted our diverse student body who may need an online and flexible learning offer for many reasons, with our continued commitment to this provision enabling students to pursue higher education who may not otherwise have been able to.

While Risk 9 is not one of our identified priority risks for this Plan, we will remain vigilant to the ongoing effects of the pandemic, closely monitoring relevant data to ensure that emerging gaps throughout the student lifecycle are identified and addressed.

RISK 10 – COST PRESSURES

Increases in cost pressures may affect a student's ability to complete their course or obtain a good grade. The Student Academic Experience Survey 2023 delivered by Advance HE and HEPI notes there has been a 10% rise in the number of students in paid employment since 2022. For our majority mature cohort, most of them are already in paid work before they begin studying with us. Our hardship fund applications are usually linked to loss of income from work when students may be ill or lose their job. Alongside financial support, we support students with tailored support for their issues, including referrals to careers support or engagement with healthcare providers.

Our experience suggests that concern about student finances and the high cost of living is an increasing issue for more and more students, and most particularly for those from lower income backgrounds. The cost-of-living is a significant challenge for our students, particularly as many of our students have families and caring responsibilities, which come with added costs and

pressures. Their ability to attend classes can be impacted by cost-related stress, particularly for mature and IMD Q1 learners.

Many of our students do not realise they can be eligible for financial support such as DSA, particularly for those with mental health conditions. Our Advice and Wellbeing Service team supports students to make them aware of their eligibility and provide advice on the application process for additional financial support.

We continue to offer financial support on-course, targeted at students from lower household income backgrounds. We will continue to provide financial support and evaluate this to ensure we are offering the best and most effective support. We will monitor the impact on all students, with a particular focus on our target groups, e.g. IMD Q1 backgrounds, disabled students, mature students, and Ethnic Minority students.

RISK 11 – CAPACITY ISSUES

There are some resource shortage and access challenges for students at DGHE, in relation to childcare provision and digital resource availability. We have some students who are parents and carers who can struggle to access education due to a lack of childcare. Our flexible course offer aims to support students to plan their schedule and seek regular childcare, though this is not always possible for all of our students. We also provide a free laptop loans programme for students who are unable to access the required technology to address digital access challenges. Our hardship funding is also available to support students to access any required equipment or resources to enable them to succeed in their course.

This is not a priority risk for at this time, but we will monitor the impact and build it into our internal strategies going forward.

RISK 12 – PROGRESSION FROM HIGHER EDUCATION

Our APP data analysis did not highlight any areas of concern for our target groups in relation to progression, with some evidence of better progression outcomes for our target groups than their comparator peers. Nationally, mature students have better progression into highly skilled employment and further study than young students (OfS, 2021) which we have seen reflected in our own progression performance. As our degrees are vocational, many of our mature students choose to study here with a specific career pathway in mind, which may influence positive progression outcomes.

We are already taking action to support our students with careers. We increasingly embed employability skills and development into the curriculum, which is well-received by our learners who have limited free time to attend careers activities outside of the curriculum. Some programmes include assignments relating to professional development and reflection. There is one-to-one careers and employability support provided for current students and alumni through our dedicated careers advisor. We also invite guest speakers from various employers on a regular basis, including The City of London, to facilitate students building connections and understanding of relevant industries. We invite students to provide feedback on our in-class curriculum activities and have used their feedback to prioritise inviting more guest speakers when requested.

Although our data shows below sector average progression outcomes overall, due to current data limitations and institutional capacity, this risk has not been prioritised for targeted intervention in

this Plan. This is being addressed through our wider institutional strategies, including the Learning and Teaching Strategy and Employer Engagement Plan, and will continue to be monitored annually. There are opportunities through our wider strategies to develop a careers and employability experience that works for our students' needs, which can be different to the needs of more traditional student cohorts.

Annex B: Further information that sets out the rationale, assumptions and evidence base for each intervention strategy that is included in the access and participation plan

Intervention Strategy	Activity	Evidence (reference / links)	Key points from evidence and reference to proposed activity
IS1 Supporting access to higher education for disabled learners by promoting opportunities to engage.	<p>Targeted outreach and community engagement</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> target London areas, e.g., Tower Hamlets, Hackney, and others with high proportion of IMD Quintile population. up to five outreach partnerships with industry and community organisations. <p>Target: students with disability.</p> <p>What is it? A programme of activities comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted outreach in areas of London with higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Awareness campaigns through community networks in such areas, as well as awareness events specifically targeted at disabled learners and flexible opportunities for studying in HE. Streamlining information related to accessing HE on the DGHE website. 	<p>¹CFE Research. 2023. The benefits of and barriers to collaborative access activity by higher education providers. Report for the OFS. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3ad6de14-b501-4b3e-be63-d77e23e9ffa/benefits-and-barriers-to-collaborative-access-activity-by-higher-education-providers.pdf</p> <p>²Causeway Education. 2019. Access Champions: Interim Evaluation Report. Causeway Education.</p> <p>³TASO evidence toolkit, on pre-entry aspiration raising: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/aspiration-raising-interventions-pre-entry/</p> <p>⁴TASO evidence toolkit, on pre-entry study and soft skills support: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/</p> <p>⁵Universities UK. 2017. Raising Attainment Through University- School Partnerships. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/30504/1/Raising-attainment-through-university-school-partnerships.pdf</p> <p>⁶TASO. 2021. Summary report: An investigation into the relationship between outreach participation and KS4 attainment/ HE progression. https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/relationship-outreach-attainment-progression.pdf</p> <p>⁷Brilliant Club. 2019. Barriers to Access: Five lessons for creating effective school-university partnerships. https://thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Impact-Case-Study-Barriers-to-Access.pdf</p> <p>⁸Martikie, S., A. Church & A. Hart. 2015. Greater than the sum of its parts: What works in sustaining community-university partnerships. Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation.</p> <p>⁹Continuum. 2013. The value of school engagement and school partnership working: review of the literature. Continuum. https://shorturl.at/JN7JU</p> <p>¹⁰TASO evidence toolkit, on information, advice, and guidance:</p>	<p>Evidence on the effects of outreach, e.g., provision of IAG on HE, and providing outreach through partnership with other institutions (HEIs or industry, community, or other types of organisations) indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> partnerships with schools, colleges, and community organisations helps¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand and respond to diversity of needs and barriers to accessing HE, engage hard to reach groups of learners, increase outreach efficiency through collaboration and learning from partners, and extend the reach of small and specialist HE providers. effective partnerships with industry and employers specifically involve HE providers offering²: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> guidance on applying to HE, guidance on careers linked to HE, skills needed to transition into HE and application rates to HE. partnerships can positively impact the aspirations³ and attainment⁴ of underrepresented students at, e.g., GCSE level, including achievement of sufficient grades in the minimum of five GCSEs required for access of HE^{5,6}. to build effective partnerships for outreach to under-served groups, HE providers need to engage schools, colleges, and other organisations in areas with high representation of such groups^{7,8}. effective partnerships engage students early, align activities with the partners' priorities, and minimise costs and logistical barriers to involvement in the partnership^{7,8}.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with relevant industry and community organisations around outreach. 	https://taso.org.uk/intervention/information-advice-and-guidance/ ¹¹ TASO evidence toolkit on multi-intervention outreach: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/multi-intervention-outreach/ ¹² TASO evidence toolkit on pre-entry study and soft-skills support: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/study-and-soft-skills-support-pre-entry/	
	<p>Strategic partnerships and advocacy for target students</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> target London areas, e.g., Tower Hamlets, Hackney, and others with high proportion of IMD Quintile population. up to five outreach partnerships with industry and community organisations. <p>Target: students with disability.</p> <p>What is it? Targeted partnership development aimed at enhancing IAG for disabled learners on accessing HE. The focus of the partnerships will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities, industry bodies, and charities. Enhancing the regional access to HE for disabled learners. Providing events in local communities on that advocate for and engage 	¹³ Robinson, D. & V. Salvestrini. 2020. The impact of interventions for widening participation to higher education. A review of the evidence. Education Policy Institute. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Widening_participation-review_EPI-TASO_2020-1.pdf ¹⁴ Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Dickinson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. http://shura.shu.ac.uk/29312/ ¹⁵ Hutchinson, J., H. Rolfe, N. Moore, S. Bysshe & K. Bentley. 2011. All things being equal? Equality and diversity in careers education, information, advice and guidance. Equality and Human Rights Commission Research Series. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-71-all-things-being-equal-equality-and-diversity-in-careers-education-information-and-advice.pdf ¹⁶ Joseph Rowntree Foundation. 2010. Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour? https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poorer-children%E2%80%99s-educational-attainment-how-important-are-attitudes-and-behaviour ¹⁷ BIS. 2015. Understanding progression into higher education for disadvantaged and under-represented groups. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80876f40f0b6230269409a/BIS-15-462-understanding-progression-into-higher-education-final.pdf ¹⁸ Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> partnerships can be very effective at extending the reach and ability of HE providers to engage prospective students in various outreach activities, from summer schools and campus visits to mentoring programmes, projects and project portfolios, and HE information events^{7,8}. long term partnership engagement builds knowledge of student needs locally, and facilitates cultural change across the partners, which can be particularly beneficial to under-served groups⁹. outreach activities that integrate information, advice, and guidance (IAG) on accessing HE^{10,11,12,13,14} are known to affect positively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student attitudes and aspirations related to HE, student confidence in the ability to achieve the required entry qualification to access HE, student sense of belonging to HE. integration of IAG helps disadvantaged students with decision-making and preparation to apply to and study in HE¹⁵ and is especially important to learners from areas of high deprivation and low participation in HE^{16,17}. IAG helps also to alleviate student concerns and misconceptions about the value and cost of HE¹⁷. supporting disadvantaged students with preparing for the application process (e.g., putting together application portfolios, attending interviews) benefits them both in terms of preparation and rate of success¹⁸. including advice and guidance on, preparation for, and financial support with the application process within a programme of targeted application support enhances the access of underrepresented students to HE, including to highly selective HE providers¹⁹.

	prospective learners with information about HE.	<p>¹⁹Barkat, S. 2019. Evaluating the impact of the Academic Enrichment Programme on widening access to selective universities: Application of the Theory of Change framework. Br Educ Res J, 45, pp. 1160-1185. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3556</p>	<p>Our activities around developing partnerships for outreach and reaching out to target groups with information, advice, and guidance on accessing HE will aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend our ability to reach under-represented and under-resourced prospective students. • provide them with information about studying in HE through CIAG sessions and other outreach activities.
IS2 Embedding inclusive admissions practices to break down barriers to access	<p>Inclusive admissions practice</p> <p>Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • target London areas, e.g., Tower Hamlets, Hackney, and others with high proportion of IMD Quintile population. • up to five outreach partnerships with industry and community organisations. <p>Target: students with disability.</p> <p>What is it? Development of our contextual admissions policy and process that focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing the accessibility of our application form and process. • admissions of mature students. • staff training in inclusive admissions. 	<p>¹Comunian, R., Dent, T., O'Brien, D., Read, T. & Wreyford, N. 2023. Making the Creative Majority: A report for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category. KCL. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/cultural/projects/creative-majority-education</p> <p>²Boliver, V. & M. Powell. 2020. Fair admission to universities in England: improving policy and practice. Nuffield Foundation. https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Fair-admission-to-universities-in-England.pdf</p> <p>³OfS. 2019. Contextual admissions: Promoting fairness and rethinking merit. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/bf84aeda-21c6-4b55-b9f8-3386b21b7b3b/insight-3-contextual-admissions.pdf</p> <p>⁴Boliver, V., S. Gorard & N.Siddiqui. 2021. Using contextual data to widen access to higher education, Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 25(1), pp.7-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2019.1678076</p> <p>⁵Boliver, V., C. Crawford, M. Powell & W. Craige. 2017. Admissions in Context: The use of contextual information by leading universities. The Sutton Trust. https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Admissions-in-Context-Final_V2.pdf</p> <p>⁶Gorard, S., V. Boliver & N. Siddiqui. 2018. How Can Contextualised Admissions Widen Participation? In: Shah, M., McKay, J. (eds) Achieving Equity and Quality in Higher Education. Palgrave Studies in Excellence and Equity in</p>	<p>Evidence around the design and implementation of contextual admissions indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they mitigate inequalities and biases related to the ability to demonstrate and assess talent during admissions to studying creative subjects in HE^{1,2}. • they are a recommended approach to enhancing access to HE for our target groups^{3,4}. • the effectiveness of contextual admissions at enabling demonstration, and assessing talent, depends on^{5,6}: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ using indicators of disadvantage intersectionally and, in the case of composite indicators (e.g., TUNDRA; school ratings), cautiously. ○ avoiding attachment of conditions to contextual offer. ○ lowering entry tariff to e.g., BCC (which predicts 80% completion and 50% attainment rates). ○ the transparency of eligibility criteria. ○ signposting of the eligibility criteria in pre-entry CIAG activities. ○ lowering or removing prior attainment thresholds for participation in outreach activities. ○ increasing the intake of disadvantaged students / students with lower prior attainment into a Foundation Year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rolling intake at three points in the year: September, January/February, and March. 	<p>Global Education. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78316-1_14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ factoring applicant backgrounds into admissions decisions. <p>Through our work on contextualising admissions, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the right mix of evidence-based admissions criteria to help improve access for students from our target groups.
IS3 Pre-entry and transition support for target students	<p>Pre-entry and transition support</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? A programme of transition support that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early needs assessment and signposting to appropriate support. • Extended induction to the first year of study, including identifying and tailoring support to needs, e.g., IT and other individual needs. • Pre- and in-session classes in English. • Peer-mentoring and use of student ambassadors. 	<p>¹TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/</p> <p>²Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina & V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrolment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800</p> <p>³van Lamoën, P. M., M. Meeuwisse, A.M.F. Hiemstra, L.R. Arends & S.E. Severiens, S. 2024. Supporting students' transition to higher education: the effects of a pre-academic programme on sense of belonging, academic self-efficacy, and academic achievement. European Journal of Higher Education, pp.1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2024.2331122</p> <p>⁴Beard, L.M., K. Schilt & P. Jagoda. 2023, Divergent Pathways: How Pre-Orientation Programs Can Shape the Transition to College for First-Generation, Low-Income Students¹. Sociol Forum. https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12923</p> <p>⁵Perrine, R. M. & J. W. Spain. 2008. Impact of a Pre-Semester College Orientation Program: Hidden Benefits? Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 10(2), pp.155–169. https://doi.org/10.2190/CS.10.2.c</p> <p>⁶Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Donaldson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. Advance HE. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/10204</p>	<p>Evidence related to support activities before, during, and post-enrolment to HE shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • residential or online pre-enrolment programmes covering orientation, information, and advice on higher education, can impact positively the aspirations and motivation for studying in HE of prospective applicants¹ and increase access to HE for, e.g., first-in-the-family students². • pre-enrolment activities aiming to provide information and advice, as well as activities for developing relevant academic skills, can enhance the learning and performance, and the sense of belonging and social capital of entrants during their first year of study in HE^{3,4}. • induction programmes boost the development of peer capital and self-advocacy skills by disadvantaged students (e.g., first-in-the-family; low family income)^{5,6}, which impacts on the integration of students in HE. • student integration into HE, their institution, and course, is central to their transition and continuation^{7,8}. • mapping the student journey around key transition points and across target student groups can help optimise the student experience and support their transition^{9,10}.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome pack and providing digital resources around transition. 	<p>⁷Scottish Framework for Fair Access. 2024. Extended Induction. https://www.fairaccess.scot/intervention/extended-induction/</p> <p>⁸Tinto, Vincent. "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving." The Journal of Higher Education, vol. 59, no. 4, 1988, pp. 438–55. JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/1981920</p> <p>⁹Rains, J.P. 2017. Defining student journey mapping in higher education: The 'how-to' guide for implementation on campus. Journal of Education Advancement & Marketing, 2(2), pp.106-119. https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf</p> <p>¹⁰Young, A., L. Dawes & B. Senadji. 2023. Using journey maps as a holistic, reflective approach to capture student engineering identity experiences. European Journal of Engineering Education, 49(1), pp.22–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2268023</p> <p>¹¹Gilani, D., R. Parke & N. Wilson. 2022. Peer-to-Peer Phone Calls as a Method of Providing Proactive and Personalised Support to Enhance Student Engagement. Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal, 4(2), pp. 82–104. https://sehej.raise-network.com/raise/article/view/1068</p> <p>¹²Pistilli, M. D. & K. E. Arnold. 2010. Purdue Signals: Mining Real-Time Academic Data to Enhance Student Success. About Campus, 15(3), pp.22–24. https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using different communication channels, e.g., phone calls, to check in on students can help re-engaged them; peer-to-peer supportive phone call interventions have been shown to work, and multiple call interventions over an academic year appear to work better than single call ones¹¹. • the employment of a traffic alert system for at-risk students based on combined data on student demographic data, attendance, assessment performance, and engagement on the VLE, promotes behavioural change towards better attendance and engagement of the students and better overall attainment¹². <p>The aim of our planned pre-entry and transition activities will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up a programme of student support from pre-enrolment to the end of the first year that may comprise checking with students at touchpoints, monitoring risk to help allocate targeted support, engaging students in social, extracurricular, and other activities as part of an extended induction. • enhance student sense of belonging and social capital.
IS4 Flexible and inclusive academic environment to improve on-course experience and outcomes for diverse learners	<p>Supportive academic delivery and study skills.</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p>	<p>¹OFFA, 2018. Office for Fair Access annual report and accounts 2017-18. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728202/2017-18_OFFA_annual_report_2307FINAL.PDF</p> <p>²Crawford, C. 2014. Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and degree class. London: IFS. Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/publications/socio-economic-differences-university-outcomes-uk-drop-out-degree-completion-and</p> <p>³TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/</p>	<p>Evidence shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower attainment rates of disadvantaged students are a key barrier to their access of HE; when disadvantaged students achieve the same attainment levels as their better off peers, they are almost equally likely to succeed in accessing HE^{1,2}. • residential or online-based pre-enrolment programmes of orientation, information, and advice on higher education can impact positively student aspirations, motivation for studying in HE³,

	<p>What is it? A support programme that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with academic writing and referencing. • Pre- and in-sessional support with English, delivered online. • 1:1 drop-ins aimed at providing study skills support. • Training in IT skills for digitally excluded students. • Putting in place Individual Learning Plans that will be supported by the students' assigned personal tutors. <p>Flexible and accessible education delivery</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Developments in our provision that aim to increase its flexibility through, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing hybrid delivery and access to timetabled 	<p>⁴Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina & V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrolment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800</p> <p>⁵van Lamoen, P. M., M. Meeuwisse, A.M.F. Hiemstra, L.R. Arends & S.E. Severiens, S. 2024. Supporting students' transition to higher education: the effects of a pre-academic programme on sense of belonging, academic self-efficacy, and academic achievement. European Journal of Higher Education, pp.1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2024.2331122</p> <p>⁶Beard, L.M., K. Schilt & P. Jagoda. 2023, Divergent Pathways: How Pre-Orientation Programs Can Shape the Transition to College for First-Generation, Low-Income Students1. Sociol Forum. https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12923</p> <p>⁷Perrine, R. M. & J. W. Spain. 2008. Impact of a Pre-Semester College Orientation Program: Hidden Benefits? Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, 10(2), pp.155–169. https://doi.org/10.2190/CS.10.2.c</p> <p>⁸Tinto, Vincent. "Stages of Student Departure: Reflections on the Longitudinal Character of Student Leaving." The Journal of Higher Education, vol. 59, no. 4, 1988, pp. 438–55. JSTOR, https://doi.org/10.2307/1981920</p> <p>⁹Arshad-Snyder, S. 2017. The Role of Faculty Validation in Influencing Online Students' Intent to Persist. Dissertation/thesis. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576756&site=ehost-live</p> <p>¹⁰Gough, D., D. Kiwan, K. Sutcliffe, G. Simpson & N. Houghton. 2003. A systematic map and synthesis review of the effectiveness of personal development planning for improving student learning. EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London: London, UK. https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10174646/1/LTSN_June03.pdf</p> <p>¹¹Rains, JP. 2017. Defining student journey mapping in higher education: The 'how-to' guide for implementation on campus. Journal of Education Advancement & Marketing,</p>	<p>increase the access of HE by first-in-the-family students⁴; pre- enrolment activities focused on information and advice, as well as developing relevant academic skills can also enhance student learning and performance early on into the first year of study in HE, as well as sense of belonging and peer social capital^{5,6}; while the uplift in academic performance can be small, c.1% up on non-attending students⁷, the other benefits from such programmes remain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student integration into higher education, institution, and course, is central to transition and continuation^{8,9}. • engagement in reflection on learning and skills development through personal development planning (PDP) affects positively attainment and the effectiveness of learning approach¹⁰. • mapping the student journey around key transition points and across target student groups can help optimise the student experience and support provision^{11,12}. • cohort tailored, needs based support with the development of employability skills works best, according to alumni feedback^{13,14} and good practice from the UK HE sector¹⁵. • developing academic and other skills, e.g., that help with coping in a higher education environment, is important across student groups and characteristics, and has implications for transition and continuation in higher education¹⁶. • insufficient support with developing such skills during the first year of undergraduate study impacts negatively the continuation and attainment of disadvantaged students¹⁶, including Ethnic Minority learners¹⁷, mature learners¹⁸, first-in-the-family learners¹⁹, and disabled learners²⁰.
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	<p>teaching through our Moodle-based VLE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of self-paced catch-up tools and resources online. • Flexible timetabling fit for adult learners. • Ongoing review of the accessibility of timetables. 	<p>2(2), pp.106-119. https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf</p> <p>¹²Young, A., L. Dawes & B. Senadji. 2023. Using journey maps as a holistic, reflective approach to capture student engineering identity experiences. <i>European Journal of Engineering Education</i>, 49(1), pp.22–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2268023</p> <p>¹³Scott, F. J. & D. Willison. 2021. Students' reflections on an employability skills provision, <i>Journal of Further and Higher Education</i>, 45:8, pp. 1118-1133. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1928025</p>	
	<p>Inclusive teaching with careers integrated into the curriculum</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Developments in our provision that aim to increase its inclusivity through, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum inclusivity review and development. • Embedding employability skills into modules. • Provision of 1:1 career advice. • Reaching out to industry partners, employers, and career mentors for co- 	<p>¹⁴Moore, J., J. Sanders & L. Higham. 2013. Literature review of research into widening participation to higher education. Bristol: HEFCE. http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2013/wplireview/</p> <p>¹⁵Pegg, A., J. Waldock, S. Hendy-Isaac & R. Lawton. 2012. Pedagogy for employability. The Higher Education Academy. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/3983</p> <p>¹⁶Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf</p> <p>¹⁷Parker, H., A. Hughes, C. Marsh, S. Ahmed, J. Cannon, E. Taylor-Steads, L. Jones & N. Page. 2017. Understanding the different challenges facing students in transitioning to university particularly with a focus on ethnicity. <i>New Directions in the Teaching of Physical Sciences</i>, Vol. 12 (1). https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1231896.pdf</p> <p>¹⁸OfS. 2023. Blended learning and OfS regulation. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/blended-learning-and-ofs-regulation/themes/</p> <p>¹⁹Coombs, H. 2022. First-in-Family Students. HEPI Report 146. https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/First-in-Family-Students.pdf</p> <p>²⁰TASO. 2023. Summary report: What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students. https://taso.org.uk/wp-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • embedding skills into curricula works most effectively when²¹: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the skills and their development (when and how) are made prominent in the student experience from the first year of study. ○ students collaborate with both academic staff and skills specialists (e.g., learning/academic support staff) in developing the skills²². ○ support with skills development is accessible <u>and</u> signposted throughout the student journey. ○ skills development is personalised through needs analysis, for example based on student confidence levels related to a 'curriculum' of skills, that reveals what students do not know ('hidden curriculum') and what skills they should focus on²³. ○ skills development and support are framed as a means for success and overcoming challenges for students who have already succeeded in overcoming challenges, e.g., related to a disability, or their socio-economic background (e.g., first-in-the-family students). <p>Evidence on the effects of flexible learning provision indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexibility enables students to tailor when and how to learn^{24,25}. • flexibility can enhance student outcomes and the quality of student experience, compared to the traditional, face-to-face mode of learning²⁵. • flexibility needs to be carefully balanced between in-person and online activities to benefit disadvantaged learners²⁶. • flexible teaching and learning models like flipped classroom and block teaching produce significant benefits in both attainment and persistence

	<p>developing and support with the above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing and offering placements with, and career / employability workshops delivered by our partners. • Developing staff peer support with inclusive teaching. 	<p>content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf</p> <p>²¹Thomas, Liz. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in England. Student Success. Special Issue: Enabling Excellence through Equity. Vol. 11 (1). https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2101-0067</p> <p>²²Bailey, R. 2018. Student writing and academic literacy development at university. Journal of Learning and Student Experience, Vol.1: Article 7. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301021821.pdf</p> <p>²³Checkoway, B. 2018. Inside The Gates: First-Generation Students Finding Their Way. Higher Education Studies, Vol 8(3). https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v8n3p72</p> <p>²⁴Loon, M. 2021. Flexible learning: a literature review 2016 - 2021. Advance HE. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/flexible-learning-literature-review-2016-2021</p> <p>²⁵Soffer, T., T. Kahan & R. Nachmias. 2019. Patterns of Students' Utilization of Flexibility in Online Academic Courses and Their Relation to Course Achievement. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 20(3). https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v20i4.3949</p> <p>²⁶Summers, R., H. Higson, H. & E. Moores. 2022. The impact of disadvantage on higher education engagement during different delivery modes: a pre- versus peri-pandemic comparison of learning analytics data. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 48(1), 56–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2021.2024793</p> <p>²⁷Ryan, M. D. & S.A. Reid. 2016. Impact of the flipped classroom on student performance and retention: A parallel controlled study in general chemistry. Journal of Chemical Education, 93(1), pp.13-23. https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jchemed.5b00717</p> <p>²⁸Buck, E. & K. Tyrrell. 2022. Block and blend: a mixed method investigation into the impact of a pilot block teaching and blended learning approach upon student outcomes and experience. Journal of Further and Higher Education, 46(8), 1078–1091. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2022.2050686</p> <p>²⁹Page, N., G. Forster-Wilkins & M. Bonetzky. 2021. The impact of student timetables and commuting on student</p>	<p>(retention), especially for students of lower prior attainment, e.g., lower entry tariffs^{27,28}.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students use the flexibility afforded in the timetabling and teaching, learning, and assessment, to juggle more effectively various responsibilities alongside learning, which impacts positively on attainment²⁹. • overall, flexing the education provision raises student continuation, completion, attainment, belonging, and satisfaction, particularly of students from our target groups, e.g., mature learners, students with non-traditional entry qualifications, first-in-the-family students, etc.³⁰ • flexibility can also relate to the pathways to students from non-traditional backgrounds, e.g., mature students, e.g., foundation years and Access to HE diploma courses that can be effective^{31,32}. <p>Evidence on the effects of inclusivity on learning and the student experience indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusivity encompasses all teaching, learning, and assessment dimensions and is about anticipating and considering students' entitlement to accessing and participating in a course³³. • inclusivity relates not only to curricula and learning, teaching, and assessment, but also to institutional policy, resources and funding, and staff development, practice, and leadership³⁴. • lack of inclusivity, e.g., in the curriculum in terms of belonging and representation, associates with gaps in continuation, completion, and attainment for, e.g., Ethnic Minority students, care experienced students, first-in-the-family students, and students from lower socio-economic ('working-class') backgrounds^{35,36}.
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		education (engineering). European Journal of Engineering Education, 48(4), pp. 747–760. https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2194244	
IS5 Holistic student support provision to improve on-course experience and outcomes for diverse learners	<p>Financial support</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Provision of financial support in the form of, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bursaries for at-risk students. • Hardship funds available to students in need of immediate financial support. • Support with applying for SLC loans. • Check-ins with students on their financial wellbeing. • Proactive communication and signposting of available financial support with eligible students. <p>Wellbeing services</p>	<p>¹TASO. 2023. Financial support (post-entry). https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-post-entry/</p> <p>²OFS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf</p> <p>³Harrison, N., S. Davies, R. Harris & R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university bursaries to students' wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586</p> <p>⁴Hordosy, R., T. Clark & D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the 'double deficit' of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. Journal of Education and Work 31(4), pp. 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068</p> <p>⁵Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf</p> <p>⁶Clark, T., & R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. Sociological Research Online, 24(3), 353–369. https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971</p> <p>⁷Herbaut, E. & K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802</p> <p>⁸Murphy, R. & G. Wyness. 2015. Testing Means-Tested Aid. CEP Discussion Paper No 1396, Centre for Economic Performance. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35438856.pdf</p>	<p>Evidence on the effect of financial support on disadvantaged student groups suggests that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receipt of financial support (grants, bursaries, scholarships, and fee-waivers) increases continuation and completion¹ and can help close continuation gaps for disadvantaged students². • positive effect of financial support on attainment (good degree outcome) is less evident¹. • receipt of financial support also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increases recipient capacity to focus on their studies³. ○ Improves social life³. ○ helps build a social network³. ○ Increases recipient's self-esteem³. ○ reduces the need for working in term time⁴. ○ increases sense of belonging and mattering^{5,6}. • means-based financial support is more effective than merit-based support, particularly for disadvantaged students⁷. • bursaries especially help increase continuation of disadvantaged students⁸. • students eligible for means-based support may not receive it because their household income has not been officially assessed (meaning they miss out also on a maintenance grant) and/or because they find navigating the bursary application process difficult to navigate; that increases their risk of dropping out^{9,10}. • adopting an effective method for identifying students at a greater risk and therefore in greater need of financial support is necessary for the

	<p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Embedding wellbeing support through, e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of 1:1 wellbeing and academic coaching. • Subsidising assessment for neurodiversity and disability. • Introducing a referral system for mental health and disability related issues and needs. • Providing support with applying for Disability Student Allowance. • A report and support ‘Speak Up’ programme. • ‘TogetherAll’ services that offer additional mental health support. • A Student Assistance Programme counselling helpline. 	<p>⁹Harrison, N. & R. Waller. 2017. Success and Impact in Widening Participation Policy: What Works and How Do We Know? Higher Education Policy 30(2), pp. 141-160. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057/s41307-016-0020-x.pdf</p> <p>¹⁰Moore, E. & A P. Burgess. 2023. Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, Studies in Higher Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950</p> <p>¹¹Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, Educational Review, 73:6. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954</p> <p>¹²Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf</p> <p>¹³McVitty, D. 2024. It is not sustainable to expect universities to offer specialist mental health support. WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/blogs/it-is-not-sustainable-to-expect-universities-to-offer-specialist-mental-health-support/</p> <p>¹⁴TASO. 2023. Summary report: What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students. https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf</p> <p>¹⁵Disability UK. 2022. Adjustments for disabled students and apprentices. https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/resources/adjustments-disabled-students-and-apprentices</p> <p>¹⁶Safer, A., L. Farmer & B. Song. 2020. Quantifying Difficulties of University Students with Disabilities. Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, v33, n1, pp. 5-21. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273641.pdf</p> <p>¹⁷Hubble, S. & P. Bolton. 2021. Support for disabled students in higher education in England. Briefing Paper. House of Commons. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8716/CBP-8716.pdf</p> <p>¹⁸Beard, L.M., K. Schilt & P. Jagoda. 2023. Divergent Pathways: How Pre-Orientation Programs Can Shape the Transition to College for First-Generation, Low-Income Students1. Sociol Forum. https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12923</p>	<p>overall effectiveness of the financial support provision¹¹.</p> <p>The evidence on effects of providing wellbeing, mental health, and other support, particularly aimed at disabled students, indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • embedding mental health and wellbeing into curricular and co-curricular activities achieve a wide range of impacts, from improved mental health, general wellbeing literacy, and the development of coping mechanisms and awareness of available support and how to access it, to increased self-reporting and seeking support by student groups that generally are less likely to report and seek help¹². • embedding preventative measures into curricula is likely to be more effective than offering more mental health support¹³. • disabled students are negatively affected by the lack of accessibility, digital and physical, in the learning environment¹⁴, and by insufficient reasonable adjustments for their type of disability¹⁵. • the support provided to students with disability can have profound effect on their continuation and attainment¹⁶, e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ provision of support as early as in the first semester/term of study affects positively the continuation of disabled students. ○ hearing impairment students, regardless of provision of interpretative support, as well as students with ASD, tend to have lower attainment. ○ ethnically minoritised students with disability may be less likely to do as well (and/or take up available support) as their white comparator group, so culturally responsive support and teaching may be necessary.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take on a curriculum approach to embedding mental health and wellbeing. • enhance our provision of information, guidance, and activities around helping diagnose disability early during the student journey, encouraging students to self-report disability, developing their self-advocacy skills, and supporting them with applying for DSA.
IS5 Holistic student support provision to improve on-course experience and outcomes for diverse learners	<p>Student voice, belonging and representation</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p> <p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Introducing, e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-grants for student projects on inclusion. • Funding an Equality Rep student role. • APP Student Reps & Focus Groups 	<p>¹Ahn M.Y. & H.H. Davis. 2023. Students' sense of belonging and their socio-economic status in higher education: a quantitative approach, <i>Teaching in Higher Education</i>, 28(1), pp. 136-149, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1778664</p> <p>²Tinto, V. 2003. <i>Learning Better Together: The Impact of Learning Communities on Student Success</i>. Higher Education Monograph Series.</p> <p>³Davison, E., R. Sanderson, T. Hobson & J. Hopkins. 2022. Skills for Success? Supporting transition into higher education for students from diverse backgrounds. <i>Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning</i>, 24(1), pp. 165-186. https://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/id/eprint/49341/</p> <p>⁴Hamshire, C., R. Forsyth & C. Player. 2018. <i>Transitions of first generation students to higher education in the UK. In: Understanding Experiences of First Generation University Students: Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Methodologies</i>. Bloomsbury Publishing.</p> <p>⁵Hockings, C. 2010. <i>Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research</i>. EvidenceNet HEA. https://rb.gy/pew2d2</p> <p>⁶Gopalan, M., A. Linden-Carmichael & S. Lanza. 2022. College Students' Sense of Belonging and Mental Health Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, <i>Journal of Adolescent Health</i>, 70(2), pp.228-233. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.10.010</p> <p>⁷Austen, L., R. Hodgson, C. Heaton, N. Pickering & J. Dickinson. 2021. Access, retention, attainment and progression: an integrative review of demonstrable impact on student outcomes. <i>Advance HE</i>. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/access-retention-attainment-and-progression-review-literature-2016-2021</p>	<p>Evidence around the concepts of belonging, representation, and student voice, and their effects on the student experience, suggests that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a learning community correlates positively with aspirations and motivation, expectations of oneself, and academic achievement, particularly for less advantaged students^{1,2,4,5}. • belonging to a course, subject, and HE provider can demonstrably affect student transition, engagement, self-efficacy, satisfaction, retention, attainment, and mental health^{1,3,4,5,6}. • enhancing the inclusivity of curricula, learning resources, teaching and assessment practices, and student support enhances students' sense of belonging^{5,7,8}. • pedagogic and other approaches (e.g., academic induction, personal tutoring, peer-mentoring and coaching, collaborative learning) to enhancing student interactions with staff, peers, and the campus that make students feel 'seen', 'known', and valued, have a demonstrably positive effect on belonging⁷. • providing students with opportunities to collaborate with staff and peers on diversifying and co-creating curricula, assessment, course content, and learning resources helps develop learning
	<p>Staff development and inclusion culture</p> <p>Scope: all new students, but particularly those from our target groups.</p>		

	<p>Target: students with disability, mature students, Ethnic Minority students, and students from IMD Quintile 1.</p> <p>What is it? Providing staff with support related to our expectations for inclusive academic practices, that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on inclusion. • Embedding APP related topics in staff induction. • Embedding inclusion practices into academic departments through the activities of the APP Steering Group, e.g., policy development, sharing of good practice, advocacy, and project work. 	<p>⁸Blake, S., G. Capper & A. Jackson. 2022. Building Belonging in Higher Education. Pearson & WonkHE. https://wonkhe.com/wp-content/wonkhe-uploads/2022/10/Building-Belonging-October-2022.pdf</p> <p>⁹Lubicz-Nawrocka, T. & C. Bovill. 2021. Do students experience transformation through co-creating curriculum in higher education?, Teaching in Higher Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1928060</p> <p>¹⁰Wavehill. 2022. What Works in Supporting Student Mental Health. Final Report to the Office for Students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7584/evaluation-of-the-mhcc-what-works.pdf</p> <p>¹¹OfS. 2023. Meeting the mental health needs of students. https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/8812/insight-brief-20-meeting-the-mental-health-needs-of-students.pdf</p> <p>¹²Advance HE. 2020. Equality impact assessment. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/governance-and-policies/equality-impact-assessment</p> <p>¹³Advance HE. 2016. Student Engagement Through Partnership. Essential Frameworks for Enhancing Student Success. https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/Student%20Engagement%20Through%20Partnership%20Framework.pdf</p> <p>¹⁴Matthews, K.E., M. Dollinger. 2023. Student voice in higher education: the importance of distinguishing student representation and student partnership. High Educ 85, 555–570. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00851-7</p> <p>¹⁵Dunne, L. & R. Zandstra. 2011. Students as Change Agents: New ways of engaging with learning and teaching in Higher Education. Eds. T. Brown & T. Nurser. Higher Education Academy. https://srhe.ac.uk/arc/conference2010/abstracts/0237.pdf</p> <p>¹⁶Sandoval Mena, M. & F.R. Waitoller, F. R. 2025. Students as agents of school change for inclusive education: international approaches and methodological pluralism. International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 38(3), 331–337. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2025.2455981</p>	<p>communities, engagement with and enjoyment of learning, persistence and attainment⁹.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partnering with students and enabling their leadership of curricular reform in the context of support provision, raising awareness, and self-advocacy, is very effective and can help destigmatise help seeking and reporting of mental health and other kinds of challenges by certain student groups¹⁰, many of which (e.g., mature students, students from lower economic background, Ethnic Minority students) are likely to experience higher attrition due to lower rates of presenting to and engagement with available support, e.g., mental health support¹¹. • equality impact assessment is an established approach to modelling the effect of higher education policies and processes on protected characteristics under equality law¹²; inclusivity impact assessment (SEER) is a novel approach that combines the modelling of effects of curricular and support provision designs and practices on both equality and inclusivity for target student characteristics in the equality law and EORR. • engaging the student voice in fostering inclusive education and student experience generally follows two main approaches: the student-staff or peer-student partnerships¹³, often local to modules, courses, and teaching and learning, and student representation in the formal, decision-making structure of HE providers¹⁴. • students as change agents represent a form of student partnership operating through a project-based approach (Dunne-Zandstra model, 2011)¹⁵. • the change agents approach to student partnerships is effective at facilitating and embedding inclusion into curricula, teaching,
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		Higher education teachers' understandings of and challenges for inclusion and inclusive learning environments: A systematic literature review. Educ Res Review, 43. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2024.100605	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• engage staff in sustained development in inclusive practice.
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Fees, investments and targets

2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: David Game College Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10015688

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

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.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OfS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£62,000	£62,000	£62,000	£62,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£40,000	£41,000	£42,000	£43,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£43,000	£43,000	£43,000	£43,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000	£63,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£52,000	£52,000	£52,000	£52,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£62,000	£62,000	£62,000	£62,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£40,000	£41,000	£42,000	£43,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%

Fees, investments and targets

2026-27 to 2029-30

Provider name: David Game College Ltd

Provider UKPRN: 10015688

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone	2029-30 milestone
To increase the proportion of HND students at DGHE who are disabled, achieving 8.1% disabled entrants by 2029-30.	PTA_1	Access	Reported disability	Disability reported		Our internal data shows our current enrolment of disabled students to be 5.7% (2-year aggregate). Our baseline and annual milestones are 2-year aggregates, from the baseline years 2023/24 to 2024/25.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	5.7%	6.7%	7.2%	7.6%	8.1%
	PTA_2														
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone	2029-30 milestone
To reduce the gap in continuation between Non-White and White students, closing the continuation gap between Non-White and White learners to 3 percentage points (pp) by 2029-30.	PTS_1	Continuation	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)	White	We are using Ethnic Minority as a combination of Black, Asian, Mixed and other ethnicities. Our internal data shows a continuation gap between Ethnic Minority and White students of 11.7pp (2-year aggregate). Our baseline and annual milestones are 2-year aggregates, from the baseline years 2022/23 to 2023/24.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	11.7pp	9pp	7pp	5pp	3pp
To reduce the gap in attainment outcomes between the most and least deprived groups (IMD Quintiles 1 and 5, respectively) on HND courses, reducing the gap between IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 attainment outcomes (Merit or Distinction) to 17 percentage points by 2029-30.	PTS_2	Attainment	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	Our internal data shows an attainment gap between IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 of 25.5pp (4-year aggregate). Our baseline and annual milestones are 4-year aggregates, from the baseline years 2021/22 to 2024/25.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage points	25.5pp	23pp	21pp	19pp	17pp
To increase the attainment rate of mature students on HND courses to 60% by 2029-30.	PTS_3	Attainment	Age	Mature (over 21)	N/A	Our internal data shows our mature students HND attainment to be 45.5% (2-year aggregate) which we aim to increase. Our baseline and annual milestones are 2-year aggregates, from the baseline years 2023/24 to 2024/25.	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	Other (please include details in commentary)	Percentage	45.5%	48%	52%	56%	60%

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