Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Access and participation plan

2025-26 to 2028-29

Improving equality of opportunity in a changing world

Foreword

At Goldsmiths, the principles of challenging inequality and advancing social justice are at the heart of how we teach, what we research and how we support our students. We believe that it is our mission to create a level playing field for all, working to address inequality in all its forms with a focus on social, racial, gender and environmental disparities. Improving equality of opportunity in higher education is a core priority for the College and is embedded in our overarching strategy. Developing our access and participation plan for 2025-26 to 2028-29 has provided us with a welcome opportunity to reflect on our successes, identify areas of strength and weakness, and challenge ourselves to be more creative, more ambitious, and more accountable in our work.

We are proud to be an incredibly diverse institution. Through our outreach work with schools, colleges, charities, and our community, we will continue to work collaboratively to address nationwide challenges in access to higher education and meet the needs of potential students of all ages. Our current students are clear that the challenges they are facing are extensive, ranging from cost pressures and poor mental health to gaps in their sense of belonging. It is a difficult time to be a student, but we believe that a Goldsmiths degree remains a fantastic route to a rewarding life and career. Through this access and participation plan, we will ensure this is the case for students of all backgrounds by improving the quality and efficacy of the academic, pastoral and financial support we provide.

Our plan is deliberately and relentlessly ambitious – we know that it will be challenging to achieve the targets and objectives we have set out, but we owe it to our students to deliver swift and substantive change in the areas we have identified. Success will require absolute commitment from academic and professional services staff, students and student representatives, and partners both within and beyond the higher education sector. By working together, we will create a learning environment in which all students can thrive, transforming the experiences, outcomes and lives of students from underrepresented groups. In our context, this includes Black students, Asian students, students of Mixed and Other ethnic backgrounds, socio-economically disadvantaged students, mature students, disabled students, care-experienced and estranged students. Most of our students belong to one or more of these groups, and our interventions and commitments have therefore been informed by the intersectional realities of students' lives.

Goldsmiths has experienced many challenges in recent years, and we know that further challenges lie ahead for our institution and for the wider higher education sector. However, with this plan and with the energy and enthusiasm of our community, we believe that we can and will see meaningful, measurable progress over the next four years. We invite you to hold us accountable for delivering this progress for the long-term benefit of prospective students, current students, and recent graduates.

Professor Frances Corner OBE

Vice-Chancellor, Goldsmiths, University of London

The Goldsmiths community have long embodied the values of Social Justice and fighting inequality. Our speciality in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences has long provided a diverse and critical educational degree offering, challenging the status quo and promoting transformative alternatives in their respective disciplines through radical pedagogical approaches. The University's location in New Cross has historically necessitated reflection of its local community and its struggles against Racism and oppression, traditions mirrored by the successive generations of students who have struggled and campaigned against structural inequalities and injustices within the University and the wider community. Our recent history and student mobilisations prove that these principles remain central to the student body's priorities today.

Resting on these foundationary principles lies the implicit understanding that, at its best, a Goldsmiths degree can empower, deliver a critical perspective on Society and the Arts, and encourage students to become part of a radical community of social innovators that significantly changes the trajectory of students' lives. This belief is applied to students' demands to ensure that everyone receives the opportunity to access higher education and its benefits to gain a valuable understanding of the world, become more active participants in the social world, and achieve in becoming improved versions of themselves, conscious of the issues that affect their society, and clear about their role to play in improving it.

Nonetheless, for many students, there remain significant ongoing challenges and barriers to achieving this. Rising costs of living, a changing economy, and rising levels of discrimination against marginalised groups demand a clear and coherent set of actions to address them. The access and participation plan forms part of Goldsmiths' commitment to tackling these issues. It outlines useful contributions to address them, identifies the most significant challenges to student participation, and sets out actions to address these.

As a Students' Union, we shall continue to ensure that the University is held accountable for its delivery of the plan. We previously tabled a student contribution to the Office for Students to ensure that the access and participation plan reflects the needs of the student body. We shall also ensure that it does not limit the ambitions of the Goldsmiths community in imagining possibilities for improving the student experience or limit our efforts to campaign against structural inequalities and ensure an equitable experience for all students. The scale of the challenge is significant and will require work across the University to address, but nonetheless, the access and participation plan, as a part of those holistic efforts, is a useful initiative that will have a tangible impact on the student experience.

Luca Di Mambro-Moor

Education Officer, Goldsmiths Students' Union

Goldsmiths, University of London
Access and participation plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Introduction

At Goldsmiths, we offer a transformative experience to our students, generating knowledge and stimulating self-discovery through creative, radical and intellectually rigorous thinking and practice. We deliver world-leading research and excellent teaching from our campus in the heart of South East London. Founded in 1891, and part of the University of London since 1904, Goldsmiths offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate study options in the arts, humanities, social sciences, cultural studies, computing, entrepreneurial business and management and the professions. We have a long history of local engagement, and in 2021, we became the first university in London to launch a **Civic University Agreement**, formalising our commitments as an anchor institution in South East London.

We are a small university with around 8,600 students in 2023-24, including 3,500 home undergraduate students. In 2024, most of our UK domiciled undergraduate students belong to groups at risk of not experiencing equality of opportunity in higher education. Specifically, 84% of students are mature, disabled, socioeconomically disadvantaged (living in IMD Q1 and Q2 areas)[1] and/or belong to the Global Ethnic Majority (GEM).[2] 87% of socioeconomically disadvantaged students are also mature, disabled or GEM.

The ongoing impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and other funding pressures have combined to create an entirely new environment in which we are delivering higher education. Through our new ten-year strategy, we will renew our institution as a sustainable, modern university which makes a progressive contribution to global life. The strategy will be supported by several core pillars detailing our ambitions as a university and this plan will support the delivery of pillars relating to social innovation, student experience and our learning environment.

Our strategic aims

Our strategic aims in relation to equality of opportunity are reflective of the scale of the challenges facing our institution and the wider sector. This plan will set out the steps we will take to advance towards the following strategic aims between 2025-26 and 2028-29, while acknowledging that the scale of the work required in many of these areas will undoubtedly extend beyond the life of the plan. In the long term, we recognise our role as part of a wider higher education sector seeking to ensure that people from all backgrounds receive the support, opportunities and respect they need to navigate a path to and through higher education, and into rewarding lives and careers.

---

[1] The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small geographical areas in England. The measure is calculated based on seven different domains of deprivation: income deprivation, employment deprivation, education, skills and training deprivation, health deprivation and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment deprivation. People living in IMD Q1 and Q2 areas live in the areas with the highest levels of relative deprivation. Throughout the plan, we have used IMD data as a proxy for socioeconomic background, with students living in Q1 and Q2 areas considered 'disadvantaged'.

[2] Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) is the term we use to collectively refer to Black students, Asian students, Mixed students and students of other ethnicities. This term has been selected following engagement with GEM students about their preferences.

Strategic aim 1: To continuously improve our institutional understanding of the experiences, needs, priorities and concerns of our students, especially those from underrepresented groups and those with protected characteristics.

Strategic aim 2: To question and challenge existing processes, structures, decisions and policies where these may not be meeting the needs of our students, including challenging prevailing narratives that suggest certain experiences are marginal or fringe, rather than core and common.

Strategic aim 3: To address gaps in success and progression outcomes between underrepresented students and their peers, taking a whole lifecycle approach that recognises the strength of the link between student experience and student outcomes.[3]

Strategic aim 4: To provide local schools, further education colleges, university technical colleges, people and organisations with tailored information, advice and guidance about university that meets their needs, providing opportunities for people of all backgrounds to develop familiarity with the university environment, and build the confidence, knowledge and skills required to access higher education.

Strategic aim 5: To identify and address differential experiences and outcomes for students who are not covered by this plan, but who nonetheless remain a core part of our student community, specifically, international and postgraduate students.[4]

Risks to equality of opportunity

We have identified the following risks to equality of opportunity which we believe are most relevant to our context and which we will seek to address through this plan. We have considered the twelve sector-wide risks in the **OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register** (EORR) and undertaken extensive student consultation to support our analysis.

Risk 1.1 – Differential access to higher education

There are many people in our society who do not experience equality of opportunity in terms of access to higher education, with some groups remaining far less likely to progress to higher education than their peers, and/or being far less likely to progress to higher tariff or specialist artistic and creative institutions. This includes students from lower income backgrounds, students with no familial experience of higher education, students from some ethnic and religious backgrounds and mature students. Evidence suggests that there are several overlapping factors contributing to this risk, for example:

- People from some groups are less likely to receive the information needed to make informed choices about their futures (**EORR risk 2** and **9**) and as such may feel that higher education is not for them (**EORR risk 3**)
- People from some groups may feel that a creative or arts education is not for them (**EORR risk 3**). Some schools and colleges are offering fewer Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in artistic and creative subjects, meaning that students from underrepresented backgrounds may not have the opportunity to explore creative subjects, develop their skills, or undertake

---

[3] 'Underrepresented students' refers to GEM students, mature students, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with mental health conditions.

[4] The actions we will take to achieve strategic aim 5 will not be covered in any detail within this plan, as these students are not covered by access and participation regulation. We have included this aim in the plan because we know that risks to equality of opportunity also impact international and postgraduate students.

qualifications that would allow them to make a competitive application for artistic and creative higher education courses (**EORR risk 4**).

- People may be concerned that going to university is not a financially viable option for them (**EORR risk 10**)

On an institutional level, the diversity of our student body indicates that we are performing well in this area. Therefore, we have identified this risk based on an assessment of sector-wide data and national priorities in relation to access to higher education.

Risk 1.2 – Attainment gaps in schools

There is a persistent attainment gap between disadvantaged young people and their peers, which is observable at various points throughout primary and secondary school.[5] This attainment gap can have far-reaching impacts for disadvantaged students and the attainment gap at GCSE level is a key contributor to differences in rates of access to higher education for specific groups. Evidence suggests that this gap is caused by differences in knowledge and skills development (**EORR risk 1**) and the ongoing impacts of the coronavirus (**EORR risk 9**).

Risk 2.1 – Disrupted educational journeys

People belonging to specific groups are more likely to experience disruption in their educational journeys, resulting in lower rates of access to higher education, and impacting on-course success. Groups impacted by this risk may include care-experienced and estranged students, refugees and asylum seekers, young carers, student parents, people who have been in the armed forces and those from military families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, neurodivergent people, people with special educational needs and trans and non-binary people, amongst others. As a result of this disruption, people do not develop the knowledge and skills needed to progress to HE (**EORR risk 1**), do not receive adequate information and guidance about HE (**EORR risk 2**), feel that HE is not for people like them (**EORR risk 3**) and/or are less likely to make a successful application to HE (**EORR risk 4**). Disruption may have been exacerbated by the ongoing impacts of the coronavirus (**EORR risk 9**).

Risk 2.2 – Some students face complex personal, legal, political and financial challenges on the basis of their personal characteristics, life experiences or circumstances

Students belonging to specific groups may also experience complex personal, legal, political and financial challenges which make it more difficult for them to succeed in or progress from higher education.[6] For example, gaps in governmental support and funding, hostile policies, and prejudice in the jobs market can have significant impacts on the life chances of students belonging to these groups. This issue is influenced by many of the risks highlighted in the EORR, including insufficient academic support (**EORR risk 6**), insufficient personal support (**EORR risk 7**), mental health (**EORR risk 8**), cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**), capacity issues (**EORR risk 11**) and progression from higher education (**EORR risk 12**).

Risk 2.3 – Lack of institutional knowledge, representation or lived experience

Understanding of the experiences of students belonging to specific groups (see **Risk 2.1**) is currently lacking at an institutional level. Data collection for these groups is often limited or incomplete. Where we do hold data, this may be in siloed systems and is not always accessible to

---

[5] Learn more: https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Closing-the-attainment-gap.pdf.
[6] See **Risk 2.1** for examples of the student groups impacted by this risk.

all relevant colleagues. The specificity and complexity of the experiences of these students means that staff are less likely to be able to draw from lived experience when designing or delivering work to support these groups. Improving institutional understanding of these students would make it easier for the university to provide the academic, personal, mental health and financial support that these students require to succeed, addressing the consequences of **Risk 2.1** and **Risk 2.2**.

Risk 3.1 and Risk 3.2 – Continuation gaps between Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) students and White students

For 2020-21 entrants, there was a 13.3 percentage point (pp) continuation gap between Black and White students, and a 4.8pp gap between Mixed and White students. This means that Black and Mixed students were significantly more likely to drop out of their studies ahead of their second year than their White peers. Evidence and student engagement suggests that these gaps are influenced by cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**), a reduced sense of belonging and inclusion, experiences of discrimination, harassment and bias, insufficient academic and personal support (**EORR risk 6** and **7**), poor mental health (**EORR risk 8**) and gaps in knowledge and academic skills development (**EORR risk 1**), which may arise because students are more likely to join the university with non-traditional qualifications.

Risk 3.3, Risk 3.4, Risk 3.5 and Risk 3.6 – Attainment gaps between Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) students and White students

For 2021-22 qualifiers, there was a 19.3pp attainment gap between Black and White students, a 14.1pp gap between Asian and White students, a 6.1pp gap between students of other ethnicities and White students, and a 3.3pp gap between Mixed and White students. This means that Black, Asian and Mixed students and students of other ethnicities were less likely to receive 2:1s or 1sts than their White peers. Evidence and student engagement suggests that these gaps are influenced by insufficient academic support (**EORR risk 6**), a reduced sense of belonging and inclusion, experiences of discrimination, harassment and bias, gaps in knowledge and skills development (**EORR risk 1**), cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**), the ongoing risks of coronavirus (**EORR risk 9**), and insufficient or inadequate personal and mental health support (**EORR risk 7** and **8**). The **Co-POWeR research project**, co-authored by Goldsmiths researchers, found that the pandemic had a disproportionately negative impact on Black, Asian and minority ethnic students' engagement with education. Our GEM students have connected this inability to engage fully in education during school and college with their success on-course. Students also felt that significant organisational change at the College, specifically the potential closure of diverse modules and changes to ethnic representation amongst staff, could have an adverse impact on attainment for this group.

Risk 3.7 and Risk 3.8 – Progression gaps between Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) graduates and White graduates

For 2020-21 qualifiers, there was a 6.3pp progression gap between Asian and White graduates and a 6.1pp gap between Black and White graduates. This means that Asian and Black graduates were less likely to progress to highly skilled employment or further study than their White peers (**EORR risk 12**). Many of the underlying risks identified as contributing to attainment gaps for GEM students are also relevant here.

Risk 4.1 – Continuation gap between mature and young students

For 2020-21 entrants, there was an 8.6pp continuation gap between mature and young students. This means that mature students were less likely to continue into their second year than younger students. Evidence suggests that this gap is caused by underlying gaps in knowledge and skills

development and access to information and guidance (**EORR risk 1** and **2**), as well as insufficient academic, personal and mental health support (**EORR risk 6**, **7** and **8**). Student engagement highlighted that mature students may have navigated a non-traditional path to higher education, are more likely to be managing additional responsibilities alongside their studies, are more likely to be commuting to campus, and may be disproportionately concerned about cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**) and progression from higher education (**EORR risk 12**).

Risk 5.1 – Continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability

For 2020-21 entrants, there was a 5.4pp continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability. This means that students with mental health conditions were less likely to continue into their second year than those with no known disability. Evidence and student engagement suggests that, in addition to the impacts of poor mental health (**EORR risk 8**) and insufficient personal support (**EORR risk 7**), this gap is also influenced by gaps in knowledge and skills development, gaps in access to information and guidance, the ongoing impacts of coronavirus and the impacts of cost pressures and capacity issues (**EORR risk 1**, **2**, **9**, **10** and **11**). Students felt that organisational change at the College, specifically the scale and speed of change, the approach to communicating change and the potential for sustained uncertainty, could have an adverse impact on continuation for this group.

27.7% of 2021-22 entrants declared a disability, a proportion which has been steadily increasing over time. Our students are far more likely to declare a disability than in the wider sector, where 17.4% of entrants declared a disability in 2021-22. In particular, a disproportionately large proportion of our students declare a mental health condition – 11.4% compared with 5% in the wider sector. However, recent **Student Minds research** found that 27% of a representative sample of students had a diagnosed, current mental health issue. As the 17.4% figure applies to university entrants, this discrepancy may be explained by the existence of students whose condition is only diagnosed during their time at university. However, it could suggest there is mass underreporting of mental health conditions in official university data, which is another potential risk to equality of opportunity for students impacted by poor mental health.

Risk 6.1 – Continuation gap between socioeconomically disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers

For 2020-21 entrants, there was a 7.9pp continuation gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 students.[7] This continuation gap suggests that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were less likely to continue into their second year of study than their more advantaged peers. Evidence and student engagement suggests that, in addition to cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**), this gap is caused by differences in access to information and guidance (**EORR risk 2**), limited choice of course type and delivery type (**EORR risk 5**), the ongoing impacts of coronavirus (**EORR risk 9**) and capacity issues (**EORR risk 11**). Students also felt that concerns about progression from higher education (**EORR risk 12**) were particularly relevant for this group, and that it was important students understood how completing their course would benefit them in the jobs market.

---

[7] In this plan, we are using IMD data as a proxy for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, students with lower household incomes and those for whom 'cost pressures' are most likely to influence their decision-making. Together, 'income deprivation' and 'employment deprivation' make up 45% of the final weighting for this measure.

Risk 6.2 – Attainment gap between socioeconomically disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers

For 2021-22 qualifiers, there was an attainment gap of 11.4pp between IMD Q1 and Q5 students. This gap suggests that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were less likely to receive 2:1s or 1sts than their more advantaged peers. Evidence and student engagement suggests that this gap is caused by differences in access to information and guidance (**EORR risk 2**), limited choice of course type and delivery type (**EORR risk 5**), the ongoing impacts of coronavirus (**EORR risk 9**), the impacts of cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**) and capacity issues (**EORR risk 11**).

Risk 6.3 – Our changing context

An increasingly diverse student body, changes in the wider economic environment of the UK and financial challenges in the higher education sector have combined to create a new context in which we are delivering higher education. As such, there is a risk that our current modes of delivery and approaches to student support may no longer meet the needs of all students. Relevant underlying risks identified in the EORR include limited choice of course type and delivery mode (**EORR risk 5**), cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**) and capacity issues (**EORR risk 11**).

Objectives

Objective 1.1: To maintain the diversity of our student body across the period of the plan, fulfil our civic mission and contribute to sector-wide efforts to improve access to higher education, through continuing to work in partnership with schools and colleges in South East London and with organisations committed to widening access. We will ensure that students at schools and colleges in South East London have multiple opportunities to meaningfully engage with university throughout their educational journeys.

Objective 1.2: To contribute to raising GCSE attainment in schools for young people from underrepresented backgrounds locally and nationally.

Objective 2.1 / Objective 2.2: To establish a clear, coherent and unbroken framework of support for students who have experienced disruption in their educational journeys, or are facing complex personal, legal, financial and political challenges on the basis of their personal characteristics, experiences or circumstances.

Objective 2.3: To improve our understanding of the needs, experiences, and outcomes of these groups of students at the College (see **Risk 2.1** for a list of relevant student groups).

Objective 3.1: To close the continuation gap between Black and White students by 2032-33.

Objective 3.2: To close the continuation gap between Mixed and White students by 2028-29.

Objective 3.3: To close the attainment gap between Black and White students by 2032-33.

Objective 3.4: To close the attainment gap between Asian and White students by 2032-33.

Objective 3.5: To close the attainment gap between students of other ethnicities and White students by 2028-29.

Objective 3.6: To close the attainment gap between Mixed and White students by 2028-29.

Objective 3.7: To close the progression gap between Asian and White students by 2032-33.

Objective 3.8: To close the progression gap between Black and White students by 2032-33.

Objective 4.1: To close the continuation gap between mature and young students by 2032-33.

Objective 5.1: To close the continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability by 2030-31.

Objective 6.1: To close the continuation gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students by 2032-33.

Objective 6.2: To close the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students by 2032-33.

Objective 6.3: To review our existing delivery modes, policies, processes and ways of working and consider how far these are consistent with the needs, expectations, priorities and challenges faced by our diverse student body. We will publish a series of blogs to share our findings and recommendations internally and externally throughout the period of the plan, with clear timelines for making changes. Where changes are not possible or desirable (for example, due to other constraints facing the College), we will share our rationale. We will share updates on this activity at annual access and participation conferences for our staff and students.

Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1: Improving access to higher education for local students and raising attainment in schools

This intervention strategy aims to address **Risk 1.1** and **Risk 1.2** and the associated EORR risks listed above. Our performance in terms of providing access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups is strong. As such, this intervention strategy is part of our commitment to address sector-wide and societal issues impacting access to higher education. Through it, we aim to fulfil our civic and wider societal responsibilities by meeting the needs and expectations of schools, colleges and communities in our local area and beyond, and protect the existing diversity of our student body. This includes working in partnership with local authorities to support the development and delivery of their education strategies, and delivering PGCE courses designed to support the development of exceptional teachers who recognise and value inclusivity.

Objectives and targets

This intervention strategy aims to address **Objective 1.1** and **Objective 1.2.** We have not set any targets relating to this intervention strategy as we are seeking to maintain the diversity in our student body. We will carefully monitor the impact of our activities over the course of the plan period and will undertake annual assessments of our access data. Where new indications of risk or concerning changes in the diversity of our student body are observed, we will develop new interventions to address these concerns and will submit a variation to the plan to reflect proposed changes in our approach.

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes[8]
1.1 – Gold Futures mentoring Existing, collaborative activity.	Six-week programme through which we will match current students with ten Year 9 students at Addey and Stanhope School. We will select mentees based on their characteristics (e.g., eligible for free school meals, first generation HE). We will consider mentor relatability in selection and hold a graduation event on our campus.	Widening Participation (WP) staff resource Student staff costs Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved sense of belonging in relation to university, improved academic self-efficacy, improved metacognitive strategies and improved university expectations and knowledge.
1.2 – Alchemy and Alchemy Masters Existing, collaborative activity.	Programme of professional and creative music skills training delivered alongside youth work and mentoring activities. 13 to 19-year-old participants are referred by schools, partner organisations and social workers on the basis of concerns they are at-risk of dropping out of education and/or demonstrating patterns of non-attendance, poor academic performance, lack of engagement with their studies and/or are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Approximately seventy-five direct participants annually across fourteen schools.	Alchemy specialised staff resource Student staff costs WP staff resource Catering costs Publishing costs Provision of space, resources and equipment 'in kind.'	Intermediate outcomes include improved social confidence, wellbeing and sense of community, improved access to ongoing support and self-efficacy with regards to navigating the future and improved school/college attendance, behaviour and engagement. Also, improved university expectations and knowledge and improved sense of belonging in relation to HE.
1.3 – Team Up tutoring New, collaborative activity.	English and Maths tuition programme where our students provide English and Maths study support to twenty-five Year 11 students preparing for their GCSE's. Targeted at students who are eligible for free school meals, predicted to achieve Grade 4 or 5 in English and Maths, and who are at risk of not achieving their target grade. We will consider tutor relatability. We will	WP staff resource Student staff costs Operational costs Partnership costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved academic self-efficacy, improved cognitive and metacognitive strategies, improved university expectations and knowledge and improved sense of belonging in relation to higher education. The overall aim is to raise participants' GCSE

---

[8] Where relevant, intermediate outcomes throughout the plan are reflective of the TASO Access and Success Questionnaire (ASQ) set of validated scales for access and success activities. Survey activity will allow us to evaluate the degree to which these outcomes have been delivered.

	hold a graduation event on our campus.		English and Maths attainment and improve their wider academic performance.
1.4 – Schools engagement strategy **1.5 – Colleges engagement strategy** Existing activity. Activity with 'partner' schools and colleges is collaborative.	Maintain relationships with a portfolio of approximately one hundred schools, sixth forms and colleges across South East London. For the purposes of mature student recruitment and engagement, the team also works with further education colleges across Greater London and beyond. Institutions are prioritised for engagement based on the proportions of their students who belong to underrepresented groups. Activities include tailored regular communications, partnership meetings, the delivery of information, advice and guidance (IAG), academic taster sessions, student Q&A panels and personal statement and application support. Schools and colleges are eligible to bring groups to campus for Discover Gold events (see **Int. 1.6**, below).	WP staff resource Student staff costs Academic staff resource Tavel and accommodation costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved university expectations and knowledge, improved sense of belonging in relation to higher education and improved ability to navigate the application process successfully.
1.6 – Discover Gold Existing activity.	Tailored campus taster days for students of all ages. Schools must ensure that 50% of attendees are eligible for free school meals. College visits target Access to HE Diploma students, mature students, SEND students and ESOL students. Schools and colleges must prioritise providing places to students with no familial history of HE. More than 800 annual participants.	WP staff resource Student staff costs Academic staff resource Catering costs Merchandise, marketing and prizes costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved university knowledge and expectations, improved sense of belonging in relation to higher education, improved cultural capital and improved ability to navigate the application process successfully.
1.7 – The Brilliant Club Scholars Programme	In collaboration with **The Brilliant Club**, we deliver **The Scholars Programme**, targeted at students aged 8-18 who are eligible for pupil premium, live in the most deprived areas (IDACI quintiles 1 and 2), and have no parental experience of	WP staff resource Student staff costs Partnership costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved academic self-efficacy, improved cognitive strategies, improved university expectations and knowledge and

		Catering costs	improved sense of belonging in relation to higher education.
Existing, collaborative activity.	higher education. Students complete a series of university-style group tutorials, delivered by a trained PhD tutor, and attend a graduation event held at a university campus. Our PhD students work as tutors, and we host graduation events for between 750 and 900 students each year.		
1.8 – Progression agreements Existing, collaborative activity.	Progression agreements grant prospective students at specific schools and colleges, or studying for specific qualifications, unique admission benefits to our courses. Students can access guaranteed interviews and/or offers for more than fifty UG programmes. In most cases, offers are set one grade below the standard offer, in recognition of contextual factors. Progression agreements are in place with **Lewisham College**, **Southwark College**, **Mulberry UTC**, **OCN** and **LASER** (accreditors of Access to HE Diplomas).	WP staff resource Admissions staff resource Academic staff resource Promotional and travel costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved ability to navigate the application process successfully, improved university expectations and knowledge.
1.9 – Art summer school Existing, collaborative activity.	10-day on-campus studio-based programme for twenty 16- to 18-year-olds. Includes working with visiting graduate artists, learning artistic crafts, experiencing arts-making in a studio setting, and learning university application skills. Targeted at students who have been eligible for free school meals, have no familial experience of HE, live in IMD Q1 & Q2 areas, are GEM, disabled, care-experienced and/or asylum-seeking. Participants are eligible for a guaranteed interview for our Fine Art programmes.	WP staff resource Student staff costs Academic staff resource Summer School Coordinator staff resource Catering, material and equipment costs Training and safety checks costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved academic self-efficacy, improved cognitive strategies, improved subject knowledge, improved metacognitive strategies, improved university expectations and knowledge, improved sense of belonging in relation to HE and improved ability to navigate the application process successfully. Also, improved social confidence, wellbeing and sense of community.
1.10 – Financial	Activities to address the risk that perceived or actual 'cost pressures' (**EORR risk 10**) reduce access to	WP staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved university expectations

literacy project New activity. We will investigate potential partners.	higher education. Includes the creation of a new suite of resources, supporting students applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) pre-entry, sharing accurate information about the costs of full-time study, and supporting prospective students to develop their financial literacy and budgeting skills. Where possible, activities will be embedded into Discover Gold events and other forms of engagement with schools and colleges (see **Int. 1.4, Int. 1.5, Int. 1.6**).	Student staff costs Operational costs	and knowledge, and improved sense of belonging in relation to higher education.
1.11 – Upskilling and empowering staff to deliver effective activity Developing, collaborative activity.	We will continue to upskill staff working with prospective students to ensure that our institutional understanding of how to deliver effective widening access activity and meet the needs of specific student groups in terms of access and success is continuously improved.	Subscription and membership costs Training and conference costs Travel and accommodation costs Operational costs	The core outcome of this activity is that staff are able to deliver all interventions in this strategy successfully and are further enabled to make procedural and strategic improvements to delivery in response to evaluation, research and data, over the full period of the plan and beyond.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The estimated total cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £1,859,000.[9] In addition to the interventions listed above, this figure includes costs for the following activities:

- Collaborative campus visits for cohorts of underrepresented students being supported by **Aimhigher London** and **IntoUniversity**
- Financial, operational and academic contributions to the Lewisham Challenge programme delivered by Lewisham Borough Council to sixth forms and colleges in Lewisham

---

[9] It is challenging to accurately predict investment over the period of the plan, due to uncertainty in the wider economic environment for higher education, including possible changes to the rate of inflation, as well as fluctuations in student numbers. Actual investment will be reported through our annual financial return and through other OfS access and participation plan monitoring mechanisms, as relevant. Should we foresee the need to make significant changes to the scale or nature of our activities, we will ensure that we engage with the OfS at an early stage, including by flagging a reportable event or requesting a variation to our plan. We understand that a reduction in overall ambition is unlikely to be approvable in such a case. See Annex C for further information about our investment.

The figure does not include 'in-kind' costs.

In addition to the activities detailed here, teams across the university undertake a variety of additional activities in support of this intervention strategy. Our student staff schemes employ a disproportionate number of underrepresented and disadvantaged current students. These student staff act as relatable, aspirational role models for prospective students from similar backgrounds across the College's access and recruitment activities. Other activities we are delivering in support of this strategy include:

- The Fine Art Schools Studio Programme and the **Centre for Contemporary Art Schools Programme**
- Ad-hoc academic engagement between our academics and schools and colleges, in addition to academic contributions to the interventions listed above
- Information, advice and guidance sessions and other projects delivered by our UK recruitment team, including **Be Bold with Gold**, **Channel Talent webinars** and **Young Writer Competitions**
- Our portfolio of **wider civic engagement activities**

Additionally, in 2023, we became the national delivery partner for Arts Council England's **Artsmark programme**, the only creative quality standard for arts and culture in England. Artsmark empowers teachers to embed arts, creativity and culture across the whole curriculum and evidence the impact on the whole school community. Through this work, we are enhancing arts and culture education in up to 4,000 schools, through providing comprehensive support and innovative learning opportunities.

Investment in these activities has not been included in the figure provided above because these activities may have different primary aims and it is therefore challenging to disaggregate spend accurately.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

In the long term, we expect the delivery of this strategy to result in higher rates of underrepresented groups accessing higher education in general, and Goldsmiths in particular, and improvements in GCSE attainment for local and national cohorts of underrepresented students. We also expect student staff supporting the delivery of this work to have an improved sense of belonging and develop key transferable skills which will help them to progress to graduate employment. The vast majority of student staff belong to underrepresented groups themselves.

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**. Where activities are existing (see **Int. 1.1**, **Int. 1.2**, **Int. 1.6**, and **Int. 1.9**), these are supported by the outcomes of previous internal evaluation exercises. Our approach to schools and colleges engagement (**Int. 1.4** and **Int. 1.5**) has been developed in consultation with teachers and school leaders at our target schools and colleges, who have struggled to find university partners who were willing to adapt their activity to support school and college timelines and priorities for university and careers engagement. Studies show that introducing university to students as young as ten can render them significantly more likely to go to university themselves and we deliver campus experiences that can be tailored to suit the needs of a wide range of year groups. Since 2016, annual independent UCAS evaluations have shown that Scholars Programme (**Int. 1.7**) graduates are statistically significantly more likely to apply and

progress to a competitive university than students from similar backgrounds, and HEAT data shows a clear positive relationship between participation in The Scholars Programme and **improved GCSE attainment**.[10]

Over the course of the plan, we intend to review the efficacy of progression agreements, set out a theory of change for this intervention and consider how we can evaluate its success.[11]

Evaluation

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Gold Futures mentoring	We will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through: • Pre- and post- programme surveys for participants and mentors • End-of-programme review meetings and process evaluation surveys with mentors, staff and school leaders We will undertake long-term tracking of outcomes through HEAT.	We will share interim findings and testimonials on our Enhancing Education and Student Experience (EESE) blog in 2026-27, with updates published annually through the period of the plan.[12]
Alchemy and Alchemy Masters	We will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through pre-, mid- and post-programme surveys for participants, Alchemy Masters and Alchemy student ambassadors, as well as structured interviews with selected participants, parents and teachers. We will undertake long-term tracking of outcomes through HEAT.	We will share interim findings and testimonials on the EESE blog in 2026-27, with subsequent annual updates.
Team up tutoring	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through analysis of changes in diagnostic assessment data, pre-, mid- and post- programme surveys for participants, tutors and school leaders and weekly performance reviews by tutors tracking progress. This programme has a small sample size, but we will compare GCSE attainment of participants with attainment of a matched cohort of students who did not benefit from this intervention, with potential to generate causal (Type 3) evidence.	We will share interim findings on the EESE blog in 2026-27, with updates published annually through the period of the plan. We may also share findings with our existing sector networks. This may include presenting at conferences and training days.

---

[10] HEAT is the Higher Education Access Tracker, more information here: https://heat.ac.uk/
[11] Further information about the evidence base for this intervention strategy is available in Annex B.
[12] This external blog will be launched in autumn 2026.

Schools engagement strategy **Colleges engagement strategy** **Discover Gold** **Financial literacy project**	This activity has been designed on the basis of narrative (Type 1) evidence. We will gather feedback from teachers about the quality of our information, advice and guidance activity adding to our narrative evidence base. We will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence for our Discover Gold on-campus events through pre- and post- event surveys for participants. To support process improvements, we will undertake post-event surveys with accompanying teachers and student staff. We will also track and report on participant characteristics and undertake long-term tracking of participants through HEAT where individualised data has been collected.	We will share interim findings on our Enhancing Education and Student Experience blog in 2026-27, with updates published annually through the period of the plan.
The Brilliant Club Scholars' Programme	**Evaluation** of the efficacy of the Scholars' Programme is undertaken by The Brilliant Club. This evaluation provides causal (Type 3) evidence. We will undertake process evaluation of Scholars' Programme graduation events through collecting feedback from student staff and Brilliant Club event staff.	The Brilliant Club publishes an annual independent evaluation of the Scholars' Programme undertaken by UCAS. We will report on our specific contribution on the EESE blog in 2026-27.
Art summer school	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through pre-, mid- and post-programme surveys for participants and student staff, focus groups with all participants and structured interviews with selected participants. We will also track students' progression into HE and into Goldsmiths.	We will share interim findings and testimonials on the EESE blog in 2026-27, with subsequent updates published annually.
Upskilling and empowering staff	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through undertaking periodic learning, development and skills audits with staff.	We have no immediate intentions to publish materials in relation to this intervention.

Intervention strategy 2: Understanding and supporting people who have had specific life experiences which may impact their ability to access, participate, belong, succeed and progress from higher education

This intervention strategy aims to address **Risk 2.1**, **Risk 2.2** and **Risk 2.3**, and the associated EORR risks. This strategy also relates to **Risk 6.3**. The nature of this intervention strategy is deliberately wide-ranging in terms of the student lifecycle and the groups identified. We have taken this approach because disruption and gaps in support can be especially problematic for students with these characteristics and experiences, and many of the interventions should influence outcomes at multiple stages of the student lifecycle. If we identify additional groups of students who are not experiencing equality of opportunity at the College, it would be possible to expand the scope of the strategy. Through this intervention strategy, we will:

- Improve our understanding of the needs, experiences and outcomes of these groups

- Improve access to higher education for students from these groups, focusing on care-experienced students in the first instance
- Establish a coherent and unbroken framework of support for students from these groups at the College, from access through to progression

Objectives and targets

This intervention strategy aims to address **Objective 2.1, Objective 2.2** and **Objective 2.3.** We have not set any targets in relation to this intervention strategy, due to the small numbers of students belonging to these groups and the lack of reliable baseline data. Assuming that we improve our understanding of these groups over the course of the plan, we may vary the plan to include relevant targets and/or set targets in our next access and participation plan (APP). This strategy also relates to **Objective 6.3**, but crossover in student characteristics means that this strategy could support the delivery of all our objectives relating to on-course success. As such, many interventions listed here have corresponding interventions across **IS3** – **IS6**.

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes
2.1 – Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice New activity, collaboration with students.	Range of activities including termly 1-1 meetings between staff and care-experienced and estranged students (see **Int. 2.8**), agreeing institution-wide definitions for relevant groups, ensuring we collect and share data with relevant colleagues, and increased focus group, interview and survey activity. We will convene cross-institution discussions to pool learning and consider service improvements.	Student Success staff resource Planning, Registry, Admissions, Data Protection staff resource Focus group and survey incentive costs	Intermediate outcomes include an increased sense of belonging and wellbeing – students feel the university listens to them, cares about them, values them. Enabling intervention designed to maximise the impact of the strategy as a whole.
2.2 – Targeted promotion of existing support, priority access to support, streamlining mechanisms to access support New activity, some collaboration with external partners.	Targeted communications providing tailored information and priority access to existing support and opportunities, including through signposting in termly one-to-ones (see **Int. 2.11**). We will invite partner organisations onto campus to inform students about their entitlements and promote their services. Existing services will be required to collect and report information about who is accessing these services, where possible. User testing of mechanisms to access support, with a set of recommendations produced	Student Success staff resource Student Support, Library Services and Careers staff resource Promotional costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved rates of access to personal and academic support, improvements in student attendance and engagement, and improvements in students' wellbeing and sense of belonging.

	to support improvement in each service.		
2.3 – Targeted outreach programme Existing, collaborative activity.	Includes IAG webinars for Lewisham Virtual School, bespoke Discover Gold events (see **Int. 1.6**), tailored pre-entry communications and pursuit of new partnerships with organisations supporting these groups. Unsuccessful care-experienced applicants can book 1-1 appointments to discuss their applications and their future options.	WP staff resource Catering costs Student staff costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved university knowledge and expectations, improved ability to navigate the application process and improved sense of belonging in relation to HE.
2.4 – Targeted financial support Existing activity.	The **Care-Experienced and Estranged Student Bursary** is a guaranteed bursary for care-experienced and estranged students. Refugee and asylum seeker students are eligible to apply for the **International Response Scholarship**.	Cost of awards Admissions staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and reduced stress. Other outcomes could include improved student attendance and engagement.
2.5 – Enhanced welcome, induction and transition (WIT) package New activity.	Programme of activities delivered between September and January of first year, targeted at care-experienced, estranged and neurodivergent students. Includes pre-entry communications, targeted 'what to expect' webinars, provision of a clear point of contact for 1-1 support, a specialised package of Welcome gifts and other materials to support students settling in, exclusive campus tours and curated social opportunities during Welcome Week and beyond.	Student Success staff resource Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and reduced stress, increased rates of accessing support, improved sense of belonging, improved confidence and resilience.
2.6 – 'Futures' mentoring project New activity.	Pilot project through which a group of care-experienced and neurodivergent students will receive a programme of one-to-one personalised teaching and learning support throughout their first term, delivered by specially trained	Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre (TaLIC), Student Support staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved cognitive and metacognitive strategies, improved academic performance, improved sense of belonging, confidence and resilience, increased rates of accessing support and

	academic practitioners completing Stage 2 of their PGCHE.	Operational costs	reduced stress and isolation.
2.7 – Promoting belonging, celebrating diversity, building community New activity, some collaboration with students.	This activity includes a programme of social connection events during the vacations and other quiet periods, as well as the introduction of a fund to support the delivery of student-led social events throughout the year. We will gather and share testimonials, tips, advice and reflections from students and alumni with experiences which may be helpful to students facing similar challenges.	Student Success staff resource Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved sense of belonging, improved wellbeing, reduced stress and isolation.
2.8 – Network of trusted adults New activity.	Creation of a network of trusted adults who have received specialised training to support care-experienced and estranged students. We will invite all care-experienced and estranged students to termly check-ins with a named contact. Wider support will be clearly and consistently signposted, and students will have an advocate to help them access internal and external support.	Student Success staff resource Student Support staff resource Training costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved sense of belonging, improved wellbeing, reduced stress, and improved rates of accessing support. This may result in improvements to student attendance and engagement, and even academic performance as students are more likely to access support.
2.9 – Life skills scheme New activity, some collaboration with external partners.	Priority access to new life skills provision for students belonging to these groups. Activities will cover key life skills such as budgeting and managing money, shopping, meal planning and cooking. We will also support students to understand their rights and build resilience, confidence and personal agency. These activities will incorporate a social element where possible.	Student Success staff resource Operational costs External partnership costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing, improved resilience, reduced stress and isolation, and improved rates of accessing support.
2.10 – Upskilling and empowering staff to enhance	Training and development activities to support staff to progressively improve their understanding of the experiences, entitlements and challenges faced by these groups.	Student Success staff resource	The core outcome of this activity is that staff are able to deliver all interventions in this strategy successfully and

service delivery New activity.	This will include providing staff with information about funding available and the criteria for accessing this funding.	Training and development investment	are further enabled to make procedural and strategic improvements to delivery in response to evaluation, research and data, over the full period of the plan and beyond.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The estimated total cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £1,813,000.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**. Staff members have undertaken training on the needs, challenges and rights of these groups and have used this learning to shape the design of this intervention strategy. Where activities already exist, they are supported by the outcomes of previous internal evaluation exercises. A core aim of this intervention strategy is to expand and strengthen the evidence base supporting its design and delivery (see **Int. 2.1** and **Int. 2.10**).

Evaluation

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice	Annual learning, development and skills audits with staff will allow us to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence in relation to improvements in staff understanding of the experiences of these groups. We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence through surveys in which we will gather student views about whether they feel like the College listens to and acts on the basis of their feedback.	One of the outputs of this intervention will be to publish a series of topic briefings about these groups on our EESE blog, and/or cover findings and advice for staff in annual access and participation conferences. We will also provide updates on student satisfaction in relation to how the College responds to their feedback.
Targeted promotion of existing support, priority access to support, streamlining mechanisms to access support	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through surveys and focus groups with relevant groups, tracking their awareness, uptake and experience of using various services over time.	Relevant services will produce annual reports detailing which students are accessing these services, when and how, as well as the experiences of these students both in terms of accessing the service, and the experience of support. We will publish a brief summary of these reports, supported by student testimonials, on the EESE blog from 2026-27.

Targeted outreach programme	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through pre- and post-intervention surveys with outreach participants.	We will share the outcomes of these activities on our EESE blog in 2026-27, with subsequent annual updates.
Targeted financial support	We recognise the need to review our approach to financial support. We will use the OfS financial support evaluation tool to support us in delivering a full review in 2026-27 (see **Int. 6.4**).	We expect to publish the results of our review and our new approach to financial support in Autumn 2027, with an intention of making changes to our financial support package for 2028 entry.[13]
Enhanced welcome, induction and transition package	Our annual 'Just Joined' survey generates and will continue to generate narrative (Type 1) evidence supporting the existence of this package of support. We will also gather qualitative feedback from participants through one-to-one meetings (see **Int. 2.10**) and through activities undertaken as part of **Int. 2.1**.	We expect to publish an annual report on welcome, induction and transition for an internal audience, and we will create an accompanying blog post for the EESE blog to share successes and failures with an external audience. We expect to share our first entry in 2026-27.
'Futures' mentoring project	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence in relation to this intervention, through pre-, mid- and post-programme surveys for participants and mentors. Where possible, we will track academic performance for participants and we will compare these to the performance of similar students who are not part of the project, with the potential to generate causal (Type 3) evidence, although this is a small group.	Given the small number of participants, we expect to publish a piece on the EESE blog in 2027-28 in relation to the delivery of this intervention across the preceding three years.

---

[13] We will consult with the OfS about making a variation to our plan to reflect any proposed changes, as relevant.

Promoting belonging, celebrating diversity, building community	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence supporting the delivery of these activities, through collecting feedback about individual activities on an ongoing basis and delivering tracker surveys collecting information about student experience and sense of belonging at different points throughout the student journey. These surveys will include questions about student characteristics that allow us to analyse differences in belonging between target groups and peers.	We expect to publish internal reports in 2027-28 sharing the results of these survey activities, including highlighting where particular student groups have differential experiences.
Network of trusted adults	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence supporting the delivery of this intervention through the collection of regular feedback from participants and assessing levels of attendance and uptake of wider support by care-experienced and estranged students.	We will collate information about the issues and challenges faced by students targeted by this intervention and will report on this across the College. We will also share a blog reporting on the outcomes of this pilot project across its first three years on the EESE blog in 2027-28.
Life skills scheme	We will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through delivering pre- and post- surveys with participants.	We will report on this intervention on the EESE blog in 2027-28.
Upskilling and empowering staff to enhance service delivery	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through undertaking annual learning, development and skills audits with staff.	We have no immediate intentions to publish materials in relation to this intervention. However, where relevant we will continue to take opportunities to support the professional development of staff at other institutions through collaboration with our established networks such as Aimhigher London.

Intervention strategy 3: Understanding and supporting the participation, belonging, success and progression of Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) students

Goldsmiths is an ethnically diverse institution which is becoming increasingly diverse over time. In 2021-22, 62.9% of 18-year-old entrants belonged to Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) groups. Specifically, 34.6% were Asian, 13.2% were Black, 9.1% were Mixed, and 6.1% were of other ethnicities. These statistics compare favourably with the wider sector, but also with the most recent census data for England and Wales, and census data for London. Improving access for GEM students is therefore not a priority in this plan, although some of the interventions included in **Intervention Strategy 1** should help us to maintain our positive performance in this area.

This intervention strategy seeks to improve the experience and outcomes of GEM students while at the College, and as they enter employment, addressing **Risk 3.1**, **Risk 3.2**, **Risk 3.3**, **Risk 3.4**,

Risk 3.5, **Risk 3.6**, **Risk 3.7** and **Risk 3.8**. This intervention strategy is designed to cover multiple stages of the student lifecycle, in recognition of the fact that each stage is related to the other stages, and that interventions improving outcomes at one stage could have a knock-on or parallel effect on another stage. 78.5% of Global Ethnic Majority students covered by the APP also belong to other target groups, in that they are socioeconomically disadvantaged, mature and/or disabled. This degree of intersectionality means that this strategy is closely related to **Risk 4.1**, **Risk 5.1**, **Risk 6.1**, **Risk 6.2** and **Risk 6.3**.

International students

In the course of student engagement in relation to the plan, student representatives, home, and international students have repeatedly highlighted the experiences and outcomes of international students as requiring attention from the university. International students are a core element of our community but are not covered by access and participation plan regulation. Although there will be similarities between the experiences of home and international students from GEM groups, students have also stressed core differences between these experiences. As such, this intervention strategy has been designed to apply to home students only, although there will be areas where interventions hold some benefit for international students. We will undertake an assessment of international students' experiences and outcomes ahead of our first access and participation conference in spring 2026, producing a set of recommendations to address the issues identified through this work. We will share these recommendations at the conference and implement improvements parallel to the delivery of this plan.

Objectives and targets[14]

Objective 3.1: To close the continuation gap between Black and White students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_1:** Reduce the continuation gap between Black and White students from 13.3pp to 6.6pp by 2028-29.

Objective 3.2: To close the continuation gap between Mixed and White students by 2028-29.

- **Target PTS_2:** Eliminate the 4.8pp continuation gap between Mixed and White students by 2028-29.

Objective 3.3: To close the attainment gap between Black and White students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_6:** Reduce the attainment gap between Black and White students from 19.3pp to 9.6pp by 2028-29.

Objective 3.4: To close the attainment gap between Asian and White students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_7:** Reduce the attainment gap between Asian and White students from 14.1pp to 7pp by 2028-29.

Objective 3.5: To close the attainment gap between students of 'Other' ethnicities and White students by 2028-29.

---

[14] Objectives and targets relating to current students apply to 'qualifying students on qualifying courses' only, generally full-time, first-degree UK domiciled students and graduates.

- **Target PTS_8:** Eliminate the 6.1pp attainment gap between Other and White students from by 2028-29.

Objective 3.6: To close the attainment gap between students of Mixed ethnicities and White students by 2028-29.

- **Target PTS_9:** Eliminate the 3.3pp attainment gap between Mixed and White students by 2028-29.

Objective 3.7: To close the progression gap between Asian and White graduates by 2032-33

- **Target PTP_1:** Reduce the progression gap between Asian and White graduates from 6.3pp to 3.1pp by 2028-29.

Objective 3.8: To close the progression gap between Black and White graduates by 2032-33.

- **Target PTP_2:** Reduce the progression gap between Black and White graduates from 6.1pp to 3pp by 2028-29.

As so many students hold multiple intersecting characteristics of underrepresentation, this strategy is closely related to **Objective 4.1**, **Objective 5.1**, **Objective 6.1**, **Objective 6.2**, and **Objective 6.3**.

Crossover interventions

Many of the interventions we have identified to reduce continuation and attainment gaps for GEM students are also expected to reduce gaps for mature students, students with mental health conditions and socioeconomically disadvantaged students as per **IS4**, **IS5** and **IS6**. These interventions include activity targeted at the groups in question. To avoid repetition throughout the plan, we have used the 'activity' column below to indicate where an intervention appears in more than one intervention strategy.

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes
3.1, 4.1, 5.1 – Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice[15] New activity.	Range of activities including focus groups, surveys and structured interviews with GEM students, mature students and students with mental health conditions. Collection and distribution of feedback across the university.	Student Success staff resource TaLIC staff resource Focus group and survey incentives Strategic Projects and Planning (SPP) staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include an increased sense of belonging and wellbeing – students feel the university listens to them, cares about them, values them. Enabling intervention designed to maximise the impact of the strategy as a whole.

---

[15] This intervention relates to IS3, IS4 and IS5, so we have classified it as Intervention 3.1, Intervention 4.1 and Intervention 5.1 in this table. We have taken this approach throughout the plan.

3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2 –Targeted promotion of support services, streamlining of routes to access support and report unacceptable behaviour New activity, some external partners.	Targeted communications and multi-channel signposting to opportunities and support for current students and recent graduates. New points of connection between staff and GEM students to provide access to services for students who may be less likely to pursue support independently. We will collect student feedback about their experiences of using mechanisms to access support and report racism or other unacceptable behaviour. Where these mechanisms are not meeting the needs of our students, we will design improvements to address the concerns raised. Promotional campaign to reach students who may have previously undiagnosed specific learning difficulties and connect these students with support. We will undertake a Mental Health Awareness campaign, introduce support sessions to help students navigate forms and processes and explore partnerships with LGBTQIA+ counselling services and other partners to enhance the cultural competence of our delivery. New campaign to promote scholarships, bursaries and other financial support. Where possible, existing services will be required to collect and report information about who is accessing these services and when they are accessing them.	Student Success staff resource Student Support, Library Services, and Careers staff resource Promotional costs External partnership costs Student staff costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved rates of accessing personal and academic support, normalisation of mental health challenges, improvements in student attendance and engagement, improvements in student wellbeing and sense of belonging and reduced stress and isolation.
3.3, 4.3, 5.3, 6.3 – Review and development of approach to academic support and mentoring by employers,	Review roles of personal and senior tutors, embedding clear expectations into performance management processes. Create a coordinated plan for academic support, underpinned by a theory of change, and owned by senior leaders. Identify connections between personal tutoring, academic support	Senior leader resource Student Success, TaLIC, Library Services, Careers staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved cognitive and metacognitive strategies improved academic confidence and performance.

	provided by Library Services and **CALL,** peer-led academic support and the wider activities of **TaLIC**, Student Success and Careers. This includes employer, alumni and peer mentoring. Consider if existing systems, data collection, tracking and sharing practices support success for students and recent graduates from underrepresented groups. Consider sector approaches, the prior academic experiences and academic and career preparedness of our student body, producing a set of costed and resourced recommendations which we will implement across the period of the plan. Students from target groups to be consulted as part of this review which will consider how to ensure students have access to academic staff with similar lived experiences to them.	Academic staff resource Operational costs to fund new systems or approaches Focus group and survey incentives	
alumni and peers New activity.			
3.4 – Targeted financial support Existing activity, new elements.	New students are eligible to apply for **Equity Awards** which incorporate a significant financial award in addition to academic and pastoral support and peer mentoring. We will introduce a new Equity 'Level Up' award for GEM students on track to achieve a 2:2 award which provides financial support and coaching alongside conditions around attendance and engagement. New students from Lewisham may be eligible to apply for **New Cross Fire bursaries** which are funded by Lewisham Borough Council.	Cost of awards Cost of top-up awards Centre of Academic Languages and Literacies staff resource Admissions staff resource Student Success staff resource Coaching costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and reduced stress. Other outcomes could include improved student attendance and engagement.
3.5, 4.5, 5.5 – Enhanced welcome, induction and	Produce a plan covering the WIT journey for GEM students, mature students and students with mental health conditions which may incorporate targeted communications pre- and post-	Student Success staff resource Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved sense of belonging and inclusion, improved wellbeing, increased rates of accessing

transition (WIT) package New activity, some collaboration with students.	Welcome Week, including communications designed by current students. Clear sequential signposting and promotion of support starts early and is consistent, led by current students from similar backgrounds wherever possible. Targeted tours and social opportunities delivered in collaboration with the Students' Union.		support and improved attendance and engagement.
3.6, 4.6, 5.6 – Promoting belonging, celebrating diversity, building community New activity.	Activities include a regular coffee morning for GEM students with opportunities to share experiences, engage with services and societies and form social connections, introduction of a departmental external facilitator grant to improve representation amongst teaching staff and expansion of funds to support the delivery of student-led activities for GEM and mature students. GEM students will receive priority access to a new inspirational speaker series focused on empowering GEM students and supported by a social/networking element and we will make efforts to connect GEM staff and students. Promotion of mature and GEM student experiences through student newsletters alongside the celebration of key dates throughout the calendar. We will undertake a series of activities to raise awareness of mental health challenges and ensure students do not feel alone, linked to the most stressful points of the student journey and key dates such as mental health awareness week. To include cocreation with students, for example through the formation of LGBTQIA+ study groups. We will encourage programme convenors to consider options for delivering the curriculum in ways that support the	Student Success staff resource Development and Careers staff resource Inspirational speaker fund Catering costs External facilitator grant costs Student-led activity costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved sense of belonging and inclusion, improved wellbeing and sense of community and reduced isolation. Other outcomes could include improved student attendance and engagement.

	forming of social connections and ask them to report on this through department development plans (see **Intervention 3.11**). We will ensure engagement is spread across the whole year.		
3.7, 4.7 – Peer-led academic support schemes New activity.	Introducing new peer-led academic support schemes, including a Graduate Study Supervisor scheme and an Academic Peer Mentor scheme. GEM and mature students who are not currently achieving 2:1s or 1sts to receive priority access to peer mentors, and uptake amongst GEM and mature students will be tracked. Recruitment of mentors and supervisors will consider ethnic and age representation.	Student Success staff resource Student staff costs Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved student engagement, reduced isolation, stress and impostor syndrome, improved cognitive and metacognitive strategies, improved academic confidence and improved academic performance. For mentors, outcomes include improved confidence and sense of belonging.
3.8, 4.8, 5.7 – Improvements to attendance tracking, reporting, flagging, signposting and referral Developing activity.	SEAtS attendance tracking system to be fully embedded in 2024-25, with progressive automatic email system enabled across all departments, and a clear structure for signposting, escalation and intervention. Academic colleagues to have live access to attendance reports for their students, with the ability to follow-up with students where necessary. Annual analysis of attendance data broken down by target group and widely shared. Improved tracking should allow us to identify mental health and other struggles earlier and proactively offer support.	Academic staff resource SPP staff resource Systems costs to support analysis and reporting	Intermediate outcomes include improved attendance, improved rates of accessing support and improved academic performance.
3.9 – Supporting personal tutors to enhance employability	The Careers Service will work with personal tutors and other academic colleagues to ensure that there is a strategic focus on employability	Careers staff resource Personal tutor resource	Intermediate outcomes include increased rates of accessing support, increased career readiness, increased

New activity.	embedded in academic and pastoral support mechanisms.		engagement and improved employability.
3.10, 4.9 – Embedding our new inclusive employability framework New and developing activities, some collaboration with employers, alumni, and students.	Includes mechanisms to embed and evaluate employability within degree programmes and the development of leading indicators for employability at programme level to enable progressive curriculum developments to improve students' skills. This will also include co-development of initiatives with the Students' Union, enhancement of work and entrepreneurship opportunities, improvement in engagement with careers for students from GEM backgrounds and specific employability development programmes to enable access to professional networks, skills development and confidence. Student consultation highlighted that employment prospects are especially relevant to mature students because they may need reassurance that completing their course will lead to improved employment outcomes. Students mentioned that messaging from academic and support staff was sometimes inconsistent on this point – embedding the framework will ensure all staff are on the same page. Programmes to improve students' digital skills are also likely to be popular for mature students and the framework has been designed to support students who need to access support online or outside of standard working hours.	Careers staff resource Academic staff resource Operational costs	Intermediate outcomes include increased rates of accessing support, increased career readiness, increased engagement, improved academic performance, reduced stress and improved employability.
3.11, 4.10, 5.8 – Embedding a focus on access and participation into quality and	New approach to DDPs will require departments to develop timebound department-level interventions to address continuation, attainment and progression gaps for GEM students and continuation gaps for mature students and students with mental	Academic staff resource Student Success staff resource	Core outcome of this activity is that academic departments are enabled to design department and programme level interventions to address

enhancement processes, such as the department development plan (DDP) process Developing activity.	health conditions, where these exist in their contexts. We will set higher expectations around evaluation of interventions, and reporting of outcomes to support other academic departments. Developing quality and enhancement processes will be designed to support the delivery of the APP, wherever possible. Departments will also be expected to share information about the proportion of their staff who have undertaken specific mandatory training courses, such as the new anti-racism training being launched in 2024-25.	Fund to support department-level interventions Senior leader resource	department level gaps. Reporting on the success or failure of interventions will support other departments to deliver more effective activities.
3.12 – Creation and rollout of learning, teaching and assessment framework New activity.	Our new Equality and Diversity at Goldsmiths (EDGe) framework will ensure that inclusivity, accessibility academic decolonisation and anti-racist practice are embedded in curriculum design, pedagogical development and continuing professional development (CPD). This will include supporting staff to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of the virtual learning environment (VLE). We will also review assignment extension policies.	TaLIC staff resource	Increased dissemination of good practice across the institution. For students, improved sense of inclusion and belonging, reduced experiences of alienation and unconscious bias, improved engagement and improved academic performance.
3.13 – Supporting academic staff to decolonise academic practice Developing and new activities.	Creation of a resources hub with a revised toolkit for decolonising academic practice, departmental reading lists on decolonial practice and general reading lists on pedagogical and curriculum design through a decolonial lens. Design and delivery of mini-courses and CPD bubbles covering topics related to academic decolonisation. Inclusion of academic decolonisation discussion as part of the PGCert. Sharing of auditing tool to support the revision of decolonial praxis across departments and modules, alongside provision of 1-1 support.	TaLIC staff resource Library Services staff resource	Increased dissemination of good practice across the institution. For students, improved sense of inclusion and belonging, reduced experiences of alienation and unconscious bias, improved engagement and improved academic performance.

	Library Services will audit reading lists for global majority authors, support departments in their self-assessment activities and develop a metric for improving reading list inclusivity.		
3.14, 4.11, 5.10 – Upskilling and empowering staff to improve service delivery New activity, some collaboration with external training providers.	Training and development activities to support staff to progressively improve their understanding of the experiences, priorities and struggles faced by these groups and what the university can do to address these issues. This will include colleagues taking part in the Advance HE 'Building Belonging' training programme in 2024-25, with potential to run this annually. Clear communication to staff about the criteria for accessing training and development funding. We will set new expectations for services to gather, report and address student feedback in a more proactive and deliberate way.	Training and development costs	The core outcome of this activity is that staff are able to deliver all interventions in this strategy successfully and are further enabled to make procedural and strategic improvements to delivery in response to evaluation, research and data, over the full period of the plan and beyond.
3.15, 5.14 – Report and support tool Existing activity.	This tool supports students and staff to report issues or incidents on campus related to a range of sensitive topics, including gender-based violence, harassment, misconduct and racism. The tool allows students to request support and receive advice on formal disciplinary and legal mechanisms.	Operational costs Student Support staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and belonging and reduced stress.

Additional activities committed to under our Race Justice Strategy are also relevant to this intervention strategy, including efforts to improve staff representation, improve understanding of anti-racism across the institution and create a safe environment for students and staff of colour. The desired long-term impact of this intervention strategy is to close gaps in continuation, completion, attainment and progression for GEM students, and to ensure these gaps remain closed over time.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The estimated total cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £2,335,000.[16] This figure is not a precise reflection of our total spend on this intervention strategy. The majority of students who are covered by this plan belong to the Global Ethnic Majority. As a result, a significant proportion of the generalised support we offer to all students is designed to contribute to closing continuation, attainment and progression gaps between GEM students and their peers. Library Services colleagues will leverage their existing annual resources budget of £165,000 to deliver **Int. 3.12** but we have not included this figure in our overall investment because this budget supports all students, and it would be challenging to disaggregate accurately. Academic staff will be significant contributors to this intervention strategy through **Intervention 3.3**, **3.8**, **3.10**, **3.11** and **3.12**. Again, we have not included investment in academic staff in the overall investment estimation because it would be overly complex to calculate the staff FTE dedicated to this work across a diverse range of academic roles. Embedding our new employability framework will have a total cost of more than £1 million annually but we have only included investment figures where we feel confident that these can be disaggregated from the whole. As such, we expect investment in all strategies aimed at current students (**IS2** through to **IS6**) to be higher than the figures we have provided in the plan.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**, the NSS and other survey results. We have also considered feedback from GEM students provided in a variety of settings, including as part of focus groups to support the development of the plan, and have consulted with internal stakeholders with experience of working with these groups of students. Students taking part in focus groups explained that they would like more regular opportunities to share their experiences with staff in this way, highlighting that this was beneficial for their mental health and wellbeing. Our attainment data reveals that disabled students perform better than students with no known disability, and engagement with staff stakeholders suggests that GEM students are less likely to come forward for support, especially early in their student journeys. As such, ensuring that GEM students claim support at the same rates as their peers could have a positive impact on their outcomes (see **Int. 3.2** and **Int. 3.5**). Further information about the evidence base for this intervention strategy is available in **Annex B**.

Evaluation

Given the degree of crossover between the interventions detailed here, and those detailed as part of **IS4**, **IS5** and occasionally **IS6**, evaluation methods and publication intentions given below may apply to multiple intervention strategies, as relevant.

For **Int. 3.1**, **Int. 3.2**, **Int. 3.4**, **Int. 3.6**, and **Int. 3.13**, detailed evaluation and publication plans can be found in the 'Evaluation' section for **IS2** (see corresponding interventions).

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan

---

[16] We have included Equity Awards and New Cross Fire bursaries in this figure. Equity Awards are partially funded by alumni, friends and charitable organisations while New Cross Fire bursaries are funded by Lewisham Council.

Review and development of approach to academic support	In the course of reviewing our approach to academic support, we intend to develop methodologies that will support improved evaluation of the efficacy of our approaches. We expect this to include pre- and post- surveys and tracking of academic performance for participants in various activities, with analysis undertaken to compare performance with peers who did not participate in the activities/matched groups from previous cohorts, with an aim of generating causal (Type 3) evidence. We will assess who is accessing support and when and attempt to understand the key factors influencing the success of particular activities.	We do not expect to be able to publish content on the efficacy of different interventions until comparatively later in the plan period. Ideally, we would be able to present interim findings regarding what works in our context in 2027-28.
Enhanced welcome, induction and transition package	Our annual 'Just Joined' survey generates and will continue to generate narrative (Type 1) evidence supporting the existence of this package of support. These surveys include questions about student characteristics that allow us to analyse differences in belonging between target groups and peers. We will also track the popularity of activities and collect qualitative and on-the-spot feedback from students. Where relevant, we will assess changes in the rates and speed of accessing support for these students, generating empirical (Type 2) evidence.	We expect to publish an annual report on welcome, induction and transition for an internal audience, and we will create an accompanying blog post for the EESE blog to share successes and failures with an external audience. We expect to share our first entry in 2026-27.
Peer-led academic support schemes	We will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence by undertaking surveys with students before, during and after the programme of sessions, assessing changes in cognitive and metacognitive strategies and sense of belonging. We will also track changes in students' attendance.	We expect to publish interim findings on the EESE blog in 2026-27, followed by annual updates throughout the period of the plan.

Improvements to attendance tracking, reporting, flagging, signposting and referral	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence to support the delivery of this intervention, including through tracking changes in attendance rates over time as the system becomes further embedded. We will undertake analysis assessing the degree of connection between academic performance and attendance rates for different groups of students across different academic departments. We will gather feedback from academic staff and students to assess the accuracy and efficacy of different activities included in this intervention, such as automated emails, signposting of support, targeted emails from senior tutors, and meetings with senior tutors. This will include providing students and academics with opportunities to feedback on teething issues and other problems in relation to the implementation of the platform.	We will report on how different departments harness SEAtS software to improve student attendance through DDPs (see **Int. 3.10**), identifying successes, failures, risks and opportunities. As below, we will collate and share a selection of DDP findings more widely through the EESE blog in 2027-28.
Supporting personal tutors to enhance employability	Departments will be expected to use Department Development Plans to report how employability and career readiness has been embedded in courses and approaches to personal tutoring, including identifying pockets of good practice and areas for development. Surveys and focus groups with students will collect information about the topics covered in meetings with personal tutors and general career readiness.	We expect to publish blogs throughout the period of the plan with personal tutors sharing good practice examples of engagement with employability and careers.
Embedding our new inclusive employability framework	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence to support the delivery of this intervention through collecting feedback for individual careers activities. We will use tracker surveys, analysis of leading indicators and Graduate Outcomes Survey trends to assess and analyse changes in levels of career readiness across different groups and at different stages of the student lifecycle, generating empirical (Type 2) evidence. We will track engagement rates for careers activities for these students in comparison to their peers.	We expect to publish interim findings relating to the implementation of the new framework on the EESE blog in 2026-27 and annually thereafter.

Improvements to department development plan (DDP) process and approach	Core to the review of the DDP process is improving approaches to evaluating department-level interventions. Colleagues in academic departments will be required to identify the type of evidence they will generate and provide information about where and how they will share findings. Where possible, departments will generate empirical (Type 2) evidence.	Redesigned DDPs will incorporate a high-level summary of the successes and failures of each intervention. These plans are reviewed through academic governance structures. We will collate findings from across all academic departments and publish a summary of these on our EESE blog in 2027-28.
Report and support tool	Case outcomes are tracked in the system alongside student ID numbers and declared protected characteristics. Student continuation can also be tracked. Internally we will undertake an annual assessment of the kinds of concerns being raised and consider underlying causes for changes in the volume or topic of reports. Students have raised concerns about the efficacy of the tool. We will work with our students to review the tool, identify what success would look like and create a plan to measure success.	Where it is possible to do so and maintain student anonymity, we will publish information about actions taken by the College as a result of issues raised through the tool. We will also share information about changes we make to this and other reporting mechanisms in response to student feedback. This information will be shared with representatives from the SU, with initial updates published on the EESE blog from 2025-26.

Creation and rollout of learning, teaching and assessment framework Supporting academic staff to decolonise academic practice	The identification of these interventions is based on narrative (Type 1) evidence of the connection between decolonising academic practice and closing attainment gaps for GEM students. We will track the delivery and reach of these activities through assessing the number of programmes engaging with the decolonising process and making changes to their practices to improve inclusivity and accessibility. We will track and compare changes in attainment gaps across programmes implementing changes and those programmes which have not changed. Activity led by Library Services will follow a phased rollout with materials developed to support more generalised approaches in the longer term. We will undertake focus groups and collect feedback from students about the changes, including tracking changes in students' sense of inclusion and belonging.	We will share examples of good practice across the institution so that departments can learn from each other. We will publish department-level updates on the EESE blog and Library Services blog across the period of the plan. We will take opportunities to produce research projects, contribute to journal articles and deliver conference papers.

Intervention strategy 4: Understanding and supporting mature students to participate and belong

26.7% of 2021-22 entrants were mature students, decreasing from a high of 27.8% in 2020-21. Commitments made under **IS1** and **IS2** should allow us to maintain, and potentially grow, the proportion of mature students joining the College. This may include taking steps to support an aging population to retrain and upskill through the provision of flexible courses (see **IS6**). However, there is a gap in continuation for mature students (**Risk 4.1**), which this strategy seeks to address, alongside associated risks identified in the EORR. This strategy also relates to **Risk 2.1**, **Risk 2.2** and **Risk 6.3**.

Objectives and targets

Objective 4.1: To close the continuation gap between mature and young students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_3:** Reduce the continuation gap between mature and young students from 8.6pp to 4.3pp by 2028-29

As above, this strategy also relates to **Objective 2.1**, **Objective 2.2** and **Objective 6.3**.

Crossover interventions

Most of the interventions described in **Intervention Strategy 3** are also relevant to improving continuation outcomes for this group. For detailed information about the following interventions for mature students, including evaluation and publication plans, please return to **IS3**.

- **Intervention 4.1** – Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice
- **Intervention 4.2** – Targeted promotion of support services, streamlining of routes to access support and report unacceptable behaviour

- **Intervention 4.3** – Review and development of approach to academic support and mentoring by employers, alumni and peers
- **Intervention 4.5** – Enhanced welcome, induction and transition (WIT) package
- **Intervention 4.6** – Promoting belonging, celebrating diversity, building community
- **Intervention 4.7** – Peer-led academic support schemes
- **Intervention 4.8** – Improvements to attendance tracking, reporting, flagging, signposting and referral
- **Intervention 4.9** – Embedding our new inclusive employability framework
- **Intervention 4.10** – Embedding a focus on access and participation into quality and enhancement processes, such as the department development plan (DDP) process
- **Intervention 4.11** – Upskilling and empowering staff to improve service delivery

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes
4.4 – Targeted financial support Relates to **IS6**. Existing activity.	Students may be eligible to apply for the **Mature Student Scholarship** or the **PGCE Mature Student Scholarship**. Students who have undertaken Access to HE Diplomas may be eligible to apply for the **Access Programme Scholarship**.	Cost of awards Admissions staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and reduced stress. Other outcomes could include improved student attendance and engagement.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The estimated total cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £821,000.[17]

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**, the NSS and other survey results. We have also considered feedback from mature students provided in a variety of settings, including as part of focus groups to support the development of the plan, and have consulted with internal stakeholders with experience of working with these groups of students. Further information about the evidence base for this intervention strategy is available in **Annex B**.

---

[17] Similar to **IS3**, we have avoided reporting investment in generalised interventions or staff time where such figures cannot be disaggregated accurately. As such, investment in this strategy is in excess of the figure recorded here.

Intervention strategy 5: Understanding and supporting students with mental health conditions to participate and belong

This intervention strategy is aiming to address **Risk 5.1** and associated risks identified in the EORR. This strategy will also address risks associated with organisational change, which student engagement identified as being of particular concern to this group.

70.3% of disabled students covered by this plan also belong to other target groups, meaning they are socioeconomically disadvantaged, belong to the Global Ethnic Majority or are mature students. As such, there is a high degree of crossover between this intervention strategy and other strategies relating to on-course success. Engagement with students and sector-wide evidence suggests that underreporting of mental health conditions may contribute to continuation and attainment gaps for Global Ethnic Majority students. The connection between financial worries and mental health is also well established. In terms of risks, this means that this intervention strategy also relates to **Risk 3.1**, **Risk 3.2**, **Risk 3.3**, **Risk 3.4**, **Risk 3.5**, **Risk 3.6**, **Risk 6.1**, **Risk 6.2** and **Risk 6.3**. Student engagement has highlighted the particular prevalence of mental health conditions amongst LGBTQIA+ students, a phenomenon which is borne out by research.

Objectives and targets

Objective 5.1: To close the continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability by 2030-31.

- **Target PTS_4:** Reduce the continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability from 5.4pp to 1.5pp by 2028-29

As above, the delivery of this strategy may contribute to **Objective 3.1**, **Objective 3.2**, **Objective 3.3**, **Objective 3.4**, **Objective 3.5**, **Objective 3.6**, **Objective 6.1**, **Objective 6.2** and **Objective 6.3**.

Crossover interventions

Most of the interventions described in **Intervention Strategy 3** are also relevant to improving continuation outcomes for this group. For detailed information about the following interventions for students with mental health conditions, including evaluation and publication plans, please return to **IS3**.

- **Intervention 5.1** – Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice
- **Intervention 5.2** – Targeted promotion of support services, streamlining of routes to access support and report unacceptable behaviour
- **Intervention 5.3** – Review and development of approach to academic support and mentoring by employers, alumni and peers
- **Intervention 5.5** – Enhanced welcome, induction and transition (WIT) package
- **Intervention 5.6** – Promoting belonging, celebrating diversity, building community
- **Intervention 5.7** – Improvements to attendance tracking, reporting, flagging, signposting and referral
- **Intervention 5.8** – Embedding a focus on access and participation into quality and enhancement processes, such as the department development plan (DDP) process
- **Intervention 5.10** – Upskilling and empowering staff to improve service delivery
- **Intervention 5.14** – Report and support tool

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes
5.4 – Targeted financial support Existing activity.	Students are eligible to apply for **Disabled Student Bursaries**. PGCE students are eligible to apply for the **PGCE Disabled Students Bursaries**. Students can access support to apply for **Disabled Students' Allowance** through the Disability and Inclusion service.	Cost of awards Admissions staff resource Student Support staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing and reduced stress. Other outcomes could include improved student attendance and engagement.
5.9 – Improving communication and engagement with students New activity.	Creation and distribution of guidance for engaging students effectively in decision-making and sharing updates, review of accessibility, modes and timeliness of student communication. Provision of more face-to-face and virtual opportunities for students to connect with academic and professional staff throughout the year.	Student Success staff resource Student Support, Careers, Library Services staff resource Academic staff resource Senior leader resource	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress and improved sense of belonging.
5.11 – Student Mediation Scheme New activity.	New scheme through which students will be trained to be able to resolve conflicts with their peers by mutual resolution, rather than through accessing formal college mechanisms or interventions from figures in authority. Guided by clear principles and a code of conduct, the mediators help their peers to consider how the problem has come about and what the impact has been. They assist them to agree how to put things right or avoid it happening again,	Operational costs of setting up and administering the scheme	Intermediate outcomes include increased sense of agency for students and improved sense of belonging. Problems should be resolved more quickly and constructively, with fewer instances where students feel they have been treated unfairly.

	finding amicable solutions to conflicts.		
5.12 – Amersham Vale GP surgery partnership Existing activity.	The College's partnership with Amersham Vale provides all students with the opportunity to register with a GP surgery close to campus. This partnership supports students with mental health conditions to access local GP/NHS support in collaboration with the College, ensuring that adjustments and interventions are timely, and that communication is effectively joined up. We will encourage students to sign up as part of welcome, induction and transition activities.	Partnership costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved access to appropriate support, advice and healthcare, leading to improved health and wellbeing and reduced stress.
5.13 – Membership of Student Minds' University Mental Health Charter Programme and pursuit of the University Mental Health Charter Award New activity.	The College is a new member of Student Minds' University Mental Health Charter Programme. As a member of the programme, we will continuously improve our student support mechanisms ensuring that our work develops in line with sector best practice and reflects a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing that meets the needs of our students.	Participation costs	Intermediate outcomes include continuous improvement in the delivery of student support interventions to meet the needs of our student body, leading to improved wellbeing and reduced stress for students. We will pursue the University Mental Health Award.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The estimated total cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £1,133,000.[18]

---

[18] Similar to **IS3** and **IS4**, we have avoided reporting investment in generalised interventions or staff time where such figures cannot be disaggregated accurately. As such, investment in this strategy is in excess of the figure recorded here.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**, the NSS and other survey results. We have also considered feedback from students with mental health conditions provided through focus groups and structured interviews undertaken in the course of developing the plan. Finally, we have consulted with internal stakeholders with experience of working with these students. Further information about the evidence base for this intervention strategy is available in **Annex B**.

Evaluation

Evaluation and publication plans for interventions exclusive to this intervention strategy are below.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Improving communication and engagement with students	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence through using surveys to assess students' opinions about our communications on a variety of important topics, using this feedback to drive ongoing process improvements in our approach.	We will publish blog updates sharing student feedback and actions we are taking as a result of this feedback.
Peer Mediation Scheme	We will generate narrative (Type 1) evidence in relation to this intervention by collecting feedback from students who have taken part in the scheme, including collecting feedback from students acting as mediators in the scheme. We will also track the scheme's popularity and assess speed of resolution across a variety of areas.	We will aim to publish guest blogs written by student mediators on the EESE blog to share successes and challenges and promote the scheme to the wider student body.
Amersham Vale GP surgery partnership	We will use surveys to track how many of our students are signing up with Amersham Vale GP surgery, including tracking when students sign up with the surgery, with the aim that students increasingly sign up early and have access to healthcare when they need it.	We do not intend to publish outcomes at this time. However, we will seek to gather student testimonials where students share positive experiences and use these to increase sign-up rates.

Membership of Student Minds' University Mental Health Charter Programme and pursuit of the University Mental Health Charter Award	We are aiming to achieve the University Mental Health Award within two years of joining the charter (by autumn 2026). The UMHC Award Assessment is a robust process of evaluation by peer assessors aimed at assessing progress against the Principles of Good Practice and understanding areas of strength and development to inform ongoing improvement to the university and across the sector. Following the assessment, we will be provided with an Outcome Report highlighting good practice and recommending further actions to improve our approach.	Regardless of whether we are successful in undertaking the assessment process by autumn 2026, we will publish a blog providing an update on our progress in early 2027. This will include publishing a summary of our detailed Outcome Report and our proposed actions as a result, if we have received these at this time. If not, we will publish this as soon as we are able.

Intervention strategy 6: Understanding and addressing circumstantial barriers to participation, belonging, success and progression

In 2021-22, 51.8% of entrants came from IMD Q1 and Q2 areas, while 32.1% of entrants were eligible for free school meals. Forty percent of people live in IMD Q1 & Q2 areas nationally, while 24.6% of pupils at schools in England were eligible for free school meals in 2023-24. This means that students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds are overrepresented at the College. Commitments made in **IS1** and **IS2** will help us maintain this good performance in terms of access to higher education. However, students from these backgrounds are experiencing differential outcomes in relation to success on-course, as per **Risk 6.1** and **Risk 6.2**.

Cost pressures (**EORR risk 10**) were frequently highlighted during student consultation as one of, if not the, most important risk to equality of opportunity being faced by large proportions of our students. Students drew connections between this risk and the additional responsibilities which many students manage alongside their studies, and which may have a significant financial element, including work and caring responsibilities. The majority of our students did not relocate to attend university – they are 'commuter students.' This strategy will also seek to address **Risk 6.3** and the associated risks identified in the EORR. There is evidence of a strong connection between financial distress and poor mental health. As such, this strategy should also support the delivery of **IS5**.

Objectives and targets

Objective 6.1: To close the continuation gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_5:** Reduce the continuation gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 students from 7.9pp to 3.9pp by 2028-29

Objective 6.2: To close the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students by 2032-33.

- **Target PTS_10:** Reduce the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and Q5 students from 11.4pp to 5.7pp by 2028-29

We have used IMD data to set our targets as this data is publicly available, meaning we can be held accountable for our progress in this area. However, we intend to take a more holistic approach to targeting our interventions, and none of our work will target students solely on the

basis of their postcodes. We also commit to improving the information we collect about students' financial circumstances, and we will develop our systems to allow better internal tracking of students who have been eligible for free school meals. This strategy will also seek to address **Objective 6.3** and **Objective 5.1**.

Crossover interventions

86.6% of IMD Q1 and Q2 students are also GEM (68.9%), mature (31%) and/or disabled (24%). For this reason, this strategy has significant crossover with many other risks, objectives and targets related to on-course success for specific groups, and the interventions listed elsewhere in this plan are likely to contribute to the narrowing of the gaps targeted here. For detailed information about the following interventions for socioeconomically disadvantaged students, including evaluation and publication plans, please return to **IS3:**

- **Intervention 6.2** – Targeted promotion of support services, streamlining of routes to access support and report unacceptable behaviour
- **Intervention 6.3** – Review and development of approach to academic support and mentoring by employers, alumni and peers

Activity	Description	Inputs (annual)	Outcomes
6.1 – Improving our understanding of our student body and the student journey and centring the student voice New activity, some collaboration with students.	Increased focus group and survey activity to run across the entire academic year. Focus should be on collecting information about the financial and practical realities of students' lives. Responses will be analysed and shared through multiple internal channels on a regular basis. Collection and distribution of feedback across the university.	Student Success staff resource Focus group and survey incentives Strategic Projects and Planning staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include an increased sense of belonging. Enabling intervention designed to maximise the impact of the strategy as a whole.
6.4 – Targeted financial support and review of financial support New activity.	We will undertake a full review of scholarships, bursaries and discretionary funding. We will use OfS financial support evaluation tool and create a set of recommendations for implementation over the period of the plan. We will identify a strategic lead for financial support at the College.	Senior leader resource Admissions, Development, Student Support, Student Success staff resource Cost of awards	The aim of this intervention is to identify the fairest and most effective use of financial support to improve student experiences and outcomes in line with the access and participation plan.

	Students may be eligible to apply for **travel bursaries** or the **Lewisham Borough Fee Waiver**.		
6.5 – Life skills scheme New activity, some collaboration with external providers.	Life skills provision for students struggling with the transition to independent living. Activities will cover key life skills such as budgeting and managing money, shopping, meal planning and cooking. We may also support students to understand their rights, build resilience, confidence and personal agency. These activities will incorporate a social element where possible.	Student Success staff resource Operational costs External partner costs	Intermediate outcomes include improved wellbeing, improved resilience, reduced stress and isolation, and improved rates of accessing support.
6.6 – Review of timetabling and delivery modes New activity.	Review of our approaches to timetabling and mode of teaching, consulting with academic and professional services stakeholders and students. Consider approaches taken by other universities across the sector to meet new challenges relating to the cost of living, student expectations and engagement. Create a set of recommendations for implementation across and beyond the period of the plan, as relevant. We will also explore options for providing timetabling information earlier, as per student feedback.	Senior leader resource Academic staff resource Estates, TaLIC, Student Support, Student Success staff resource	The aim of this intervention is to ensure we are delivering a model of teaching that is fit-for-purpose and meets the needs of our student body.
6.7 – Improving campus liveability and creation of a 'sticky' campus New activity.	Undertake focus groups to consult commuter students and the wider student body about the strengths and weaknesses of the campus and estate. Gather recommendations from staff stakeholders and develop a campus development plan. Focus on how changes to campus can encourage students to spend more time on campus and reduce their costs. Likely to include improving access to face-to-face support, with	Operational costs Student Success staff resource Estates staff resource	Intermediate outcomes include increased attendance and engagement, improved wellbeing, improved rates of accessing support, even improved academic performance.

	the introduction of a 'one-stop-shop' Student Hub already in train.		
6.8 – Improving the virtual learning environment (VLE) to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body New activity.	Includes updates to improve accessibility and ease of navigation of the VLE and increase active learning. Explore purchasing additional software to support accessibility auditing of the VLE, learning content and materials. Explore employment of digital tools, software and assistive technologies to increase VLE access.	TaLIC staff resource Operational costs	This intervention will enable teaching staff to support the learning requirements of a diverse student body. Intermediate outcomes for students include increased engagement, improved access rates to the VLE, and improved academic performance.
6.9 – Continue to deliver existing student staff schemes and enable internal hiring of student staff across more varied roles Existing activity, new elements.	Our student staff schemes are designed to provide well-paid, flexible, frequently campus-based employment to underrepresented students. Pillar 2 of the Employability Framework will enhance existing schemes and pursue the development of a student temp agency to increase the range of on campus roles available to students.	Careers, People and Organisational Development staff resource Operational costs Student staff costs	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress and isolation, improved wellbeing, improved attendance and engagement.
6.10 – Review of provision including consideration of interim awards and other flexible and diverse provision New activity.	Review of model of multi-year higher education to consider introducing interim awards and allowing students to 'step-off' after Year 1 and Year 2 with no detriment, and the option to return. Consideration of other options for contributing to the flexibility and diversity of the HE market. Market research to understand appetite and review approaches across the sector. Longer term initiative – intention is to produce recommendations within the period of the plan.	Senior leader resource SPP staff resource Operational costs	The aim of this intervention is to consider if the multi-year model of HE offered by the College is constraining or undesirable to some current or prospective students. To ascertain if the College would appeal to more non-traditional students if we offered more non-traditional interim qualifications.

6.11 – Creation of a cost-of-living taskforce New activity which will involve collaboration with external partners and organisations.	Cross-institution taskforce to focus on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on students and consider actions the university could take to reduce this impact. Membership to include strategic leaders, operational and frontline staff and students, with a clearly defined remit and a budget. We will share an annual report of activity undertaken by the group with the student body. Activities may include action to reduce the cost of travel, subsistence and extracurricular activities, amongst other things. Will rely on insights collected through **Int. 6.1**. This is a longer-term intervention.	Cross-institutional staff resource Operational and delivery costs	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress, improved wellbeing, improved attendance and engagement.
6.12 – Student Hardship Fund Existing activity.	The Student Hardship Fund is a fund to assist disadvantaged students experiencing financial hardship to continue with their studies. Priority groups include students with disabilities, those from lower income households, estranged and care experienced students and those experiencing generalised financial hardship. All applicants are asked to complete the Blackbullion online money management learning programme.	Student Support staff resource Cost of awards	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress, improved wellbeing, improved attendance and engagement.
6.13 – Residential Hardship Fund Existing activity.	Fund to support home students from outside of London with the cost of living in student accommodation. Priority groups include students from lower income households, care-experienced and estranged students and those moving from outside London.	Student Support staff resource Cost of awards	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress, improved wellbeing, improved attendance and engagement.
6.14 – Blackbullion money	All students have access to the Blackbullion money management tool which supports students to learn about money management and develop effective techniques	Partnership costs	Intermediate outcomes include reduced stress and improved wellbeing,

management tool Existing activity.	for managing their money. We undertake targeted promotion to students from lower income households and belonging to other APP priority groups, including through inviting hardship fund applicants to use the tool, as above.		confidence and resilience.

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy

The total estimated cost of this intervention strategy across four years of the plan is £3,232,000.[19] Many of the commitments in this intervention strategy involve us reviewing our existing practices, identifying recommendations and then implementing these recommendations, meaning that the actions we will take have not yet been identified. In addition, the fluid, project-based and cross-institutional nature of some of this work means it difficult to estimate staff FTE. As a result, we expect our actual spend on this intervention strategy to be higher than the figure recorded here.

Summary of evidence base and rationale

We have undertaken a literature review to support the selection of our interventions, including consulting the **TASO evidence toolkit**, the NSS and other survey results. We have also considered feedback from low-income students and students with additional work and caring responsibilities. Finally, we have consulted with internal stakeholders with experience of working with these students. Further information about the evidence base for this intervention strategy is available in **Annex B**.

Evaluation

For **Int. 6.1** and **Int. 6.2** see corresponding interventions in the 'Evaluation' section for **IS2**. For **Int. 6.3** see corresponding interventions in the 'Evaluation' section for **IS3**.

Activity	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Targeted financial support and review of financial support **Student Hardship Fund** **Residential Hardship Fund**	We will use the OfS financial support evaluation tool to support us in delivering a full review of financial support in 2026-27. Tracking of continuation outcomes for applicants to the Hardship Fund. Tracking patterns of rent arrears for applicants to the Residential Hardship Fund.	We expect to publish the results of our review and our new approach to financial support in autumn 2027, with an intention of making changes to our financial support package for 2028 entry.[20]

---

[19] This includes hardship funds of £1,312,000.

[20] If we decide to make changes to any of the commitments in the plan as a result of this review, we will consult with the OfS about making a variation to the plan to reflect these changes. Changes will apply to new students only, and we will ensure that they are clearly communicated in advance of application deadlines.

Review of timetabling and delivery modes	Where our review results in recommendations to change timetabling and/or delivery modes, we will ensure changes are underpinned by a theory of change and have an embedded evaluation plan.	We will establish a publication plan for our evaluation findings once we have identified the actions we will take.
Improving campus liveability and creation of a 'sticky' campus	We intend to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence through tracker surveys with students where we will gather feedback about the popularity of our activities and the connection between these activities and student attendance on campus. We will use library attendance statistics to track campus attendance, comparing this week-to-week with attendance in previous years.	We expect to publish a blog post to our EESE blog detailing changes made to campus through this intervention and covering the student response in 2027-28.
Improving the virtual learning environment (VLE) to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body	We will track the implementation of this intervention through undertaking annual audits of VLE pages and tracking engagement with associated staff development opportunities across the institution. We will generate Type 2 (empirical) evidence through undertaking periodic student surveys gathering information about the student experience of using the VLE.	We expect to publish blog updates on changes to the VLE and student feedback on our EESE blog throughout the period of the plan.
Encourage and enable internal hiring of student staff across more varied roles	We will begin to collect information about the number and range of student roles offered across the university, tracking changes over time. We will undertake surveys of staff to understand the drivers of any increases in the number or variety of roles offered, with the potential to generate empirical (Type 2) evidence.	We will publish an annual blog on student staff roles, with the first being blog published in 2027-28 as this is a longer-term intervention.
Review of provision including consideration of interim awards	Where our review results in recommendations to change our courses, we will ensure changes are underpinned by a theory of change and have an embedded evaluation plan.	We will establish a publication plan for our evaluation findings once we have identified the actions we will take.

Creation of a cost-of-living taskforce	Where the taskforce identifies actions, there will be an embedded requirement to confirm what type of evidence will be generated, how success will be judged and where and how findings will be shared.	We expect to publish an annual blog detailing the actions undertaken by the taskforce, with the initial post published in 2027-28.
Blackbullion money management tool	We will track usage of the tool by our students to ensure that students from lower income households and other priority groups are accessing this support, using student feedback to generate narrative (Type 1) evidence of the impact of the tool on continuation and wellbeing.	We will publish blog updates regarding usage of the tool across the College, accompanied by student feedback/testimonials.

Whole provider approach

This is a time of significant change for our institution. While there are elements of this plan which have been designed to build on commitments made in our previous plan, we have made several changes to our approach to respond to changes in our student body, the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, and developments in the wider economic environment. This includes our commitments to review current practice (see **IS6**), which we intend to pursue early in the plan period, with a view to implementing changes in subsequent years. This work will necessarily require input from stakeholders across the university, ensuring that the principles of equality of opportunity, innovation in the student interest and theory of change methodologies become increasingly familiar to larger cohorts of staff. We recognise the scale of activity required, and we will seek external partnerships where such relationships could help us deliver our aims. Where possible, we have attempted to future-proof our work by grouping activities by theme under intervention headings – this is to allow us to be sufficiently agile in how we implement and develop these interventions across the period of the plan. The launch of our 'Enhancing Education and Student Experience' blog in autumn 2026 will allow us to provide updates regarding the implementation of our interventions across the next several years.

Students have highlighted the negative impacts on equality of opportunity that could result from widespread organisational change, due to ongoing uncertainty and the potential narrowing of the curriculum, with neurodivergent and GEM students most likely to experience these impacts. Student concerns have been escalated to senior colleagues with responsibility for driving organisational change processes, with mitigations including an enhanced communications plan and an Equality Impact Assessment. Student feedback will be actively sought and considered as part of the implementation of the College's new strategy. We have also committed to improving our approach to student communication (**Int. 5.9**).

Our whole provider approach is developing and we intend to periodically assess our progress using the **WPA toolkit**, providing updates on the EESE blog. One immediate area of focus is addressing pockets of siloed working within some student and academic services, as we know from student consultation that this is having an impact on the student experience. Students have also highlighted weaknesses in current signposting practices, whereby academic and professional

services staff may refer students to the wrong internal team or service or to an external service for which the student may not be eligible. We will continue to engage with our students to understand where this is happening and take steps to ensure that the information provided to students is accurate. Wherever possible, we will expect teams to follow-up with students who they have referred to other internal or external services, to ensure that issues are ultimately being resolved. Where we have been able to embed work to improve equality of opportunity into existing projects, processes and procedures, we have committed to doing so, for example, through changes to department development plans (see **Int. 3.10**, **Int. 4.10** and **Int. 5.8**) and improvements to welcome, induction and transition activity (see **Int. 2.5**, **Int. 3.5**, **Int. 4.5** and **Int. 5.5**).

In line with the current period of organisational change and the introduction of our new ten-year strategy, we anticipate making changes to roles and governance structures, which means it is difficult to provide detailed information about how we will embed delivery of the plan across the institution and ensure it is monitored effectively. However, we are aware of the risks that this could create and are taking active steps to mitigate these risks. This includes the following actions and commitments:

- Pro-Warden Education and Student Experience identified as the strategic lead responsible for access and participation, with the Director of Student and Academic Services identified as the deputy strategic lead
- In each of our new faculties we will identify an academic lead for access and participation ahead of the 2025-26 academic year
- Creation of a strategic group with responsibility for access and participation, with membership to include:
  - Strategic and deputy strategic leads for access and participation
  - Senior leaders from Student and Academic Services, Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre, Library Services, Strategic Projects and Planning and Finance
  - Academic leads for access and participation
- Creation of a panel of students from underrepresented groups who will inform the activities of the access and participation strategic group
- Introduction of an annual access and participation conference for staff and students which will include:
  - Presentations from staff and students to share information about successful interventions and analysis from student voice exercises
  - Award ceremony for staff and students who have made outstanding contributions to access and participation in the previous year
  - Student panel sessions to share specific, nuanced information about the student experience with staff
  - Discussion groups between staff and students identifying emerging and developing challenges to equality of opportunity, including identifying risks and challenges to delivering the plan. Information will be collated into a blog post following the event.
  - Progress update relating to the commitments made in the plan and communicating priorities and timelines
- Creation of an accountability matrix to sit alongside the plan, detailing all interventions and commitments made in the plan and assigning strategic and delivery leads in each case

The degree of change taking place across the university also provides us with an opportunity to ensure that we embed commitments to equality of opportunity in university strategies, many of which will be updated ahead of 2025-26. This includes our Civic University Agreement and

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan. Our new Civic University Agreement, launching in 2024-25, will align with the commitments we have made under **IS1** and **IS2**, supporting and enabling the successful delivery of the APP. Under this agreement, we will continue to work with eleven local partners or 'anchor institutions' to drive civic and social innovation for our borough, region and beyond. We will report on our progress delivering the new four-year EDI action plan in annual EDI reports, published to our website. Alongside these reports, we will publish annual blog posts to the EESE blog, in which we will draw connections between EDI and APP progress.

The College's new overarching strategy will launch in 2024-25 and is supported by several key pillars, one of which relates to 'social innovation'. This pillar incorporates many activities and programmes of work that fall outside the specific regulatory confines of this plan, but which contribute to the delivery of our wider civic and social responsibilities and are consistent with the access and participation aims we have identified. For example, **Open Book** is an outreach and education programme which developed in response to an action research project considering the barriers to education faced by people with experience of the criminal justice system. Open Book now works closely with a network of agencies to support people from a wide range of backgrounds, including people with criminal records, those who are at risk of offending and people with addiction or mental health issues. The team run drop-ins and study sessions on campus as well as delivering a prison education programme through which they support prisoners to complete a Level 3 Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Parallel to delivering this plan, we will undertake work to ensure the project is operating as strategically, impactfully and sustainably as possible. The implementation of the **Connected Curriculum** will also enhance the delivery of the plan by supporting academic transition into higher education, enabling students to understand how their identities and wider environments shape their learning, and providing students with opportunities to work on projects to bring about social change.

This plan is enabled by the work of Student Support Services, comprising the Disability and Inclusion Service, Wellbeing Service, Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy Service, Advice Service, Accommodation Services and the Campus Support Team. These services deliver holistic student support interventions to all students, providing a 24/7 service that also works to identify students who may require additional support, including disability-related adjustments or mental health support. The team works closely with external agencies to ensure that students can access more appropriate support mechanisms where necessary, such as a local GP surgery, specialist mentoring, gender-based violence support, crisis services and money management tools.

Our new employability framework is inclusive by design, considering the high proportion of our students who are from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. In the course of 2024-25, we expect to develop a new teaching and learning framework and a new student voice framework, both of which will align with this access and participation plan. For example, the new student voice framework should support the delivery of specific interventions aiming to improve our understanding of our student body and centre the student voice (see **Int. 2.1**, **Int. 3.1**, **Int. 4.1**, **Int. 5.1** and **Int. 6.1**). We expect the 'student consultation' section of this plan and the new student voice framework to be mutually reinforcing.

In developing our plan, we have had due regard to our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We have designed our interventions to support us in achieving these aims, from our review of pathways to

accessing support and reporting concerns, to our work to promote belonging, celebrate diversity and build community across the whole student journey. The activities outlined in this plan specifically relate to age, race and disability but we also expect the plan to support our work to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and good relations for students with other protected characteristics, including religious students and LGBTQIA+ students. We will continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments when launching major projects and will continue to share details of the EDI implications attending our work when submitting papers to College committees.

Our EDI team will launch mandatory anti-racism training for all staff in the course of 2024-25 in addition to a wider e-learning module covering equality, diversity and inclusion issues. Our Race Justice Strategy includes commitments to create a culture of psychological safety, belonging and anti-racism. This activity will be a crucial enabler of our work to close continuation, attainment and progression gaps for GEM students, in addition to being an essential part of our wider commitment to our students.

Student consultation

Design of the plan

We have consulted students at each stage of plan development through a series of focus groups, structured 1-1 interviews, and surveys. This has included targeted engagement with Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) students, mature students, students with mental health conditions, low-income students and students who have been eligible for free school meals, care-experienced students and commuter students. We tested our proposed approach to student engagement with sabbatical officers at the Students' Union, who highlighted the importance of paying students for their time, of providing feedback to students on how their views had been used and of gathering the views of international students, despite these students not being covered by the plan. We have incorporated all of these suggestions into our approach, as detailed below. We also highlighted the opportunity for students to submit a student submission alongside this plan, and identified a named staff contact who was available to provide support in developing this independent submission.

We paid our students to take part in focus groups and interviews, with some activity delivered on-campus and some activity delivered online, to avoid inadvertently excluding any students from being able to engage. Given the timeline for developing and submitting the plan, most engagement took place outside of core teaching periods, and therefore would not be likely to have a negative impact on student success. We have focused our engagement on UK domiciled undergraduate students. However, we have not excluded international or postgraduate students. Some international students have attended focus groups, and we have created two fixed-term roles for current postgraduate students to support with the development of the plan. These Student Access and Participation Plan Development Officers led on the design and delivery of significant portions of the student engagement activity described here. This student-led approach allowed us to create environments in which students felt safe and comfortable to be truly candid about their experiences. Through these focus groups and interviews, we engaged approximately 80 students from a variety of underrepresented groups, with around 100 additional students responding to a short survey about their experiences and habits. We also considered student responses to previous large-scale surveys, such as the 2023 'Just Joined' survey.

In each focus group, we provided a comprehensive introduction to the plan, the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), and the indications of risk we had identified through analysis of

our data. We let students know how they could contribute and explained what actions the College might take in response to these contributions. Some sessions were more general and involved a wide range of students, while others were more specific, relating to the risks, experiences and outcomes for a particular group. We explored many different questions in the course of our engagement with students, including:

- Asking students to rank the EORR risks in order of relevance and importance, and consider and identify risks and priorities not included in the EORR
- Asking students what they thought the College could be doing to address some of these risks
- Asking students about their experiences engaging with support services, including asking them to identify where existing processes were not working or were exacerbating risks
- Asking students how they felt the College could engage them in the delivery and evaluation of the plan, and in other decision-making
- Asking students what they thought of some of our proposed interventions, whether they felt these would be successful, and if they had any suggestions for maximising success, or mitigating potential risks to delivery

As a result of student engagement, we have taken the following steps:

- Identified 'reduced sense of belonging and inclusion' and 'experiences of discrimination, harassment and bias,' as risks faced by GEM students, designing interventions accordingly
- Identified significant organisational change as a risk for GEM and neurodivergent students
- Expanded **IS6** into a more wide-ranging strategy aiming to address inherent conflicts between how students live now, and how we deliver higher education
- Identified 'cost pressures' and 'mental health' as issues facing the vast majority of our students and recommended these issues be prioritised in wider university strategies
- Included commitments to provide a greater number of flexible, well-paid work opportunities to students in the course of delivering the plan
- Included commitments to identify and address differential experiences and outcomes for international and postgraduate students
- Committed to a review of access routes for different services and consider whether these systems and processes work for students
- Committed to a review of academic support including personal tutoring
- Included commitments to improve our understanding of the student body and centre the student voice
- Introduced peer-led academic support
- Committed to a review of our financial support offering, considering if this is fit for purpose
- Introduced activity aiming to connect GEM staff, visitors and students
- Included commitments to deliver wraparound support for students from specific groups
- Committed to improving student communication, ensuring this is timely, accessible, and meeting students' needs

There are many additional areas where student views aligned with our proposed areas of focus and approach, and where student consultation was incredibly helpful in confirming that our analysis was correct. We shared a late draft of the plan with key contacts at the Students' Union for their final comments before submission, adding new commitments in response to the detailed challenges raised. We intend to continue to engage with our students in the delivery of the plan, as detailed below.

Delivery and evaluation of the plan

We recognise that this access and participation plan is a lengthy document and, although we have made efforts to ensure it is accessible to a student audience, it is not reasonable to expect the average student to engage with it in full. As such, we are developing a suite of accessible resources to support us in 'launching' the plan with our student body. We will host these resources on our website and will include specific information about how we have incorporated student feedback into the design of the plan.

As we have covered, we will invite students to present at and attend our annual access and participation conference. The extensive use of student staff to deliver access and participation plan activity will ensure continued involvement from students, as well as supporting the aims of **IS6**, through the provision of well-paid, flexible, campus-based work opportunities. Intervention evaluation plans include commitments to gather feedback from student staff as well as from participants. We will create a student-facing version of our toolkit for decolonising academic practice to support students with an interest in decolonial praxis and facilitate student engagement in decolonial approaches taken by academic staff (see **Int. 3.12**).

We found that our students engaged enthusiastically in the engagement sessions delivered in the course of developing the plan. Participants were universally open to receiving further contact from the College in relation to access and participation plan design, implementation and evaluation. This puts us in a strong position for continuing to engage students across the whole period of the plan, and such positive relationships are essential if we are to deliver commitments to improve our understanding of our student body and centre the student voice (see **IS2** to **IS6**). The rapid and unprecedented changes to the higher education landscape in recent years have demonstrated the essential importance of continued dialogue with students, and we feel that our efforts to adapt to this new environment must involve students to have any chance of success.

We will continue to engage with students to understand how organisational change at the College and the launch of the new College strategy impacts their studies and lives where these factors have implications for underrepresented students and the successful implementation of the access and participation plan. Representatives of the Students' Union will be supported to shape the delivery and evaluation of the plan, including by contributing to the development of our approach to ongoing student consultation and engagement. We will ensure that we provide frequent informal and formal opportunities for stakeholders at the SU to share their reflections, priorities, ideas and concerns. In recognition of the demands placed on student representatives, the College will take the lead in proactively soliciting contributions from the SU and will be responsive to communication and other preferences wherever possible.

Evaluation of the plan

Detailed information about the methods of evaluation we will employ, and the publication plans for sharing the results of this evaluation are in the relevant sections for each of our six intervention strategies. In this section we will share information about our overall approach to evaluation, and how we intend to drive this approach forwards across the period of the plan. Our previous access and participation plan categorised our evaluation practice as emergent where it was in existence at all, with our widening access and careers activities identified as the areas in which our practice was most developed. We have made some progress since then, especially in the course of developing this access and participation plan. Many of our interventions to support the success of current students are either new or redesigned. These interventions are now supported by theories

of change and have clear evaluation plans embedded in programme design, with commitments to sharing this evaluation internally and externally to drive improvements at the College and in the wider sector. In line with this, a July 2024 analysis of our practice using the OfS self-assessment tool found that programme design for many of the interventions included in the plan was generally 'advanced,' while evaluation design and plans for learning from evaluation were both 'good'. We undertook this assessment on the basis of the commitments set out in the plan which we expect to deliver from the beginning of the plan period, rather than on the basis of existing practice.

Comparatively, the commitments made in our intervention strategies do not allow us to categorise either the strategic context of our evaluation or our evaluation implementation as anything beyond 'emerging.' We recognise that we need to make additional commitments to ensure that these elements meaningfully improve across the period of the plan, and we are also aware that improving these elements of our evaluation practice may require action over a longer period of time. In addition to the commitments made in our intervention strategies, we commit to undertaking the following actions across the period of this plan:

- Identifying an 'Evaluation Champion' amongst senior leadership who will have oversight of our approach to evaluation and ethical considerations in relation to this
- Introducing a consideration of the risks impacting evaluation implementation as a standing item at meetings of the new access and participation strategic group
- Including evaluation training as part of the annual access and participation conference
- Introducing a series of learning lunches in which practitioners from different operational teams share their approaches to evaluating activities with each other
- Introducing a training and development fund to which staff are able to bid for funding to undertake external evaluation training
- Encouraging staff to engage as fully as possible with their existing networks for the purposes of developing their confidence in implementing evaluation
- Establishing and communicating an expectation of the degree of operational and staff resource which teams should be dedicating to the evaluation of their activities
- Creating an internal reporting template for access and participation interventions
- Undertaking an evaluation skills audit of staff to understand where there are gaps in knowledge and where staff hold specific expertise
- Publishing updates covering developments in evaluation practice, and associated risks and opportunities on the EESE blog

We will assess our evaluation practice using the self-assessment tool in July 2026 and July 2028 and produce blog posts sharing the outcomes of these assessments. It is our ambition to achieve a score of 'good' or 'advanced' across all five areas of the framework by July 2028.

Provision of information to students

We commit to providing clear, timely and accessible information to applicants and students regarding their fees for the duration of their courses and the financial support available to them. This information is on our website.[21][22] We will make available to UCAS and the Student Loans Company (SLC) any information they require on a timely basis. We will ensure that all information provided in printed and web formats is compliant with equality and diversity legislation and best

---

[21] https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/tuition-fees/
[22] https://www.gold.ac.uk/fees-funding/scholarships/

practice. We share this information with students in pre- and post-entry communications, and through face-to-face engagement during Welcome Week and beyond.

Information about the financial support available to students targeted by this plan is provided below. Recipients of the Care-Experienced and Estranged Students' bursary may also be selected to receive one additional scholarship or bursary from those listed below. Recipients of any of the other scholarships and bursaries can only receive one award in total, although students are encouraged to apply for any awards for which they are eligible.

Where scholarships and bursaries are not guaranteed to all eligible students, the application process consists of an initial shortlisting against the criteria, followed by consideration by an awarding panel. Awarding panels consist of staff members who are knowledgeable about the experiences of students belonging to the relevant group, including widening participation and student support staff, academic staff and, where relevant, staff from the immigration advisory service. When making decisions, the panel will consider the applicant's experiences, needs and aspirations. Where relevant, the panel may also consider the applicant's academic record. For Equity Awards, priority will be given to applicants who meet other widening participation criteria, while the disability team will assess applications for Disabled Students' Bursaries based on need. Further information about the application process is available on our website, alongside information about the regulations governing scholarships and bursaries at Goldsmiths.[23]

Name of award	Criteria and application process	Value of award
Care-Experienced and Estranged Students' Bursary	Home undergraduate and PGCE students who have been in local authority care, kinship care, are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child, or are under the age of 25 and estranged from their parents or legal guardians. This award is guaranteed to all eligible students who complete an information form providing evidence that they meet the criteria.	£1,000 a year for one, three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course
Access Programme Scholarship	Home undergraduate students who studied for an Access to HE Diploma. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£1,000 a year for three years
Disabled Students' Bursary	Home undergraduate students who have a disability which they declared in their UCAS application. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£3,000 a year for three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course

---

[23] https://www.gold.ac.uk/fees-funding/scholarship-regulations/

Equity Awards	Home undergraduate students of Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnicities, and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller students, whose household income is below £35,000. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£3,000 a year for three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course
International Response Scholarship	Undergraduate offer holders with refugee status in the UK or with an active application for asylum in the UK. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Offer holders must apply by the deadline, ahead of joining Goldsmiths. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	Full tuition fee waiver, accommodation fee for a single study bedroom in Goldsmiths halls of residence (up to £200 a week for 40 or 41 weeks), and an allowance of £8,825 for each year of study. Should they need to, recipients can extend this term and remain in accommodation over the summer period at no charge.
Lewisham Fee Waiver	Home undergraduate students who have lived in Lewisham for three years prior to entry and whose household income is below £35,000 a year. The award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	A full tuition fee waiver for three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course
Mature Student Scholarship	Home undergraduate students aged 25 or over upon entry. The award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£3,000 a year for three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course
New Cross Fire Bursaries	Home undergraduate students of Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnicities, and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller students, whose household income is below £35,000 and who have lived in Lewisham for three years prior to entry. The award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Students must apply by the deadline in their first year of study. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	The value of the award is £4,500. This can be split across three or four years, depending on the length of the student's course.

PGCE Disabled Students Bursaries	Home PGCE offer holders who have a disability which they declared in their UCAS application. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Offer holders must apply by the deadline ahead of joining Goldsmiths. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£4,500 cash bursary (single year of study)
PGCE Mature Student Scholarship	Home PGCE offer holders aged 25 or over upon entry and undertaking a non-salaried PGCE. This award is not guaranteed to all students meeting the criteria. Offer holders must apply by the deadline ahead of joining Goldsmiths. Applications are submitted through an online form available on our website.	£3,000 cash bursary (single year of study)

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

This annex provides an assessment of indications of risk in our access and participation data, as presented in the OfS data dashboard.[24] The data in the OfS dashboard is for 'qualifying students on qualifying courses' (those covered by the APP) only. At the time of writing, the latest available data was for the following cohorts:

- For Access, the latest data is for 2021-22 entrants (1,400 students)
- For Continuation, the latest data is for 2020-21 entrants (1,480 students, overall continuation rate of 85.9%)
- For Completion, the latest data is for 2017-18 entrants (1,830 students, overall completion rate of 77.8%)
- For Attainment, the latest data is for 2021-22 qualifiers (1,200 students, overall attainment rate of 86.6%)
- For Progression, the latest data is for 2020-21 qualifiers (580 students, survey response rate of 51.9%, overall progression rate of 70.3%).

We have focused our analysis on the data available in the OfS dashboard. As this data is publicly available, we believe it is the most appropriate basis for the identification of risks and areas of focus for the plan. The exception to this approach relates to smaller groups of students who may be at risk of not experiencing equality of opportunity, but for whom sector-wide data is not easily reportable or comparable. **IS2**, above, addresses this discrepancy. As 99% of our students are full-time, the analysis relates to full-time students only. However, we will not exclude part-time students from the interventions in the plan, wherever relevant.

We have not undertaken a detailed analysis of intersections in our data for the purposes of writing the plan. As we have covered in the main plan, a high proportion of our students have multiple characteristics of disadvantage. We have therefore approached the whole plan with this understanding – when we deliver and target activity, we intend to take an intersectional approach as standard. In fact, considering intersectional data is one of the only mechanisms we can use to ensure that our limited resources reach the students with the greatest need.

Throughout this annex, our focus is on gaps in outcomes between underrepresented groups and their peers, as we believe that such gaps provide the strongest indications of risk. The assessment focuses on areas of risk, rather than areas of no or limited concern. We have considered the presence of a gap of two percentage points or more as a potential indication of risk. We have provided a rationale for our decision-making in areas where gaps of this size are not addressed through the plan.

Access

As we have covered in the plan, we perform well in terms of access. The exception to this is in relation to students who are from low participation neighbourhoods (areas where fewer young people progress to university). In 2021-22, only 6% of young entrants came from TUNDRA Q1 and 8.8% came from Q2. For every Q1 entrant in 2021-22, there were 7.6 Q5 entrants. There has been limited movement over time – in every one of the previous six years, there were fewer students from Q1 and Q2 than there were from Q3 (11% in 2021-22), Q4 (28.8% in 2021-22), and Q5 (45.5% in 2021-22) respectively. We have not considered this as a risk in the plan because we

---

[24] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/data-dashboard/

draw the majority of our students from London. Only 0.8% of London postcodes are in TUNDRA Q1, while 4.2% of London postcodes are in TUNDRA Q2.[25] Given the presence of gaps in outcomes at other stages of the student lifecycle and the resource requirements and potential futility of shifting our recruitment efforts outside of London, we have decided not to focus our efforts on reducing the size of this gap.

Similarly, only 5.1% of 2021-22 entrants were from POLAR4 Q1, with 9.2% from Q2. Of 172,155 postcodes in London, only 1.04% were in Q1, with 4.65% in Q2.[26] As above, we have decided not to focus on this group of students in our plan.

Continuation

In continuation, there are several gaps in outcomes for particular groups, such as for IMD Q1 students and students who were eligible for free school meals. We have focused on IMD Q1 students in the plan because we currently hold this data in our systems. We have made commitments in the plan to improve the quality of information we collect about students' financial circumstances and develop our data tracking and sharing approaches. We anticipate that our activities to close the gap for IMD Q1 students will also have a positive impact on the gap for students who were eligible for free school meals.

There are also gaps for Black students, Mixed students, mature students, and students with mental health conditions, which we are addressing in the plan. There is a gap of 9.8pp between students with sensory, medical, or physical impairments and those of no known disability. We have decided not to target this gap in the plan because it has been highly volatile and inconsistent, and it relates to a small group of only thirty students in 2020-21 data.

There is a gap of 4.7pp between TUNDRA Q1 and Q5 students. We are not targeting this gap. The gap has only opened in the latest year of data, from a negative gap in 2019-20. In most of the last six years, POLAR4 Q1 students have had higher continuation rates than all other POLAR4 quintiles (2016-17 to 2019-20). In the latest year of data, continuation rates for POLAR4 Q1 students have decreased from 92.2% to 83.9%, creating a 7.5pp gap between these students and Q5 students. We have not considered it necessary to address these gaps through the plan because they are not sustained, and we believe it is a better use of our resources to focus on gaps for socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Completion

There are several gaps in outcomes for particular groups, including the following gaps for 2017-18 entrants:

- A gap of 12.6pp between IMD Q1 and Q5 students
- A gap of 12.9pp between students who were eligible for free school meals and those who were not eligible
- A gap of 13.2pp between Black and White students
- A gap of 9.6pp between Mixed and White students
- A gap of 6pp between students of other ethnicities and White students

---

[25] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1bb543b4-776d-4941-8018-dd3c17d62504/tundra-methodology_20210311.pdf
[26] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/about-polar-and-adult-he/

- A gap of 23.4pp between mature and young students
- A gap of 5.2pp between disabled students and students with no known disability
- A gap of 2pp between students with cognitive or learning difficulties and those with no known disability
- A 13.4pp gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability
- A 1.7pp gap between students with sensory, medical, or physical impairments and those with no known disability
- A 5.4pp gap between TUNDRA Q1 and Q5 students
- A 3.3pp gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students

Despite the existence of completion gaps for such a wide variety of groups, we have elected to focus on continuation gaps in this plan. There are several reasons for this, including:

- In general, where there are completion gaps there are corresponding continuation gaps for the same groups
- The inherent lag in completion data which makes it more difficult to evaluate the success of measures to improve completion
- Addressing continuation gaps should address completion gaps as these metrics are related
- Some of the measures we are undertaking to address attainment gaps should also address completion gaps
- Focusing on continuation allows us to concentrate our activity on specific stages of the student journey and we believe that this will be the most effective use of our limited resources

Assuming that we see significant improvements in the size of continuation gaps across the period of this plan, we would expect to target any remaining completion gaps in our subsequent plan.

Attainment

In attainment, there are several gaps for specific groups of underrepresented students, including IMD Q1 students, Black students, Asian students, Mixed students and students of other ethnicities. We are addressing all of these gaps through the plan. There is a 7.8pp gap between students who were eligible for free school meals and those who were not eligible. As above, we have elected to set our targets based on the IMD metric, but we anticipate that work to meet this target will also impact the gap for students who were eligible for free school meals.

Progression

In progression, there were gaps between Black and White graduates, and between Asian and White graduates. We are addressing both of these gaps through the plan. There was also a gap of 3.5pp for graduates who were eligible for free school meals in comparison to those who were not eligible. We have not targeted this gap in the plan for several reasons. The size of the gap has been volatile in recent years, and there are some weaknesses in our data collection practices which render it difficult for us to reliably set targets relating to free school meals eligibility. Additionally, we want to ensure that we are targeting our resources effectively at areas with the most concerning indications of risk. There was a gap of 2pp between graduates with mental health conditions and those with no known disability. This gap has been volatile in recent years. Given its small size, and the inconsistency we have observed, we have elected not to target this gap in the plan.

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.

Each of our six intervention strategies is underpinned by an overarching theory of change and has been developed in consideration of current students' stated experiences, struggles and priorities, in addition to external evidence produced by universities, the Office for Students and other sector bodies and organisations.

Intervention strategy 1: Improving access to higher education for local students and raising attainment in schools

Assumptions

- Teachers, school and college leaders hold significant expertise about their students, and it is sensible to listen to their advice about when and how their students should engage with university
- Underrepresented students have limited access to opportunities to visit universities, museums, galleries and other cultural and educational spaces; they are lacking 'cultural capital' which would enable them to navigate the path to higher education with a greater degree of confidence
- Visiting campus and meeting current students is likely to improve participants' sense of belonging in relation to higher education
- Participants in sustained initiatives will find our current students relatable, and look to them as role models
- Participants do not have easy access to role models with experience of higher education who can advise them
- Providing information about student finance and budgeting will not deter participants from enrolling in higher education

Evidence and rationale

Gold Futures mentoring programme

The Gold Futures mentoring programme has been designed to align with the recommendations in the **TASO evidence toolkit**. Mentors are trained and supported throughout the scheme, and relatability is carefully considered when selecting and assigning mentors to mentees. The scheme is supported by a campus visit, comprising information, advice and guidance workshops, campus tours and a celebration event. Teacher feedback from the 2022-23 Gold Futures mentoring programme identified a positive impact on participants' confidence and commitment to their studies as a result of the programme. Analysis of feedback also revealed improvements in participants' academic self-efficacy, metacognitive strategies, knowledge and expectations of higher education. Participants also reported feeling more positively about their current education and school experience, and described improvements in key transferable skills, such as presentation skills. Mentors reported improvements in their confidence, communication and leadership skills as well as their sense of social awareness.

Alchemy

Alchemy is a complex **multi-intervention outreach programme** built on a strong foundation of evidence, including *Pedagogies of Taking Care: Art, Pedagogy and the Gift of Otherness*

(Atkinson, 2022), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1968), and *Engaged Pedagogy* (hooks, 1988). Evaluation of the programme has shown improvements in participants' behaviour and engagement at school and college, in addition to improvements in their creative confidence and wellbeing. The programme provides local students from underrepresented groups with access to relatable role models and unique creative opportunities, resulting in improvements in participants' knowledge of higher education and careers and the development of key transferable skills which will support their future success.

Team Up tutoring

The **TASO evidence toolkit** found that 'there is a high-quality body of evidence suggesting that academic tutoring can improve attainment.' TASO found that programmes were most effective when:

- Targeted at disadvantaged pupils, particularly those who lack family support from adults
- Targeted at pupils' specific needs and linked to classroom content
- Delivered by trained staff, well prepared for interacting effectively with pupils, for instance by providing well-planned feedback
- Delivered consistently by the same person and multiple times per week
- Progress was monitored and the support provided adjusted accordingly
- Delivered in small groups, as there is a noticeable reduction in effectiveness once group size increases above six or seven

The Team Up tutoring programme will follow all of these recommendations, with the exception that tutoring will only be delivered once a week, at least in the pilot phase. This is because a more frequent schedule would be too burdensome for student staff, but we will review our approach on an annual basis. In order to deliver this programme most effectively, we have also referred to the Education Endowment Foundation **teaching and learning toolkit on small group tuition**.

Art summer school

The **TASO evidence toolkit** states that 'there is little research on the efficacy of summer schools to widen participation.' The toolkit highlights that the intensive nature of summer schools means that better evidence is needed and TASO is undertaking a randomised controlled trial of summer schools which will report in 2024-25. We intend to review our own summer school in line with the content of this report. That being said, our model is distinct from more traditional summer school models in the higher education sector. Specifically:

- Accommodation is not provided, and the summer school is attended by local participants only, meaning it can be run inexpensively
- The summer school is focused on Art, and offers bespoke opportunities that participants from underrepresented backgrounds would be unlikely to access in other ways
- The summer school aims to help participants see that an artistic or creative future could be an option for them and understand the pathway towards this future, whether this involves higher education or not – this cannot be communicated in a one-off engagement, and requires a period of intensive study
- The programme aims to support participants to develop their portfolios and therefore improve their chances of being successful in applying to creative courses – it therefore

does not impact the efficacy of the programme if it mainly supports participants who were likely to progress to higher education anyway

- The intervention is aimed at a small group of participants (twenty annually) and involves lots of small group work and individualised support for participants to improve their creative practice. As participants are all studying artistic courses at college, we expect this to raise attainment at Level 3.
- Because participants are local, the final exhibition can be attended by family and friends, allowing participants to demonstrate the value of their work to key influencers who may doubt the value of creative courses.

33% of 2022-23 participants applied to creative undergraduate courses in 2023-24. Many participants chose courses other than Fine Art, which could reflect the high standard of information, advice and guidance provided to participants. They understood the breadth of courses on offer in higher education and were able to make informed choices about their futures. Analysis of pre- and post- surveys for 2022-23 found that, following the programme, participants demonstrated improvements in their knowledge of higher education, their higher education expectations and their sense of belonging in relation to higher education.

Progression agreements, mature students and contextual admissions

There is lots of evidence about the impact of contextual admissions in widening access higher education, including an **OfS topic briefing** on the subject. Due to systems and infrastructure limitations, it is not currently possible for us to implement a more comprehensive approach to contextual admissions. However, we recognise that students taking qualifications other than A-levels can experience bias in the admissions process and sometimes struggle to access information about whether their qualifications are acceptable. Our progression agreements with LASER and OCN (major accrediting bodies for Access to HE diplomas) are designed to address this by providing students with access to contextual offers, guaranteed interviews and even guaranteed offers.

This approach is supported by the OfS topic briefing which found that 'if universities want to recruit a more diverse student body, working with the colleges and awarding bodies delivering these diplomas to expand provision and progression could be a successful approach.' The topic briefing also explains that low awareness of contextual admissions schemes amongst students can prevent their having the desired impact. This is a problem we have observed at the College and there are plans to enhance promotional activity to address this issue. Efforts to track the numbers of students joining us under progression agreements and assess the general impact of the agreements have been complicated by the systems limitations referenced above. We aim to improve this over the course of the plan period.

Schools and colleges engagement, provision of information, advice and guidance, Discover Gold and the financial literacy project

Our strategy for engaging with schools and colleges and our approach to campus taster days (Discover Gold) has been developed following engagement with teachers, careers advisers, school and college leaders to understand what schools and colleges need from universities. It has also been informed by speaking to participants about their major concerns in relation to higher education and asking them what they would like to know. For example, our financial literacy project is based on participant feedback. In response to teacher feedback, our Discover Gold event series

is designed to be flexible and adaptable. As a result, the programme is becoming increasingly popular with schools and colleges, and with some partners there is potential to develop a multi-year programme of visits for the same groups of underrepresented students. This could increase the potential impact of the activity, as per TASO evidence on **multi-intervention outreach**.

Evaluation of Discover Gold in 2022-23 revealed that participants were more likely to agree with the following statements after the event:

- 'Higher education is for people like me.'
- 'I would fit in well academically with others in higher education.'
- 'I would fit in well socially with others in higher education.'

These responses suggest improvements in participants' sense of belonging in relation to higher education as per the **TASO validated scale for access and success**. We are continually improving our Discover Gold event series as to respond to evaluation outcomes. In recent months, this has included offering a wider range of academic taster sessions and dedicating more time to Q&A sessions with current students.

The **TASO evidence toolkit** found that the provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG) 'can have a small positive impact on students' aspirations/attitudes, and sometimes on HE participation'. Further, the toolkit identified that 'the most successful IAG interventions for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups appear to be those that are tailored to individual students, start early, and are integrated into other forms of support such as career advice and guidance.' Our approach to the provision of IAG involves working with students from Year 5 upwards, is tailored to students belonging to specific groups, and is flexible enough to allow for integration into other programmes of activity being delivered by schools and colleges, such as Careers Days.

The Brilliant Club Scholars' Programme

This programme is supported by its own **theory of change**. Since 2016, annual independent UCAS evaluations have shown that Scholars Programme graduates are statistically significantly more likely to apply and progress to a competitive university than students from similar backgrounds. HEAT data shows a clear positive relationship between participation in The Scholars Programme and **improved GCSE attainment**.

Intervention strategy 2: Understanding and supporting people who have had specific life experiences which may impact their ability to access, participate, belong, succeed and progress from higher education

Assumptions

Many of the assumptions that apply to **Intervention Strategy 1** also apply to **Intervention Strategy 2**. Additional assumptions specific to this intervention strategy include:

- There are gaps in access, success and progression for students in these groups
- Even where outcomes gaps do not exist, these groups experience gaps in experience. These gaps could be improved through the provision of targeted support.
- Students from these groups are less likely to have received support to develop life skills necessary for successful independent living

- Students from these groups will accept staff members as 'trusted adults' in their lives
- Intensive student voice activities will make students feel more valued and we will be able to avoid unintended consequences such as students feeling like their feedback has been ignored or students feeling unsafe when sharing personal experiences
- Considering these disparate groups as part of a single intervention strategy will allow us to be agile in our approach to identifying and addressing a wide variety of problems and issues, as well as providing a unifying mission for this work. This will not result in the inadvertent de-prioritisation of some groups.

Evidence and rationale

This intervention strategy is underpinned by an overarching theory of change, and each intervention is supported by evidence. Care-experienced students who were engaged in the delivery of the plan highlighted vacation periods as quiet and lacking in activity, talked about issues accessing financial support and lacked understanding of how they could access other forms of support. We will address these issues through **Intervention 2.2**, **2.4** and **2.7**. They also talked about having access to limited emotional and pastoral support when compared to other students, which we hope to address through **Intervention 2.8**.

In addition to consulting our students, we have considered information from key organisations involved in supporting care-experienced and estranged students and refugees such as **Propel**, **the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers**, **the Care Leaver Covenant**, **Become**, **the Care Leavers' Association**, **Stand Alone** and **Refugee Education UK.** We have considered the UCAS good practice briefings on **care-experienced** and **estranged students**, and engaged with **Lewisham Virtual School**, with whom we are establishing a partnership in 2024-25.

We have also engaged with our existing professional networks, including as a member of the **Aimhigher London** Looked After Children working group. This has included **hosting a continuing professional development conference** for practitioners working with care-experienced and estranged students in a variety of educational and non-educational settings. Members of staff have undertaken the LASER Level 3 Award in 'Supporting Young People Leaving Care in Post-16 Education,' which highlighted that care-experienced students are less likely to have someone to provide emotional, physical and practical support when moving to university for the first time. We are addressing this issue through **Intervention 2.5** and **2.8**.

We recognise that most of our research and analysis so far has focused on care-experienced and estranged students, who we have prioritised for engagement and support. However, as detailed in this strategy, we have ambitions to expand our knowledge of the experiences, priorities, struggles and outcomes of a wider variety of students through the period of this plan, including refugees and asylum seekers, young carers, student parents, people who have been in the armed forces and those from military families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, neurodivergent people, people with special educational needs and trans and non-binary people. We will identify groups for attention as part of our annual access and participation conferences and share findings and action plans on the EESE blog.

Intervention strategies 3, 4, 5 and 6

There is a significant degree of crossover between the assumptions, rationale and evidence base for strategies 3, 4, 5 and 6, especially as these relate to the participation and success of current students. Each strategy has been designed to support the other strategies as part of an

intersectional approach that recognises the large proportion of our students who belong to more than one of these groups. While these strategies are supported by sector evidence, they have also been designed in response to student feedback collected over the course of developing the plan.

Assumptions

- There are similarities in the experiences of students from different non-white ethnic groups (**IS3**)
- Intensive student voice activities will make students feel more valued and we will be able to avoid unintended negative consequences such as students feeling like their feedback has been ignored or students feeling unsafe or uncomfortable when sharing personal experiences (**IS3**, **IS4**, **IS5**, **IS6**)
- Students from underrepresented backgrounds (such as GEM and mature students) are less likely to report a mental health condition than their peers (**IS3**, **IS4**, **IS5**)
- Students from underrepresented backgrounds are less likely to proactively access existing support services (**IS3**, **IS4**, **IS6**)
- Improved awareness of support services amongst students will not lead these services to become overwhelmed and unable to cope with the demand, creating unintended negative consequences for students who are unsuccessful in accessing support (**IS3**, **IS4**, **IS5**)
- The impact of the cost-of-living crisis is likely to persist over an extended period of time (**IS6**)
- Student working patterns are unlikely to significantly decrease even if there are changes in the wider economic environment for students (**IS6**)
- Providing financial support in the form of bursaries, scholarships and fee waivers is likely to improve student continuation (**IS3** – **IS6**)
- Addressing continuation gaps in this plan will help us to address completion gaps in the longer term (**IS3** – **IS6**)
- The lack of focus on completion gaps will not result in these gaps increasing over the period of the plan (**IS3** – **IS6**)
- Tracking students' attendance and challenging non-attendance will have a net-positive impact on student engagement, continuation and success, and will not result in unintended negative consequences for students belonging to specific groups (for example, for neurodiverse students, those with mental health conditions and other disabled students) (**IS3** – **IS6**)
- Students from underrepresented groups will appreciate and benefit from additional targeted support. They will not feel that the provision of targeted support indicates any lack of confidence in their success and will understand that interventions have been designed to address structural inequalities and societal issues that are outside of their control (**IS3**, **IS4**). Wherever possible, we will seek to avoid taking a deficit model approach to plan implementation, and instead consider why and how existing structures and processes are disadvantaging particular groups.
- Mature students identify as mature students and will benefit from being connected to other mature students, even where there are some disparities in age (**IS4**)
- Students will have the time and inclination to engage with interventions and activities that take place outside of the core curriculum (**IS3** – **IS6**)

Evidence and rationale

Global ethnic majority students

As part of our student engagement activities, we delivered focus groups with GEM students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Students talked at length about issues impacting their sense of belonging, connecting this sense of belonging to their mental health and wellbeing and on-course success. They described a lack of representation amongst staff and students on some modules and in some classes and felt that some staff lacked knowledge and experience about the issues facing students from particular backgrounds. They talked about tribalism on campus and described how, despite high levels of diversity, the student body as a whole could be more cohesive. These experiences were exacerbated for students with intersecting characteristics of disadvantage, for example Black LGBTQIA+ students. Students also felt that the College could do more to celebrate diversity on campus. **Intervention 3.6** has been designed to address some of these issues.

Students talked about how navigating a Eurocentric curriculum could prevent student success. **Interventions 3.12** and **3.13** have been designed to address this. They also described challenges connecting with their personal tutors and accessing academic and pastoral support in person as well as online (**Interventions 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4**). Students wanted to see more personal tutors using data about their students to identify problems and address them proactively, taking some of the onus off students who may find it difficult to raise issues themselves (**Intervention 3.8**). Some students felt that their style of communication or dress meant they were less likely to be taken seriously, even describing how they felt they needed to overcome unconscious bias to be assessed fairly (**Intervention 3.12**). Students also mentioned specific experiences of racism, discrimination, bias and harassment both on and near campus. **Intervention 3.15** should support the College in addressing some of these concerns. Students were very appreciative of the opportunity to share their experiences in a safe space alongside students from similar backgrounds. The delivery of **Intervention 3.1** should allow us to continue this valuable dialogue with students.

Students were emphatic about the negative impact of financial challenges on their success (**Interventions 6.4**, **6.6**, **6.9**, **6.11**, **6.12**, **6.13** and **6.14**). They felt that decisions to prioritise paid work over study were sometimes misunderstood by staff as evidence of a lack of engagement, rather than an unwelcome necessity (**Interventions 6.1** and **6.6**). Students wanted clearer, more accurate, frequent and proactive communication from the College in a variety of areas. They described how information was sometimes shared in an overwhelming way and felt information about the support available to them could be reiterated more deliberately at key points of the student journey. They struggled to understand who they should speak to about particular issues, and identified instances of siloed working where academic staff and professional services teams were operating in a disconnected way. While students felt good communication was particularly important in relation to the organisational change and strike action, they also felt that the College should provide more accurate information about what to expect from university and what the university would expect from them, including providing more accurate information about expenses and teaching periods. **Interventions 3.2**, **3.5**, **3.12**, **5.9** and **6.8** have been designed to address these issues.

Mature students

In focus groups, mature students highlighted the diversity of their backgrounds and circumstances. They talked about the challenges of managing paid work and caring or familial responsibilities

alongside full-time study. They identified actions the College could take to help students manage these challenges, including considering the impact of timetabling decisions on commuter students, exploring more flexible modes of learning and teaching, and providing timetabling information as early as possible (**Interventions 6.6**, **6.7**, **6.8** and **6.10**).

Students talked about the importance of a positive transition into higher education, both socially and academically. Some students struggled to settle into university-level study, especially where they were returning to formal education after a break, suggesting that they would appreciate more targeted academic support from the beginning of their studies (**Interventions 4.3** and **4.5**). Some students felt that access to a peer mentor might have helped ease this transition (**Intervention 4.7**).

Students felt they did not always have complete information about the support available to them or how to access it (**Intervention 4.2**). They emphasised the importance of financial support and guidance around managing money (**Interventions 4.4**, **6.12**, **6.13** and **6.14**). They felt that processes to access support (financial, pastoral and academic) were sometimes unclear, and they asked for more frequent opportunities to hear about the options available to them. Where students engaged with support services, many had positive reflections on their experiences, but lots of students felt that response times for dealing with administrative issues were too long, describing how long waiting times could lead to anxiety, uncertainty and even non-continuation (**Intervention 4.11**).

Students appreciated the opportunity to share their views and experiences in focus groups and commented that they would welcome further opportunities to feed into the College's decision-making. Many students felt that the College could take more active steps to facilitate this (**Intervention 4.1**) but cautioned against asking students for their views and then failing to act on them.

Students with mental health conditions

Students felt that personal tutors were an especially important resource for students with disabilities and those with mental health conditions. However, students from these groups wanted to see improvements to personal tutoring, including greater flexibility for those wishing to change their personal tutor (**Intervention 5.3**). Students felt it was essential that they could access support from the very start of their courses, including Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), and wanted more support navigating processes to access support (**Intervention 5.2**). In talking about transitioning to university and the first few weeks of study, students wanted to see more options to attend welcome activities online (**Intervention 5.5**) and described how applying to receive reasonable adjustments in the first few weeks of term meant starting a course without these in place, impacting their chances of academic success. Many students felt that existing processes to apply for adjustments or extenuating circumstances were too lengthy and wanted to see more support for students pre-diagnosis of a condition. Students described a reluctance to engage with attendance tracking amongst the student body and the Students' Union which will need to be addressed to enable the delivery of **Intervention 5.7**. They also talked about a desire to see course leaders exploring alternative teaching and assessment options (**Interventions 6.6**, **6.8** and **6.10**).

Disabled students wanted to see improvements in communications, including quicker response times and more detailed and proactive messaging (**Intervention 5.9**). This included a desire for

more communication between the offer and enrolment stages and a review of the website to address circularity and improve the user experience. Major organisational changes have created additional anxiety for neurodiverse students and those with mental health conditions. These students felt that clear, accurate and frequent communication would be helpful in reducing their stress. They also suggested that the College should consider alternative channels of communication for some messaging. Students described instances where they were required to provide the same information repeatedly to different colleagues, commenting that teams could be more effective at communicating with each other to improve the overall student experience. Some students suggested that staff could benefit from additional training on how to communicate and support students in the most effective way (**Intervention 5.10**). They also wanted to see improved awareness of the challenges being faced by neurodiverse students and those with mental health conditions across the wider student body (**Intervention 5.2**).

Students felt that the College should improve its awareness of the intersectional identities of its students, particularly the connection between disabled and low-income students, designing processes with these identities in mind. While the intervention strategies included in the plan necessarily disaggregate actions by group, we do intend to take an intersectional approach to plan implementation. There was a general feeling that existing financial support was insufficient given the challenges of disabled students' lives (**Intervention 6.4**). Students really appreciated the opportunity to share their views and experiences (**Intervention 5.1**), but they were clear that they wanted the opportunity to hold us accountable for the commitments made in the plan.

Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, students with lower household incomes and those for whom 'cost pressures' are most likely to influence their decision-making

The impact of 'cost pressures' (**EORR risk 10**) on our students cannot be overstated. While we did run a focus group specifically focused on this issue, inviting students from lower income households to share their experiences and concerns, it is important to highlight that financial challenges were a central conversation topic in every session and interview we undertook.

Students described how issues with timetabling, including inflexible scheduling and the late release of information, could make it very difficult to maintain paid employment alongside study (**Intervention 6.6**). Students talked about difficulties finding appropriate part-time work, and described how the work they could obtain was frequently poorly paid. They suggested that the university could take additional steps to help students find work, including through working more closely with local employers and supporting students to make applications (**Interventions 3.10**, **4.9** and **6.9**). While students had to work to support themselves, there were also acutely aware of the impact that managing significant hours of paid work could have on their continuation and academic success and would appreciate support from the university to enable them to manage this better (**Interventions 6.6** and **6.8**).

Students were very clear about the connection between financial stress and poor mental health, but many said they struggled to describe these pressures to their personal tutors. They talked about the need to provide support for different kinds of mental health challenges, including short-term challenges, such as bereavements. They wanted the College to consider offering more immediate and emergency support options, both in relation to mental health and financial support (**Interventions 5.13**, **6.2**, **6.12** and **6.13**). In terms of financial support more generally, students felt that existing scholarships and bursaries were insufficient and that the processes to access financial support, including hardship funds, could be simplified and accelerated (**Intervention 6.4**). Students

had lots of other suggestions for how the College could support students with their costs, including reviewing the cost of university accommodation, subsidising travel and course materials and introducing institutional subscriptions for some online media platforms, facilitating swaps of equipment and course materials between students and addressing digital inequalities (**Interventions 6.7** and **6.11**). They also wanted to see the university doing more to create a community for lower income students on campus.

Students talked about how being a first-generation university student had its own challenges, especially in the first few months. Some students wanted more holistic support from the university to help them develop 'life skills' and increase their confidence in asking for help (**Intervention 6.5**). Students in this group also raised many of the same issues as their peers in relation to communication from the College, staff response times and the challenges of siloed working and opaque support structures. As with all groups, students welcomed the opportunity to have their voices heard, and wanted to see the College doing more to encourage this, including by ensuring that the student voice is central to decision-making and strengthening relationships with elected student representatives (**Intervention 6.1**).

Additional evidence

In identifying our interventions, we have also considered sector research into many of these topics. The examples given below are not exhaustive and we will continue to engage with relevant research findings as we prepare for and implement our plan. This includes considering evaluation outcomes published by universities and colleges in relation to their access and participation plans.

Advance HE, 2021. *Understanding structural racism in UK higher education: an introduction*. [Online] Available at: **https://warwick.ac.uk/services/sg/si/diversity/advance_he_-_understanding_racism_report.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Association for Young People's Health, 2023. *Summary of findings: the importance of ethnicity for understanding young people's experiences of health inequalities.* [Online] Available at: **https://ayph.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Summary-report-Ethnicity-and-young-peoples-health-inequalities.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Atkinson, P., 2022. *Pedagogies of Taking Care: Art, Pedagogy and the Gift of Otherness.* [Bloomsbury Publishing].

Disabled Students' Commission, 2023. *The Disabled Student Commitment.* [Online] Available at: **https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/The%20Disabled%20Student%20Commitment_1681910327.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Disabled Students UK, 2020. *Impact of the Pandemic on Disabled Students and Recommended Measures.* [Online] Available at: **https://disabledstudents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Impact_of_the_Pandemic_on_Disabled_Students_and_Recommended_Measures_-_July_2020_Updates.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Disabled Students UK, 2023. *Access Insights Report 2023.* [Online] Available at: **https://disabledstudents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Disabled-Students-UK_Access-Insights-2023-Report.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Freire, P., 1968. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* [Penguin].

HEPI, 2023. *Student Academic Experience Survey 2023.* [Online] Available at:
https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Student-Academic-Experience-Survey-2023.pdf [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

HEPI, 2024. *A Minimum Income Standard for Students*. [Online] Available at:
https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2024/05/09/landmark-hepi-report-shows-students-studying-outside-london-need-18600-to-have-an-acceptable-standard-of-living/ [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

HEPI, 2024. *'Dropouts or stopouts or comebackers or potential completers?': Non-continuation of students in the UK.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Dropouts-or-stopouts-or-comebackers-or-potential-completers-Non-continuation-of-students-in-the-UK.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

hooks, b., 1988. *Engaged Pedagogy.* [Praeger].

House of Commons Library, 2021. *Mature higher education students in England.* [Online] Available at: **https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8809/CBP-8809.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

House of Commons Library, 2023. *Impact of increases in the cost of living on further and higher education students.* [Online] Available at:
https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2023-0186/CDP-2023-0186.pdf [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

House of Commons Library, 2024. *Student mental health in England: Statistics, policy, and guidance.* [Online] Available at: **https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8593/CBP-8593.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Mind, 2023. *Race and mental health.* [Online] Available at:
https://www.mind.org.uk/media/12427/final_anti-racism-scoping-research-report.pdf?_adal_ca=cg=Organic.1720539989769&_adal_cw=1720531332531.1720539989769 [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

NEON, 2021. *Will abolishing BTECs mean reversing widening access to higher education?* [Online] Available at: **https://www.educationopportunities.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/BTEC-report-FINAL.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Office for Students, 2021. *Improving opportunity and choice for mature students.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/7042/ofs-insight-brief-9-updated-10-may-2022.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

TASO, 2023. *Approaches to addressing the ethnicity degree awarding gap*. [Online] Available at: **https://cdn.taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Approaches-to-addressing-the-ethnicity-degree-awarding-gap.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

TASO, 2023. *Rapid review to support development of the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR).* [Online] Available at: **https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/8080/taso-rapid-review.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

TASO, 2023. *Student mental health in 2023: Who is struggling and how the situation is changing.* [Online] Available at: **https://cdn.taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/student-mental-health-in-2023.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

TASO, 2023. *What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students.* [Online] Available at: **https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-what-works-to-reduce-equality-gaps-for-disabled-students.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

TASO, 2024. *From vision to action: harnessing Theory of Change to tackle ethnicity degree awarding gaps.* [Online] Available at: **https://taso.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TASO-report-2024-harnessing-Theory-of-Change-to-tackle-ethnicity-degree-awarding-gap.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

The Sutton Trust, 2023. *Cost of living and university students.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/cost-of-living-and-university-students-2023/** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

UCAS, 2021. *Starting the conversation: UCAS report on student mental health.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.ucas.com/file/513961/download?token=wAaKRniC** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Universities UK, 2019. *Black, Asian and minority ethnic student attainment at UK universities: #Closingthegap.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/bame-student-attainment.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Universities UK, 2020. *Stepchange: Mentally healthy universities - Improving mental health in universities.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Reports/uuk-stepchange-mhu.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Universities UK, 2022. *Closing ethnicity degree awarding gaps: three years on.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Reports/closing-the-gap-three-years-on.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Universities UK, 2023. *Tackling racial harassment in higher education: progress since 2020.* [Online] Available at: **https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Reports/tacking-racial-harassment-progress-since-2020.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

WonkHE and Pearson, 2022. *Students' perceptions of belonging and inclusion at university.* [Online] Available at: **https://wonkhe.com/wp-content/wonkhe-uploads/2022/02/Belonging-and-inclusion-survey-Wonkhe-Pearson-Feb-22.pdf** [Accessed 25 Sep. 2024].

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Goldsmiths' College

Provider UKPRN: 10002718

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

We will not raise fees annually for 2024-25 new entrants

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0		N/A	5760
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	9250
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	Computing	N/A	1000
Sandwich year	Psychology	N/A	1385
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	4625
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Goldsmiths' College

Provider UKPRN: 10002718

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	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£470,000	£480,000	£491,000	£502,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£1,029,000	£1,029,000	£1,029,000	£1,029,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£129,000	£132,000	£134,000	£137,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£251,000	£256,000	£262,000	£268,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£219,000	£224,000	£229,000	£234,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£470,000**	**£480,000**	**£491,000**	**£502,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	*5.3%*	*6.0%*	*6.2%*	*6.3%*
Access activity investment	**Total access investment funded from HFI (£)**	**£470,000**	**£480,000**	**£491,000**	**£502,000**
Access activity investment	***Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)***	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**	**£0**
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£571,000	£571,000	£571,000	£571,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£130,000	£130,000	£130,000	£130,000
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£328,000	£328,000	£328,000	£328,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£1,029,000**	**£1,029,000**	**£1,029,000**	**£1,029,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	*11.6%*	*12.8%*	*12.9%*	*12.9%*
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£129,000	£132,000	£134,000	£137,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	*1.5%*	*1.6%*	*1.7%*	*1.7%*

Office for Students

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Goldsmiths' College

Provider UKPRN: 10002718

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	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
	PTA_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	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Reduce the continuation gap between Black and White students	PTS_1	Continuation	Ethnicity	Black	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	13.3	11	9.5	8	6.6
Reduce the continuation gap between Mixed and White students	PTS_2	Continuation	Ethnicity	Mixed	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	4.8	3.8	2.5	1	0
Reduce the continuation gap between mature and young students	PTS_3	Continuation	Age	Mature (over 21)	Young (under 21)	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	8.6	7.3	6.3	5.3	4.3
Reduce the continuation gap between students with mental health conditions and those with no known disability	PTS_4	Continuation	Reported disability	Mental health condition	No disability reported	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	5.4	4.5	3.5	2.5	1.5
Reduce the continuation gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students	PTS_5	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	7.9	6.9	5.9	4.9	3.9
Reduce the attainment gap between Black and White students	PTS_6	Attainment	Ethnicity	Black	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	19.3	18	16	13	9.6
Reduce the attainment gap between Asian and White students	PTS_7	Attainment	Ethnicity	Asian	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	14.1	13	11	9	7
Eliminate the attainment gap between Other and White students	PTS_8	Attainment	Ethnicity	Other ethnicity	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	6.1	5	3.5	2	0
Eliminate the attainment gap between Mixed and White students	PTS_9	Attainment	Ethnicity	Mixed	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	3.3	2.8	2	1	0
Reduce the attainment gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students	PTS_10	Attainment	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1	IMD quintile 5	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage points	11.4	10	9	7.5	5.7
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression 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	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Reduce the progression gap between Asian and White students	PTP_1	Progression	Ethnicity	Asian	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	6.3	5.5	4.8	4	3.1
Reduce the progression gap between Black and White students	PTP_2	Progression	Ethnicity	Black	White	N/A	No	The access and participation dashboard	2020-21	Percentage points	6.1	5.5	4.8	4	3
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														

PTP_7													
PTP_8													
PTP_9													
PTP_10													
PTP_11													
PTP_12													