

Liverpool Hope University

Access and Participation Plan

2025-26 to 2028-29

1. Introduction and strategic aim

- 1.1 This Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how Liverpool Hope University will address risks to equality of opportunity. The Plan details how the institution will enable students to access the University, succeed on course and achieve high quality outcomes in further study or graduate employment. In order to do this, risks to equality of opportunity for particular groups of students have been identified and targeted intervention strategies proposed to address them.

The Plan is founded in evidence, from our internal data, externally published metrics and from the published literature. Furthermore, consultation with students, staff and external stakeholders underpins the steps we intend to take to ensure that Liverpool Hope is fully inclusive and provides high quality opportunities for students to access and succeed in higher education programmes offered by Liverpool Hope.

- 1.2 Founded in 1844, Liverpool Hope University is a liberal arts teaching-led, research-informed and mission focussed institution and the only ecumenical Christian University in Europe, supporting students of all faiths and none.

Liverpool Hope University pursues a path of excellence in scholarship and collegial life without reservation or hesitation. The University's distinctive philosophy is to 'educate in the round' – mind, body and spirit – in the quest for Truth, Beauty and Goodness¹.

- 1.3 As the smallest of the 12 institutions in the North West region, with around 5,610 students (4,360 of whom are undergraduate)², Hope has the advantage of knowing its students 'one by one'. The University is thus able to offer a personalised learning experience that is rooted in innumerable day-to-day conversations between students and staff. Large plenary teaching sessions are used when necessary but small group seminars and tutorials are preferred. These foundational principles, together with the mix of students and courses, makes the University distinctive and informs its educational mission. Hope's philosophy is to provide a personalised experience for every student within a strong community that nurtures, supports and stimulates scholarly advancement. The Mission and Values of Hope underpin a 'kind, generous and gracious fellowship' where all may flourish.

Hope has a distinctive cohort shape, with a significant majority of female students and 51% of its students having non-A level entry routes. 61% of our students have those characteristics associated with a risk of under representation in Higher Education. The University has a growing number of students from black and global majority backgrounds. A significant number of students have disabilities, almost 8% above the national average. In line with its mission, Hope is proud that the student body includes a significantly high proportion of those from the poorest areas in the UK (Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD))

¹ Strategic Plan (hope.ac.uk)

² Office for Students Size and Shape of Provision Data Set (2021-22)

quintiles 1 and 2), and from Participation of Local Areas (POLAR 4) Quintiles 1 and 2³, where participation is the lowest. The Liverpool context is particularly significant; the majority (57%) of the student body comes from the North West, with 37% from Liverpool itself⁴. Of 317 Local Authorities, Liverpool is the third most deprived in the country; in terms of employment, it is the fifth most deprived Local Authority, and the third in relation to health deprivation and disability⁵. Hope also attracts a significant proportion of students (15%) from Northern Ireland⁶. Northern Ireland has higher levels of multiple deprivation than the rest of the UK⁷. In August 2022, Independent Member of the Legislative Assembly, Claire Sugden wrote to the Minister for the Economy asking for immediate help to enable students to continue their studies. She is quoted as having said; ‘Students from Northern Ireland are at a serious disadvantage compared to their peers from other parts of the UK. Many are finding it impossible simply to pay rent and living costs from the loans they receive – even those receiving the maximum amount currently possible’⁸.

Thus, with such a distinctive and mission specific cohort, Equality of Opportunity, and risk to this, is at the core of our strategic approach. The 2023/27 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy⁹ is explicit in its imperative of ‘**delivering a personalised learning experience**’ based on a ‘**clear awareness of our student profile, their different characteristics and needs**’. This Plan has been developed alongside the vision enshrined in the 2023/28 Liverpool Hope Strategic plan¹⁰ which was built on five pillars and followed extensive consultation with staff, students and external stakeholders. Central to the Strategic Plan is a commitment to ‘**provide education that transforms lives**’ through ‘**delivery of our Life-Long Learning mission, including widening access and participation and ensuring good outcomes for our graduates**’ (2023/28 Strategic Plan). Leadership on these issues comes from the Senior Management Team, whose clear and strong vision is reflected in Faculties and Professional Services teams across the University. We are committed to monitoring, evaluating and understanding our performance in relation to underrepresented groups of students using a theory of change approach.

This Plan is also aligned to our University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives¹¹ ‘**ensuring equality of opportunity for all our students**’ and to the overarching commitment of the University to equality, diversity and inclusion by working towards the Athena Swan Charter and becoming a Level 3 Disability Confident Employer.

- 1.4 Success under the auspices of the 2019/20 to 2024/5 Access and Participation Plan: the Plan committed Hope to eradicating inequity of outcomes for all those who apply to, or study at, Hope. This was ambitious and stretching but we have made significant strides towards achieving our targets. Amongst our successes are the increasing numbers of Black, Asian and mature students at Hope; closure of continuation gaps for global majority students in the 2020/21 academic year which have remained closed. Also of note: the attainment gap for disabled students, which has remained closed since 2021/22; and

³ Office for Students Size and Shape of Provision Data Set

⁴ HEIDI data 2018-19 to 2021-22

⁵ Liverpool City Council Key statistics

⁶ HEIDI data 2018-19 to 2021-22

⁷ Abel, Barclay, Payne (2016)

⁸ Belfast News Letter 2022

⁹ Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (hope.ac.uk)

¹⁰ Strategic Plan (hope.ac.uk)

¹¹ Equality and Diversity Objectives (hope.ac.uk)

progression for females from low participation areas (POLAR4 Q1/2). The gap to males from high participation areas (POLAR3/4/5) has closed to within 1pp from 15pp at the start of the Plan¹². An important component of our analysis of performance has been a regression analysis which analyses the trajectory of our current gaps. This is particularly useful as it enables us to identify gaps that are closing and would have closed had the current Plan run across its expected life course whilst enabling us to identify gaps that are widening. There is more work to be done across the coming years, which is detailed later in this Plan.

- 1.5 In line with the requirements of the Office for Students, this Access and Participation Plan covers the period to 2028/9. In order to inform the Plan, we have assessed our performance across the life cycle of full-time undergraduate students who pay a tuition fee of £9250. Part-time students make up only 1% of our cohort. The analysis includes a robust and reflective analysis of our metrics in access, success and progression in relation to participation, deprivation, ethnicity, disability, gender and care leavers. There is a thorough consideration of gaps that may result from overlapping characteristics of underrepresentation or intersectionality. We note that in relation to sex only binary data, male/female, is available for analysis.

2. Risks to equality of opportunity

- 2.1 As detailed in the Office for Students Regulatory Notice 1, Liverpool Hope conducted a full assessment of performance in order to identify the most significant gaps in performance that pose a risk to equality of opportunity at the University (Annex A). Data presentation is compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), small numbers have been suppressed where appropriate.
- 2.2 In order to understand the risks to equality of opportunity, that underpin the Indications of Risk identified in our Assessment of Performance, we have consulted the sector-wide Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)¹³. Where a gap in performance is identified in our data the underlying contributing risks have been identified from the EORR using discussion with staff and students, course evaluations, service update information and a range of other internal data.
- 2.3 Analysis of our performance (Annex A) pointed to the following as the most prevalent indications of risk at Liverpool Hope:

Indication of Risk 1: There is a substantial on course awarding gap for black and global majority students compared to white students. This is particularly marked at the intersection with high deprivation, qualifications on entry, joint honours courses and eligibility for free school meals.

EORR Evidence suggests that this is a function of insufficient personal (Risk 7) and academic support (Risk 6) and poorer knowledge and skills on entry (Risk 1). Students ask for more extensions on assessment submission and access academic writing workshops more frequently than white students. These students are more likely to enter without A level qualifications and have lower tariff scores.

Indication of Risk 2: At Liverpool Hope there is a substantial gap in continuation, attainment and completion for students from the most deprived areas compared to those from the least

¹² APP Reflective Statement MAY 2023.pdf (hope.ac.uk)

¹³ Equality of Opportunity Risk Register - Office for Students

deprived areas and for those from the areas of lowest participation compared to those from the highest participation.

EORR evidence suggests this is a function of lack of knowledge and skills needed for successful HE (Risk 1) and also a deficit in information and guidance before coming to university (Risk 2). At Hope these students are more likely to enter without A level qualifications and to select joint honours degree courses. Cost pressures impact on this group because of the likelihood of students having to support their families and increase paid work (Risk 10). Internal data at Hope shows that these students are more likely to access academic skills workshops pointing to the impact of on course Risks 6 (lack of academic support) and 7 (a lack of personal support on course).

Indication of Risk 3: At Liverpool Hope there are substantial gaps in progression for students who have mental health concerns.

EORR evidence suggests that mental ill health negatively impacts progression outcomes for students graduating from Liverpool Hope (Risk 8). This cohort are more likely to join Hope without having studied A levels and may require additional advice and guidance in relation to the range of opportunities available on completion of their award.

3. Objectives

Our analysis of performance indicated three key areas of risk to equality of opportunity at Hope. Having consulted the EORR we have identified the reasons that appear to contribute to this risk for particular groups of students. Detailed below are the measurable objects which the evidence base, detailed in Annex B to this Plan, suggests will address the risks.

Indication of Risk 1: There is a substantial on course awarding gap for black and global majority students compared to white students. This is particularly marked at the intersection with high deprivation, qualifications on entry, joint honours courses and eligibility for free school meals.

Objective Liverpool Hope will reduce the awarding gap for black and global majority students compared to white students to 5pp from the current 14 pp over the life of the plan (PTS_1).

This will be achieved through decolonising the institution and the curriculum and advertising these achievements via various social media channels and during recruitment activities such as Open and Taster Days; enhancing both academic and non-academic support offerings for this group and offering enhanced financial support for students from the poorest backgrounds (Interventions 1 and 2)

Indication of Risk 2: At Liverpool Hope there is a substantial gap in continuation, attainment and completion for students from the most deprived areas compared to those from the least deprived areas and for those from the areas of lowest participation compared to those from the highest participation.

Objective Liverpool Hope will eliminate the gaps in continuation for students from the most deprived areas compared to those from the least deprived areas by 2028. The gap in the latest year was 7.6pp (PTS_2).

Objective: Liverpool Hope will eliminate the completion gaps for students from the most deprived areas compared to those from the least deprived areas by 2028. The gap in the latest year was 5.9pp (PTS_3).

Objective: Liverpool Hope will eliminate the gaps in attainment for students from the most deprived areas compared to those from the least deprived areas by 2028. The gap in the latest year was 6.2pp (PTS_4).

Objective: Liverpool Hope will eliminate gaps in continuation for students from the lowest participation areas compared to those from highest participation by 2028 particularly for those studying major degrees. The gap in the latest year was 4.7pp (PTS_5).

Objective: Liverpool Hope will eliminate gaps in completion for students from the lowest participation areas compared to those from highest participation by 2028 particularly for those studying major degrees. The gap in the latest year was 5.8pp (PTS_6).

Objective: Liverpool Hope will eliminate gaps in attainment for students from the lowest participation areas compared to those from highest participation by 2028 particularly for those studying major degrees. The gap in the latest year was 3.2pp (PTS_7).

This will be achieved by targeted pre-course activities, such as community outreach initiatives; on course financial and personal support and enhanced access to learning resources/support.

Indication of Risk 3: At Liverpool Hope there are substantial gaps in progression for students who have mental health concerns.

Objective Liverpool Hope will reduce the gap in progression for students with a mental health disability. We will aim to reduce the gap from 16.8pp in the latest data to <5pp (PTP_1).

This will be achieved by targeted careers interventions including enhanced induction processes, on course support, focus on successful transition, better integration of placements and enhanced guidance relating to progression opportunities.

4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Liverpool Hope will implement a series of intervention strategies which will address the indications of risk identified in our data. The interventions are aimed at resolving the risks identified in the EORR as contributing factors and are underpinned by a Theory of Change approach evidence base (Annex B).

Intervention Strategy 1: Decolonising Liverpool Hope through internal and external collaboration to develop a more inclusive and racially aware community that fosters a sense of belonging for black and global majority students.

Intervention Objectives and Targets: This Intervention Strategy aims to remove barriers to inclusion throughout the institution and in so doing develop a clear sense of belonging for students from Black and Global Majority groups.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: The Intervention aims to address Risks 6 and 7 relating to a lack of on course academic and personal support and to ameliorate the impact of poorer knowledge and skills on entry (Risk 1).

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Revised approach to Marketing and Recruitment Risk 1 Pre-course Understanding of HE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review to ensure our marketing language and imagery are reflective of our student body and target groups. • Positive effort, through a guaranteed interview scheme, to attract a diverse cohort of student ambassadors from underrepresented groups, to work at Open/Applicant Days, recruitment visits, school fairs etc. • Virtual Open days to make them more accessible for deprived students who are unable to travel. • Appointment of Associate Deans (External Engagement) with remit to support marketing and recruitment/outreach activity with Faculties and to facilitate cross institutional collaboration for consistent efforts. • Access to Hope Scholarship (https://www.hope.ac.uk/undergraduate/feesandfunding/scholarships/accesstohopescholarship/) with applicants previous personal circumstances taken into consideration. 	<p>Enhancement of student ambassador recruitment and training to ensure lived experiences of all student groups on campus are represented</p> <p>Staff training in Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions to enhance understanding of the lived experiences of all prospective and current student groups, with particular focus on ethnicity and other identified forms of underrepresentation within the existing cohort</p>	<p>Applicants will recognise that the University has a positive attitude towards creating communities of belonging and value this when making choices about their future in higher education.</p>	IS2

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Wider implementation of Inclusive Curriculum Toolkit Risk 6 Academic Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of an Inclusive curriculum toolkit for use from course design events through to classroom delivery and annual monitoring reports. Decolonisation is/will be a standard item in all co-design events for revalidated and newly validated provision. 	<p>Development and Implementation of relevant toolkit materials.</p> <p>Administrative costs in the University Learning and Teaching Team.</p> <p>Consultation with experts in the field for example Malik al Nasir, who was recently awarded a Hope honorary doctorate, and who is leading the Black Academia initiative (https://blackacademia.co.uk/)</p> <p>Increased recruitment of staff with a global majority background.</p>	<p>Black and Global Majority will feel that the university is engaged / listening to them in developing communities of belonging</p> <p>Higher levels of racial literacy for staff and students.</p> <p>Improved understanding amongst academic staff of the ways in which racial inequity manifests in taught content and practice and strategies for best practice will enable higher levels of targeted academic support.</p> <p>More literature from Black and Global Majority authors (including in library stocks) will enhance students' sense of belonging.</p>	
Continuing work of the Community of Practice focussing on Inclusion and Decolonisation Risk 6 Academic Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic staff and students working together to better understand the experiences of Black and Global Majority students. 	<p>Academic Staff time.</p> <p>Administrative costs in the University Learning and Teaching Team.</p>	<p>The Community of Practice, and external networks, will continue to contribute to the strategic development of the University as appropriate.</p>	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
<p>Enhanced availability of bespoke personal and pastoral support</p> <p>Risk 7 Personal Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Student Wellbeing Assistant prioritising support for students with APP characteristics offering rapid pastoral support and signposting. • Enhanced training for Student Engagement Officers to enable signposting to appropriate support services. • Appointment of Associate Deans (Student Experience) to monitor equality of opportunities for diverse student groups. • Appointment in academic areas of Lead academics for Access and Participation, Student Voice and Employability. 	<p>Training and staffing costs of 1.0 FTE Wellbeing Assistant. This will ensure students living in Halls have appropriately trained support that can be signposted to the support team in a timely manner.</p> <p>Proactive approach to contacting students by Engagement Officers where attendance dips or where there are additional support issues raised by the student</p> <p>Participation in a multiagency project with Mersey Care, including the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University to form a regional hub routing students to mental health support.</p>	<p>Students' academic success will increase; less requests for extensions and less uptake of mental health support.</p> <p>The Mersey Care/HEI project will be successful in supporting students.</p>	IS2, IS3
<p>Redesigned Academic Writing Skills</p> <p>Risk 7 Academic Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with associated web pages for students whose first language, or common language at home, is not English. • Access to bespoke on line writing packages: the University offers Studiosity. 	<p>1 full time Writing Mentor with the Library Services team prioritising this group.</p> <p>Staff time Subscription to Studiosity</p>	<p>Students will report increased academic confidence and skills relating to academic writing.</p> <p>Use of Studiosity will be monitored.</p>	IS2
<p>New Aspiration-Raising Activities including Lecture Series, Festival of Futures and Honorary Doctorates</p> <p>Risk 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on a range of APP matters including external agencies, e.g., Anthony Walker Foundation, Leonard Cheshire Organisation, RESPECT Group, welfare organisations in Liverpool 8, with whom we have established links and Black and Global Majority alumni. • The Festival of Futures is a university wide week-long event - focussing on UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4 Quality Education) with public lectures from external speakers from various backgrounds including those from Black and Global Majority backgrounds • Honorary Doctorates and Senior Fellowships acknowledge recipients' contribution to society, particularly of work that aligns closely to the University's mission, values and aims [Malik Al-Nasir as honorary graduate in July 2024] 	<p>Time investment from staff and students.</p> <p>Expense reimbursement for external speakers.</p>	<p>The lectures and Festival will be well attended by staff and students.</p> <p>Students and Staff will find value in attendance.</p>	IS2, IS3

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Membership of Specialist External Groups: Risk 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Universities Studying Slavery, the RESPECT Group, and active participation in Black History month. External Examining 	<p>Engagement of the whole University community.</p> <p>Staff time and signposting of resources via Learning and Teaching Newsletter.</p>	<p>Enhanced sense of belonging for students of colour. Higher levels of racial awareness for staff in order to foster improved understanding of the issues affecting members of the Hope community from ethnically diverse backgrounds</p> <p>Improved understanding amongst academic staff of the issues fostered by sharing of information with external colleagues including through knowledge exchange opportunities</p>	<p>IS2, IS3</p> <p>IS2, IS3</p> <p>IS2, IS3</p>
Enhanced Recruitment and Professional Development Risks 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of recruitment processes. Establishing a new network for Black and Global Majority staff and students. Raising awareness through expanded training: 'Unconscious Bias' classroom training; other Professional Development events. Development of an EDI Hub within the University to give focus to the work of developing an anti-racism University by fostering community-wide discussions. University EDI Committee - monitoring and intervening on equality matters for both staff and students 	<p>Administrative Time in People Services Team</p> <p>Administrative Time in Learning and Teaching unit</p> <p>Administrative time for committee members</p>	<p>The staff body will have a greater diversity of ethnic backgrounds in turn adding to a more diverse learning community.</p> <p>High numbers of staff will have received training, and awareness of key issues around access and participation will increase.</p> <p>An EDI hub will provide leadership in this area.</p>	
Total cost of activities and evaluation for Intervention Strategy 1 - £838,000 Summary of evidence base and rationale: Each intervention supporting Intervention Strategy 1 is based on a literature review and is underpinned by a Theory of Change Approach. Mahmud and Gagnon (2020) ¹⁴ clearly state that there is a need in UK institutions to recognise that the issues with the attainment of Black and Global Majority students represent widespread inequities rather than any lack of skills, motivation or aspiration. We are committed to creating communities of belonging and ensuring that students voices are heard in their development. Decolonisation is an important step in reducing such inequities. A more detailed review of the evidence base is provided in Annex B.				

¹⁴ Racial disparities in student outcomes in British higher education: examining Mindsets and bias A. Mahmud, J. Gagnon Teaching in Higher Education 29 July 2020 Sociology, Education

Intervention Strategy 2: Supporting students from the poorest and lowest participation backgrounds to achieve at Hope.

Indication of Risk: At Liverpool Hope there is a substantial gap in continuation, attainment and completion for students from the most deprived and lowest participation areas.

Intervention Objectives and targets: This Intervention Strategy aims to support the attainment of these students through enhancing personal and academic support and ameliorating impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and residual effects of COVID and beyond.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: The Intervention focuses on addressing the impact of cost pressures (Risk 10) and to reduce the risk of pre-course and on-course risks (Risks 1, 2, 6 and 7).

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Enhanced financial support Risk 7: Personal Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Student Support Fund will be more accessible, better publicised and targeted throughout the year. Students will receive at least 80% of their financial deficit. Continuing to issue supermarket shopping vouchers for students unable to access bank accounts due to debt Temporary emergency accommodation in halls for any students who live privately but have a financial crisis. Recruitment activities in deprived areas such as staff visits to Northern Ireland. Existing Liverpool Hope Bursary Schemes. Money mentors will be part of the University Induction Programme and beyond. This will be on campus to give money advice to students during induction. The team will be visible at key locations across the campus at key times of the year. On site catering will continue to offer meal deals during the day, Chaplaincy will continue with their £1 meal initiative. Emergency food vouchers are available for students in need and will be targeted to this group. Students' Union continuing their clothes/book exchange. Continue to offer free transport between teaching campuses and residences. Better publicity of existing schemes of paid work on campus. Additional support for estranged students and care leavers, including meals and support for Graduation costs. The university has developed an 'Access to Hope Scholarship' (https://www.hope.ac.uk/undergraduate/feesandfunding/scholarships/accesstohopescholarship/), with applicant's previous personal circumstances taken into consideration. 	Student Support Fund 1.0 FTE member of staff in Student Life team to administer the funds.	Overall reduction in awarding gap reflected in APP monitoring. Increased uptake of Support Fund by students in APP groups. Students using the services will have decreased financial concerns, will feel more confident with their finances and will be able to reduce paid work. Improved uptake of onsite study facilities.	IS1, IS3

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Extended range of free extra-curricular activities Risk 10 Cost Pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with the University Community Engagement Team and the local Childwall 'All Together' project. • Global Hope Projects 	Staff support for the Community Engagement Team.	<p>Students taking part in the interventions will report feeling lonely less frequently and will feel a greater sense of belonging. Mental health/wellbeing will be improved with less referrals to academic and non-academic support.</p> <p>In the longer term, students will have equal on course achievement (and progression).</p>	IS1, IS3
Making learning resources more accessible (Risks 6, 7 and 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised approach to timetabling enabling early publication and where possible consolidated blocks of study. • New digital strategy enabling recordings of sessions made available on the virtual learning platform, increasing digital skills and reducing digital poverty. • Availability of a digital literacy mentor. • Laptop loans continuing with priority for this group. • Ongoing investment in library resources and infrastructure - bookable rooms for quiet study spaces, long library opening hours, online resources, accessible clearly signposted reading lists (Leganto). • Availability of online support/tutorials (via Zoom) during office hours to cut down on travel costs 	<p>A Digital Literacy Mentor based in the Learning and Teaching Team.</p> <p>Cost of laptops.</p>	<p>Students will report enhanced confidence with digital resources.</p> <p>Lap top loans and use of digital literacy mentor will be recorded.</p>	IS1

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Enhanced understanding of the impact of paid employment on student outcomes Risks 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Student Futures team will carry out/commission research on patterns of paid employment by students and its impact on academic engagement and outcomes with particular focus on students with APP characteristics. 	Student Research Project Officer (or similar).	Changes to University policy as appropriate to the findings.	IS1, IS3
Outreach: Raising pre-course confidence around attainment Risks 1 and 2: Pre-course Knowledge and skills/information and guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of targeted outreach activities aimed at enhancing reading/numeracy skills in primary age children in at least ten primary schools in the most deprived local areas. It is hoped to engage over 150 children in this initiative over the course of this plan. Shaping Futures Merseyside Collaborative Outreach Programme for Liverpool City Region, Knowsley Chamber of Commerce Youth Chamber and third sector organisations including National Saturday Club 30-week programme on campus. 	Student Ambassadors, appropriate student volunteers. Staff costs, including training and travel expenses for volunteers. National Saturday Club costs (staff and resources - £14,000 approx. per annum).	Partner schools engaged. Sessions scheduled and delivered. Longer term children's attainment improves.	IS1
Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy - £423,000 Summary of evidence base and rationale: Each activity supporting Intervention Strategy 2 is based on a literature review and is underpinned by a Theory of Change Approach. There is considerable published literature detailing the link between high deprivation/low participation background and poorer outcomes. The 2024 Research Briefing: Equality of access and outcomes in Higher Education in England ¹⁵ highlights financial concerns as being detrimental to applications and also to on-course achievement in these groups. Additionally, the briefing papers notes that insufficient advice and support both pre- and on- course are barriers to success. IS2 aims to address these issues. A more detailed evidence base is included in Annex B.				

¹⁵ Equality of access and outcomes in higher education in England P Bolton and J Lewis 25th July 2024 <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9195/>

Intervention Strategy 3: Supporting progression to further study or graduate employment for students with mental ill health

Indication of Risk 2: At Liverpool Hope there are substantial gaps in progression for students who have mental health concerns.

Intervention Objectives and targets: This Intervention Strategy aims to support the progression of these students by enhancing support, employment experience and guidance.

Related risks to equality of opportunity: The Intervention focusses on support for on-course Risk 8 and in bridging the gap created by pre-course Risks 1 and 2.

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy?
Enhancing transition to employment/further study Risks 6 and 8 (academic support and mental ill health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New membership of the external organisation the Purpose Coalition; this initiative aims to break down barriers to opportunity. • Bespoke employment initiatives for disabled students including Change 100 in association with the Leonard Cheshire Foundation. • On course transition focussed placements, community opportunities. • Expansion of work-based experience opportunities. • Bespoke information, advice and guidance in the context of a student's individual needs, including extra support around building confidence and challenging self-limiting ideas. • Individual student meetings with personal tutor lead to career opportunities by developing bespoke support plans and risk assessments. • Enhanced Counselling Services provision by extending the availability of Counselling for up to a year after graduation for this group. • A new programme of Essential or Transferable Skills embedded into the curriculum that covers practical employability skillsets as well as resilience and managing mental health in the workplace 	<p>Administrative oversight costs.</p> <p>Staff training to raise awareness of neurodiversity, mental ill health etc, and to allow staff to develop helpful skillsets to work with students presenting with mental ill health.</p> <p>Formal staff support to ensure their resilience when addressing mental ill health challenges with students</p> <p>Administrative oversight in Student Futures</p> <p>A specialist mental health practitioner to support students with complex needs for an extended period after graduation.</p> <p>Development of a new programme of skills development</p>	<p>Students with mental ill health are better prepared for the transition between University and graduate employment/further study</p> <p>Students and new graduates are better equipped to deal with the rigours of graduate level employment</p> <p>University metrics improved.</p>	

Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy: - £401,000

Summary of evidence base and rationale: Each activity supporting Intervention Strategy 3 is based on a literature review and is underpinned by a Theory of Change Approach. The risks to equality of opportunity associated with mental ill health are well established in the literature. The Insight Briefing of 2019 'Mental health: are all students being properly supported?'¹⁶ notes that times of transition can be particularly challenging for all students but are particularly so for students who have mental ill health. Additionally, early intervention to support students with their mental wellbeing is pivotal. IS2 aims to address these issues. A more detailed evidence base is included in Annex B.

5. Evaluation

Evaluation: Intervention Strategy 1 Decolonising Liverpool Hope through internal and external collaboration to develop a more inclusive and racially aware community that fosters a sense of belonging for black and global majority students.			
Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Revised approach to marketing and recruitment (Risk 1 Pre-course Understanding of HE)	Applicants will recognise that the University has a positive attitude towards creating communities of belonging, and value this when making choices about their future in higher education.	Type 2: Empirical Enquiry Qualitative research with students at Open/Applicant days and with on-course students.	Findings will be reported on our web pages Summer 2026.
Wider implementation of Inclusive Curriculum Toolkit Risk 6 Academic Support	Black and Global Majority will feel that the university is engaged / listening to them in developing communities of belonging. Higher levels of racial literacy for staff and students. Improved understanding amongst academic staff of the ways in which racial inequity manifests in taught content and practice. Strategies for best practice will enable higher levels of targeted academic support. More literature from Black and Global Majority authors, including in library stocks, will enhance students' sense of belonging.	Type 2: Empirical Enquiry Qualitative research with staff and students. Type 3: Causality Audit of library collection/reading lists pre/post review of curriculum for inclusivity review. Audit of curriculum documents (i.e. definitive documents)	All findings will be reported at appropriate Hope Learning and Teaching days in academic year 2026/7.
Community of Practice Inclusion and Decolonisation Risk 6 Academic Support	The Community of Practice, and external networks, will continue to contribute to the strategic development of the University as appropriate.	Type 2: Empirical Research Narrative report from the Community of Practice detailing discussions and key recommendations.	Produced annually commencing Summer 2026.
Data Analytics: Risk 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	Academic tutors will be better informed in supporting students; students in turn will feel better supported both academically and pastorally. Student's academic success will increase along with fewer requests for extensions and less uptake of mental health support. Reduction in % gap between Global Majority students and other students.	Type 2: Empirical Enquiry Qualitative research with staff and students; outcomes from course evaluations and NSS surveys. Audit of data on extensions and mental health support reported by Student Support and Wellbeing	IS2

¹⁶ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/mental-health-are-all-students-being-properly-supported/>

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Bespoke Personal and Pastoral Support Risk 7 Personal Support	<p>Student's academic success will increase; less requests for extensions and less uptake of mental health support.</p> <p>The Mersey Care/HEI project will be successful in supporting students.</p>	<p>Type 2: Empirical Research</p> <p>Pre/post comparison using questionnaires administered to students using support services.</p> <p>Type 3: Causality</p> <p>Investigation of student outcomes for those using services compared to those who did not.</p> <p>*small numbers may prevent detailed analysis</p>	<p>Liverpool Hope Learning and Teaching Day Summer 2027</p> <p>Project reports from our partnership with Mersey Care, University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University that ensures a direct route for Mental Health support for university students.</p>
Academic Writing Skills Risk 7 Academic Support	<p>Students will report increased academic confidence and skills relating to academic writing.</p> <p>Use of Studiosity will be monitored.</p>	<p>Type 2: Empirical Research</p> <p>Pre/post comparison using questionnaires administered to students using support services.</p> <p>Type 3: Causality</p> <p>Investigation of student outcomes for those using services compared to those who did not.</p> <p>*small numbers may prevent detailed analysis</p>	
Aspiration-Raising Lecture Series and Festival of Futures Risk 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	<p>The lectures and festival will be well attended by staff and students.</p> <p>Students will find value in attendance.</p>	<p>Type 2: Empirical Research</p> <p>Short questionnaire to be completed by attendees at the end of the lecture and end of Festival of futures events.</p>	<p>In house report to Equality and Diversity Steering Committee.</p>
Partnerships with Specialist External Groups: Risk 6 and 7 (academic and personal support)	<p>Enhanced sense of belonging for students of colour.</p> <p>Higher levels of racial awareness for staff in order to foster improved understanding of the issues affecting members of the Hope community from ethnically diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Improved understanding amongst academic staff of the issues fostered by sharing of information with external colleagues including through knowledge exchange opportunities.</p>	<p>Type 2: Empirical Research</p> <p>Qualitative interviews with students and staff.</p>	<p>In house report to Equality and Diversity Steering Committee.</p>
Recruitment Processes and Professional Development Risks 6 and 7 (Academic and Personal Support)	<p>The staff body will have a greater diversity of ethnic backgrounds in turn adding to a more diverse learning community.</p> <p>High numbers of staff will have received training and awareness of key issues around access and participation will increase.</p> <p>An EDI hub will provide leadership in this area.</p>	<p>Type 2: Empirical Enquiry</p> <p>Use of questionnaire for all applicants in relation to recruitment processes.</p> <p>The % of university staff undertaking professional development.</p> <p>Type 1: Narrative</p> <p>The impact of the Hub will be evidenced by its input in the wider Hope Community.</p>	<p>The outcomes will be reported in the staff report to Equality and Diversity Steering Committee in the 2027/8 academic year.</p>

Evaluation Intervention: Strategy 2 Supporting students from the poorest and lowest participation backgrounds to achieve at Hope.			
Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Enhanced financial support Risk 7: Personal Support	Overall reduction in awarding gap reflected in APP monitoring. Increased uptake of Support Fund by students in APP groups: Students using the services will have fewer financial concerns, will feel more confident with their finances and will be able to reduce paid work. Improved uptake of onsite study facilities.	Type 2: Empirical Research Qualitative interviews/focus groups and questionnaires with students. Data analysis relating to use of support services.	Findings will be reported on our web pages Summer 2026
Extended range of free extra-curricular activities Risk 10 Cost Pressures	Students taking part in the interventions will report feeling lonely less frequently and will feel a greater sense of belonging. Mental health/wellbeing will be improved with less referrals to academic and non-academic support. In the longer term, students will have equal on course achievement.	Type 2: Empirical Research Qualitative interviews/ focus groups and questionnaires with students. Data analysis relating to use of support services.	All findings will be reported at an appropriate Hope Learning and Teaching Day in academic year 2026/7.
Making learning resources more accessible (Risks 6, 7 and 10)	Students will report enhanced confidence with digital resources. Lap top loans and use of digital literacy mentor will be recorded.	Type 2: Empirical Research Qualitative interviews/ focus groups and questionnaires with students. Data analysis relating to use of support services.	All findings will be reported at an appropriate Hope Learning and Teaching Day in academic year 2026/7.
Enhanced understanding of the impact of paid employment on student outcomes	Changes to University policy as appropriate to the findings.	Type 2: Empirical Research. Qualitative and Quantitative research gathered with the support of the Students' Union.	Report will be published on the University web site in Summer 2027.
Outreach: Raising pre-course confidence around attainment Risks 1 and: Pre-course Knowledge and Skills/Information and Guidance.	Partner schools engaged. Sessions scheduled and delivered. Longer term children's attainment improves.	Type 2: Empirical Research The Development tool available on the Office for Students web site will be used to guide evaluation. Where possible children's, teachers' and guardians' views will be sought pre and post intervention using qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires.	As a minimum the findings will be published on the Hope web pages Summer 2027/8. This may be research that is publishable externally.

Evaluation Intervention: Strategy 3

Supporting progression to further study or graduate employment for students with mental ill health

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation	Summary of publication plan
Enhanced transition for employment/further study Risks 6 and 8 (Academic Support and Mental Ill Health)	Students with mental ill health are better prepared for the transition between university and graduate employment/further study. Students and new graduates are better equipped to deal with the rigours of graduate level employment. University metrics improved.	Type 2: Empirical Research Pre and post intervention questionnaires and qualitative interviews/focus groups.	As a minimum the data will be presented at a University Learning and Teaching Day in 2027/8 academic year. This work may be publishable externally.

6. Whole provider approach

We are proud of the strides we have taken under our 20/21-24/25 Plan in ensuring parity of experience for those who apply to Hope and those who study here.

We recognise that there is further work required to do to address the identified gaps for our students. Our Plan details where these gaps are, what has contributed to the risks to equality of opportunity and how we will ensure that our proposed actions will be effective.

In order to do this effectively, we consider a whole provider approach to begin with a community wide understanding of widening participation and the access and participation plan¹⁷. From this understanding develops staff engagement and evidence-based practice. The final stage embeds the learning that has come from engagement within the University central strategy. Through the whole provider approach we therefore aim to generate and maintain a culture across the institution that is transformative for staff and students¹⁸. The necessary communication is more easily fostered at Hope because we are a smaller provider with a less complex structure and an underpinning ethos founded on a community of staff and students working towards a shared goal.

- 6.1 **Community-wide understanding:** from the University Senior Executive Team led by the Vice Chancellor, through to the academic, professional and support staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are core to the Mission and Values of this institution. Responsibility for fulfilling the Objectives and Targets detailed in the Plan lies with every member of staff both academic and professional rather than the responsibility sitting within a specialist Widening Participation unit. By definition, therefore, at Hope the plan is embedded.

To ensure the success of this devolution of responsibility, Liverpool Hope is committed to undertaking staff development in a number of areas relevant to this Plan. A staff training series ensures completion of compulsory professional development in Identifying and Responding to Student Mental Health, Equality and Diversity and GDPR. Staff training in these areas must be refreshed every 3 years; new staff induction includes a clear focus on the importance Hope places on the equality agenda. In addition, Learning and Teaching days and Faculty based subject reflective meetings are used to increase understanding of the Access and Participation Plan. Through this route target groups are highlighted locally and innovative pedagogies discussed. In the all-staff annual address, the Vice Chancellor takes the opportunity to discuss key issues relating to the Strategic Plan, into which is embedded issues of equality. The Committee structures and EDI/APP being a standing agenda of the Academic Committee and on Student Voice Committee facilitate University wide discussion and understanding of the issue.

- 6.2 **Community-wide engagement:** within each academic and professional services unit there is clear accountability for ensuring equality of opportunity. It influences all aspects of university life from outreach and school liaison, course design and approval, curriculum and assessment planning, careers and all elements of student support.

- a. **Quality Assurance and Enhancement** each work stream, whether academic or non-academic is subject to an annual reflective process. The reflective process, as appropriate, includes consideration of metrics relating to the student lifecycle and equality of opportunity. Individual subject teams are provided with their localised data relating to APP targets and produce an action

¹⁷ A whole provider approach to widening participation: a phenomenographic case study exploring the perceptions and experiences of staff and students working in a widening participation role R Maccabe Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Volume 23, Number 1, June 2021 ISSN: 1466-6529 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5456/WPLL.23.1.5>

¹⁸ The 2003 UK Government Higher Education White Paper: A critical assessment of its implications for the access and widening participation agenda R. Jones, L. Thomas 2005

plan which clearly lays out how the subject or programme team will address APP gaps across the student lifecycle. Teams are encouraged to use the action plans to enhance the student learning experience rather than using the plans solely for accountability. The plans are managed locally at Faculty level and monitored at the Faculty Academic Committee and centrally through University Academic Committee oversight and reporting to the Senate. Good practice, detailing interventions that have been successful in addressing gaps, are shared through a circulated summary. Student voice is heard both through careful consideration of discussion at staff/student liaison meetings and via student representation on Faculty and University Committees and via the Student Sounding board. The Students' Union also plays a crucial role in ensuring student representation and participation at all levels including membership at the various committee including the University Council.

- b. **University Policy and Strategy:** 'Operational' approaches to supporting students throughout the lifecycle including Recruitment and Admissions Policy, The strategy for Enhancing Student Employability (2020-2025), the Policy Statement and Guidelines for Support for Disabled Students and the Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy (2023-2027) are heavily influenced by the requirements to ensure all our students have equal opportunity to ensure success in higher education and beyond.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy, developed in 2023 from a whole University conversation, clearly states that the 'student experience is enriched by celebrating diversity' and as a consequence develops graduates who have 'an inclusive and respectful approach to others'. The Strategy has greatly benefitted from the focus on equality and inclusion that has become central to our approach across the institution and from the engagement of staff and students with that agenda.

The LTA Strategy is underpinned by a number of core principles relevant to the engagement of staff and students with the APP:

- i. The celebration of diversity
- ii. Authentic assessment
- iii. Preparation for the world of work through partnership and collaboration

Students are valued for their individual differences and these differences are supported through a variety of authentic assessment formats. Careful consideration is given to 'who our students are', what barriers to success and progression they face and how we can support them in achieving their full potential.

Through the Strategy the University commits to being proactive in reviewing continuation, completion and progression for each student and every cohort. Data analytics, available to academic and professional services staff, identify risks to equality of opportunity with the aim of supporting students who are clearly having difficulties with attendance, engagement and next steps.

Each year the University has two University Learning and Teaching Days and one Faculty Learning and Teaching day where best practice is shared and external speakers present topics of interest in the wider arena. The event is coupled to the Learning and Teaching prize which recognises the work of colleagues in a themed aspect of ensuring equality of opportunity. In addition, funds are allocated to support learning and teaching projects. The learning and teaching days are regularly complemented with learning and teaching workshops and the Learning and Teaching expert lecture series to support staff learning and teaching development. Communities of Practice (CoP), an initiative for which the University received a Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) award in 2018, are groups of staff and students who come together to share

their experiences related to supporting the student experience. The CoP specialising in Inclusive Practice developed an Inclusive Practice Checklist for academic subjects to help staff facilitate the development of inclusive curricula and to ensure that assessment briefs are written for inclusivity. This initiative was led by the Students' Union and is a good example of how engagement of staff and students can enhance the strategic approach of the whole institution.

A number of key initiatives have been delivered by the University community in recent years to support our guiding principles:

- Authentic Assessment promoting the dissemination of good practice in alternative assessment types which facilitate a widened mode of delivery that engages students from a range of backgrounds. This includes stepping away from a focus on high stakes assessments such as exams. These are likely to disadvantage students with mental health issues and those from the most deprived backgrounds.
- University wide week-long event - Festival of Futures focussing on UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4 Quality Education) with public lectures from external speakers from various backgrounds including those from Black and Global Majority backgrounds.

- c. **Support for Disabled Students:** Liverpool Hope is a member of the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) Programme which was developed by the Charity Student Minds. We are proud to attract a large cohort of disabled students, well above sector norms, and has done so for many years. Through the implementation of our 2019/24 APP we have been successful in closing the gaps in student success for our disabled students, many of whom have complex and multiple support requirements. This plan outlines how we intend to address the remaining gaps around progression for disabled students; whilst this is a concern sector wide, we are ambitious in our aim to close this gap for Hope's disabled graduates.

Liverpool Hope engages in an annual university-wide disabled student experience process, where all students who have previously identified as disabled are invited to respond to a satisfaction feedback survey. This student voice process covers a range of areas including the enabling of adjustments and support, library and learning resources, careers and employability provision, and the support received from faculty lecturers and the wider university. In addition, in our course evaluations two standard questions on learning support plans and whether students feel they are followed, provide a further measure of the consistency of support offered to these students.

The results of the surveys generate follow-up activity including direct contact with individual survey participants who indicated dissatisfaction that requires supportive action. Such areas of dissatisfaction may include, for example, issues relating to the enabling of recommended adjustments or support, effective access to library resources and provisions, and accessing Disabled Students' Allowance. Such follow-up action results in individualised positive outcomes where disabled student study engagement issues are identified and addressed.

- d. **One-stop approach to student support:** links between central services including counselling, wellbeing, careers and student finance are integrated into the work of academic faculties which in turn ensures continuity of support for our students. Furthermore, the Liverpool Hope Gateway offers a rapidly accessible network available to students who are most in need of support services. The Gateway is a state-of-the-art building, within which student services are centralised and focused. Student Life is the central hub in the Gateway Building providing help and assistance to a wide range of students, with particular emphasis on those from vulnerable groups. Service provision comprises a number of specialist teams each with a clear focus including supporting student mental well-being, enabling access and support for those with a disability, and facilitating the general health and well-being of the student population at Hope. The University has developed a Student Retention and Engagement group; this group meets each week to discuss operational

strategic issues in relation to the continuation of our students. The group evaluates data returns, and will include a particular focus on the students identified in the Plan. The group is empowered to intervene locally in specific academic areas where support for student continuation may be required. This is a proactive mechanism to ensure the success of our target groups through both data monitoring and operational community-wide conversations about individual students. For example, the group has recently initiated campaigns to enhance students' sense of belonging and empowerment 'Donut worry' and 'ReachOut to Check in'. These interventions are aimed at enhancing student retention by offering open access, personal support with student wellbeing advocates liaising between academic and non-academic areas. The work was presented at the UK and Ireland Higher Education and Institutional Research (HEIR) network conference in September 2024 by the Deputy Vice Chancellor. Finding solutions for students with multiple overlapping issues is imperative because of the intersectionality we see in our data analysis.

- e. **Working with Students and the Students Union** Liverpool Hope Students' Union (LHSU) representatives meet with the Deputy Vice Chancellor weekly. They play a vital role in facilitating clubs and societies who provide a platform for students from underrepresented groups. These societies are a support network for students who may face similar difficulties and they provide a vehicle for increasing the visibility of issues and fighting for positive change. LHSU's Afro-Caribbean Society and Disability Studies Society are examples of these groups and we believe that they should be incentivised to play an active role in both LHSU and University life, for example, with their presence at Open Days. In addition, LHSU has Part Time Officers, current students who are elected to represent others from a specific demographic; to listen to their needs, ideas and concerns and to bring them to LHSU to inform discussions
- f. **Widening the University Portfolio:** to include more emphasis on micro credentials and diversification from traditional entry routes into Higher Education. This review of the portfolio is driven by the need to respond to the characteristics of our learners as well as to the needs of employers in terms of upskilling the workforce. The University is focussing on offering:
 - Apprenticeships
 - Life Long Learning and micro credentials
 - Foundation Degrees

6.4 Governance and Academic Management, University Central Strategy: These processes ensure the objectives and targets detailed in the Access and Participation Plan are a central focus across the Institution. Furthermore, learning from student and staff understanding of, and engagement with, the APP is reflected in our overarching governance.

- a. **Committee Structure:** The University is committed to its responsibilities in relation to the 2010 Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee (EDSC), has strategic overview of University Equality Objectives and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. The Committee is made up of staff representatives from a range of academic and professional service areas and includes a Sabbatical Officer of the Students' Union. EDSC receives annual data reports relating to equality of opportunity for both staff and students which assures the university that its duties are being met across the institution. It is therefore well placed to oversee the delivery of the Plan and reports to the University Council on progress against the objectives and targets detailed in the Plan. University Councillors, which include the president of the Students' Union, have received training about the institutional responsibilities detailed in the Plan and are well placed to receive, understand, and where necessary question and progress. In addition, the Chair of EDSC is not only the institutional lead on the APP but is also a member of Academic Committee ensuring that APP monitoring is regularly reported through to the Senate. A Sabbatical Officer of the Students' Union is a member of the Committee and there is

representation from Central Services. EDSC oversees the evaluation of interventions detailed in the Plan and makes recommendations for next steps.

- b. **The new Strategic Plan** – under the guidance of our newly appointed Vice Chancellor, and the Senior Executive Team, the 2023-28 Strategic Plan¹⁹ lays out our vision for the future and the goals and objectives that will ensure we achieve them. The Plan clearly places inclusivity and respect for diversity at its centre and as such stewards the institution in a university-wide and sustained approach to equality of opportunity.

7. Student consultation

- 7.1 The University has a strong relationship with its Students' Union who lead our student representation; at regular meetings issues including the Access and Participation Plan are discussed with senior staff. As a result, the early draft of this Access and Participation Plan was made available to members of the Students' Union and their part-time officers. The Deputy Vice Chancellor met with the Students' Union and discussed the Plan on a number of occasions during the summer of 2024. In addition, support was offered in understanding the University Analysis of Performance. The Sabbatical Officer team were satisfied with the process and with their involvement in discussions about the new Plan. Through the involvement of the Students' Union, whose Vice President (Welfare) is a member of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, the student body will remain fully involved in the evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the Plan.
- 7.2 The Plan moved through the University Committee structure where student representatives had the opportunity to comment and contribute to the evolving draft of the document. In addition, the Vice-President Welfare is part of the Student Support Fund steering group which considers expenditure of the capital funds throughout each academic year.
- 7.3 Given our small size, and relatively simple organisational structure, the opportunity for initiatives and enhancements to be fed through from staff/ student liaison committees into University policy and practice remain plentiful. This is the most organic and sustainable way to ensure the Plan retains vigour and currency throughout its life.
- 7.4 The Students' Union are active participants in our Communities of Practice and have been central to many of the initiatives detailed in the Plan including the Inclusive Practice Checklist. Support for the Cost-of-Living aids mechanisms and other approaches to student retention.
- 7.7 Across the life of the Plan we will continue to listen to the voice of our studies, both elected sabbatical officers and the wider student body in order to ensure that students play a significant part in evaluating the success of our Plan.

8. Evaluation of the plan

- 8.1 Methods of evaluation for each of the interventions have been detailed in the Evaluation section of this Plan (Annex B). We have used the OfS Access and Participation standards of evidence²⁰ and

¹⁹ <https://www.hope.ac.uk/strategicplan/>

²⁰ Access and participation standards of evidence, Office for Students

associated Using standards of evidence to evaluate impact of Outreach work²¹ alongside The TASO Access and Success Questionnaire²² to inform our decisions.

8.2 The Theory of Change approach, will be embedded institutionally in order to support colleagues through having a framework for evaluation embedded in intervention design. This is a key accountability method to enhance our understanding of why an intervention succeeded if it did, and if it didn't why it didn't. High quality evaluation links planned interventions to the outcomes and impact they have, and therefore assists further planning by providing a clear explanation of why the change happened. In 2019/20 our evaluation was 'emerging' as defined by the OfS self-assessment tool. In 2024/5 the self-evaluation tool still identified our evaluation skills as emerging; however, this does not truly reflect the significant strides we are made in expanding our skill base. The University is initiating NERUPI (Network Evaluating & Researching University Participation Interventions) membership. This partnership provides a framework and tools which can upskill teams on evaluation design and implementation. The training support from NERUPI combined with the considerable expertise within the academic staff will enable us to set up an Evaluation Task Force. The Task Force will ensure the veracity of evaluation and the appropriate reporting of, and learning from, these findings going forwards.

8.3 Liverpool Hope aims to evaluate planned interventions largely using Type 2 Evidence. The outcomes of these evaluations will be reported through the University Committee structure as appropriate to our Governance requirements. In addition, evaluations will be reported to the Liverpool Hope Learning and Teaching Conference, and where appropriate to external events including opportunities through the Northwest Uni Connect network. As a university with a strong background in pedagogical action research, we will seek to disseminate our findings to the wider sector through research publications and attendance at conferences such as the Society for Research in Higher Education, Advance HE Learning and Teaching Conference.

Examples of staff publications:

- Skea, Claire (2022) Reconsidering Student Voice: Svankmajer's 'Dimensions of Dialogue' and the Claim to Community. In: *The Promise of the University: Reclaiming Humanity, Humility, and Hope. Debating Higher Education: Philosophical Perspectives* (10). Springer, Singapore. ISBN 9811652767
- Gravett, Karen and Baughan, Patrick and Rao, Namrata and Kinchin, Ian M. (2022) Spaces and Places for Connection in the Postdigital University. *Postdigital Science and Education*. ISSN 2524-4868
- Su, Feng (2022) The datafication of higher education: Examining universities' conceptions and articulations of 'teaching quality'. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*. ISSN 1360-3108
- Hosein, Anesa and Rao, Namrata (2021) Selling lemons? The relationship between learning and teaching information on university programme web pages and future students' course satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*. ISSN 0884-1241 Electronic: 1540-7144
- Wood, Margaret and Su, Feng (2021) Pursuing Teaching Excellence in Higher Education: Towards an Inclusive Perspective. Bloomsbury Academic, London. ISBN 9781350055285
- Bagelman, Caroline and Keelan, Chris and Massumi, Mona and Springbob, Jan (2021) Precarity and pedagogic rights: How teacher training programmes prepare trainees for the realities of migration in the classroom. *Educational futures The Journal of the British Education Studies Association*, 12 (1). ISSN 1758-2199
- Cronin, Sue and Cook, Tina and Griffiths, Tim and Flattery, Christina and Rodrigues, Susan (2020) Enabling ambitious science teachers in urban challenging settings: the Hope Challenge model. *Educational Action Research*. ISSN Print ISSN: 0965-0792 Online ISSN: 1747-5074
- Hosein, Anesa and Rao, Namrata (2020) Academic diversity and its implications for teaching and learning. In: *Understanding Contemporary Issues in Higher Education*. Routledge, London, pp. 65-76. ISBN 9780367374150
- Spohrer, Konstanze (2018) The problem with 'raising aspiration' strategies: social mobility requires more than personal ambitions. *LSE British Politics and Policy blog*.
- Bamber, Philip M. (2016) Transformative Education through International Service-Learning: Realising an ethical ecology of learning. *Research in Comparative and International Education*. Routledge, London. ISBN 9781138923607
- Spohrer, Konstanze (2015) Opening doors or narrowing opportunities? the Coalition's approach to Widening Participation, Social Mobility and Social Justice. In: *The Gove legacy: education in Britain after the Coalition*. Palgrave Pivot. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 101-115. ISBN 9781137491527

²¹ Using standards of evidence to evaluate impact of outreach, Office for Students

²² Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education, Access and Success Questionnaire (ASQ)

9. Provision of information to students

9.1 Fees: Liverpool Hope University publishes its full Access and Participation Plan and fee levels transparently and in good time on its institutional website. We also provide details of our financial support package to UCAS and the Student Loans Company in order for applicants to make informed judgements. Our [web page](#) on Fees and Funding details the fees for each year and the methods of financial support available from the Student Loan Company in the form of tuition fee loans and maintenance grants for both full time and part time modes of study. Potential students are provided with information on fees and funding through Finance presentations at Open Days and Applicant days and information leaflets. These attempt to explain fees and funding in a straight forward way and also provide opportunities for potential students to ask questions in advance of registering for the course. The University provides links to the Government website where additional support and advice is available for students. If the Government determine a change in the maximum fee that can be charged, we will be clear with students that we will charge that higher fee.

9.2 Financial Support: The Student Finance team is open every week day in term time between 9am and 5pm with students able to drop in with financial queries or book to see an advisor if the query is more detailed. The University will also assist students in their dealings with the Student Loan Company if necessary.

The University has a Student Support Fund available to support students in financial hardship. The details are on the University website, but the University recognises that it has an on-going duty to raise awareness of the Fund and to ensure that the funding reaches the students that it needs to. The University is committed to ensuring that all students are aware that help is available if they need it. As a result, the promotion of the Fund is done through a number of routes including the Student Finance team helpdesk, the Students' Union, the Student Wellbeing team, Personal and course tutors. All University staff that provide support to students are aware of the Student Support Fund and know how to signpost students towards the Fund if they have financial issues. The University also sends emails to certain groups of students that are potentially at risk to ensure they are fully aware of the fund.

All undergraduate students are eligible to apply to the Student Support Fund, with the only criteria being the ability to demonstrate financial hardship. A simple application form is completed by the student giving details of their weekly income and expenditure. An assessment of the application and supporting evidence is then undertaken by the Student Finance team to identify the funding gap faced by the student. The maximum amount available is £3,000, the minimum is £100, if eligible. Whatever award is made, it does not need to be paid back.

The value of the award paid to the student is a fixed % of the funding gap (at least 75%). In this way students with the greatest need receive a larger financial award than others, rather than everyone receiving a set amount. The process ensures that funds are directed to students whose financial issues are as a result of their personal circumstances at that time. The Student Support Fund also provides emergency payments in response to unplanned events – for example the need to travel home in an emergency.

Each academic year the University offers 10 Access to Higher Education Scholarships to students valued at £3,000 per year over the normal period of study aimed at supporting students facing barriers to entry to higher education. The annual amount is paid in three £1,000 termly instalments. The recipients of these scholarships will need to meet one of our widening participation criteria including mature students, care leavers, disabled students, Black and Global Majority or from an area of high deprivation (IMD Q1) or an area of low participation (POLAR4 Q1). Students are made aware of the scholarships using a number of different methods including our webpages, inclusion of the scholarships into material used by the Outreach team and recruitment staff bringing the scholarship to the attention of students they feel may meet the criteria (for example applications from disabled or mature students). A committee composed of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Director of Student Life, the Executive Director of Finance Services and Resources, the Student Finance manager and a representative from the Student Union meet after the closing date for applications. Each submission is looked at individually with particular reference on the number of widening participation criteria they meet along with an examination of their personal statements which details the personal challenges they have faced before entering Higher Education and once this has been completed a decision on the successful students are made.

The University offers a Care Leavers Bursary to full time undergraduate students. Students should be under the age of 25 at the start of the course and need to provide evidence of a minimum of 13 weeks spent in Local Authority care since the age of 14 and were in care on or after their 16th birthday. The bursary is also open to students who are living in Foyer/supported housing. All students who fulfil the eligibility criteria are awarded the bursary yearly for the normal period of study. Eligible residential students are offered a 50% discount on accommodation (including the summer) and a catering package equivalent in value to one hot meal per day. Non-resident students receive a bursary of £1,000 each year and a catering package equivalent in value to one hot meal per day.

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

1. Process of Investigation

For the 2025-26 Access and Participation Plan we have assessed the University's performance in relation access, continuation, completion, attainment and progression to graduate level employment or further study. For each of these metrics we have considered the main characteristics of the student population as shown in the Office for Students Access and Participation dashboard; along with other characteristics identified as potential risks within the Equality to Opportunity Risk Register (EORR²³). This has enabled us to identify students who may be associated with inequality of opportunity and social mobility. Where we found significant differences in the shape of our student body, compared to the rest of the sector, we have undertaken further investigation of these groups, including intersectional analysis.

We have analysed various data sources including the 10 year data set from the Office for Students, the Size and Shape dashboard data and our own internal data. Being a relatively small institution of around 4300 full time undergraduates²⁴ the numbers of students across some metrics are too small to undertake any meaningful analysis and particularly when considering intersections within the data. In all cases we have followed the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in the presentation of our data.²⁵

2. Data Analysis

To explore access and student outcomes over the life cycle metrics we used the Access and Participation Plan dashboard²⁶ and the Risks to Equality of Opportunity (EORR) to identify student characteristics for investigation:

Access and Participation Dashboard Characteristics

- Participation by Young People (TUNDRA)
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Disability
- Multiple Characteristics (ABCs)
- Free School Meals

Equality of Opportunity Risks (EORR) Characteristics

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| • Participation by area (POLAR4) | • Care Leavers* |
| • Disability, including mental health and social or communication skills | • Estranged* |
| • Qualifications on Entry, including tariff | • Travellers* |
| • First in Family | • Sexual Orientation |
| • Service Children* | • Socio Economic Status |
| • Young Carers* | • Locality |

(*numbers are too small to analyse)

We compared the University's population to that of the sector to give context to the findings across the student life cycle. The table below shows key differences between the student body

²³ Office for Students Equality of Opportunity Risk Register <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/risks-by-indications-of-risk/>

²⁴ Office for Students Size and Shape of Provision dashboard <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/size-and-shape-of-provision-data-dashboard/data-dashboard/>

²⁵ UK GDPR guidance and resources | ICO

²⁶ Office for Student Access and Participation Dashboard [Data dashboard - Office for Students](#)

at Hope, compared to other providers. We used this information to underpin our analysis of the metrics.

Characteristics of student body		Hope % (n)	Sector %	Associated EORR Risks
Deprivation, participation, locality and family background	Indices of Multiple Deprivation. % high deprivation Q1/2	56 (7780)	40.1	1 and 2
	Participation in HE. % Low participation (POLAR4) ²⁷ Q1/2	41.4 (1500)	28.9	1, 2,3,4,6,7
	Participation in HE. % Low participation (TUNDRA) Q1/2	41 (5680)	28.1	1, 2,3,4,6,7
	Free School Meals	22.7 (2220)	18.2	1 to 12
	Local students	32.6 (5740)	23.3	5,6,7,10
	Socio Economic Status - Routine and Manual jobs	30 (5280)	15.8	12
	Socio Economic Status - never worked/unemployed	2.9 (520)	0.3	6,7,12
	First in family	49.2 (2170)	44.4	1, 2,4,6,7,10,12
	ABCs Q1/2 ²⁸	37.5 (1220)	21.6	
Ethnicity	Global Majority compared to white	11.5 (1940)	32.3	2,3,4,5,6,7
	Black	3.5 (530)	9.8	
	Asian	3.3 (500)	15	
	Mixed	3.5 (540)	5.2	
	Other	1 (150)	2.3	
	white	88.5 (14870)	67.8	
Disability	Any Disability	24.4 (4310)	16.5	1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12
	Mental Health Disability	8.8 (1550)	5	6,7,11,12
	Social or Communication Skills Disability	1.1 (190)	0.8	1,4,5,6,7
Qualifications or course type	BTEC Entry Qualifications	23.9 (4220)	15.6	1, 5, 6
	HE Level Entry Qualifications	3.8 (670)	8.7	1, 5, 6
	Average Tariff	112	121	1, 5
Sexual Orientation	LGBTQ+	9.7 (1710)	7.7	5,7, 8,10
Age	Mature students	17.1 (2800)	22.8	1-8, 10-12

The distinctiveness of our student body in comparison to the sector, provided the basis to further investigate the following risks to equality of opportunity:

- Deprivation, participation, locality and family background
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Previous qualifications and course type
- Sexual orientation
- Age

Previous analysis has also shown that course type (single or dual subject degrees) appears to have an effect on outcome. On average 36% of our students take dual subject major degrees, significantly higher than the UCAS average of 9%²⁹. We therefore decided to include this as part of our investigations.

In assessing the characteristics for each metric, we used the following set of criteria to identify concerns:

- the 6 year aggregated gap was at least 2 percentage points above the sector's gap
- the yearly gap over a six year period is increasing or mixed
- the regression analysis suggests a widening gap in the future
- the gap in the most recent year is at least 2 percentage points above the sector

²⁷ 2021 data only

²⁸ Office for Students Access and Participation Dashboard

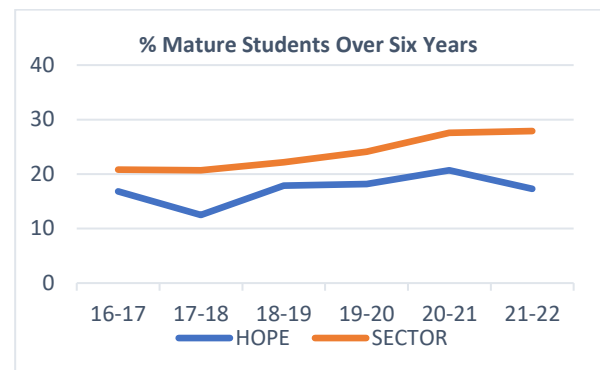
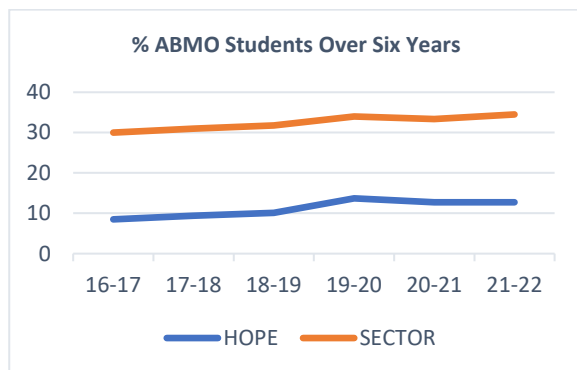
²⁹ UCAS Analysis & Insights - 2021 cycle applicant figures - provider preview

Mindful of small cohorts of data, we excluded characteristics where the cohort size was less than 5%. Where no sector data was available, and/or the university's gaps were above 5 percentage points (regardless of the criteria above), we undertook further analysis; as detailed below.

a. Access

The Access measures for participation (Tundra and POLAR4), deprivation, disability ABCs, free school meals, entry qualifications, degree type, sexual orientation, socio economic status and locality all show positive trends; numbers of students with these characteristics have been increasing in recent years and are above those of the sector.

Ethnicity and age are both monitored through our current Access and Participation Plan for 2020-24³⁰. Although numbers have increased since 2017-18, the cohorts are still below those of the sector. The University will continue to make progress working with its current interventions to improve participation for both Global Majority students and mature entrants.



³⁰ [Access and Participation Plan 2020-24](#)

b. Continuation

The data shows that continuation is successful for low participation school leavers (TUNDRA), Global Majority students, mature students, those with disabilities (including mental health and/or social and communication skills), those with multiple ABCs characteristics, students studying major and single subject degrees, LGBTQ+ students and those entering with low tariff totals.

However, continuation rates are less encouraging for students from areas of high deprivation (IMD quintiles 1 and 2), students from areas of low participation (using the POLAR measure quintiles 1 and 2), local students and those previously in receipt of free school meals. Furthermore, the data shows students entering with BTEC qualifications (at level 3) are less likely to continue compared to those with other entry qualifications.

The table below gives more detail for these student groups:

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector % 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap 2020 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
Deprivation, participation, locality and family background	IMD	87.2 Q12 92.2 Q345	5.0	87.8 Q12 92.6 Q345	4.8	7.6 compared to sector (5.8)	7.2
	Free School Meals	85.6 Eligible 91.6 Not Eligible	6.0	88.3 Eligible 93.1 Not Eligible	4.8	3.9 compared to sector (5.0)	4.2
	POLAR	88.3 POLAR Q12 91.8 POLAR Q345	3.5	90.9 POLAR Q12 93.1 POLAR Q345	2.2	4.7 compared to sector (2.5)	3.6
	Local Students	87.8 Local 90.3 Not local	2.5	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	6.1	5.3
Qualifications or course type	BTEC Entry Quals	84.7 BTEC 93.0 A-Levels	8.3	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	10.0	8.6

c. Completion

The analysis of completion rates showed positive trends for low participation school leavers (TUNDRA), students with non-white ethnicities, mature students, disabled students (including mental health or social and communication skills), students with multiple ABCs characteristics, entrants with non BTEC (level 3) qualifications, those with low tariff points, students doing different types of degree (major or single subject) and LGBTQ+ students.

However, gaps in completion rates and risks to equality of opportunity exist for students from areas of high deprivation or low participation, those previously in receipt of free school meals, entrants with BTEC level 3 qualifications, local students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Further detail for these students is shown below:

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector % 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap 2017 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
	IMD	86.7 Q12	5.1	85.0 Q12	6.2		5.6

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector % 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap 2017 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
Deprivation, participation, locality and family background		91.8 Q345		91.2 Q345		5.9 compared to sector (6.7)	
	Free School Meals	85.7 Eligible 91.8 Not Eligible	6.1	85.5 Eligible 91.9 Not Eligible	6.4	9.0 compared to sector (7.8)	12.2
	POLAR	88.0 POLAR Q12 91.6 POLAR Q345	3.6	88.5 POLAR Q12 91.6 POLAR Q345	3.1	5.8 compared to sector (3.3)	4.6
	Local Students	87.4 Local (31.8 pop)	2.3	N/A	N/A	0.8	1.8
	Socio Economic	88.4 Routine 91.9 Higher (88.1 Intermediate)	3.5	N/A	N/A	4.9	8.3
Qualifications or course type	BTEC Entry Quals	82.6 BTEC 93.5 A-Levels	10.9	N/A	N/A	10.2	13.0

d. Attainment

Attainment levels for students with disabilities (including mental health), local students, students from low socio-economic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ are all encouraging with similar rates to those with no risks to equality of opportunity.

Disappointingly there more students with a range of different risks who are not achieving the same rates of good degrees as their peers:

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector % 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap 2021 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
Deprivation, participation, locality and family background	TUNDRA	63.8 Q1 74.7 Q5	10.9	76.4 Q1 81.9 Q5	5.5	13.2 compared to sector (6.4)	Q1 against Q5 = 9.1
	IMD	68 Q12 76.5 Q345	8.5	71 Q12 82.7 Q345	11.7	6.2 compared to sector (12.0)	Q1/Q2 = +4.7 Q3/4/5 = +3.5 Q12 against Q345 = 7.4
	Free School Meals	60.2 Eligible	14.8	69.8 Eligible	12	5.7 compared to sector (12.3)	Eligible = +5.8

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector % 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap 2021 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
		75 Not Eligible		81.8 Not Eligible			Not Eligible = +7.3 Eligible against non-eligible = 7.2
	POLAR	68 Q12 75.2 Q345	7.2	76.6 Q12 81.8 Q345	5.2	3.2 compared to sector (5.6)	Q1/Q2 = +4.2 Q3/4/5 = +3.8 Q12 against Q345 = 3.9
Ethnicity	Ethnicity (Asian, Black, Mixed, Other - ABMO)	61.8 ABMO 73.3 White	11.5	69.7 ABMO 82.5 White	12.8	14.2 compared to sector (11.4)	ABMO = +3.7 White = +7.4 ABMO against White = 17.9
Qualifications or course type	BTEC Entry Quals	58.3 BTEC 78.1 A-Levels	19.8	Not Available	Not Available	15.6	BTEC = +4.1 A-Levels = +7.5 BTEC against A-Levels = 19.0
	Major or Single	66.8 Major 75.2 Single	8.4	Not Available	Not Available	6.2	Maj = +7.9 Sin = +6.4 Maj v Sin = 4.7
	Tariff (high v low)	76.1 High 68.2 Low <73.7 <i>Medium</i>	6.8	Not Available	Not Available	11.2	High against Low = 5.2

e. Progression

The progression metric depends on the number of students who respond to the graduate outcomes survey. Although HESA have set a minimum 60% response rate for the survey, Hope's average response rate for full time first degree students is 44%, which can make the outcomes less reliable. In particular students with disabilities, including mental health have lower response rates than the sector (50.5% compared to the sector rate of 56.2%³¹).

Progression to graduate level employment or further study has been improving for students from areas of high deprivation and low participation (POLAR4 Q1/2), Global Majority students, students eligible for free school meals, local students, and those entering with lower tariff points.

However, progression has been challenging for school leavers from low participation areas (TUNDRA Q1/2), students with disabilities, especially concerning mental health, those entering with

³¹ GOS 2020-1 response rate for Mental Health students

BTEC qualifications, students with major subject degrees, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ students. The table below gives further detail:

Metric/Characteristic		Hope 6 year aggregate (%)	Hope 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Sector 6 year aggregate (%)	Sector 6 year aggregate gap (pp)	Hope latest year gap in 2020 (pp)	Regression gap for year 7 (pp)
Deprivation, participation, locality and family background	TUNDRA	56.6 Q1 65.8 Q5	9.2	68.1 Q1	5.0	-4.6 compared to sector (5.2)	-4.5
	Socio Economic	66.9 Higher 57.6 Routine	9.3	N/A	N/A	8.9	Higher = -0.2 Routine = -2.1
Disability	Disability	56.7 Disability 63.9 No Disability	7.2	70.6 Disability 72.5 No Disability	1.9	12.0 compared to sector (2.1)	Disability = -2.2 No Disability = -1.4
	Mental Health	53.7 Mental Health 63.9 No Disability	10.2	67.6 Mental Health 72.5 No Disability	4.9	16.8 compared to sector (4.3)	Mental Health = +1.7 No Disability = -1.4
Qualifications or course type	BTEC Entry Quals	55.4 BTEC 64.1 A-Levels	8.7	N/A	N/A	6.7	BTEC = -3.2 A-Levels = +1.1
	Major or Single	58.4 Major 64.2 Single	5.8	N/A	N/A	5.9	Maj = -5.8 Sin = +0.4
Sexual Orientation	LGBTQ+	57.1 LGB 62.8 Heterosexual	5.7	N/A	N/A	6.7	LGB = -6.6 Heterosexual = -0.8 LGB v Hetero = 12.5

3. Overview of initial concerns

The challenges for students with risks to equality of opportunity across the access and success metrics are summarised in the table below. It shows particular student characteristics have a greater impact across all or most metrics, whilst others are less successful in one particular metric.

Initial findings show clear issues around equality of opportunity where deprivation and low participation exists. Additionally, pre-entry qualifications and the choice of degree also appear to have a bearing on success, completion and progression to graduate employment or further study.

Attainment has the greatest impact across most of the characteristics associated with risks to equality and social mobility.

	Lifecycle Metrics	Continuation	Completion	Attainment	Progression
Risk to Equality of Opportunity Characteristics	IMD (OfS)	X	X	X	
	TUNDRA (OfS)			X	X
	Ethnicity (OfS)			X	
	Free School Meals (OfS)	X	X	X	
	Disability (OfS)				X
	POLAR 4	X	X	X	
	BTEC entry qualifications	X	X	X	X
	Locality	X	X		
	Major and Single subjects			X	X
	Socio-Economic Status		X		X
	Mental Health				X
	Sexual Orientation				X
	Tariff			X	

Mindful of the limitations to attempt to resolve all the issues around indication of risk, we chose to concentrate further analysis on:

- Deprivation and low participation for continuation, completion and attainment
- Qualifications and course type for continuation, completion, attainment and progression

Due to the number of risks associated with inequality of opportunity for students with protected characteristics of Ethnicity and Disability, we also included attainment for non-white students and progression to employment for students with disabilities, particularly those with mental health concerns.

Although participation and deprivation can be identified through a number of characteristics we chose not to consider TUNDRA and Socio- Economic status' separately because IMD, Free School Meals and POLAR4 appear to have a greater impact. We also chose not to include Sexual Orientation within the Plan due to the small numbers involved in the analysis.

4. Intersectional Analysis of initial concerns

The University recruits a large number of students from areas of high deprivation, with a large majority being from the local area and, given the above, there is a clear correlation between students from deprived and low participation areas:

- 70% of those students in the most derived areas of IMD Q1/2 are also in areas of lowest participation (POLAR4 Q1/2)
- 71% of local students are in areas of highest deprivation (IMD Q1/2)
- 80% of students who are eligible for free school meals are also in areas of greatest deprivation (IMD Q1/2)
- 52% of students from high deprivation areas are local *and* also eligible for free school meals.

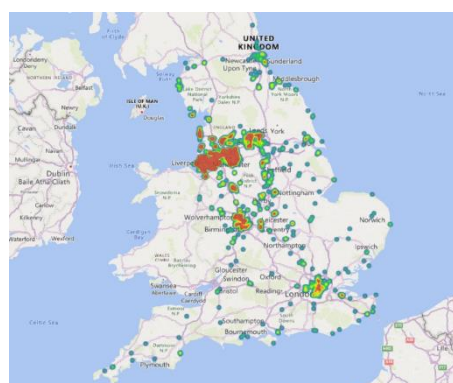


Chart showing students from areas of high deprivation (IMD Q1/2) 2018-2021

Looking at entry qualifications for students from areas of high deprivation, low participation, Global Majority and students with Mental Health concerns shows:

- More students from IMD Q1/2 take BTEC qualifications (30%) than students from IMD Q3/4/5 (22%)
- More students from POLAR4 Q1/2 take BTEC qualifications (31%) than students from POLAR4 Q3/4/5 (22%)
- More IMD Q1/2 students have higher tariff scores (36%) than students from IMD Q3/4/5 (32%)
- Slightly more POLAR4 Q1/2 have higher tariff scores (34%) than POLAR4 Q3/4/5 students (31%)
- More Global Majority students have BTEC entry qualifications (31%), than white students (25%). Furthermore 57% have lower tariff scores compared to 45% of white students.
- 36% of Global Majority students are eligible for Free School Meals, which is 15pp more than white students.
- Students with mental health concerns have similar entry profiles to those without disabilities.
- More students with mental health concerns are eligible for Free School Meals, than those without (29% compared to 22%).
- There is little difference in the proportions of those who take single or major subjects across all areas of deprivation, participation, ethnicity and mental health.

We used these intersectional relationships between deprivation, participation, entry qualifications and course type, within our student body, to further explain their impact across continuation, completion, attainment and progression.

a. Continuation intersectional analysis

We undertook an intersectional analysis of IMD and POLAR4 groups with entry qualifications including tariff, degree type and eligibility for free school meals.

The results, which are detailed in the table below, show:

BTEC Entry Qualifications

- Students from areas of highest deprivation (IMD Q12) have a continuation rate of 87.2%, but when these students have BTEC entry qualifications, their continuation rate reduces by 4pp to 83.1%. Comparing this to IMD Q12 students who enter with A Levels, shows their continuation rate increases to 90.9%, resulting in a 7.1pp gap between IMD Q12 students with BTECs and A Levels.
- This difference, albeit to a slightly lesser extent, is also seen in students from areas of least deprivation (IMD Q345), where BTEC entry students have a continuation rate of 88%, compared to A Level students whose continuation rate is 94.7%, giving a 6.7pp gap.
- The differences in intersectional analysis of IMD and entry qualifications is greatest between IMD Q12 BTEC students and IMD Q345 A Level students at 11.6pp.
- Given that the majority of IMD Q12 students are also in POLAR Q12 areas, a similar pattern emerges whereby POLAR Q12 students entering with BTECs see a reduction in continuation from 88.3% to 83.4%. When compared to those with A Levels the rate increases to 91.5%, leaving an 8.1pp continuation gap between POLAR Q12 students with BTEC and A level entry qualifications.
- Again, the continuation gap is greatest between POLAR Q12 BTEC students and POLAR Q345 A Level students at 10.7pp.

Free School Meals

- The intersection of eligibility for Free School meals with IMD and POLAR 4 gives similar results due to students sharing these multiple characteristics. Overall the disparity between

IMD Q12 students who are eligible for Free School Meals and IMD Q345 students who are not eligible for Free School Meals is greatest with a continuation gap of 8.5pp. For POLAR Q12 Free School Meal students compared to POLAR Q345 students not eligible for Free School Meals, the continuation gap is similar at 8.1pp.

Degree Type and Entry Tariff

- Interestingly, the intersections of both IMD and POLAR with degree type (major or single) or entry tariff have little impact on the overall continuation rates of IMD and POLAR students.

Continuation													
	IMD and POLAR Contin %	BTEC %	A Level %	A Level/B TEC gap pp	Majors %	Single subject %	Single - Major gap pp	Low Tariff %	High Tariff %	High /Low Tariff gap pp	Free School Meals %	Not Free School Meals %	FSM gap pp
Overall Continuation and Gaps ⇒		84.7	93	8.3	89.6	89.4	0.2	90.3	91.8	1.5	85.6	91.6	6
IMD Q12	87.2	83.1	90.9	7.1	88.3	86.5	-1.8	87.5	89.0	1.5	84.7	89.7	5
IMD Q345	92.2	88.0	94.7	6.7	92.9	91.9	-1	92.5	93.2	0.8	89.2	93.2	4
IMD Intersection Gaps pp	5	4.9	3.8	11.6	4.6	5.4	3.6	5	4.2	5.7	4.5	3.5	8.5
POLAR4 Q12	88.3	83.4	91.5	8.1	88.8	87.9	-0.9	88.4	88.5	0.1	84.9	89.6	4.7
POLAR4 Q345	91.8	87.1	94.1	7	92.0	91.7	-0.3	91.1	93.1	2	86.9	93.0	6.1
POLAR Intersection Gaps pp	3.5	3.7	3	10.7	3.2	3.8	2.9	2.7	4.6	4.7	2	3.4	8.1

b. Completion intersectional analysis

Given the association in the nature of the continuation and completion metrics, the intersectional analysis between IMD and POLAR groups with entry qualifications, degree type, tariff and eligibility for free school meals gives similar results to the continuation metric with the largest gaps immersing between:

BTEC Entry Qualifications

- IMD Q12 BTEC students have a completion rate of 81% compared to 94.7% for IMD Q345 A Level students giving a 13.7pp difference in completion.
- POLAR Q12 BTEC students and POLAR Q345 A Level students have a similar disparity in completion with gap of 12.4pp.

Free School Meals

- When intersecting IMD and POLAR groups with eligibility for Free School Meals, the disparity is greatest between IMD Q12 students who are eligible for Free School Meals where the continuation rate is 84.5% compared to the continuation rate for IMD Q345 students not eligible for Free School Meals who have continuation rate of 93.2%, giving an overall gap of 8.7pp. The gap in continuation is slightly less at 7.4 between POLAR Q12 BTEC students and POLAR Q345 A level students.

Degree Type and Tariff

- Intersecting degree type and tariff with both IMD and POLAR groups has little impact on the completion rates.

Completion													
	IMD and POLAR Comp	BTEC %	A Level %	A Level/BTEC gap pp	Majors %	Single subject %	Single - Major gap pp	Low Tariff %	High Tariff %	High/Low Tariff gap pp	Free School Meals %	Not Free School Meals %	FSM gap pp
Overall Comp and Gaps ⇨		82.6	93.5	10.9	89.3	88.7	0.6	91.7	93.7	2	85.7	91.8	6.1
IMD Q12	86.7	81.0	92.2	11.2	88.1	85.7	-2.4	88.3	88.2	-0.1	84.5	90.1	5.6
IMD Q345	91.8	86.4	94.7	8.3	91.2	92.3	1.1	92.3	93.8	1.5	90.5	93.2	2.7
IMD Intersection Gaps pp	5.1	5.4	2.5	13.7	3.1	6.6	4.2	4	5.6	5.5	6	3.1	8.7
POLAR4 Q12	88	82.1	92.3	10.2	89.3	87.1	-2.2	87.1	89.2	2.1	85.5	90.4	4.9
POLAR4 Q345	91.6	83.9	94.5	10.6	91.8	91.5	-0.3	92.1	92.7	0.6	86.0	92.9	6.9
POLAR Intersection Gaps pp	3.6	1.8	2.2	12.4	2.5	4.4	2.2	5	3.5	5.6	0.5	2.5	7.4

c. Attainment Intersectional Analysis

Previously the intersectional analysis for continuation and completion showed the gaps were greatest when looking at the relationships between IMD and POLAR with entry qualifications and free school meals. However awarding gaps are also apparent when intersecting IMD and POLAR with degree type (major or single), tariffs and ethnicity. The intersectional analysis shows that the gaps for attainment are greater than any gaps across the other metrics:

BTEC Entry Qualifications

- IMD Q12 students have an attainment rate of 68% and BTEC students have an attainment rate of 58.3%, when taken together IMD Q12 BTEC entrants have an attainment rate of 56.9%.
- The attainment rate for IMD Q345 is 76.5% and 78.1% for A Level students. Combined together the attainment rate increases to 81.4% which gives an awarding gap of 24.5pp when compared to IMD Q12 BTEC students.
- POLAR4 Q12 BTEC students have an attainment rate of 54.3%, when compared to POLAR Q345 A Level students the awarding gap is 25.4pp.

Free School Meals

- The awarding gaps for intersections between IMD and POLAR with eligibility for Free School Meals also show a similar pattern. IMD Q12 Free School Meal students have an attainment rate of 58.5% which is 19.3pp below that of IMD Q345 students who are not eligible for Free School Meals at 77.8%. Whilst comparing students from POLAR Q12 who are eligible for

Free School Meal to those from POLAR Q345 who did not receive Free School Meals shows the attainment gap to be 17.8pp.

Degree Type and Tariff

- Unlike continuation and completion, attainment gaps now become evident for students undertaking major degrees (66.8%) and single subject degrees (75.2%). Similarly, low tariff students' attainment is 68.2% compared to higher tariff students (76.1%). When low tariff students on major degrees are compared to high tariff students on single subject degrees the awarding gap increases to 16.2pp.
- When IMD Q12 major students are compared to IMD Q345 single subject students the gap becomes 16.5pp and POLAR Q12 major students compared to Q345 single subject students the gap widens to 17.2pp.

Ethnicity

- The awarding gap between Black and Global Majority students compared to white students is 11.5pp. However, the attainment gap widens when we consider the intersections with high deprivation and low participation, increasing to 11.6pp between Black and white students from deprived areas and 14.5pp from low participation areas. The greatest awarding gaps are seen when Black and Global Majority students from high deprivation and low participation areas are compared to white students from more affluent areas and areas of higher participation in HE (19.3pp and 21.3pp respectively).
- 53% of Black and Global Majority students entering with BTEC qualifications achieve good degrees which compares to 79% of white students who enter with A Level qualifications. Furthermore, there is a 7pp gap between Black and Global Majority students with low tariff entry gaining good degrees compared to white students with low tariffs.

Attainment																
	IMD and POLAR Attain	BTE C	A Level	A Level/BTE C gap	Majors	Single subject	Single - Major	Low Tariff	High Tariff	High/Low Tariff gap	Free School Meals	Not Free School Meals	FS M gap	Non white	white	Ethnic gap
Overall Attain and Gaps ⇄		58.3	78.1	19.8	66.8	75.2	8.4	68.2	76.1	6.8	60.2	75	14.8	61.8	73.3	11.5
IMD Q12	68	56.9	73.7	16.8	62.4	71.4	9	66.1	69.1	3	58.5	71.2	12.7	57.9	69.5	11.6
IMD Q345	76.5	61.9	81.4	19.5	71.9	78.9	7	71.2	81.4	10.2	65.6	77.8	12.2	70.4	77.2	6.8
IMD Intersection Gaps	8.5	5	7.7	24.5	9.5	7.5	16.5	5.1	12.3	15.2	7.1	6.6	19.3	12.5	7.7	19.3
POLAR4 Q12	68	54.3	75.1	20.8	61.2	72.2	11	65.8	69.9	4.1	59.4	71.4	12	54.6	69.1	14.5
POLAR4 Q345	75.2	61.2	79.7	18.5	69.4	78.4	9	69.8	82.0	12.2	61.5	77.2	15.7	68.6	75.9	7.3
POLAR Intersection Gaps	7.2	6.9	4.6	25.4	8.2	6.2	17.2	4	12.1	16.2	2.1	5.8	17.8	14.0	6.8	21.3

d. Progression Intersectional Analysis

Although the progression metrics for deprivation and participation have improved over recent years, we continue to include these metrics in the analysis along with entry qualifications, degree type and students with mental health disabilities. The following gaps were identified:

BTEC Entry Qualifications

- The progression rate for IMD Q12 students is 59.4% and for BTEC students is 55.4%, combined together the rate declines to 53.8%. Compared to IMD Q345 A Level students the gap widens to 14.4pp.
- The progression rate for POLAR Q12 BTEC students is 55.3% which increases to 66.8% (giving an awarding gap of 11.5pp) when compared to Q345 A Level students.

Free School Meals

- The gaps are less pronounced for IMD Q12 Free School Meal students compared to Q345 non Free School meals students the awarding gap is 9.8pp and similarly for POLAR Q12 FSM compared to Q345 non FSM, the gap is 8.7pp.

Degree Type and Tariff

- The gaps remain high at 12.3pp for IMD Q12 Major students compared to Q345 Single subject degrees who have an attainment rate of 67.4%. POLAR Q12 Major students have a lower attainment rate of 52.6% compared to Q345 Single subject degrees who achieve 67.4% good degrees.
- Similarly, there is an awarding gap of 13pp between IMD Q12 low tariff (58.1%) and IMD Q345 high tariff is 71.1%. The gap between POLAR Q12 low tariff and Q345 high tariff is 12.9pp.

Mental Health

- The progression rate for students with mental health challenges is 53.7% compared to those with no disabilities. Interestingly, when these students are from areas of high deprivation, the gap reduces from 10.2pp to 7.4pp, and conversely it increases for students from areas of low deprivation to 12.9pp. A similar pattern emerges where mental health students from areas of high participation have a wider progression gap then students from areas of low participation. However, caution is required when drawing conclusions due to the small numbers of students in the cohorts. Nevertheless, it is still concerning given that students with disabilities, particularly those with mental health issues have lower response rates to the graduate outcomes surveys than their counterparts, which could imply the gap may be wider than shown.

Progression																
	IMD and POLAR Progression %	BT EC %	A Level %	A Level/BT EC gap pp	Majors %	Single subject %	Single - Maj or gap pp	Low Tariff %	High Tariff %	High/Low Tariff gap pp	Free School Meals %	Not Free School Meals %	FSM gap pp	Mental Health %	No Disability %	Mental Health Gap pp
Overall Progression and Gaps ⇨		55.4	64.1	8.7	58.4	64.2	5.8	58.8	63.4	4.6	58.3	63	4.7	53.7	63.9	10.2
IMD Q12	59.4	53.	61.4	7.6	55.1	62.0	6.9	58.1	57.5	-0.6	56.0	59.2	3.2	53.8	61.2	7.4

IMD Q345	66.5	59.0	68.2	9.2	64.6	67.4	2.8	62.2	71.1	8.9	67.6	65.8	-1.8	55.6	68.5	12.9
IMD Intersection Gaps pp	7.1	5.2	6.8	14.4	9.5	5.4	12.3	4.1	13.6	13	11.6	6.6	9.8	1.8	7.3	14.7
POLAR4 Q12	58.2	55.3	58.9	3.6	52.6	61.4	8.8	57.7	55.6	-2.1	56.6	59.4	2.8	59.4	59.3	-0.1
POLAR4 Q345	64.1	56.1	66.8	10.7	62.0	65.2	3.2	59.6	70.6	11	61.1	65.3	4.2	50.9	66.2	15.3
POLAR Intersection Gaps pp	5.9	0.8	7.9	11.5	9.4	3.8	12.6	1.9	15	12.9	4.5	5.9	8.7	-8.5	6.9	6.8

Summary of intersections

The findings from the intersectional analysis can be summarised as follows:

1. BTEC entry qualifications effect all metrics and all quintiles of POLAR and IMD, though the differences are most pronounced in areas of highest deprivation and lowest participation (quintiles 1 and 2).
2. Continuation and completion metrics are also impacted by students previously eligible for Free School Meals who are from areas of highest deprivation and lowest participation.
3. In attainment there is a clear awarding gap for Global Majority students and those from areas of high deprivation or low participation studying major degrees or entering with low tariffs. Of particular note are BTEC students and those eligible for Free School Meals who have the highest awarding gaps across all areas of deprivation and participation.
4. Progression is also lower for BTEC entrants across all areas of deprivation and participation. Whilst students from areas of high deprivation and low participation taking major subject degrees or previously on Free School Meals have a larger progression gap when compared to their counterparts. Tariff entry scores do not appear to have a major influence on progression rates, particularly for students from high deprivation and low participation areas.

5. Final Conclusions

The extensive assessment of data confirms the University's distinctive size and shape in its student body with larger proportions of students from lower participation and deprived areas; mainly from the local area. Students are entering with a range of qualification types and lower tariffs choosing to study more combined subject degrees, compared to their counterparts across the sector.

These factors alone pose risks to equality of opportunities across all the lifecycle metrics. However, the intersectional analysis has highlighted the complexity of how these characteristics are interconnected and when they are combined together how their impact on opportunities to equality of risk is amplified.

This being the case we have chosen to develop the indications of risk in our Action and Participation Plan around four main themes:

- Attainment for black and global majority students.

- Deprivation and low participation for continuation, completion and attainment
- Progression for students with mental health concerns.
- BTEC entry qualifications, low tariff and course type are interrelated and increase the risks to equality in continuation, completion, attainment and progression

This does not however, preclude us from being mindful of other students with different characteristics and backgrounds who also require support and opportunities to succeed.

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

Intervention Strategy 1: Decolonising Liverpool Hope through internal and external collaboration to develop a more inclusive and racially aware community that fosters a sense of belonging for black and global majority students.

Much has been written and published in relation to the awarding gaps for Black and Global Majority students. The outcomes are summarised by the key pieces detailed below.

Universities UK, and the NUS produced a joint publication in May 2019 detailing steps in Closing the Gap for Black and Global Majority Students. This report highlights that the awarding gap for this group is 'stark'. There is a clear conclusion that in order to address the issue a whole institution approach to racial equality must be adopted. The culture of the institution is identified as contributing to a student's sense of belonging. Addressing underlying factors including low numbers of Global Majority staff, inclusive curriculum and learning practices and a reduced sense of belonging are key to enhancing reducing deficits for this group. In addition, prior attainment, which develops at an early stage in the education system must be tackled. Thomas et al 2016 noted that the issues that contribute to the awarding gap between Black and Global Majority students may result from "more BME students arriving at university from poorly performing schools from lower socioeconomic groups which have been regularly linked with poor degree attainment". The author reiterates the need for appreciation of cultural learning styles and appropriate policy and practice to foster belonging.

Furthermore, Rana et al 2022³², Wong et al, 2020³³ noted that all academic staff should engage with cultural/religious training and inclusive recruitment practices should be adopted. Importantly, the authors point out that in a predominantly white institution, which includes Liverpool Hope, it is not adequate to simply aim to increase representation from Black and Global Majority students. Campuses must become more diverse and inclusive to achieve sector wide aims around equality of experience and outcomes. Further, Eden et al (2024)³⁴ have also emphasised the need for educators to engage in ongoing professional development to raise their cultural competence.

In June 2023 TASO³⁵ has noted that the sector lacks confidence in tackling the awarding gap relating to ethnicity. Their recommendations include sustaining change through both bottom-up and top-down approaches. The recommendation to bring about a stepped change of short-, medium- and longer-term goals fits with the approach taken in our interventions. Furthermore, Mahmud and Gagnon (2020)³⁶ reiterate that attainment gaps represent issues with widespread inequities rather than gaps in knowledge and skills.

A whole University approach is important; this includes an important role for students. Our inclusive curriculum toolkit is aimed at a permanent radical change to the design and delivery of our provision. This resource was produced by a Community of Practice lead by the Students' Union

³² Bridging the BAME Attainment Gap: Student and Staff Perspectives on Tackling Academic Bias A Rana et al 2022 Front. Educ., 06 May 2022 Sec. Language, Culture and Diversity Volume 7 - 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.868349>

³³ Is race still relevant? Wong et al 2020 Student perceptions and experiences of racism in higher education. Cambridge Journal of Education, 51(3), 359–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2020>.

³⁴ Cultural Competence in Education Strategies for Fostering Inclusivity and Diversity Awareness CA Eden et al March 2024 International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences 6(3):383-392 6(3):383-392 DOI:10.51594/ijarss.v6i3.895

³⁵ Approaches to addressing the ethnicity degree awarding gap S. Andrews et al June 2023 <https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/Approaches-to-addressing-the-ethnicity-degree-awarding-gap.pdf>

³⁶ Racial disparities in student outcomes in British higher education: examining Mindsets and bias A Mahmud and J Gagnon July 2020 Teaching in Higher Education, 28(2), 254–269. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1796619>

and academic staff. As highlighted in the academic literature (Briggs et al 2019³⁷) that student-led projects are the most likely to be long lasting and successful. Our inclusive curriculum toolkit would go some way in ensuring that the curricula are diverse, and there is evidence in literature to suggest that this would go some way in reducing achievement gaps amongst racially minoritised students by encouraging engagement by the relational content and pedagogy (Thomas and Quinlan, 2022)³⁸.

Student attainment has been shown to be impacted by knowledge and perceptions of socio-economic status and ethnicity (Doyle et al. 2022)³⁹. The same study identified the number of strong passes was 15% lower for Black Caribbean students regardless of SES.

Taking all the above into account, Intervention Strategy 1 proposed in our Plan sets out an evidence-based approach to tackling risks to attainment for Black and Global majority students.

Intervention Strategy 2: Supporting students from the poorest backgrounds to achieve at Hope.

Awarding gaps at Hope are particularly significant given the proportion of our students who are from areas of high deprivation and/or low participation. In their 2023 Cost-of-Living National Conference the National Union of Students (NUS)⁴⁰ report that that “students from working-class backgrounds often pay higher costs in order to access post-16 education as a consequence of class and poverty”.

The NUS makes a number of recommendations which influenced the financial support package detailed in our Plan. These included encouraging Food Banks, clothes swaps, breakfast clubs, and ensuring that on campus catering options are affordable; free or subsidised transport; clubs/society memberships and events are free.

The 2023 All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Students Report of the Inquiry into the impact of the cost-of living crisis on students⁴¹ reiterated the NUS view point. Many students noted eating less or skipping meals, not having hot water or time to take part in activities despite 61% reporting working full time and 37% working part time. Taking paid work was linked to non-attendance at taught classes, deterioration in mental health and potentially to increased attrition going forward. The APPG urge Universities to carry out research to better understand the patterns of paid work amongst their students and correlate this with academic outcomes and engagement with studies.

In the OfS Evaluation report of the cost-of-living research 2023, 85% of students who received support from their university for the cost-of-living said it had helped them to succeed. Our improved access to the Learning Support Fund and other financial interventions are designed to ensure that students can access practical support from us as simply and easily as possible.

³⁷ The importance of university, students and students' union partnerships in student-led projects: A case study S Briggs et al September 2019 International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education Issue(s) available: 131 – Volume: 20 Issue: 8, 9

³⁸ Reimagining curricula: effects of cultural (in)sensitivity of curricula on racially minoritised students' Engagement D Thomas and K Quinlan, 2022 Studies in Higher Education, 48 (2). pp. 283-298. ISSN 0307-5079.

³⁹ Roles of socioeconomic status, ethnicity and teacher beliefs in academic grading L Doyle, L., et al. (2022). British Journal of Educational Psychology, 93(1). 91-112.

⁴⁰ https://www.nus.org.uk/cost_of_living#h_34721864461687515842186

⁴¹ <https://appg-students.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/APPG-Students-Report-Cost-of-Living-Inquiry-220323.pdf>

Our analysis of performance showed a significant awarding gap for students from the poorest and lowest participation areas; the gap is wider when these students also enter with non-A level and vocational qualifications. In fact, students with these backgrounds are more likely to take BTECs (Dilnot et al 2023)⁴². BTECs are very different to A levels, they are based on more practical skills and portfolio work than the more traditional routes. Peake (2018)⁴³ notes that the skills acquired through vocational routes are useful but do not equip students for transition to HE in the same way as A levels. Therefore, the academic skills workshops included in our intervention strategy is key to ensuring skills deficits are addressed.

The reading interventions activity to be carried out by Hope undergraduate students in local schools is a new initiative which aims to increase attainment in pupils in the short and longer term. This approach has been evidenced in the academic literature; the systematic review published in November 2023 by Nickow, Oreopoulos and Quan⁴⁴ concluded that timely interventions can be transformative. Dietrichson et al 2017⁴⁵ also noted the significant value of tutoring interventions aimed at pupils from low socioeconomic backgrounds at primary school^{46, 47}.

As outlined for global majority students, anonymous marking has also impacted student continuation for students from high/low level deprivation, reducing the percentage continuation gap between the two. Student attainment has been shown to be impacted by knowledge and perceptions of socio-economic status (SES) and ethnicity (Doyle et al. 2023⁴⁸). The same study identified that teachers rated lower-SES students as having significantly inferior ability and potential, and to be working at a lower level than higher-SES students. At Liverpool Hope we have noted that anonymous marking has a positive impact on attainment and progression for students from high/low deprivation and on the attainment gap between students from high and low areas of deprivation.

The suite of free extracurricular activities offered to students from disadvantaged backgrounds is known to improve student progression/employability outcomes; (Tomlinson and Jackson, 2019⁴⁹; Chapman, Emambocus, Obembe, 2023⁵⁰) as a degree is no longer consider sufficient to secure employment (Herbert et al, 2020⁵¹)

⁴² The path increasingly travelled: Vocational entry qualifications, socioeconomic status and university outcomes C. Dilnot August 2023 British Educational Research Journal Volume 49: Issue 6 pg 1142.

⁴³ We are not all equal! Raising achievement and aspiration by improving the transition from the BTEC to higher education. R Peake 2018 The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences Volume 11 Issue 3.

⁴⁴ The Promise of Tutoring for PreK–12 Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence A Nickow American Educational Research Journal, 61(1), 74-107. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312231208687>.

⁴⁵ Academic Interventions for Elementary and Middle School Students with Low Socioeconomic Status: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis J Dietrichson et al 2017 Review of Educational Research, 87(2), 243-282. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316687036>.

⁴⁶ Enabling ambitious science teachers in urban challenging settings: The Hope Challenge model. S Cronin et al 2020 Educational Action Research. ISSN Print ISSN: 0965-0792 Online ISSN: 1747-5074.

⁴⁷ The Hope Challenge: a new model of partnership for school improvement. J. Moore et al 2016 In: Teacher education in challenging times: lessons for professionalism, partnership and practice. Routledge Research in Teacher Education. Routledge, pp. 187-198. ISBN 9781138943360.

⁴⁸ Roles of socioeconomic status, ethnicity and teacher beliefs in academic grading. J Doyle et al 2023 British Journal of Educational Psychology, 93(1), 91-112.

⁴⁹ Career values and proactive career behaviour among contemporary higher education students D Jackson and M Tomlinson 2019 Journal of Education and Work 32(2) DOI:10.1080/13639080.2019.1679730

⁵⁰ Higher education student motivations for extracurricular activities: evidence from UK universities G Chapman et al 2023 Journal of Education and Work Volume 36, 2023 - Issue 2

⁵¹ Graduate employability, employment prospects and work-readiness in the changing field of professional work I Herbert, et al 2020. Loughborough University. Journal contribution. <https://hdl.handle.net/2134/11830254.v1>

Intervention Strategy 3 For Liverpool Hope students the progression into further study or graduate employment is lower for students with mental ill health compared to those without.

Across the sector, the number of students who disclose a disability to their university has increased, with a notable rise in those with mental health condition. Furthermore, this is potentially a conservative figure with students reporting higher levels of mental ill health in confidential surveys. At Hope we have a significant number of students who have a declared mental health condition, above the sector average. Therefore, gaps in attainment for this group are a particular focus.

The What Happens Next? 2022 report from the AGCAS Disability Task Group⁵² noted that disabled graduates at all qualification levels were more likely than those with no known disability to be in part-time jobs or employment. Furthermore, graduates with a mental health condition were less likely to be in paid employment than non-disabled graduates. Security of employment was less likely in disabled graduates. AGCAS recommend further investigation into the specific barriers faced by disabled students in securing employment.

An important aspect for promoting disabled student progression is to ensure developing their professional identity (Forber-Pratt et al, 2017⁵³) to encourage work participation amongst disabled students (Goodall et al, 2022⁵⁴). Our employment initiatives for disabled students including Change 100 in association with the Leonard Cheshire Foundation; on course transition focussed placements, community opportunities; expansion of work-based experience opportunities; bespoke information, advice and guidance in the context of a student's individual needs and individual student meetings are few of our interventions which will go some way in developing this professional identity.

⁵² https://www.agcas.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Resources/Research%20and%20knowledge/WHN_2022.pdf

⁵³ Disability Identity Development: A Systematic Review of the Literature A Forber-Pratt et al 2017 *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 62(2), 198–207. <https://doi.org/10.1037/rep0000134>

⁵⁴ Barriers and Facilitators in the Transition from Higher Education to Employment for Students With Disabilities: A Rapid Systematic Review G Goodall 2022 *Front. Educ.*, 25 April 2022 Sec. Higher Education Volume 7 - 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.882066>

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Liverpool Hope University

Provider UKPRN: 10003956

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

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

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	Foundation fee reducing to £5,760 for classroom based subjects from 2025/26	N/A	5760
Foundation year/Year 0	Foundation year fee retained at £9,250 for higher cost subjects	N/A	9250
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT		N/A	9250
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
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: Liverpool Hope University

Provider UKPRN: 10003956

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	£543,000	£561,000	£579,000	£599,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£337,000	£349,000	£371,000	£395,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£20,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000

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 (£)	£116,000	£120,000	£123,000	£128,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£398,000	£411,000	£425,000	£439,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£29,000	£30,000	£31,000	£32,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£543,000	£561,000	£579,000	£599,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (as % of HFI)	5.0%	5.2%	5.2%	5.1%
Access activity investment	Total access investment funded from HFI (£)	£543,000	£561,000	£579,000	£599,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£126,000	£135,000	£145,000	£154,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£211,000	£214,000	£226,000	£241,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£337,000	£349,000	£371,000	£395,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	3.3%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£20,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%

Fees, investments and targets

2025-26 to 2028-29

Provider name: Liverpool Hope University

Provider UKPRN: 10003956

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 awarding gap for black	PTS_1	Attainment	Ethnicity	Not specified (please give detail in description)	White	Target group is Black and Global Majority compared to white FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2021-22	Percentage points	14.2	11	9	7	5
eliminate the gaps in continuation	PTS_2	Continuation	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	Target is aimed at FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2020-21	Percentage points	7.6	5	3	1	0
eliminate the completion gaps for s	PTS_3	Completion	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	Target is aimed at FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2017-18	Percentage points	5.9	4	3	1	0
eliminate the gaps in attainment fo	PTS_4	Attainment	Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivations [IMD])	IMD quintile 1 and 2	IMD quintile 3, 4 and 5	Target is aimed at FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2021-22	Percentage points	6.2	5	3	1	0
eliminate gaps in continuation for s	PTS_5	Continuation	Other	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	Target is aimed at POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 compared to quintiles 3, 4 and 5 FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2020-21	Percentage points	4.7	3	2	1	0
eliminate gaps in completion for st	PTS_6	Completion	Other	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	Target is aimed at POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 compared to quintiles 3, 4 and 5 FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2017-18	Percentage points	5.8	4	3	1	0
eliminate gaps in attainment for stu	PTS_7	Attainment	Other	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	Target is aimed at POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 2 compared to quintiles 3, 4 and 5 FT First Degree students. Baseline data is from OFS APP individualised data (10 year file).	No	Other data source (please include details in commentary)	2021-22	Percentage points	3.2	2.5	1.5	1	0
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	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
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[illegible]