

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN: REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report provides an updated assessment of performance against key WP measures based on the most recent available data. The report also examines this performance against the targets and commitments set out in the University's five year (2020-2025) Access and Participation Plan (APP) and an update on the actions implemented as part of this plan.

A review of 2019/20 OfS data (and 2020/21 internal data for access indicators) shows a positive trend in most indicators and that the milestone targets for 2020/21 are achievable. As targets become more challenging towards the later part of the plan, however, further progress will need to be made, particularly in addressing degree awarding gaps.

Beyond the target areas, there are a number of other priority areas that require further analysis, particularly in awarding gaps for other groups e.g. socio-economic groups and age groups. As a whole, the inter-relationship between student characteristics and outcomes needs further exploration, to understand how much of the observed awarding gap can be explained by structural factors such as entry qualification, subject of study and therefore the extent of the unexplained gap and the factors that contribute to this.

APPENDICES

1. APP Monitoring Return – summary of activities during 2020/21
2. APP Access Target data
3. Graphs showing intersectionality of intake
4. APP Award Gap data
5. APP Action Plan summary

DETAIL OF REPORT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 From the end of 2020/21, the University will be required to report on progress against the objectives in its Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020/21 to 2024/25¹. This report provides an assessment of the University's current position against the targets and objectives that will be applicable from the current year and an update on the strategic measures in place to deliver the University's widening participation strategy. This period coincides with the Covid-19 pandemic and a summary of how the University has supported students from widening participation backgrounds during this time and the impact on the University's WP strategy is included here in appendix 1.
- 1.2 The University's APP progress is monitored by the Access and Participation Strategy Group (APSG) chaired by the Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students.
- 1.3 The assessment of performance outlined in this report is based on:
- Official Office for Students APP dashboard data, published in March 2021 containing data up to 2019/20 academic year².
 - Internal data for 2020/21, where these provide an early indication of trends. This data is only available for the access part of the strategy.

and includes:

- an assessment of the objectives which have a numerical target and milestones³;
- an overview of the objectives which do not have an agreed target value but can be measured, either using the OfS data set or internal data;
- a review of the OfS analysis of statistically significant gaps across the lifecycle stages of access, continuation and degree attainment.

2. Access

- 2.1 The University has two APP targets related to the access stage of the student lifecycle focusing on its work to widen participation to HE more generally and increase access specifically to The University of Manchester.
- 2.2 Our collaborative target with The Brilliant Club aims to contribute to attainment raising in schools by mobilising our PGR students to work as tutors on the Scholars Programme, by increasing year on year the number of students from WP backgrounds who make at least 5% improvement in the academic progress as part of the programme⁴. Whilst data for 2020/21 is not yet available, 2019/20 suggests that we are on track to meet our 2020/21 milestone.

¹ <https://thebrilliantclub.org/the-scholars-programme/>

² The OfS data on Progression (employment and further study) have not been updated for the second year, and published data are still based on data from the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education Survey (last data set based on 2016/17 graduates).

³ For the majority of measures, the data presented are for full-time UK undergraduates. English Russell Group measures have been calculated excluding UoM data.

⁴ <https://thebrilliantclub.org/the-scholars-programme/>

Table 1

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2019/20 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|---|---|--|--|
| In partnership with the Brilliant Club, the University will support pupils from POLAR 4 Q1&2 areas or eligible for Pupil Premium to make at least a 5% improvement in their overall academic progress whilst participating in The Scholars Programme. | 118 pupils from POLAR4 Q1+2, who made 5% or more progress in overall attainment | 230 pupils from POLAR4 Q1+2 make 5% or more progress | 183 pupils from Pupil Premium/POLAR Q1 + 2 made 5% of more progress (170) |

- 2.3 In its submission of the 2020/21-2024/25 APP, the University noted that approaches to increase the number of students from POLAR4 Q1 will take at least two admissions cycles before there is any reliable and detectable increase in the number of applications, acceptances and entrants.

Table 2

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2020/21 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|
| To reduce the gap in participation at the University between young, full-time first degree entrants from POLAR4 Quintile (Q1) and POLAR 4 Quintile 5 (Q5) | 5.2:1 385 Q1 students | 3:1 (matching the OfS target) 667 Q1 students | 4.6 (5) 503 (400) |

Internal data for 2020/21 shows that the University has achieved its milestone for this year (appendix 2). This is a slight increase in the ratio compared with the previous year (4.5:1) and whilst we saw a significantly larger intake of Q1 students, this coincided with a larger intake in Q5 students. In previous years, internal data has shown a good match with official OfS data and the University can be confident of meeting its milestone for 2020/21. However, the most recent confirmation period in August 2021 where a greater proportion of students met their entry requirements meant the University was unable to maximise its strategy to accept WP students who had narrowly missed their offers which in turn will have an impact on the 2021 milestone. Predictions of continued grade inflation and how these grades are distributed has the potential to impact longer term. The University has already taken steps to mitigate this with a review of its contextual data processes and has increased its lower offers for certain groups of WP students.⁵

- 2.4 The University also has a commitment in its APP to monitoring its intake against other OfS target groups and the data also provides an opportunity to bench-mark the University's performance against the sector and the Russell Group. From this data we can see that:

- **Sector/RG benchmarking:** OfS data allows comparison of the proportion of UoM 18 year old entrants in POLAR4 Q1 or Q2 vs the proportion of the national 18-year old population in the same quintiles. 2019/20 OfS data shows the Q1 gap is 8.9%, the 3rd smallest in the Russell Group

⁵ <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/contextual-admissions/admissions/>

compared to a sector gap of 6.1%. The same trend is seen for Q2, with a gap of 4.9%, the 3rd smallest in the Russell Group compared a sector gap of 3.3%.

- **BAME Students:** The 2019/20 OfS data shows Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnicity groups are all over-represented in UoM compared to the population. When comparing with the sector data, the over-representation is lower in UoM for the Black population (-0.9 UoM to -3.5 sector) and higher for Asian (-11.8 UoM to -8.5 sector) and Mixed (-3.6 UoM to -2 sector). White entrants are under-represented (gap 17.1% UoM compared to 15% sector). The trend over five years shows an increase in ethnic diversity with an increase in the proportion of Asian students from 15% to 18.6% and an increase in Mixed students from 5.7% to 7.1%. However, the proportion of Black students has remained flat, and was 4.4% in 2019/20. For the English Russell Group as a whole the proportion of Black students has grown from 3.7% to 4.8%. Internal data for 2020/21 (1st December snapshot) shows increasing ethnic diversity compared to 2019/20 where the proportion of Asian students has increased to 19.8%, Mixed to 7.9% and Black to 4.8%.
- **Intersectionality of socio-economic status/IMD/ethnicity/gender:** The OfS data shows an intersection of White and IMD⁶ Quintile 1 and 2 students. 15% of entrants in UoM met this definition in 2019/20, with little change since 2015/16. This compares to 12.3% for the English RG and 21.5% in the English sector. Internal data for 2020/21 (1st December snapshot) shows increasing proportions of students from disadvantaged backgrounds (as defined by a range of different metrics), but there are differences between White and BAME groups. The particular trends of note are:
 - The % of BAME students from IMD Quintile 1 neighbourhoods is lower than the White equivalent but growing (appendix 2);
 - There is a further reduction in participation from white males from IMD Q1;
 - The proportion of BAME students from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 4-7) is higher than for White students. There is no difference in the proportion of White males or females from lower socio-economic groups. These patterns are different from those observed using IMD data and it should be noted that they are measuring different things. IMD is based on the student's postcode and the socio-economic classification is derived from their family's occupation as reported in the UCAS application form. The NS-SEC measure is no longer included in the HESA Widening Participation Indicators due to the challenges around the completeness and coding of this data, although as an institution we still have access to this data and continue to monitor our performance against this measure.⁷
- **Free school meals/low-income:** 2019/20 data shows that UoM is in the upper quartile of the English -Russell Group for the proportion of full-time undergraduates eligible for Free School Meals (10.5% compared to English RG 9.3%). Over five years the proportion has stayed relatively constant, ranging from 9.8% to 11.1%. Overall the Russell Group performs poorly on this measure, with 17.6% of the English sector entrants being eligible for FSM. Our internal data shows that there has been an increase from 24% in 2016/17 to 27% in 2020/21 in the proportion of students from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 4-7). However, the proportion of students from households with an income less than £25k has decreased from 18% to 17%, which is to be expected as the threshold value has not been adjusted for inflation over the period. On receipt of the detailed HESA data set for 2019/20 the potential will be assessed for analysing socio-economic data across the sector in more detail.

⁶ The Indices of Deprivation are a unique measure of relative deprivation at a small local area level (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

⁷ HESA have recently announced a complete review of their performance measures and the UKPIs (which include the WP Indicators) will be discontinued after 2022. <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/blog/19-05-2021/measure-measures>

- **Contextual admissions measures:** Based on internal data using the criteria for our contextual admissions process, students with a WP plus flag have increased as a proportion of the intake, from 6.8% in 2016/17 to 8.7% for 2020/21. This measure is a combination of an area-based measure and school performance and has been used since 2019 to identify students for a contextual lower offer.
- **Mature Learners:** OfS data shows the proportion of mature learners (21 or over on commencement) was 7.7% which is slightly lower than previous years and similar to the English Russell Group (excluding UoM) of 7.6% but much lower than the English sector proportion of 30.2%. Sheffield has grown the proportion of mature students from 8.7% in 2015/16 to 16% in 2019/20; conversely the proportion has dropped in UCL (from 17.1% to 10.3%). Although the intake of UCL has grown over this period the number of mature entrants has dropped from 540 to 280.

3. Student Success

- 3.1 The English sector-level attainment data published in the OfS dashboard demonstrate an increase in the proportion of ‘good degrees’ (first and upper second class degrees) in 2019/20, when universities were using altered methods of assessment during the pandemic. There also appears to be a reduction in most gaps between different student groups for the sector as a whole.
- 3.2 The University has four awarding gap targets to address gaps in degree outcomes for specific groups of students. For all awarding gap targets it should be noted that the commentary submitted by the University as part of its 2020/21 – 2024/25 APP recognised the lag time it would take for its actions to show an effect on outcomes. The first milestone targets were therefore set at similar levels to the baseline gaps and more significant reductions in the gaps expected towards the later part of the plan.
- 3.3 The targets also took into account the recognised drivers of attainment and sought to address the ‘unexplained’⁸ element of the observed gaps. Publication of gap data by OfS does not take account of these factors, instead showing the overall gap. In monitoring progress against our targets we are assuming that the ‘explained’ element of the gaps remains constant over the period of the plan. We will need to review these assumptions over time to ensure that they are reasonable. The commentary in the following sections is based on institutional-level data. Faculty and School level data is available from the University’s WP PowerBI apps, but it should be noted that cohort sizes can be small at these levels, particularly when looking at Black student data.
- 3.4 Degree awarding gap between White and Black students

Table 3

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2019/20 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| To reduce the unexplained awarding gap between White students and Black students | 11.6pp (percentage points) | 5.8pp | 12pp (11.3pp) |

OfS data (2019/20) shows improvement in this gap relative to the previous year but no improvement on the baseline position of 12pp. As in 2017/18 this gap is not statistically significant due to the low

⁸ The ‘unexplained’ gap is that which cannot be explained by structural differences such as entry qualification, subject of study or age of students.

numbers of Black students (180 students). However, there is more to do to reach the first milestone of 11.3pp in the current year, and to reduce this over the APP period to 5.8pp. This level is based on the residual ‘explained’ gap based on the factors which influence the likelihood of achieving a good degree (e.g. subject of study, entry qualifications).

The UoM awarding gap is similar to the English Russell Group gap of 11%, but lower than the English sector gap of 18%. Institutions with gaps below the UoM target gap of 5.8% include King’s College and UCL, as well as Imperial and Sheffield (although their numbers of Black students are very low).

3.5 Degree awarding gap between White and Asian students

Table 4

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2019/20 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| To reduce the unexplained awarding gap between White students and Asian students | 10.6pp | 5.3pp | 8pp (10pp) |

OfS data shows improvement in the gap from 10pp in 2018/19 to 8pp in 2019/20 and is ahead of the milestone for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. This is similar to the English sector gap of 7.7pp, but larger than the English Russell Group gap which dropped from 6.8pp in 2018/19 to 4.2pp in 2019/20. 11 Russell Group institutions had a gap below the University’s target value of 5.3pp.

3.6 Degree awarding gap between disabled students and students with no known disability

Table 5

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2019/20 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| To reduce the unexplained awarding gap between disabled students and students with no known disability | 4.4pp | 0.0pp | 2.1pp (4pp) |

The OfS data for 2019/20 shows an improvement in the awarding gap from 5.pp (2018/19) to 2.1pp, and this gap is not statistically significant. This demonstrates a positive step in addressing what was the largest disability awarding gap in the Russell Group in 2018/19. When looking at the breakdown of disability types, the greatest improvement was in the cognitive and learning disability group, where the gap reduced from 8pp to 3pp, and the mental health disability group, dropping from 6pp to 1pp. The progress shown in the mental health disability group is strong in the context of the data for other Russell Group institutions, with Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds and Nottingham all having gaps of 5pp or greater, and the gap for the English Russell Group overall being 3.1pp.

3.7 Degree awarding gap between the most and least disadvantaged students as measured by IMD

In its underlying datasets, the OfS provides both classifications for the Index of Multiple Deprivation IMD2015 and IMD2019, but it presents IMD2019 in its main dashboard. As such, IMD2019 is used as the focus for monitoring in this paper, but the gap for the baseline year of 2017/18 and 2019/20 was the same using either dataset.

Table 6

| Target | Baseline (2017/18): | Target (2024/25): | 2019/20 data (2020/21 milestone in brackets) |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| To reduce the unexplained awarding gap between students from IMD Quintile 5 and IMD Quintile 1. | 10.4pp | 5.2pp | 9pp (10.1pp) |

The data shows a reduction in the gap for 2019/20 to 9pp. This is a lower gap than the English sector as a whole (15.2pp) and the English Russell Group excluding UoM (10.4pp). Although the gap was lower than the milestone for the 2020/21 year, it should be noted that this was similar to the baseline value and that further progress is expected towards the later part of the plan as initiatives start to have an effect.

- 3.8 As with the access stage of the lifecycle, the University has a commitment in its APP to continue to monitor the degree awarding gap for other groups of students.
- **Living at home students:** In their graduating year, the largest proportion of students had a term time accommodation of 'Other rented accommodation' (62% in 2019/20) and the proportion of these students achieving a good degree was 89.4%. For students living at home, either in 'Own residence' (2%) or 'Parental/guardian home' (10%) the outcomes were slightly less positive at 87.7% and 85.7%, although more positive than those in 'Private-sector halls' (17% of the population, good degree 81.9%) or 'Provider maintained property' (7% of the population 84.7%). The gaps between living at home groups and those in other rented accommodation has narrowed over the last five years (from 8.4% in 2015/16 to 3.7% in 2019/20 for the parental/guardian home group).
 - **Low household income/low socio-economic groups:** There is an awarding gap between those from high socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 1-3) and those from lower groups (4-7), and this has not narrowed over the last five years, with the exception of 2017/18. When looking at household income categories (low income <£25k vs other students) there was a gap of 1% in 2019/20. Whilst it is difficult to make a causal link between the University's financial support and student outcomes due to the lack of a comparator group, one interpretation of the data in our recent evaluation of the Manchester Bursary is of a levelling effect⁹.
 - **Mature Learners:** Analysis of the age of students on 31st August of their graduating year shows 1.9% were in the age group of 30 years and over, and 2.5% in the age group 25-29, with the remainder being in younger age groups. The proportion of good degrees in the age group 25-29 in 2019/20 was 87.2%, an improvement on the previous two years but lower than the 21-24 and 18-20 age groups (91.8% and 89.5%). There was little improvement in the proportion of good degrees for the 30 years and over group, with a value of 79.2%.
- 3.9 OfS provide an assessment of the statistical significance of gaps for all lifecycle stages and all 'split' types (ethnicity, sex, participation neighbourhood, deprivation neighbourhood, age, disability). Review of the most recent year of data highlights the areas which are already covered by the APP (including intersections between multiple characteristics). There are no statistically significant gaps

⁹ A study in 2016 found that each £1,000 of financial aid awarded increases the chances of gaining a good degree by around 3.7 percentage points, driven by increases in annual rates of completion and course scores. We could reference this in the context of the research Gill Wyness has published (<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED574313.pdf>)

for the continuation stage, indicating that there are no obvious issues associated with different drop-out rates at the University.

4. Progression

- 4.1 The OfS data on progression (employment and further study) have not been updated for the second year, and published data are still based on data from the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education Survey (last data set based on 2016/17 graduates). The University will need to consider its own priorities when assessing progression gaps using Graduate Outcomes data, noting that the results are regarded as experimental (expected until 2022) and there are no recognised definitions of performance measures. Analysis of the 2018/19 outcome data is being undertaken and initial findings will be considered by the University's Access and Participation Strategy Group and the Employability and Graduate Outcomes Steering Group.

5. Summary of Position

- 5.1 Following a review of data across the access and student success stages of the Access and Participation Plan, the key conclusions are:

Access

- The milestone POLAR4 Q5:1 target for 2020/21 will be met; 2021/22 has been a challenging year as highlighted in 2.2 above and plans will need to be put into place to achieve later milestones. Faculty-level targets are currently being finalised and will be reported to the University's Planning and Resources Committee in the autumn.
- Ethnic diversity of intake is continuing to increase year on year.
- Manchester has a higher proportion of white entrants from the lowest two quintiles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation than the English Russell Group but could make more progress towards sector performance on applicants eligible for free school meals (FSM) supported by our use of contextual admissions practices. With FSM data now being available to universities, consideration will be given as to how this measure can inform our contextual admissions processes.

Continuation

- Reinforcing the baseline APP analysis, there were no statistically significant gaps in continuation rates for students with different characteristics. This suggests from the data that there are no significant barriers to continuation for different types of students, however qualitative findings through student surveys and focus groups highlight the need to develop a more inclusive student experience.

Success (Degree attainment)

- Progress was made in 2019/20 for all OfS targets, but further improvement is required in reducing the awarding gap between White and Black students in order to meet future milestones.
- The data suggest there have been improvements in outcomes for living at home students and some mature students but there remain awarding gaps that need further investigation, particularly for lower socio-economic groups vs higher groups and those in the higher age group (30 or over).
- Overall, for degree outcome data, further analysis is required to understand where gaps cannot be explained by structural issues e.g. prior attainment, to allow further prioritisation of actions and identify good practice from elsewhere in the sector.

In order to better understand the gaps, we need to look further at ‘intersectionality’, recognising that the dimensions of inequality are not discrete and that class, gender and ethnicity intersect and influence access to, and experience of, the University. A good example of this is when we look at the outcomes for living at home students and whether improvements here are linked to improvements in outcomes based on ethnicity and IMD.

Work is taking place to analyse the degree attainment of students in 2019/20 in order to understand what impact the changes to assessment have had on student outcomes. Initial analysis shows that the changes have had a positive impact on the outcomes for disabled students and we will be using this learning to develop our assessment practice and the work of the Institute of Teaching and Learning’s Online and Blended Learning (OBL) Assessment Group. We also need to better understand how these changes may have impacted positively on other groups of students.

6. Strategic Measures

- 6.1 In order to make progress on our APP targets and commitments the Access and Participation Strategy Group has developed an APP action plan which is monitored at each meeting, this includes a specific plan to support the delivery of our evaluation and monitoring strategy. Each Faculty has also agreed their own APP priorities which they are working towards. A summary of some of these strategic measures and progress to date is included in appendix 4.
- 6.2 This report and the developments highlighted in the APP Monitoring Return will be used to identify additional strategic measures for the APP action plan, this includes some of the new activities introduced in 2020/21 which aim to support transition and build an inclusive student experience such as the Library Peer Network and the BAME Student Support Advisor. As the University reviews its EDI Strategy and develops its Inclusive Teaching and Learning Strategy, there will also be actions that need to be captured as part of the APP Action Plan to link to these strategies.
- 6.3 These strategic measures build on a foundation of well-established widening participation work which is reported on annually in the University’s Widening Participation Annual Report¹⁰.

¹⁰ <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=4294>

An extract from the 2019/20 APP Monitoring Return summarising the impact of the pandemic on the University's WP strategy for 2020/21

Access

In relation to our strategic measures, the pandemic has continued to have an impact on the in-person delivery of access activities. In preparation for the 2020/21 academic year we continued the work started in 2019/20 to transform our activities to online provision and adapt our evaluation processes accordingly. On the whole this has been successful and is a blend of live delivery with staff and students, recorded presentations and online content. School closures have however impacted some of our delivery plans. We have also had to revise the delivery of our Y13 access initiatives due to changes to the UCAS deadlines and the A level results day.

We also anticipate that the cancellation of exams again in summer 2021 and grades being awarded based on teacher assessment will have an impact as we are likely to see more students meeting the conditions of offer meaning less flexibility to consider WP students who have narrowly missed their grades.

There is also the longer-term impact that the pandemic will have on young people's education and well-being which could potentially have consequences for the future delivery of our plan, both in terms of meeting targets and in the strategic measures and support in place for students.

Student Success

We have invested an additional £1.9m in student support for all students in 2020/21. This includes:

- A recently launched 24 hour mental health helpline and wellbeing app, giving immediate access to trained counsellors and advisors, and linking back into our own mental health service.
- An online mental health platform Togetherall, a 24/7, safe online community that helps support its members with self-guided courses and resources.
- Continuing our student peer to peer buddying scheme, launched in partnership with the Students' Union, to support students who feel isolated as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Additional Response and Wellbeing Advisors and Link Workers. The Advice and Response Team are a confidential support service and source of advice and support about any aspect of wellbeing or issues impacting on a student.
- A comprehensive package of support for students who are self-isolating is in place and is regularly communicated to all students, this includes well-being information; information about on-line food delivery through a specific delivery service the University has arranged with the Co-op Food; digital access support.
- A mini site detailing the full range of support available during the University Christmas closure period was made available to all students, this included mental health and well-being support.
- A wellbeing phoning operation for students in halls in November ran for five weeks. It made almost 12,000 calls resulting in 3062 conversations with students reaching just over half of students in our halls. As a result 310 residents were given additional information and we

followed up 108 wellbeing concerns. This has continued in 2021, reaching an additional 451 residents.

Across our Peer Support provision, we have engaged 2081 student volunteers to support first year students. 476 hours of PASS is delivered each week to support the academic development of students, as well as 878 Peer Mentors reaching out and engaging with students to provide invaluable pastoral and study skills support.

Supported by the Emergency Hardship Fund, the University Library launched the Library Peer Network. This was an invitational space for students from widening participation backgrounds identified through their admissions data in foundation and first undergraduate year to join a digital network on MS Teams. The Library's Student Team with support from the Library's Teaching, Learning and Students staff facilitated a peer to peer network focusing on academic skills, professional development and pastoral support. They created bespoke resources for transition, exam and assessment support and advice for students from underrepresented backgrounds beginning their studies. 162 students joined the Teams space and received personalised support with 3228 visitors to the open access resources (<https://medium.com/library-peer-network>) in the last three months (Jan-Mar 2021).

The Manchester Institute for Teaching and Learning was established in October 2019. Supported by the Directorate for the Student Experience, the Institute coordinates a range of academic development programmes, projects and activities across the University. The Institute's core focus is on enhancing teaching quality, one of the five priorities for Teaching and Learning in the Our Future Strategic Plan and supports the University's commitment to address its degree-awarding gaps. During 2019/20 the Institute transitioned its programmes online, including the Institute Fellowships and Student Partner Internship Programme. 11 inaugural Fellows were appointed and themes included: addressing unexplained attainment gaps; student-staff partnerships in teaching and learning design and targeted support for commuter students. All Institute Fellows have worked with Student Partners and, in total, 36 Student Partners have been employed across Institute activity.

We want to ensure that our students are supported to succeed despite the extraordinary events of this academic year, which has been especially challenging. With the support of the Students' Union Executive Team, we have made a five-point assessment pledge to all of our taught students for the remainder of the 2020/21 academic year. This includes waiving resit fees, automatic extensions for up to two individual assignments or pieces of coursework and simplifying mitigating circumstances processes for students whose studies have been disrupted. We are also carrying out a review with exam boards to identify whether the marks for a whole year cohort were out of line with those from prior (non-COVID-19) years and where appropriate, marks will be scaled to bring them more in line with previous years' results. Similarly, the University also committed to identify cases where students' individual marks may be out of line with their achievements in this and previous years of their programme, and to discussing this with students to explore whether there may be mitigating circumstances.

Work is taking place to analyse the degree attainment of students in 2019/20 in order to understand what impact the changes we made to assessment have had on student outcomes. Initial analysis shows that the changes have had a positive impact on the outcomes for disabled students and we will be using this learning to develop our assessment practice and the work of the Institute of

Teaching and Learning's Online and Blended Learning (OBL) Assessment Group mentioned above. In particular, we intend to explore the impact of our no detriment policy and the increased number of online examinations.

The Institute for Teaching and Learning is supporting the work of the University's OBL (Online and Blended Assessment Group) and developing guidance for staff which draws on the Online Assessment Matrix that the Group has developed. For example, an initial OBL Assessment staff toolkit has been published and is available on the Institute website, and work is underway to develop this with colleagues sharing examples and case studies to provide further assistance to staff in the design and implementation of new assessment types.

Prior to the challenges associated to Covid-19, the University was preparing to pilot a new provision, Manchester 10/10, which enabled ethnicity targeting to engage students and improve student outcomes in relation to degree awarding gaps. Initial funding was being sought to develop the Manchester 10/10 idea and create a programme of support, with the initial aim of engaging 50 Black students and increasing the uptake of placements with partner employers. Due to the funding restrictions resulting from Covid-19 work, lockdown measures restricting the type of engagement with students and uncertainty with work placements, progress on this project has been slower than expected. Despite the significant challenges, the University is still committed to this project and has planned a number of pilot projects in 2021/22 supported by additional staff resource.

Student Progression

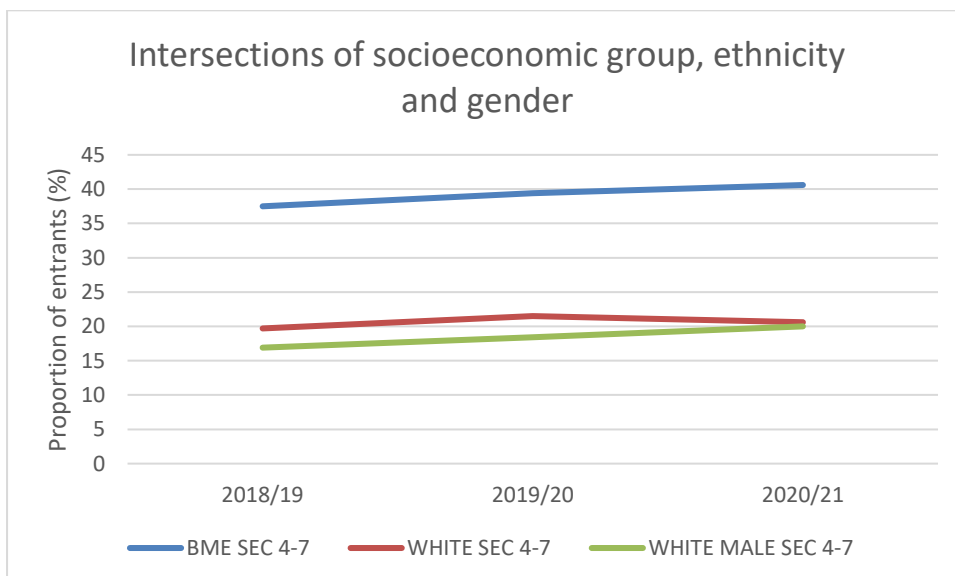
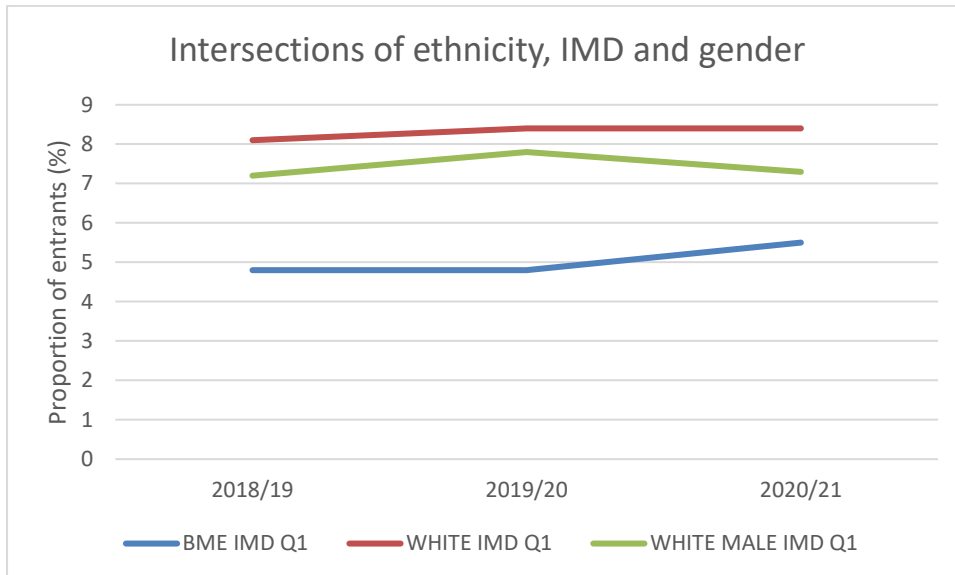
We have continued to deliver our targeted progression activities for WP students although some of these, for example the work experience bursaries, have been impacted by the availability of opportunities from employers. In 2020/21 we were able to offer an additional 25 Manchester Master's Bursaries through funding raised from donations to our Emergency Hardship Fund. This enabled us to support 100 students with a bursary of £4,000 who otherwise may not have been able to progress into further study.

Appendix 2

APP Access target - ratio of students from the most advantaged backgrounds (POLAR4 Quintile 5) compared with the most disadvantaged (POLAR4 Quintile 1)

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| POLAR4 Q5:1 ratio – targets | | | | 5 | 4.5 | 4 | 3.5 | 3 |
| POLAR4 Q5:Q1 ratio - actual (official) | 5.2 | 5.4 | 4.5 | | | | | |
| POLAR4 Q5:Q1 ratio - actual (internal) | 5.2 | 5.4 | 4.5 | 4.6 | | | | |
| POLAR4 Q1 intake official & target numbers | 385 | 350 | 440 | 400 | 444 | 500 | 571 | 667 |
| POLAR4 Q1 intake actuals - internal | 385 | 349 | 434 | 503 | | | | |

Intersections between ethnicity, gender and measures of disadvantage by year of entry



Degree awarding gap data for the University's student success APP targets

Degree awarding gap between Black and White students

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gap - White and Black students - baseline and targets | 11.6 | | | 11.3 | 11 | 10 | 8 | 5.8 |
| Gap - official APP data | 12 | 16 | 12 | | | | | |

Degree awarding gap between Asian and White students

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gap - white and Asian students | 10.6 | | | 10.3 | 10 | 9 | 7.8 | 5.3 |
| Gap - official APP data | 10 | 10 | 8 | | | | | |

Degree awarding gap between disabled students and students with no known disability

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gap - not disabled and disabled students | 4.4 | | | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Gap - official APP data | 4.4 | 5.6 | 2.1 | | | | | |

Degree awarding gap between the most and least disadvantaged as measured by IMD

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gap - IMD Q5 and IMD Q1 students | 10.4 | | | 10.1 | 9.8 | 8.8 | 7.6 | 5.2 |
| Gap IMG2019 - official APP data | 11 | 10 | 9 | | | | | |

| Lifecycle stage | APP target/commitment | Activity | Progress/impact |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| All | Embed APP priorities/data into the University's governance process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including APP data in APR process • Setting Faculty-level APP targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APP data is included in the Faculty APR data pack in order to inform the deep-dive meetings. • Faculty/School-level targets for the APP access ratio will be agreed by autumn 2021. Work will then take place to look at how this practice could be applied to the award gap targets. |
| All | Increase staff awareness of and engagement with WP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a staff development framework for WP • The publication of an institutional guide to WP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a staff survey and focus groups, an online, interactive introduction to WP is being developed with support from Staff Learning and Development. This will accompany a suite of resources available for staff to access from the WP SharePoint area. • Building on the existing WP corporate web pages, a web resource is being developed to increase awareness of and engagement with WP amongst staff, students, alumni, donors and external partners. |
| All | Target specific groups of students across the life-cycle as set out in our APP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to support specific target groups into and through university. | <p>As part of our commitment to develop targeted support for groups of students underrepresented in HE and UoM to increase access and improve outcomes we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made progress on our Stand Alone Pledge to support estranged students including a named contact; financial support via the UG Access Scholarship; staff training; • Committed to the Care Leaver Covenant, pledging support for care leavers throughout the student life-cycle; undertaking a pilot of the NNECL Quality Kite Mark • Partnered with the Cowrie Foundation to offer 3 scholarships over 10 years to Black students from 2022 entry which includes mentoring for current students. FSE have made a matched commitment which will increase the number of targeted scholarships to 6. |

| | | | |
|---------|---|--|--|
| Access | Achieve a 3:1 ratio of POLAR4 Q5 and Q1 students by 2024/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of contextual admissions • Increased awareness of access initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the University introduced contextual lower offers in 2019 the number of students receiving a contextual offer has increased. A Task and Finish Group chaired by Prof Steve Jones put forward recommendations for changes to contextual admissions for 2022 entry which have been approved by PRC. These recommendations are supported by the recent Sutton Trust report published in May.¹¹ • To increase awareness of our contextual admissions offers and access initiatives we have delivered social media campaigns and webinars through Access Manchester¹² and targeted offer-holder communications highlighting our student support offer. |
| Access | Achieve a 3:1 ratio of POLAR4 Q5 and Q1 students by 2024/25 | Review Foundation Years and contribution to WP | FSE and BMH have committed to review their existing Foundation Years and how these contribute to the University's WP intake. FSE has established a Task and Finish Group led by Prof Simon Rowland and BMH included this as one of their APP priorities. |
| Access | To work in collaboration targeting specific groups of students as set out in APP and to achieve a 3:1 ratio of POLAR4 Q5 and Q1 students by 2024/25 | Set collaborative targets through the Greater Manchester Higher partnership | In order to fulfil our role as a civic institution and contribute to the HE pipeline, the University committed to setting collaborative targets by the end of 2020/21. These are being overseen by the Greater Manchester Higher Governance Structure. |
| Success | To reduce the degree awarding gaps between specific groups of students | Development of Student Success interventions which are designed to improve the student experience, particularly transition. | Manchester 10/10 timelines are being finalised for pilot project delivery in 21/22. This project will deliver a sustained programme of interventions to targeted groups of students starting with Black students. This includes a collaborative project with the Black Solicitors Network. To resource this work, an Officer from the central WP team has been working with Teaching and Learning to lead the delivery of pilot projects. |

¹¹ <https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/measuring-up-contextual-admissions/>

¹² <http://www.access.manchester.ac.uk/>

| | | | |
|---------|--|---|---|
| Success | To reduce unexplained attainment gap and contribute to improving retention rates. | Develop institutional approach to learning analytics | Manchester 360 remains in the relatively early stages, but the work is now beginning to progress. 3 Student Partner Interns are being recruited to support the development of Manchester 360 over the summer. |
| Success | Deliver a transformative learning experiences so reducing the degree awarding gaps between specific groups of students | Establish Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL) and enhance teaching | <p>The Institute of Teaching and Learning is now in its second year of operation delivering a programme of academic development activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership in Education Awards programme (accredited by AdvanceHE) • Leaders in Teaching • Institutional coordination of the New Academics Programme (accredited by AdvanceHE) • AdvanceHE national awards pipeline • Academic Staff Training Network • Practitioner Communities including Academic Advising • Institute Fellowships <p>In addition the Institute manages a range of other initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sector insight reviews • Institutional thematic reviews (e.g Accessible Education, Stellify) • OneHE Global Benchmarking for Academic Advising • Development and delivery of teaching and academic development resources • Inclusive education framework development <p>The Institute's portfolio is fully aligned to Our Future and directed by the AVP TLS (Inclusivity and Engagement)</p> |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| Success | To reduce unexplained attainment gap and contribute to improving retention rates. | Establishment of student support coordinator posts in Humanities | Coordinators are in place and have been monitoring student engagement. This has been particularly beneficial during the pandemic and has led to early interventions to support students who have been struggling, particularly in relation to their mental health. |
| Progression | Develop a Careers Service WP operational plan to ensure actions are in place for engaging with all target groups outlined in the APP and that key relationships and mechanisms are in place for working with internal stakeholders to support a lifecycle approach. | Target specific groups of students across lifecycle as set out in APP | The Careers Service are producing action plans for all the cohorts identified in the APP Progression Priorities (these are dynamic documents produced in collaboration with all Careers Service colleagues including Student Partner Interns with a principle of co-creation.) BAME student action plan is now being utilised and links with the 10/10 initiative as mentioned above. Action plans for Disability and LGBTQ+ are underway and these plans include the use of theories of change for evaluating the impact of interventions. |
| Progression | Develop an enhanced offer for disabled graduates. | Reduce any the gaps in graduate outcomes between groups of students | Careers Service Disabled Student Services review and key actions completed. Activity under development for Semester 2 webinar programme for disabled final year students/recent graduates. |