

Coventry University Group

Access and participation plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

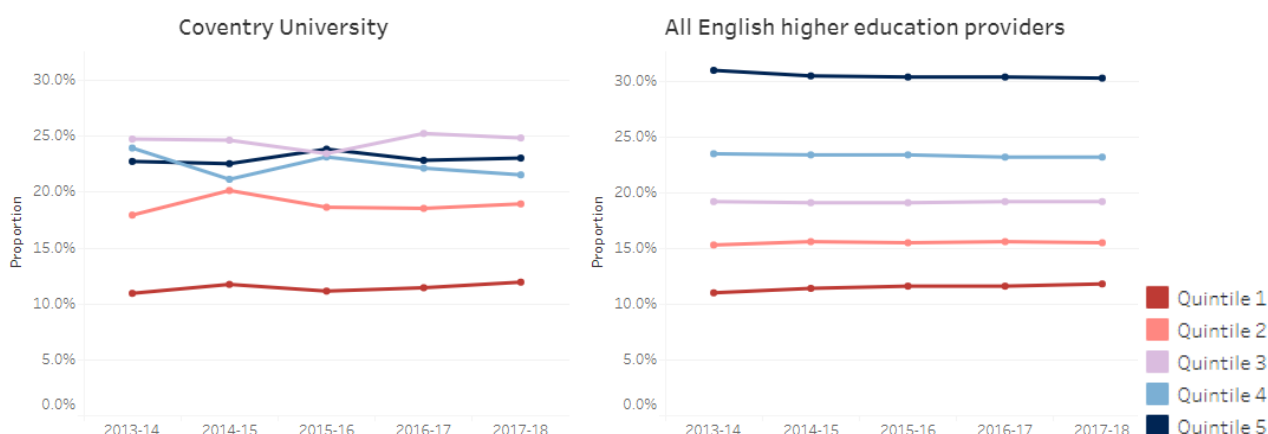
Our assessment of performance draws upon a range of sources, including the OfS access and participation dataset, UK Performance Indicators (UKPIs), UCAS and HESA datasets and analysis, Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) data, “core” and “split” metrics and other relevant published research. We have considered our own position and progress over time, both within the national context¹ and in relation to the OfS access and participation key performance measures. Our analysis within this Access and Participation Plan (APP) focuses on full-time first degree students², reflecting our profile.

Our performance in the following metrics demonstrates that Coventry University Group has a strong record in widening access, success and participation. At the same time, it identifies areas that we seek to address through our strategic aims and investment.

1.1 HE participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

In 2017/18 the proportion of full-time first degree entrants to Coventry University Group from the lowest areas of participation (POLAR4 quintile 1) was 11.9%. This is similar to the sector level of 11.8%.³ The graph below shows the rates of participation for each POLAR4 quintile for all full-time first degree entrants for Coventry University Group compared to the sector. The gap between the proportion of entrants from Quintile 5 (Q5) and Quintile 1 (Q1) at Coventry University Group is around 12 percentage points, compared to a gap of 20 percentage points at sector level. Coventry University Group has a higher proportion of entrants from POLAR4 Quintile 2 (Q2). Coventry University Group also attracts a higher proportion of entrants from Quintile 3 (Q3) and a lower proportion of entrants from the highest areas of participation compared to the sector.



The OfS Key Performance Measures (KPM 1&2) focus on the gaps in access between entrants from the most (Q5) and least (Q1) represented areas. At Coventry University Group the gap in access between full-time first degree entrants from Q5 and Q1 is a ratio of 1.9:1. This ratio is lower than that for all institutions at sector level where the gap is a ratio of 2.6:1 meaning that over two and a half times as many entrants come from the highest areas of participation, than from the lowest areas of participation.

¹ The term sector is used in this analysis and is taken to include all English HE providers

² We refer to the term full-time. This will include “full-time or apprenticeship” students when in relation to the APP dataset

³ APP dataset “Access - POLAR4 full-time first degree entrants”.

The proportion of Q1 entrants (aged 18) to Coventry University Group (11.6%) is low compared to the 18.1% of 18 year olds in the population from Q1, but Coventry University Group's proportion of entrants from Q5 is broadly similar to the distribution in the 18 year old population at 23.8%. The Group also attracts a similar proportion of Q2 students and a slightly higher proportion of Q3 and Q4 students compared to the 18 year old population.

Taking our profile in comparison to the 18 year old population into account, the gap we are aiming to reduce is the gap between entrants from the most represented groups (Q3-5) and least represented group (Q1). This is currently a ratio of 5.8:1 for full-time first degree students compared to a ratio of 6.2:1 at sector level. The position is similar when including all undergraduate provision, where Coventry University Group has a ratio of 5.7:1 compared to 6.0:1 at sector level between entrants from Q3-5 compared to Q1. The ratio of POLAR4 Q3-5 to Q1 in the 18 year old population is 3.5:1. We aim to reduce the gap and **have set a target which reflects this aim.**

The **UCAS Multiple Equality Measure (MEM)** brings together information on several equality dimensions for which large differences in the probability of progression into Higher Education (HE) exist. These include gender, ethnic group, POLAR3 classification, secondary education school sector (state or private) and income background based on free school meals (FSM). The MEM indicates the likelihood of pupils from the most advantaged group applying to and being placed at Coventry University Group, compared with those from the most disadvantaged group. Between 2013 and 2017 Coventry University Group's ratio was consistently better than the sector average. In 2017, placed applicants at Coventry University Group were 2.8 times as likely to come from advantaged groups. This compares with *all UK providers*, where placed applicants were 3.8 times as likely to come from advantaged groups.⁴

The **POLAR Gini index**⁵ provides "a measure of inequality that goes beyond simply reporting POLAR 1 and 2 rates".⁶ The index provides a measure of relative rather than absolute inequality, and indicates that Coventry University Group has a relatively low level of inequality compared to the sector based on the POLAR distribution for UG admissions in 2016, with a coefficient of below sector average.

Success

Non-continuation

The APP dataset reveals persistent and statistically significant continuation, attainment and progression rate gaps at sector level between the POLAR4 quintiles of lowest and highest participation, comparing Q1 to Q5 and comparing Q1&2 to Q3,4&5.

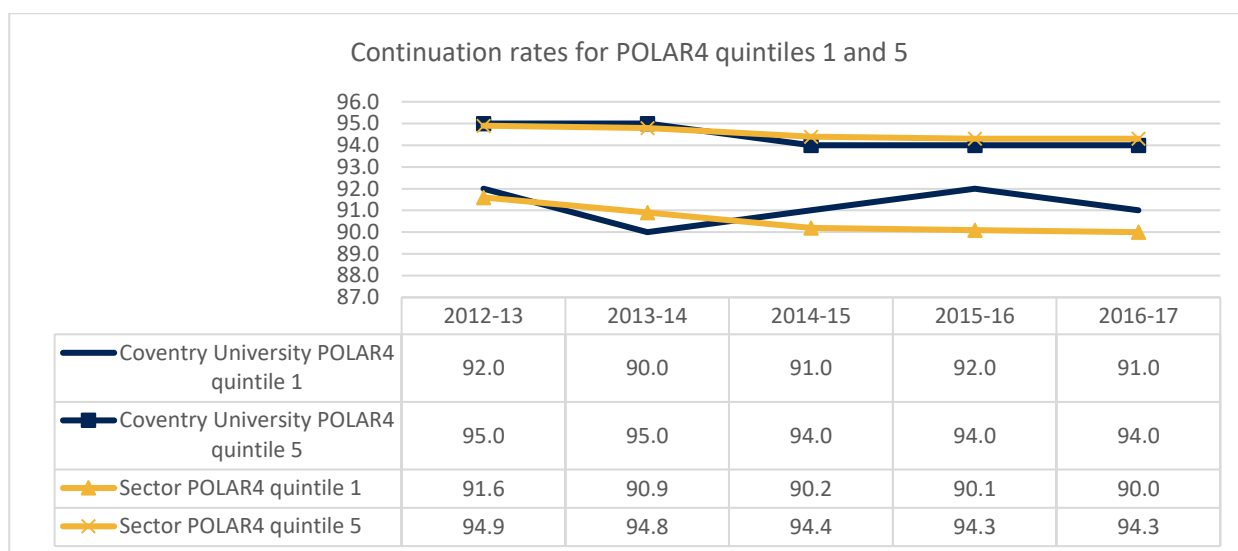
At Coventry University Group there are **no statistically significant gaps** between quintiles for continuation. The continuation rate in 2016/17 for students from the lowest participation neighbourhoods at Coventry University Group was 91%. This is slightly higher than the sector level of 90%. The Group's resulting continuation rate gap of 3 percentage points on average over the last 5 years is smaller than the sector gap of 5 percentage points and, unlike at sector level during the last 5 years, the Group's continuation gap has not been considered statistically significant.⁷ This does not mean that there is no difference, only that there is not enough information to be confident that the difference is important and not the result of chance and random variation.

⁴ The UCAS MEM Group 5: Group 1 ratio of placed applicants per 10,000 population provides a useful indication of assessing any gap in representation at provider level, showing how many times more likely pupils from the most advantaged group (MEM Group 5) are to enter a provider than those from the most disadvantaged group (MEM Group 1).

⁵ Published by the HE Policy Institute (HEPI).

⁶ "Benchmarking widening participation: how should we measure and report progress?" Professor Iain Martin, Vice Chancellor of Anglia Ruskin University, HEPI Policy Note 6, April 2018.

⁷ APP dataset "Continuation - full-time first degree entrants".



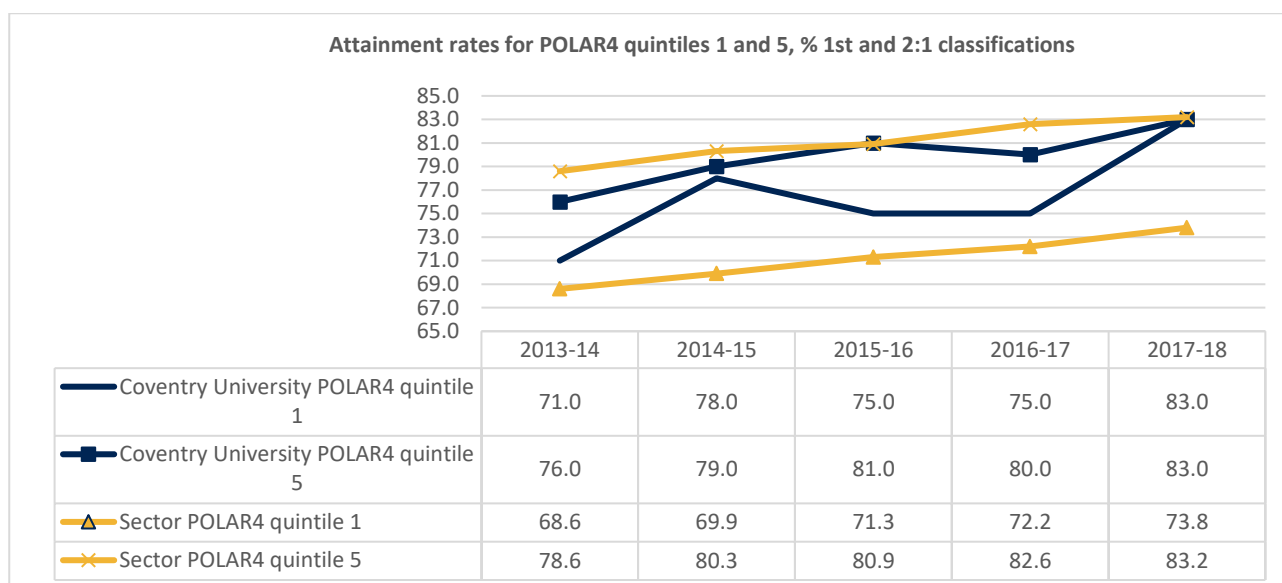
The UKPIs related to the “non-continuation” of entrants from LPNs allow us to compare against benchmarks set for Coventry University Group taking into account some of the factors that are known to contribute to differences in performance. Factors include subject of study, qualifications on entry and age on entry (young or mature). Comparing our performance in relation to the UKPI benchmarks shows that there are no unexplained gaps in continuation for students from the lowest participation neighbourhoods. We have, in fact, outperformed our benchmarks during the past three years. The latest experimental UKPIs which use POLAR4 data show that only 8.7% of students from a LPN did not continue in HE after their year of entry in 2016/17, compared to our benchmark of 10.2%.⁸ We have not set a target in this area, but we will seek to maintain this strong position compared to benchmark.

Attainment

In 2017/18 there was **no gap in attainment** at Coventry University Group between full-time first degree students from LPNs (Q1) compared to the highest participation neighbourhoods (Q5), with 83% of students from both quintiles obtaining a 1st or 2:1 degree classification⁹. Similarly, data for the previous four years at Coventry has shown very small (and not statistically significant) gaps in attainment between the POLAR4 quintiles. This is in contrast to the sector which has had statistically significant gaps of around 10 percentage points during the same period, as shown in the chart below.

⁸ UKPI Experimental Table 3b “Non-continuation following year of entry, full-time, young, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods” (POLAR4).

⁹ APP dataset “Attainment - full-time first degree entrants”.



Although there is no attainment gap across POLAR 4 students at Coventry University Group, our performance analysis using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) confirms an identifiable gap, as in the wider sector, between those students from the most and least deprived areas of England between *IMD* Q1 and Q5. Our gaps are lower than sector levels and have started to show improvement over the last three years. Our strategic measures are designed to take into account multiple and intersections of disadvantage. We have not set a target based on IMD.

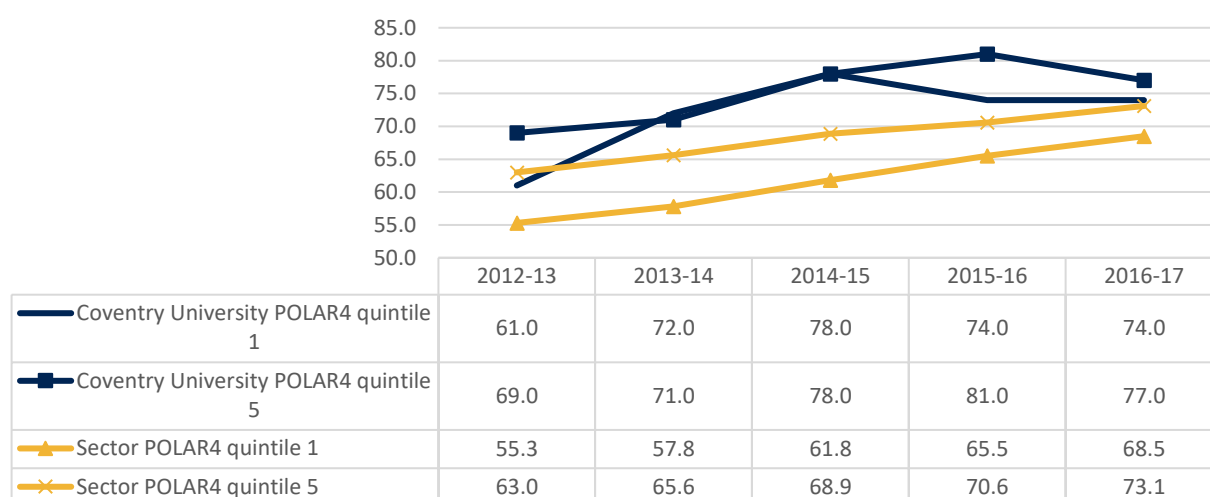
| Attainment rates full-time first degree qualifiers by IMD | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | Quintile 1 % | 68 | 68 | 67 | 71 | 74 |
| | Quintile 5 % | 79 | 84 | 85 | 87 | 90 |
| Sector | Quintile 1 % | 61.3 | 61.9 | 63.1 | 65 | 66.3 |
| | Quintile 5 % | 79.3 | 81 | 82.2 | 83.4 | 84.4 |
| Coventry University - percentage point attainment gap | | 11 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 15 |
| Sector percentage point attainment gap (red statistically significant) | | 17.9 | 19.1 | 19.1 | 18.4 | 18 |

Progression to employment or further study

Similar to continuation and attainment, there are statistically significant gaps at sector level in the progression rates to employment or further study between students from the lowest and highest participation neighbourhoods. Using POLAR4, the sector gap has remained at 6 percentage points on average during the last 5 years with no significant change during the period. At Coventry University Group the picture is less stark. Between 2013/14 and 2014/15 the gap was minimal at less than 1 percentage point difference. No years of data for the Group were statistically significant.¹⁰

¹⁰ APP dataset "Progression to Employment or further study - full-time first degree".

Progression to employment or further study rates for POLAR4 quintiles 1 and 5



We have also reviewed the progression rates of our students by IMD quintile, with a particular focus on the differences between students from IMD Q1 and Q5. Whilst we recognise that there are gaps for progression between IMD Q1 and Q5, the recent gaps are not statistically significant, unlike at sector level. We will continue to include consideration of IMD in our onward analysis and monitoring, and keep this under review.

Using an alternative measure, our “core” Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) year 4 metric for all full-time students progressing to “employment or further study” was 96.2% and our percentage of full-time students progressing to “highly skilled employment or further study” 80.3%. Both indicators are marked with ++ double positive flags, which suggests that we do not have gaps in overall progression to employment compared to our benchmarks. The split TEF metric for students from the lowest participation (POLAR) quintiles (Q1&2 combined) also shows that rates of progression are significantly above benchmark, with ++ positive flags for both progression to “employment or further study” at 95.3%, and “highly skilled employment or further study” at 77.7%.¹¹ We have not, therefore, set a target in this area.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

Coventry’s proportion of UK domiciled full-time first degree BAME entrants aged 18 increased from 49.3% to 51.3% between 2013/14 and 2017/18. Our proportion of BAME entrants has been consistently above the proportion of BAME 18-year-olds in the population by an average of 34 percentage points over the last 5 years, and above the HE sector percentage by an average of 25 percentage points.¹² Our proportion of 18-year-old entrants from minority ethnic groups is higher (statistically significant) than the proportion in the 18-year-old population for each group, with positive gaps shown when compared to the HE sector percentages, particularly for Black and Asian¹³ students, as shown in the table below. We have not, therefore, set a target in this area.

¹¹ Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework: The TEF Year Four metrics 10/01/2019. A ++ positive flag shows an indicator if above benchmark at the 3 standard deviation and 3 percentage point level in TEF core/split metrics.

¹² APP dataset “Access - full-time first degree entrants”.

¹³ Ethnicity is aligned to ONS definitions, Asian includes “Asian or Asian British – Indian, Asian or Asian British – Pakistani, Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi, Chinese and other Asian backgrounds”.

| Full-time first degree entrants by Ethnicity | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University % Black entrants | 22.2 | 20.1 | 18.3 | 19.5 | 18.5 |
| Sector % Black entrants | 5.8 | 6.1 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.6 |
| % Black in Population | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| Coventry University % Asian entrants | 21.1 | 22.9 | 22.6 | 25.4 | 24.9 |
| Sector % Asian entrants | 11.8 | 12.3 | 12.8 | 13.5 | 14.3 |
| % Asian in Population | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.2 |

Success

Non-continuation

There are minimal gaps in continuation rates at Coventry University Group for full-time first degree entrants when looking at ethnicity between White students and BAME students, and comparing White and Black, and White and Asian students. For each group the gap has been close to zero percentage points on average over the last three and 5 years. This is in contrast to the sector, where there are significant and persistent gaps in continuation between White students and BAME students (over 2 percentage points) and between White students and Black students (over 5pp) and smaller gaps for White and Asian students (less than 1 percentage point) on average during the last 5 years.¹⁴ Due to our strong performance we have not set a target in this area.

Attainment

In 2017/18 the percentage of BAME students awarded a first or upper second class (good honours) degree from Coventry University Group was 74.1% compared to a sector figure of 67.6%. Over the last 5 years the percentage of BAME students awarded good honours at Coventry University Group has increased by 6.6 percentage points - a similar rate to the sector increase of 6.1 percentage points during the same 5 year time period. In 2017/18, 87.3% of White students at Coventry University Group were awarded good honours compared to 81.3% at sector level; the rate of growth has been slightly higher than at sector level, and higher than the rate of growth for BAME students at 7.3 percentage points over the period. 70% of Black students, 75% of Asian students and 78% of mixed ethnicity students at Coventry University Group achieved a good honours classification in 2017/18, compared to 58.1%, 70.5% and 77.1% respectively at sector level. Growth in attainment across the Group has been in line with, and slightly above, sector levels over the 5 year period for both Black students and Asian students (at 6 or more percentage points since 2013/14 levels). For mixed ethnicities, Coventry University Group's position has remained broadly similar across the period, during which time the sector position has improved to within one percentage point of Coventry University Group.¹⁵ Notwithstanding the strong outcomes of BAME students at Coventry University Group compared to the sector, we recognise that there are significant absolute gaps between Black, Asian and other minority ethnic students and their White peers across the Group.

Both Coventry University Group and the sector have statistically significant gaps between the proportion of White and Black students and White and Asian students obtaining "Good honours", and there has been no significant change to the gap during the period. In 2017/18 the absolute gap in attainment at Coventry University Group between White and Black qualifiers was 17 percentage points, compared to 23.2 percentage points at sector level, and between White and Asian qualifiers 12 percentage points, compared to 10.8 percentage points at sector level.

¹⁴ APP dataset "Continuation - full-time first degree students, continuation after year of entry".

¹⁵ APP dataset "Attainment - full-time first degree students".

In order to better understand the attainment gap and support the delivery of OfS KPMs relating to disparity of attainment, we will be introducing a value-added metric¹⁶ which will support our focus to eliminate unexplained gaps by 2024/25 for all ethnicities. We anticipate that this approach will enable us to focus on institutional factors that may contribute to differential attainment having accounted for the effects of entry qualification and subject of study.

Using a value-added score based on the Kingston model, we find that our Asian students are achieving in line or slightly above expectation, with an average value-added score of 1.02, for the years of known data (2013/14, 2014/15 and 2016/17). In contrast, the average value-added score for Black students is 0.91 for the years of known data (2013/14, 2014/15 and 2016/17). **We have set a target which supports our own, and the sector's, ambition of eliminating this gap by 2024/25 and we have set associated targets designed to support the elimination of absolute gaps by 2030/31.**

Progression to employment or further study

As shown in the table below,¹⁷ the proportion of BAME and White graduates entering positive destinations from Coventry University Group has been consistently higher than the sector rate during recent years. The proportion of both BAME and White students progressing to a positive destination at Coventry University Group has increased over the past four or 5 years of available data. In the most recent year, 74.5% of BAME students and 82.7% of White students progressed to a "positive destination" from the Group in comparison to the sector, where a lower proportion, 67.9% of BAME students and 73.2% of White students, progressed to employment or further study.

| Full-time first degree students' % progression to employment or further study by ethnicity | | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | BAME % | - | 67.0 | 72.0 | 75.4 | 74.5 |
| | White % | 71.6 | 74.5 | 82.1 | 82.3 | 82.7 |
| Sector | BAME % | 53.0 | 57.7 | 63.0 | 64.9 | 67.9 |
| | White % | 62.4 | 65.0 | 68.2 | 70.5 | 73.2 |
| Coventry University - percentage point progression gap | | - | 8.0 | 10.0 | 7.0 | 8.2 |
| Sector percentage point progression gap ((red statistically significant)) | | 9.4 | 7.3 | 5.2 | 5.6 | 5.3 |

Despite this strong relative position, the data identifies some statistically significant gaps at the Group in two of the four years with known data, which suggests that the **absolute gaps** in progression to employment or further study between BAME students and White students at the Group may not be due to chance or random variation. At sector level the gaps have remained significant throughout the period.

In comparison, Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF year 4) split metrics suggest that the progression of full-time students into "employment or further study" and "highly skilled employment or further study" is strong for both BAME students and White students. Both indicators for BAME students against benchmark have a ++positive flag,¹⁸ which suggests that **taking benchmarked factors into account there are no unexplained gaps in progression**. Similarly, the supplementary Longitudinal Employment Outcomes (LEO) metrics, released as part of the TEF, do not identify a significant difference to TEF benchmark for Coventry University Group between BAME students or White students for progression to "sustained employment or further study". The supplementary LEO metrics calculate that 84.3% of BAME students, compared to a benchmark

¹⁶ The Kingston model value-added score is calculated for a full-time first degree cohort of students and takes into account student entry qualifications and their subject of study to create a probability that a cohort will achieve a 1st or 2:1 degree. If attainment is in line with this expectation then the cohort receive a value-added score of 1, if attainment is lower than expected the value-added score is proportionately below 1.0 and higher than 1.0 if attainment is above the expected level.

¹⁷ APP Dataset "Progression to employment or further study - full-time first degree".

¹⁸ Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework: The TEF Year 4 metrics 10/01/2019. A ++ positive flag shows an indicator if above benchmark at the 3 standard deviation and 3 percentage point level in TEF core/split metrics.

of 82.3%, progress into “sustained employment or further study”. Using the same measure, 90.0% of White students progress, compared to a benchmark of 88.3%.¹⁹

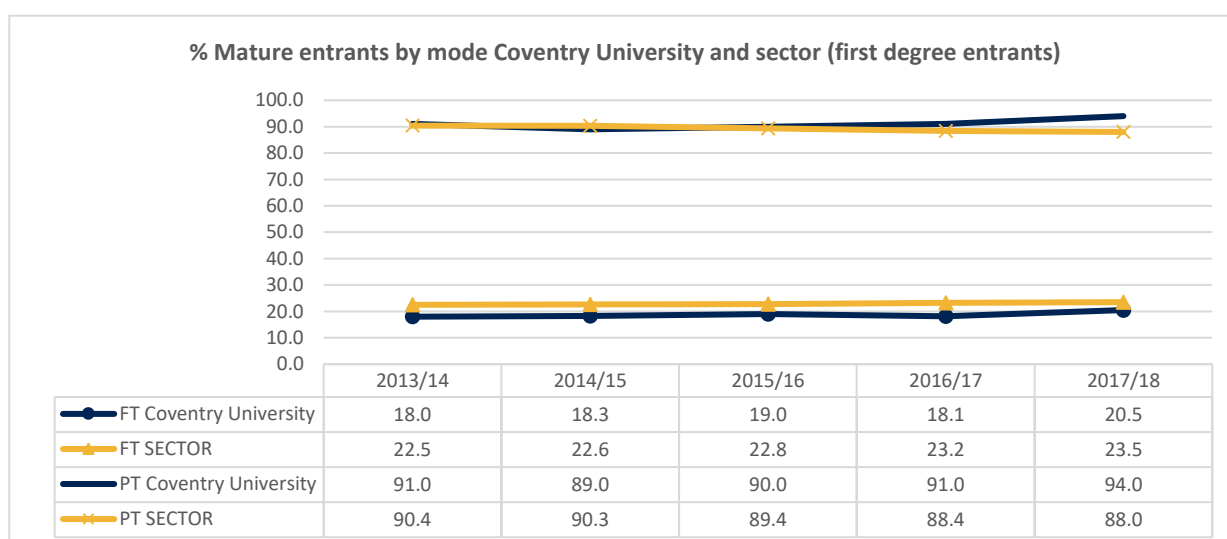
It is our intention to continue to monitor our employability record to identify and understand any gaps using the new Graduate Outcomes survey. This will report for the first time in 2020. In the meantime, **we have set a target to reduce the absolute gap between BAME students and White students by 2024/25.**

1.3 Mature students

Access

The table below illustrates that Coventry University Group has a slightly lower proportion of full-time first degree entrants who are mature (21+) than the sector. In 2017/18, 20.5% of the Group’s full-time entrants were mature (21+) compared to 23.5% at sector level. However, Coventry University Group’s proportion of full-time mature first degree entrants has increased by 2.4 percentage points since 2013/14. The sector proportion, in comparison has increased by 1 percentage point.

In 2017/18, 94% of our **part-time entrants** to first degree programmes were mature, in contrast to 88% at sector level. Comparing Coventry University Group to the sector, the difference in the proportion of full-time and part-time mature students accessing HE is small. We have not therefore set a target in this area, but will continue to monitor our progress.



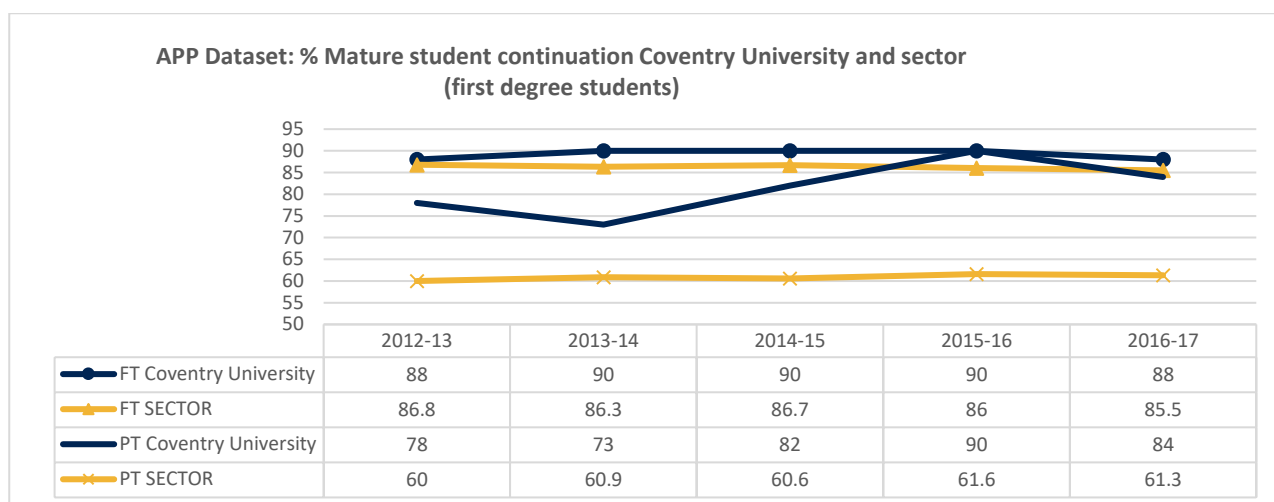
Success

Non-continuation

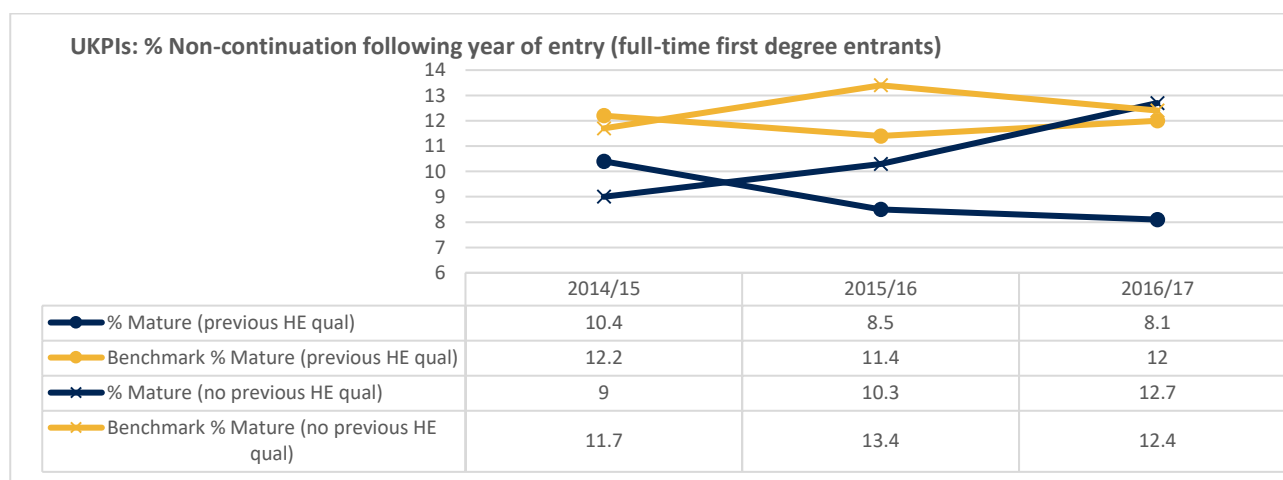
Continuation rates for full- and part-time mature first degree students have been consistently higher than sector rates over the last 5 years, and the continuation gap at Coventry University Group between mature and young students has only been statistically significant in one year (2012/13). This is in contrast to the statistically significant gaps which have persisted at sector level during the same period. At Coventry University Group, 89% of mature students continue on average during the 5 year period, compared to a sector average of 86%.²⁰ We aim to maintain these strong continuation rates for our mature students.

¹⁹ Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF year 4) supplementary LEO metrics for Coventry University, 10/01/2019.

²⁰ APP dataset “Continuation- full-time first degree entrants - by age Mature (21+ on entry)”.



Our absolute continuation gap identified by the APP dataset for mature students compared with young students at Coventry University Group has not been statistically significant in the most recent four-year period (with an average 3.7 percentage point gap). In addition, our UKPI for non-continuation following year of entry for mature full-time first degree entrants indicates that compared to our UKPI Benchmark figures, using either published or experimental statistics, our non-continuation rates for mature students have tended to be lower than our benchmark. This is true for mature students either with or without a previous HE qualification, apart from in 2016/17 where we slightly exceeded our benchmark position for the non-continuation of mature full-time first degree entrants who had no previous HE qualification.²¹ Overall, our TEF split metrics have positive flags for continuation for full-time mature students.²²



We have also considered part-time mature students. Our analysis here shows that the gap identified in the APP dataset between part-time young and mature students (across all undergraduates) was not statistically significant in the most recent three years' data. Furthermore, the part-time young continuation rate across all undergraduates is based on such a statistically small number of students that the 90% continuation rate could appear high and may lack confidence for comparison against the part-time rates for mature students. When compared with the sector average of 61.3%, the part-time mature continuation rate across first degree courses at Coventry University Group is high at 84%. We have not set a target related to mature students but we will continue to monitor our performance.

²¹ UKPI Experimental statistics: Table 3c (i): Non-continuation following year of entry: Mature Full-time first degree entrants, no longer in HE with a previous HE qualification and Table 3c (ii): Non-continuation following year of entry: Mature Full-time first degree entrants, no longer in HE with no previous HE qualification.

²² Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework: The TEF Year Four metrics 10/01/2019.

Attainment

Analysis of the APP dataset shows that there are only very small gaps for full-time qualifiers at Coventry University Group who were either mature or young on entry to their programme. In 2017/18 the attainment gap was less than 1 percentage point. 81% of mature students achieved a 1st or 2:1 classification compared to 81.6% of young students. The Group has had an average gap of 2.4 percentage points over the last 5 years and the gaps have not been statistically significant during the period. This is in contrast to the sector, where the gap has been consistently high, with around a 9 percentage point difference between attainment for mature and young students during the same period.²³ We have also identified that whilst we have a relatively low number of part-time first degree students at Coventry University Group, a significantly higher proportion of our part-time first degree qualifiers who were mature on entry achieve a 1st or 2:1 compared to part-time students who were young on entry to their degree programme. In 2017/18, 72% of our part-time mature students achieved a “good honours” classification compared to 57.7% at sector level.²⁴ We have not, therefore, included a target in this area.

Progression to employment or further study

At Coventry University Group and across the sector there is a progression to employment gap in favour of mature students. This is likely, in part, to be due to mature students who are studying while working already having an employment track record to list on their CV, or studying for a degree that leads directly to a professional role. In both young and mature age groups, the proportion of Coventry University Group students progressing to a positive destination is higher than across the sector as a whole. At Coventry University Group 76.9% of young students and 88% of mature students progressed to a positive destination in 2016/17, while across the sector 71% of young students and 75.8% of mature students progressed to a positive destination in the same year.²⁵ The table below demonstrates an ongoing and strong position for the Group in supporting students into employment at above sector rates for students from both groups, young or mature, on entry to HE.

| Full-time first degree students % progression to employment or further study comparing Mature (21+) and Young (U21) | | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | Mature (21+) % | 79 | 76 | 82 | 85 | 88 |
| | Young (U21) % | 65.9 | 70.3 | 76.4 | 77.7 | 76.9 |
| Sector | Mature (21+) % | 64.7 | 68.2 | 71.6 | 73.2 | 75.8 |
| | Young (U21) % | 59.5 | 62.3 | 65.9 | 68.2 | 71 |
| Coventry University - percentage point progression gap | | -13 | -6 | -6 | -8 | -12 |
| Sector percentage point progression gap ((red statistically significant)) | | -5.2 | -5.9 | -5.7 | -5 | -4.9 |
| Difference Coventry University & Sector | Mature (21+) | 14.3 | 7.8 | 10.4 | 11.8 | 12.2 |
| | Young (U21) | 6.4 | 8 | 10.5 | 9.5 | 5.9 |

Positive flags (in relation to TEF benchmarks) in our latest published TEF split metrics for highly skilled employment or further study also suggest that across mature and young students we maintain a strong position for employability.²⁶ We will continue to monitor our employability record and identify and understand gaps as part of our monitoring processes and using the Graduate Outcomes survey which will report for the first time in 2020.

²³ APP dataset “Attainment - full-time first degree qualifiers”.

²⁴ APP dataset “Attainment - part-time first degree qualifiers”.

²⁵ APP dataset “Progression to employment or further study - full-time first degree”.

²⁶ Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework: The TEF Year Four metrics 10/01/2019.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

In 2017/18, 11.1% of full-time first degree entrants declared a disability compared to 14.8% across the sector.²⁷ We have had a consistently lower proportion of disabled entrants compared to the sector over the last 5 years. Whilst our proportion of disabled students has increased over the last 5 years, it has not been at a high enough rate to close the gap.

| Proportion of full-time first degree entrants declaring a disability | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University % | 9.0 | 9.4 | 10.9 | 10.0 | 11.1 |
| Sector % | 11.7 | 12.5 | 13.2 | 13.9 | 14.8 |
| Percentage point gap: Coventry University vs. Sector | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 3.9 | 3.7 |

The table below shows the proportions by type of disability at Coventry University Group compared to the sector.

| Proportion of full-time first degree entrants by disability 2017/18 | Coventry University | Sector | Percentage point difference |
|---|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| No known disability | 88.9 | 85.2 | 3.7 |
| Disabled | 11.1 | 14.8 | -3.7 |
| Cognitive and Learning | 3.7 | 5.6 | -1.9 |
| Mental Health | 2.4 | 3.8 | -1.4 |
| Sensory Medical and Physical | 1.7 | 2.2 | -0.5 |
| Multiple Impairments | 2.2 | 2.4 | -0.2 |
| Social and Communication | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0.1 |

Our UK Performance Indicator for percentage of students in receipt of Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) has been an average of 4% (during the last 3 years). This is 2.6 percentage points lower than our average benchmark of 6.6% during the same period.²⁸ **We are including a target to close the gap in access for disabled students** within this APP in response to our performance to date.

Success

Non-continuation

As shown in the table below, continuation rates for disabled students have been high during the last 5 years, where the percentage point gap in continuation rates between disabled and non-disabled students has been 1 percentage point or less. The latest analysis shows that 93% of disabled students at Coventry University Group continued in the year following entry (2016/17) compared to 91.9% for students with no known disability.²⁹ This is in contrast to sector figures where there are relatively small but statistically significant gaps throughout the equivalent period. We have not, therefore, included a target for this area.

²⁷ APP dataset "Access - full-time first degree entrants".

²⁸ Table 7a (i): Participation of UK domiciled students in HE who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA): all undergraduates (full time, first degree). Experimental statistics.

²⁹ APP dataset "Continuation - full-time first degree".

| Continuation rates full-time first degree entrants by disability | | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | Disabled % | 92.0 | 92.0 | 94.0 | 91.0 | 93.0 |
| | No known disability% | 92.7 | 92.7 | 93.0 | 92.0 | 91.9 |
| Sector | Disabled % | 90.9 | 90.8 | 90.7 | 90.2 | 90.3 |
| | No known disability % | 92.1 | 91.7 | 91.6 | 91.2 | 91.1 |
| Coventry University - percentage point continuation gap | | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | -1.0 |
| Sector percentage point continuation gap ((red statistically significant)) | | 1.2 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.8 |

The table below shows the continuation rates by type of disability at Coventry University Group compared to the sector.

| Continuation rates full-time first degree entrants by disability | Coventry University | Sector | Percentage point difference |
|--|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| No known disability | 91.9 | 91.1 | 0.8 |
| Disabled | 93.0 | 90.3 | 2.7 |
| Cognitive and Learning | 93.0 | 92.4 | 0.6 |
| Mental Health | 91.0 | 87.7 | 3.3 |
| Sensory Medical and Physical | 94.0 | 89.9 | 4.1 |
| Multiple Impairments | 95.0 | 89.4 | 5.6 |
| Social and Communication | DP | 88.9 | |

Attainment

Our assessment using the APP dataset suggests that Coventry University Group has not generally had an attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students. The gap has been 1.4 percentage points on average over the last 5 years. This is in contrast to the sector where there are persistent and statistically significant gaps during the same period.

| Attainment rates full-time first degree qualifiers by disability | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | Disabled % | 74.0 | 76.0 | 78.0 | 77.0 | 76.0 |
| | No Known Disability % | 75.1 | 76.1 | 76.4 | 79.1 | 82.1 |
| Sector | Disabled % | 70.1 | 71.5 | 72.7 | 74.0 | 75.2 |
| | No Known Disability % | 73.4 | 74.4 | 75.4 | 76.8 | 77.8 |
| Coventry University - percentage point gap | | 1.0 | 0.0 | -2.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 |
| Sector - percentage point gap (red statistically significant) | | 3.3 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.6 |

We are mindful that the data shows a gap in 2017/18 of 6 percentage points, which whilst not statistically significant, and possibly the result of chance and random variation, is something that we are concerned to monitor.

The table below shows attainment rates by type of disability at Coventry University Group compared to the sector.

| Attainment rates full-time first degree qualifiers by disability | Coventry University | Sector | Percentage point difference |
|--|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| No known disability | 82.1 | 77.8 | 4.3 |
| Disabled | 76.0 | 75.2 | 0.8 |
| Cognitive and Learning | 73.0 | 74.7 | -1.7 |
| Mental Health | 73.0 | 76.8 | -3.8 |
| Sensory Medical and Physical | 86.0 | 76.3 | 9.7 |
| Multiple Impairments | 74.0 | 74.6 | -0.6 |
| Social and Communication | 80.0 | 70.8 | 9.2 |

The 6 percentage point attainment gap between disabled students and those with no known disability in 2017/18 is mostly reflected in the lower attainment rates across those students with cognitive and learning, mental health or multiple impairments.

Prior to 2017/18 we had small gaps across Coventry University Group which were not statistically significant, and whilst we can observe some gaps which have varied over time across disaggregated disability types, the numbers are low and may not be meaningful. The sector has statistically significant gaps across the period for attainment for students with a mental health and social and communication disability type.³⁰

Whilst we conclude that our gaps have been minimal, **we have introduced a target as part of this APP** (based on 2017/18 data) to return to a low or zero percentage point gap in degree attainment between disabled and non-disabled students by 2024/25, in support of the national KPM which seeks to eliminate the attainment gap by 2024/25.

Progression to employment or further study

Coventry University Group's progression rate to employment or further study for disabled students has been, on average, above 78% during the last 5 years (see table below). This is higher than the sector rate throughout the period. The percentage point gap between the progression rates for disabled and non-disabled students has varied year-on-year at Coventry University Group. In four out of the five years it has been in favour of disabled students.³¹

| Progression to employment rates full-time first degree qualifiers by disability | | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Coventry University | Disabled % | 76.0 | 70.0 | 79.0 | 86.0 | 80.0 |
| | No Known Disability % | 67.5 | 71.3 | 77.4 | 78.4 | 78.7 |
| Sector | Disabled % | 59.9 | 62.5 | 65.9 | 67.9 | 70.9 |
| | No Known Disability % | 60.5 | 63.5 | 67.1 | 69.4 | 72.1 |
| Coventry University - percentage point gap | | -9.0 | 2.0 | -2.0 | -8.0 | -1.0 |
| Sector - percentage point gap (red statistically significant) | | 0.6 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.3 |

Disaggregating the progression of students by type of disability, at sector level there are significant gaps into employment for students with mental health and social and communication disabilities. At Coventry University Group the data is insufficient to draw conclusions.

³⁰ APP dataset 'Attainment – full-time first degree'

The table below shows the progression to employment rates by type of disability at Coventry University Group compared to the sector.

| Progression to employment rates full-time first degree qualifiers by disability | Coventry University | Sector | Percentage point difference |
|---|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| No known disability | 78.7 | 72.1 | 6.6 |
| Disabled | 80.0 | 70.9 | 9.1 |
| Cognitive and Learning | 80.0 | 72.5 | 7.5 |
| Mental Health | N ³² | 68.9 | |
| Sensory Medical and Physical | 80.0 | 70.1 | 9.9 |
| Multiple Impairments | 80.0 | 71.2 | 8.8 |
| Social and Communication | R ³³ | 61.0 | |

Within the TEF split metrics, 95.4% of disabled and 96.3% of non-disabled full-time students progress to employment or further study, with 83% and 80% respectively progressing to “highly skilled employment or further study”. We are proud of our strong record on employability across our student body and will seek to monitor and maintain this for all students.

1.5 Care leavers

Access

National statistics for care leavers (at the year ending 31 March 2018), suggest that only 6% of the 3140 care leavers from the West Midlands “now aged 19, 20 and 21 who were looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday including some time after their 16th birthday” were in HE. This percentage is in line with the figure for England. Further, only 5% of the 224 care leavers from Coventry Local Authority were in HE.³⁴ Over the last 5 years, Coventry University Group has reported an average of 39 care leavers taking undergraduate courses. However, we share some sector concerns about the reliability of these figures as it is known that there are difficulties in the institutional collection of and disclosure by students of care leaver status. This can lead to some variability over time between the figures collected via UCAS, and care leaver status confirmed once students are registered at an institution. Combined with the sensitivity of collecting such data, this contributes to an element of uncertainty as to whether we fully understand the size of our care leaver population. In response, we are taking steps to enhance our data collection process relating to care leavers. We will be adding a care leaver definition and declaration to our enrolment processes in time for September 2020 enrolment. This work is in the development plan for our IT services team. It forms part of a 3 year business-wide transformation project which includes a new CRM and enrolment system. This will support our understanding of the number of care leavers at Coventry University Group, and their progress on course, attainment and progression into employment.

The Group is committed to raising the aspirations and opportunities available to care leavers. We continue to work collaboratively with a local institution and with the virtual schools in Coventry and Warwickshire, providing a programme dedicated to raising aspirations and motivation of pupils in KS3. From 2020/21 we are introducing a new accommodation fee bursary for care leavers across the Group. We are also completing

³² ‘N’ where, after rounding to the nearest 10, there are 20 or fewer students in the population

³³ ‘R’ for the progression indicators where the provider participated in the DLHE survey but has not met the response rate threshold required

³⁴ Table LAF2a: Care leavers now aged 19, 20 and 21 by activity, by local authority^{1,2,3} “Children looked after in England 2018_LA tables revised” (National Statistics)

our pledge in support of the DfE-led care leaver covenant. **We have included a target related to access for care leavers within this APP.**

Success

Non-continuation

We do not have sufficient numbers of known care leavers to enable us to draw meaningful conclusions relating to non-continuation. This is an area where we will seek to gather qualitative evidence to understand the potential gaps experienced by our students. Starting in academic year 2019/20, we are initiating a number of activities that are designed to help us to first of all accurately identify, and then work with students who are care leavers. Examples include: working with care leavers who have benefitted in 2018/19 from a bursary³⁵ financed in partnership with Santander and conducting a small research project led by an academic in our Faculty of Business and Law looking into the experiences of care leavers at Coventry University Group.

Attainment

We do not have sufficient numbers of known care leavers to enable us to draw meaningful conclusions relating to attainment. Building on our work starting in 2019 this is an area where we will seek to gather qualitative evidence to understand the potential gaps experienced by our students – see above.

Progression to employment or further study

We do not have sufficient numbers of known care leavers to enable us to draw meaningful conclusions relating to non-continuation. Building on our work starting in 2019, this is an area where we will seek to gather qualitative evidence to understand the potential gaps experienced by our students.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

In disaggregating our data to identify intersections of disadvantage, we have found that Coventry University Group has very few gaps across access, continuation and attainment compared to the sector. In terms of access, the difference in the proportion of male and female full-time first degree entrants from POLAR4 Q1&2 is around 1 percentage point at Coventry University Group, compared with over 4 percentage points at sector level. For continuation, Coventry University Group has small gaps when comparing male entrants from POLAR Q1&2 to females, and across higher participation quintiles 3, 4 and 5. The gaps are at a similar level to those experienced at sector level; however, unlike for the sector, they are not deemed statistically significant. The continuation rate for male entrants from POLAR4 Q1&2 has been close to sector level during the last 5 years, and slightly above sector rate during the last three years. Whilst there are significant attainment gaps comparing combinations of lower and higher participation neighbourhoods by male and female qualifiers at sector level, particularly for males from the lowest participation neighbourhoods, at Coventry University Group there are no statistically significant gaps. Where gaps exist these are minimal, at lower than 2 percentage points, across the data during the last 5 years for combinations relating to male qualifiers from the lowest participation neighbourhoods. Our progression rates to employment and further study are strong, and consistently above sector levels. Our analysis across combinations of POLAR4 quintiles and sex has not identified persistent or significant gaps across these intersections. We do, however, note that whilst our progression rates for female qualifiers from the lowest and highest participation neighbourhoods are similar, females have a lower progression rate at Coventry University Group compared to males.³⁶ We will continue to monitor, understand and respond to these intersectional gaps through our APP related work.

Disaggregation of our attainment gaps for ethnicity to consider the intersections with age suggest that there are differences in attainment for mature (21+) compared to young (U21) qualifiers for Black and Asian

³⁵ The Santander bursary enables students to enrol on our Global Leaders Programme, and through the programme access international mobility trips designed to develop global cultural awareness in a business context and support employability skills.

³⁶ APP dataset “intersections for Access, continuation, attainment and progression to employment and further study”.

students. In 2017/18, 71% of mature Asian qualifiers compared to 76.1% of young Asian qualifiers achieved a 1st or 2.1 classification. For Black qualifiers the gap was larger: 64% for mature students compared to 72.2% for young Black qualifiers.³⁷ We have also identified that Black female qualifiers from the lowest participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Q1) have much lower rates of attainment (61.8% obtained a 1st or 2.1 over the last 5 years) than Black female qualifiers from POLAR Q5. The intersection with the second lowest attainment rate is for black males from POLAR Q1 with a rate of 64.6%.³⁸ Our work on disparity of attainment will seek to explore and address these and other intersectional differences, such as degree pathway, commuting distance, and parental HE experience.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in HE

We are mindful of a wider set of student groups where national data indicates there are particular equality gaps including: LGBTQ; carers; people estranged from their families; people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; refugees; asylum seekers and children from military families. We have found, however, that we do not have the quantitative or qualitative data to support meaningful analysis in relation to these groups and their experience at Coventry University Group. We will seek ways of improving our data collection to support our understanding in relation to additional groups where possible.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

We have included a target related to each of the announced OfS KPMs, except for *Access at Higher Tariff providers*, as we are not a higher tariff provider. Despite thorough and deep analysis of our performance using the available datasets, we have not identified significant gaps in many of the areas that the OfS is concerned to address through its national KPMs. Our work to uncover gaps between groups with different characteristics, including looking at multiple measures of disadvantage, is on-going, but the numbers of students are often so small that it is impossible to attach statistical significance. We are continuing to invest in research into attainment gaps for under-represented and disadvantaged groups including commuting students and students with non-traditional qualifications. Our research is at an early stage, and we do not yet have the data collection processes in place to reinforce our analysis. Where we do not have significant gaps we will continue our work which supports the national KPMs, for example, by maintaining a good position or closing a relatively small gap. We have included targets where analysis of the APP dataset (or other relevant data sources) has indicated a persistent and/or statistically significant gap over time: e.g. access for students with a disability and for care leavers, and progression for BAME students.

In the context of our institution, both in terms of mission and geographical location, the targets will be challenging for us to meet. We recruit significant numbers of students from a range of disadvantaged backgrounds, including being the first in family to pursue the route to HE. We invest significantly in on-course support for our students through the provision of innovative and sector-leading initiatives such as Learner analytics, Mathematics and Statistics support, our Centre for Academic Writing, and investment in health and well-being services. These services are designed to support all students, including those from the OfS-defined target groups who we know are typically at higher risk in terms of Success and Progression. Further evidence of Coventry University Group's commitment to widening participation can be seen in the deliberate policy decision to establish campuses in Scarborough and East London where progression to HE is historically low. Communities in these areas may be particularly sensitive to the issues of economic uncertainty and perceived negative messages in respect of the value of HE and associated debt. In a competitive post-18 environment, which includes the growth in appeal of Apprenticeships, the challenge of encouraging students in these areas to make HE generally, and Coventry University Group specifically, their chosen next step, cannot be underestimated.

Our targets reflect the competitive environments in which we are operating.

³⁷ APP individualised dataset attainment.

³⁸ APP individualised dataset attainment.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Our aims and measurable objectives for each of the target groups identified through our assessment of performance are:

Access: Students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)

Our aim is to reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from under-represented groups. Specifically, our goal is to increase the proportion of students from POLAR4 Q1, lowest participation neighbourhoods (LPNs), by reducing the gap (ratio) in participation between young full time undergraduate entrants from POLAR Q3-5 and Q1 by 2024/25. Our target relates to the OfS national KPMs 1&2, but has a different focus as we are not a higher tariff provider and we do not have the ratio of gaps that the national KPMs are concerned to address. It replaces an existing access-based indicator related to LPNs from our APP 2019/20.

Our target is **to increase the proportion of full-time, first degree entrants from LPNs by reducing our ratio from 5.7:1 to 4.7:1 by 2024/25**. This target reflects the spirit of the OfS KPM and will be a challenging target for the Group to meet for the reasons outlined in 2.1 above.

Access: Students with a disability

Our aim is to increase our proportion of disabled entrants. The target is in response to a gap we have identified in Access compared to the sector (using APP dataset). There is no OfS KPM related to this target. We have set ourselves an ambitious target of **increasing the proportion of disabled full-time, first degree entrants to 15% by 2024/25**.

This would be above the sector position (based on the recent sector average position of 14% in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18). In 2017/18 we had 5760 full-time first degree entrants (APP dataset definition). 640 declared a disability. To achieve the target rate of growth in disabled entrants to 15% by 2024/25, and starting in 2020/21, we will require an additional 45 entrants p.a. declaring a disability (225 over 5yrs), to a total of 865 in 2024/25 assuming that our total number of entrants/young entrants remains static. Despite our significant investment in student welfare and disability support (see section 3.1, '*Strategic measures*'), this target represents a significant challenge for the Group.

Access: Care leavers

Our aim is to support access to HE for care leavers (and whilst on programme). This target supports OfS' identification of care leavers as a priority group. There is no OfS KPM related to this target, and no APP data available at institution level.

We have previously had an APP target in relation to care leaver entrants, which was set at a higher level than our new target. Our new target reflects a realistic assessment based on national published data which assesses that 6% of care-experienced 18-year-olds progress to HE. This intelligence is further supported by low numbers of care leavers reported at similar institutions within our locality.

Our revised target is to support **10+ care leavers annually**, including returning students from previous years of entry. Our target is supported by the introduction of a new package of financial support for care leavers from 2020/21.

Success: Ethnicity attainment (Black student "value-added" score)

Our aim is to decrease and eliminate the unexplained gap (i.e. percentage difference) in degree attainment (1st and 2:1s) between White and Black qualifiers, by 2024/25. This will be measured using a value-added (VA) score method aiming for an increase in the VA score for Black students, and as a foundation for reducing overall attainment gaps, where they exist, by 2030/31.

The target relates to the OfS KPM 4 to eliminate the unexplained attainment gap for students from under-represented groups, specifically between Black students and White students, by 2024/25.

Our baseline data uses an indicative average VA score for 2014/15 to 2016/17. An increased VA score indicates a reduced gap between the actual proportion of students awarded a 1st or 2:1 compared to the

expected proportion, taking factors such as entry qualifications and subject of study into account. A score of 1 or above indicates that students have been awarded a classification at a level that would be expected given their prior attainment and subject of study. This is a new area of work for us, and we are continuing to test and build our capability.

The APP dataset identifies statistically significant absolute gaps in attainment between White students and Black students (17 percentage points at the Group in 17/18, compared to 23.1 for the sector). Using the VA scores, the gap for Coventry University Group is much lower compared to expected outcomes.

At Coventry University Group we recruit a significant number of students with non-traditional qualifications³⁹. We have developed our teaching and assessment approaches accordingly to suit a range of styles and preferences for learning. We place an emphasis on small group teaching and support our students through a variety of carefully planned measures as described in section 3.1. Our relatively strong performance in this area may be considered as further evidence of the quality of teaching at the Group, borne out by our TEF Gold status. Our own ambition nonetheless reflects the OfS ambition of eliminating the gaps between Black students and White students by 2024/25.

Our target is to eliminate the gap using the VA score in awarding of 1st and 2:1 degrees for Black students compared with White students by 2024/25.

We have set an associated target which aims to support the National KPM to eliminate the absolute attainment gap between Black students and White students as a foundation for reducing overall attainment gaps where they exist by 2030/31.

Success: Ethnicity attainment (Asian student VA score)

We aim to ensure that the absolute gap is addressed alongside that for Black students. We have therefore set an attainment-related measure for Asian students: to maintain the VA score as part of the foundation for closing the absolute gaps in attainment over a longer time frame.

For Asian students we have an absolute attainment gap of 12 percentage points (2017/18), whereas the average VA score for Asian students is close to 1 (1.02 using an average of 3 years recent data, 2014/15 – 2016/17). This suggests that taking known factors influencing attainment into account, such as entry qualifications and subject of study, that Asian students are likely to attain (in terms of degree classification) at least in line with expectations. We set this ‘maintain’ target as the foundation for addressing the absolute gap in attainment for Asian students compared to White students by 2030/31 in line with the OfS aims.

Our target is to maintain a VA score of 1 or above for Asian students during the period 2024/25, as a foundation for reducing the overall attainment gap for Asian students by 2030/31.

We have set an associated target which aims to support the National KPM to eliminate the absolute attainment gap between Asian students and White students as a foundation for reducing overall attainment gaps where they exist by 2030/31.

Attainment: Students with a disability

We aim to maintain our historically good position in terms of degree outcomes for disabled students. This is an identified priority from our APP assessment of performance. The target supports the OfS KPM 5 which is to eliminate the attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students by 2024/25.

The APP data-set suggests that Coventry University Group has generally not had an attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students (the gap has been an average of 2.0 percentage points over the last 3 years), in contrast to the sector which has had persistent and statistically significant gaps from 2013/14 to 2017/18 (2.7pp 3 year average). We are mindful, however, that a gap of 6 percentage points emerged at

³⁹ OfS' Student Premium funding (main allocation) is directly related to risk associated with level of study, entry qualifications/grades and age. Based on 2017/18 data, and of 15600 FT UG records counted within the funding formula, 66% of Coventry University Group's records were in either the high or medium risk categories based on a combination of entry qualifications/grades.

Coventry University Group in 2017/18. Whilst not statistically significant, and possibly the result of chance and random variation rather than the start of an attainment gap, this is something that we will monitor.

Our target is to **return to a low or zero percentage point gap in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between disabled and non-disabled students by 2024/25**. With the increasing numbers of declared mental health issues amongst young people in general, and specifically those progressing to HE, we are very aware that maintaining this position will be challenging for the Group.

Progression: Ethnicity progression to employment / further study (BAME)

We aim to maintain the high progression rates into employment or further study (higher than the sector for both BAME and White students) for all of our graduates, and to reduce the absolute gap in rates into employment or further study between our BAME and White qualifiers. When analysing the gaps between different minority ethnicities compared to White students, our analysis for progression to employment identified more years where there are statistical differences in the gap between BAME students and White students, than when comparing the rates for Asian or Black students with those for White students. We have therefore set a target relating to BAME students in terms of progression to employment/further study.

Our target by 2024/25 is to reduce (and halve) the gap between BAME and White students from over 8 percentage points to just over 4 percentage points, to a level that is below the current sector level gap. This target is ambitious and stretching. The challenges facing many of our students are significant, complex and often extrinsic. They include financial and cultural constraints which may impact before as well as during and after the student journey. As described in section 3, Strategic measures, our on-going work to support our students in terms of progression includes linking employers, students and staff to change employer attitudes to diversity, and explore issues such as unconscious bias in recruitment.

We have set this target as a temporary measure, based on the DLHE data from the APP dataset, and note that with the change from the DLHE to the Graduate Outcomes survey (to be published for the first time in 2020) the methodology for the target may need to be revised.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

Through our strategic approach, we aim to deliver better outcomes for all aspiring and enrolled students. Coventry University Group's focus is on the elimination of gaps in access for students from LPN, for care leavers, and for students with a disability. We are seeking to eliminate gaps in continuation for Black and Asian students and for students with a disability. Further, we seek to eliminate gaps in progression into positive destinations for BAME students.

Our "Theory of Change" is based on a logic model supported by institutional data which demonstrates evidence of success. We undertake regular analysis of our performance, and we are able to identify areas for improvement. These areas are reflected in the targets we have set in this APP.

Our logic model, included later under "*Strategic measures*", shows that we are investing in sophisticated data analysis and a strengthened approach for evaluation. This informs our Group-wide approach to the design, implementation and delivery of our APP and is supported by opportunities for collaboration externally and across the Group between Faculties and Professional Services, with strong student engagement.

Alignment with other strategies

Aligning our APP with our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Our APP and approach to EDI are linked through action planning, monitoring and Governance arrangements. Our 2020/25 APP has been assessed in relation to the Equality Act 2010, our EDI objectives, and the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process. The outcomes demonstrate that we have considered the impact of our activities on students with protected characteristics. The EDI team has recently established a series of Equality Impact Assessment Briefings (open to all staff). The briefings have been designed to raise awareness of the importance of our work in this area, and to equip staff with the skills and knowledge required to carry out EIAs in their own areas.

Our central EDI team has both a student and staff remit and works across the Group. Our work to further equality and diversity is underpinned by our four Equality Objectives, which support the aims of the APP as well as metrics in our Corporate Plan. The equality objectives focus on equity of attainment for BME students; equality of satisfaction in the NSS both by students who have, and those who do not have a protected characteristic; diversity at senior staff grades and within the professoriate; and increasing staff disclosure of a disability. A recent midway review of our Equality Objectives demonstrated good progress in most areas - including our student-specific objectives. Our work on equality and diversity is monitored by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) supported by a comprehensive range of data. A recent development has been the establishment of Campus and Faculty EDICs which provide a forum for facilitating discussion and action on local issues, as well as cascading centrally driven initiatives. We have also established two Professional Services EDICs. The EDICs provide an additional opportunity for sharing information and actions required to support the APP.

Aligning our APP with our Education strategy

We are engaged with exploring and extending study modes so that our students can select flexible pathways towards their own goals. The development of our online campus, Coventry University Online (CUOL), and the expansion of the Coventry University Group reflects the changing nature of education and the student learning experience, and supports students with diverse needs to access HE curricula.

Supported by robust quality processes, teaching and assessment approaches across our portfolio of courses encourage our students to develop creativity, critical enquiry, reflective practice, and to independently manage their own continuous learning. Our aim is that our graduates will be confident citizens who can demonstrate a range of individual, collaborative, and professional skills and attributes, and emphasises the importance that we place on future employability.

Aligning our APP with our Employability strategy

Our strong positive destination performance suggests that our substantial investment in employability services and the targeted activity implemented to support Coventry University Group's Employability Strategy has a positive impact. We focus on improving the employability of our diverse student population to secure an advantage in an increasingly competitive graduate job market. This is of particular relevance for students who may lack the social capital due to their background to otherwise progress into their chosen profession.

We have an embedded and sustained approach to employability, including curriculum design, placement and overseas mobility opportunities, and engagement with employers. This last activity includes showcasing our diverse and inclusive student population to non-traditional employers of Coventry University Group graduates. This is in line with good practice to enable social mobility and sector evidence reported by the UUK advisory group.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ "Working In Partnership: Enabling Social Mobility In HE. The final report of the Social Mobility Advisory Group" UUK, 2016

In 2018/19, in partnership with Santander Bank, we have provided year 1 of a three-year bursary which enables students who are care leavers to enrol on our Global Leaders Programme, and participate in activities and trips abroad which are designed to help participants explore new cultures and different environments, at the same time as developing understanding of how organisations operate around the globe. Beneficiaries of the bursary have provided first-hand testimony of the impact that joining this programme has had on them. We look forward to tracking their success.

Coventry's **Add+vantage** scheme provides an innovative and comprehensive employability programme. The scheme delivers credit-bearing modules designed to help students develop more of the practical skills and capabilities sought by employers, enhancing the student experience and complementing the skills and knowledge acquired through their degree subjects. We aim for our students to be better prepared to "hit the ground running", contributing to their organisations from day one; this scheme is mandatory and offers a range of options, including the opportunity to gain volunteering experience and participate in UK and overseas work activities. It is of particular value to those students who do not have access to networks that can help them to secure such opportunities for themselves.

Focussed and specialised staffing resource, working closely with curriculum teams, encourage students to develop real-world behaviours and stretch students beyond the boundaries of initial career concepts and expectations. Employer engagement teams aim to increase access to rewarding employment opportunities within the professions across a range of initiatives, including off- and on-site assessment centre experiences, employability themed weeks, industry representation on mock interview panels, lectures and recruitment events. These events endeavour to widen students' awareness of their options, build aspiration and increase exposure to work opportunities.

Our diversity conference, which links employers, students and staff and aims to change employer attitudes to diversity, explores issues such as unconscious bias in recruitment. In particular, we seek to engage with employers who have not historically recruited graduates from Coventry University Group to showcase our students and graduates, build closer links with employers, and over time change both employer perceptions and student aspirations. Continued investment and focus on course-linked placement provision and shorter overseas mobility experiences continues through the provision of low cost, escorted European visits for students.

Through our Group-wide approach, we are able to offer all students a variety of skills development modules and additional employability workshops and development programmes. All students are encouraged to participate in a range of University-organised extra-curricular programmes to put their learning into practice. Students with no family history of attending university or entering professional careers are particularly supported to consider a range of career options. The Careers, Employability and Enterprise team also operate the London Enterprise Hub, which supports students who have ambitions to start up a business by providing them with access to business start-up expertise via an Enterprise Manager as well as the opportunity to physically locate their business in the Enterprise Hub with a "City of London" trading address.

Aligning with our admissions and widening participation strategy

In 2018/19 a Group-wide review was completed to identify a new approach to student recruitment, admissions and widening participation for UK students. We have invested significantly in specialist staff working across Coventry University, Coventry University London Campus and the CU Group (Coventry, Scarborough and East London) to establish an integrated best practice approach by regional specialists. Largely working in government defined cold spots, the regional networks provide opportunities for community engagement and targeted activity with under-represented groups.

The vision is leading to an integrated Group strategy which will articulate a national strategic approach to recruitment, admissions and widening participation. This provides Coventry University Group with the opportunity to strengthen links between portfolio development and progression across the Group. We aim to engage students from all backgrounds and abilities ranging from level 3 programmes, foundation courses, undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and Online learning, with progression pathways developed across the Group over time.

This approach is ambitious and will take time to be properly established. Our ambition is to have dedicated regional teams of specialist recruiters working alongside community based widening access specialists. This infrastructure provides a new level of flexibility with hard-to-reach groups; notably, mature learners in Scarborough, school and college students in LPNs in East London, and continued care leaver initiatives with Coventry City Council. It will ensure consistent training to all outreach staff led by dedicated senior managers who will develop and lead and evaluate the work of specialist teams to meet local needs.

Admissions specialists will review the efficacy of using contextual data by establishing a pilot with care leavers. Outputs will include access and retention rates during the admissions cycle and support on campus and internal progression.

We propose to re-launch a partnership scheme that supports regional schools and colleges, providing tailored programmes according to defined need to support and encourage learner pathways and career opportunities underpinned by tailored access agreements.

Whilst our ambition is to overhaul radically our approaches to recruitment and widening participation, we will continue with existing work to provide continuity and sustain best practice through initiatives such as National Collaborative Outreach Programmes (NCOPs) (Coventry / Warwickshire and North Yorkshire) and community engagement. Our outreach strategy will be further developed following a period of institutional re-organisation.

Aligning with our work on student health and well-being

We have a long established tradition of providing support and an environment which enables disabled students to achieve success. We will continue to develop and nurture our existing links with student representatives to support our aim of achieving an inclusive environment for all students and staff. A new Group-wide curriculum initiative, *Curriculum 2025*, has “inclusion” embedded in its framework. This will help academic staff to ensure that students with complex physical and mental health issues are well-supported. Our new approach to student recruitment, admissions and widening participation is an ambitious strategy intended to help address an identified gap in Access and Continuation for students declaring a disability. Our Welfare and Disability team will work in collaboration with our Recruitment and Admissions Office to raise the profile of Coventry University Group as an accessible place to study via a number of routes.

Aligning with other work and funding sources

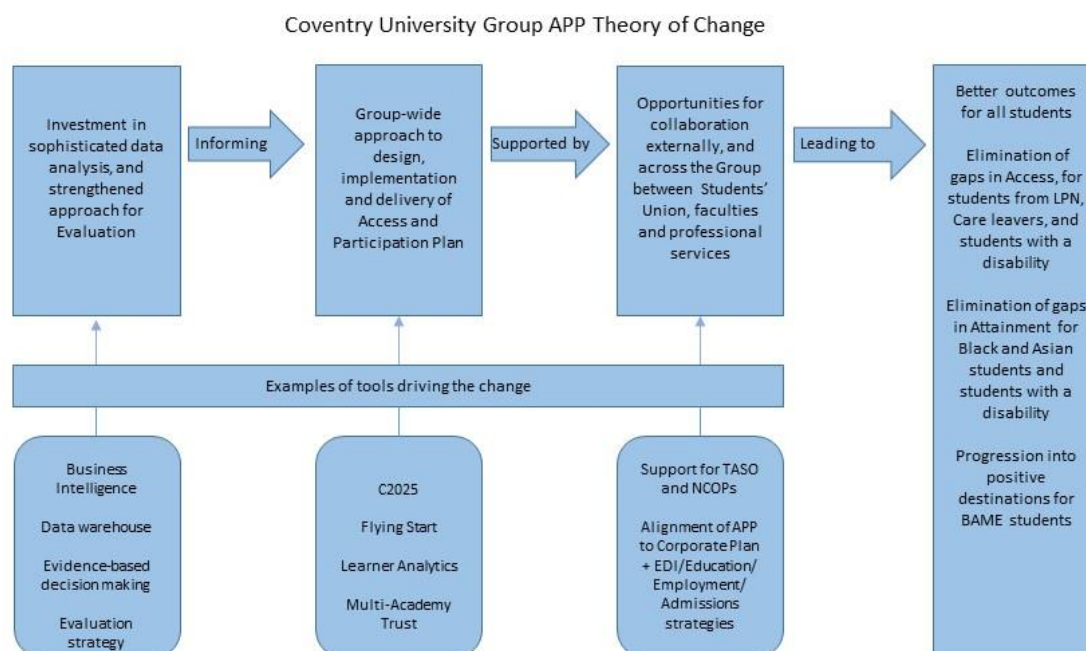
CU Scarborough is the lead partner in a collaborative project involving multiple partners, aiming to increase the number of local graduates entering the Health and Social Care sector on the North Yorkshire coast. Drawing students from YO post codes, it is expected that the majority will be female and from POLAR Q1 and Q2. Scarborough has been identified as an HE cold spot and a government-identified ‘Opportunity area’. Funding for this 3-year project has been secured through a successful bid to the OfS Challenge Competition. Coventry University Students’ Union will be employing a dedicated Employability Officer to support its implementation. There will be a student on the Steering Group of the project and students will be engaged as members of the Course Development teams to provide input to help shape the new degrees.

Strategic measures

Our over-arching aim, which will be achieved through the delivery of the targets set out in our APP, is to secure better outcomes for all students. Our performance analysis has informed target-setting and areas for investment, leading to the following specific aims for the Coventry University Group:

- Elimination of gaps in access for students from LPNs, for care leavers, and for students with a disability
- Elimination of gaps in attainment for Black and Asian students, and for students with a disability
- Progression into positive destinations for BAME students

Our work is co-ordinated centrally, led by the Widening Opportunities Manager with support from the Strategic Planning and Analytics Office, and working with all staff and services across the Group. Our approach is illustrated by our evidence-informed “Theory of Change”:



Our approach to the curriculum, pedagogy and student support is governed by our Corporate Plan and Education Strategy. Six pillars of transformative learning underpin student education across all modes and levels of study and encourage the exploration of new ways of working and new technologies: embedded employability; creativity and enterprise; intercultural and international engagement; community contribution and responsibility; innovation and digital fluency.

We are engaged with exploring and extending study modes and progression arrangements across the Coventry University Group. The development of CUOL and the expansion of the CU Group reflects the changing nature of education and the student learning experience.

Strategic measures:

Eliminating gaps in access for care leavers: University-subsidised accommodation

Supporting the OfS and sector aim of increasing the number of care leavers accessing HE, we are introducing an accommodation fee bursary for students who meet the following eligibility criteria:

‘A care leaver is defined as a person aged 25 years or under who has been looked after by a Local Authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who was looked after by a Local Authority at the age of 16 years or after that date’.

This new measure is being introduced in response to compelling testimony communicated by students who are care leavers at both our own, and other HE institutions. As well as encouraging care leavers to apply to HE by alleviating concerns over affordability, this measure is designed to help us to accurately identify care leavers enrolling at the Coventry University Group, thereby facilitating the provision of additional support.

Eliminating gaps in access and attainment for disabled students: Welfare and Disability Support

At Open Day events, each prospective student with disabilities is allocated a student ambassador who will ensure that individual needs are met. Prospective disabled students are also offered an individual visit with an appointment to meet with a Disability Adviser if desired. We provide initial disability screening, and a range of additional support is offered to students both pre-enrolment and on programme. These include a pre-induction residential summer school (*disCUss*) for new applicants who have a disclosed disability; Flexible

Academic Specialist Tuition (*FAST*) providing academic support sessions either face-to-face or via Skype to maximise flexibility; and *Friendly Faces*, a social group run for and by students on the autistic spectrum. We employ specialist Disability Advisers working with students with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). Our Summer School and weekly social group are popular with students and are considered essential parts of the transition and settling in process. Mentors are fully integrated into our wider disability support team with a view to facilitating joint working and a more cohesive approach to the complex needs of many students with ASC, and facilitating closer working links with the University Mental Health Advisers and Welfare Officers.

On-course support offered to disabled students includes Faculty-based Learning Support Co-ordinators and specialist equipment loans. We also provide short-term loans of laptops (some with assistive software) to disabled students, along with a range of online assistive software via the University intranet. Accessible across the Group, we subscribe to *the Big White Wall*. This external Care Quality Commission accredited electronic service is available 24/7 to support students who are experiencing stress and anxiety. It is particularly relevant for students who are on placement or those with family commitments which restrict their time to engage with support services whilst on campus.

We have widened our support for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) by expanding our range of workshops and collaborative working with our Centre for Academic Writing (CAW) and Mathematics and Statistics Support Centre (*sigma*), including the provision of study workshops and workstation areas for disabled students, particularly those who find it difficult to study at home or in their student rooms due to external distractions.

Due to the impact of the phasing out of DSA, we have made provision for a significant increase in manual note takers and academic support workers. We are also increasing our range of counselling support, CBT, coaching and Skype one-to-one sessions for students with disabilities.

We have reviewed our support for students on blended and distance learning courses. We are working in partnership with welfare and disability support providers who are local to the students, identifying agencies on the ground that can support the student, and contributing towards the cost of the service.

Disability awareness training is delivered to students and staff to give an understanding of disabilities, the language used and how we can adapt the way we work, and to help recognise the value of difference and diversity in the student population. Over recent years, there has been a marked increase in the number of students who are registered with and receiving support from the Health and Wellbeing Mental Health advisers and we expect that demand for our services will continue to increase, in line with student number growth and with rising mental health awareness generally. We have increased our specialist staffing to support students who are experiencing mental health difficulties and have introduced Mental Health First Aid training, which is available to all Coventry University Group staff. We have commissioned external support from an NHS trainer focussing on the support needs of students who have Personality Disorder, in response to an increase in the number of students presenting for support with this disorder. Workshops that aim to reduce stress and anxiety in the student population are offered, including “Culture Shock”, “Managing Anxiety and Depression”, and “Preparing for Examinations”. Training has been provided to the Coventry University Group and external student accommodation providers on issues relating to supporting and referring students who are presenting with characteristics which could indicate mental health issues.

Our approach is underpinned by evaluation mechanisms which inform action plans and staff development programmes. These include the review of progression data, investigation of imbalances in attainment and evaluation of interventions (including via a cross-campus network of Learning Support Co-ordinators), and an annual survey of all disabled students. As part of our Group-wide approach, we are taking forward a review of all policies, aiming for a more consistent disability support offer across the Group.

Eliminating gaps in access: Multi-Academy Trust

This measure is designed to support access for students from LPNs.

To address gaps in access, Coventry University Group has created the “Better Futures” Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Working with sixth form colleges nationally, the MAT will further our work in raising attainment and aspiration and contribute to eliminating gaps in access for students from LPNs, students with disabilities and care leavers. The plan for the MAT includes funding to develop a national centre for the advancement of sixth form teaching. “Better Futures” MAT has a central team, whose senior post holders have a specific remit to 1) grow the Trust and 2) improve attainment, educational excellence and aspiration to HE. King Edward VI Sixth Form College in Nuneaton is established in the MAT, and over the next academic year we will be on-boarding two more sixth form colleges, in Nottingham and in Leicester. There is a wide range of opportunities for cross-level working, including the development of a skills passport to recognise/reward study skills, knowledge sharing of systems such as learner analytics, and mentoring.

Eliminating gaps in access, continuation and attainment: Learner analytics

This measure supports equality of opportunity and outcomes for all learners.

We have invested in learner analytics to monitor student engagement and identify students who are at risk of leaving their course or underachieving. This work follows a HEFCE funded catalyst project, “DRIVER”, developed in partnership with eight HEIs/sixth form colleges. Students who are not engaging are contacted by a newly created team, *the Student Engagement Centre*, who offer academic and pastoral interventions making appropriate referrals. This work is in an early phase with just two years of operation, but evidence shows it is an important tool supporting personalised intervention and contributing to the elimination of gaps in continuation and progression. The work has been extended to include engagement with students pre-enrolment, and early indications are that the approach is successful in encouraging students who may be at risk of not taking up their place to do so. Further work is underway to enable us to link the characteristics of the students we have supported with the target groups identified in the new APP.

Eliminating gaps in attainment: Curriculum 2025

This measure is intended to support equality of opportunity and outcomes for all learners, and particularly attainment for Black students, Asian students and students with a disability.

In spring 2019 we launched a new initiative, *Curriculum 2025*. This is a curriculum enhancement team that works alongside academic course teams to refresh the Coventry University Group offering to our students to ensure it is modern, robust, innovative, flexible and inclusive. The team has a responsibility to develop a curriculum framework that brings a consistent tone and structure to all courses. The framework will take into account: flexible learning pathways, personalised learning styles, sense of belonging, decolonisation, co-creation of the curriculum, graduate skills, equity of attainment, inclusion and valuing of difference, assessment, sustainable development goals, student wellbeing and mental health. The team is researching global examples of good practice. We expect this to be a significant vehicle of change, supporting our aim of eliminating gaps in continuation and attainment for Black, Asian and disabled students.

Eliminating gaps in continuation, attainment and progression: “Flying Start”

This measure supports students from LPNs.

We have established an international travel grant for undergraduates in receipt of a full maintenance loan from Student Finance England. This grant supports students from disadvantaged backgrounds by contributing to or covering the costs of international mobility opportunities. We invest significantly in this area as this is in accordance with our mission to develop global citizens equipped with the skills for a global job market. Evidence from both qualitative and quantitative data shows that such experiences impact positively on continuation, attainment and progression rates, and are also important for developing soft skills such as networking and cultural awareness.

Eliminating gaps in access, continuation, attainment and progression: Collaborative working

This measure supports equality of access, opportunities and outcomes for all learners from disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

We recognise that collaboration is crucial for sustained engagement with schools and for students to receive high quality, impartial advice and guidance relating to HE. We also recognise the benefits to our students of

collaborative working and engagement with our local communities, regionally and with employers, industry and the third sector. Our student-centric “pillars” set out in our Education Strategy outline a commitment to “Community contribution and civic engagement”. In addition to collaborative outreach and on-programme activities in which our staff and students are involved, Coventry University Group seeks to strengthen collaborative working and engage in partnerships with the local community and the wider HE community. An example of our commitment to supporting institution-neutral progression to HE from pupils living in LPNs is our support for two NCOPs regionally linked to our campuses in Coventry and Scarborough. We also work with the Coventry and Warwickshire ‘virtual schools’ supporting Looked After Children, and we are committed to supporting the newly launched Evidence and Impact Exchange - also known as the *Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in HE (TASO)* – the Director of our Curriculum 2025 initiative is a member of the steering group

Eliminating gaps in progression: “Launch”

This measure is intended to support all students, and in particular BAME students, students from LPNs and students with a disability.

From 2019/20, through Coventry University Social Enterprise (CUSE), we will be offering “Launch”, an inspirational and innovative programme of workshops, networking events, training opportunities, competitions and community engagement projects, where students, through entrepreneurship, build their skills and learn about setting up a business. These areas are especially relevant to APP target groups. We know that students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds may lack the soft skills, confidence, human capital and personal networks crucial within the context of employability and enterprise. CUSE will work across the Coventry University Group with careers, employability teams, Faculty representatives and the Students’ Union. CUSE will run targeted recruitment campaigns to encourage participation, and will make referrals into the programme for students from under-represented groups and disadvantaged backgrounds. CUSE also plans to work with students to co-design activities to ensure the needs of APP target groups are met.

*Eliminating gaps in continuation, attainment and progression: **Mathematics and Statistics support***

This measure supports equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students.

Our *sigma* Mathematics and Statistics Support Service provides comprehensive mathematical and statistics support for students from any discipline, at any level, through its drop-in centre, appointments, and workshops on statistical techniques and the use of statistics software. The *sigma* team offers a diagnostic test service which provides testing facilities for about 1700 students early in the welcome process. These are marked and returned within 48 hours to allow course staff as well as students themselves to appreciate their level of mathematical preparedness. This can provide an early indication of a need for mathematical and statistical support, which the *sigma* centre is able to provide.

The centre continues to seek to expand its use of trained student proctors to contribute to the support offered to students and to act as ambassadors for the services across all academic areas. Out of drop-in hours, *sigma* also offers targeted sessions on such topics as numerical reasoning, statistics and SPSS to enhance students’ employability. Numerical reasoning tests are provided as preparation for interviews, internships and for PGCE applications, offered at an early stage in the student lifecycle to ensure that subsequent support can be delivered early enough to make it count. Given the large number of courses with technical content that Coventry University Group offers, the ever-increasing importance of quantitative skills in social sciences and humanities, and the variability of the quality of maths teaching in schools and colleges from which our students are drawn, this extensive and generous service is essential in aiding retention and progression for many of our students. In 2016/17 a higher proportion of students who used *sigma*’s services obtained a 1st class degree compared to other students.

Eliminating gaps in continuation, attainment and progression: Centre for Academic Writing (CAW)

This measure supports equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students.

In 2015 the Quality Assurance Agency for HE reported that the “Centre for Academic Writing is regarded very positively by students as a source of guidance”, and identified CAW’s contribution “to the student learning experience” as a feature of good practice at Coventry University.⁴¹

CAW offers a range of writing development provision to students throughout their degree study. Services cover the student lifecycle and include tailored support at specific points in the student journey such as the transition of skills to study at HE level, dissertation writing, and employability. CAW also offers support to students identified via Coventry University Group’s Student Engagement Centre team as being at risk of falling behind in their studies and coursework assignments.

Provision is designed to be accessible to meet the needs of our diverse student body. Extended opening times including evenings and Saturdays, in addition to the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) service, provide fair access to part-time, mature, and placement students, as well as students with caring responsibilities. An online booking system, accessible 24/7, enables all students to choose the type of tutorial or workshop best suited to their needs. Both CAW and *sigma* provide dedicated support to students with dyslexia or dyscalculia, as part of the Group’s commitment to supporting disabled students throughout their studies, and have been recognised by UUK as best practice examples for supporting students with disabilities.⁴²

CAW regularly evaluates its activities and makes changes to its services and working practices in response to feedback from students and staff. CAW monitors the demographics of students who use its services, including indices of deprivation, ethnicity, gender, disability, and domicile. The data shows CAW is supporting the students who need it most. Additionally, a significant number of students who come to CAW report having Dyslexia or a Learning Disability that has not been diagnosed formally.

Eliminating gaps in access, continuation, attainment and progression: Course specific packages

This measure supports all students and specifically mature and students from LPNs.

Coventry University Group ensures that all new undergraduates are provided with a course specific start-up package of essential items. Packages comprise core reading materials, such as textbooks, but may also include other non-text materials required as part of the course such as professional subscriptions, health and safety equipment, and software. The discontinuation of NHS bursaries placed a significant obstacle in the path of potential entrants to this profession. Coventry University Group recognises this and provides essential materials for these courses also with the aim of ensuring these initial expenses do not act as a barrier to potential entrants to the Health professions.

To understand the impact the scheme has on students, we conduct a survey each year to gather key quantitative and qualitative data. Survey responses and analysis enable Coventry University Group to ensure that its substantial investment in this area of activity is directly meeting the needs of our students and is having a significant positive impact on access and attainment.

Eliminating gaps in continuation, attainment and progression: Disruptive Media Learning Lab (DMLL)

This measure supports equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students.

The over-arching aim of the DMLL is to become a focal point for innovation and positive change in teaching and learning at Coventry University Group. The DMLL instigates, stimulates and accelerates innovation by challenging mind-sets, and by advocating provocative and radical ideas and approaches in order to change the Group’s established frames of reference, structures and mechanisms. Activities undertaken by the DMLL have included the facilitation of sector discussions around issues of accessibility in teaching and learning, including a “Disruptive Bytes” session on the theme of “Disability, Accessibility and Enabling Technologies”, exploring supporting and enabling people with disabilities using technologies, including hands free technology, to inform existing work in the area.

⁴¹ Coventry University QAA report, 2015:26, 2

⁴² “Working Partnership; Enabling Social Mobility in HE” UUK October 2016

3.2 Student consultation

Our students are consulted extensively both directly and via the Students' Union throughout our strategy development, of which our APP forms an embedded part. We have delivered bespoke training on the recent regulatory changes to the APP to members of our Students' Union to enable them to make meaningful contributions. Our Students' Union has provided input to the development of our APP for 2020-2025, including providing suggestions for continuing close collaborative working on this agenda. They have also attended, and contributed to, awareness-raising briefings held for staff across Coventry University Group. A student panel representing views of students from our target groups, led by the President of the Students' Union, provided invaluable input to an APP information day aimed at senior managers from across the Group on 1st May 2019. Our students' views are regularly sought via our extensive student representative system. When we hold focus groups for students, we ensure that they cover the full range of backgrounds. Consultation with students can also take place through Students' Union Committees (e.g. Care Leavers' Committee, Disabled Students' Committee, Mature / Part Time Students' Committee, BME Committee). We are aware that certain groups may not engage as easily as others, so to ensure their voices are not lost we are pro-active in contacting them and inviting them into the groups. In addition, our plans and progress are discussed within Coventry University Group's committee framework, including our Quality in Learning and Teaching committee, whose membership includes the Students' Union executive officer with responsibility for Student Representation to formally represent students. Our APP is reviewed by representatives from our Students' Union prior to it being approved by our Board of Governors, which includes student representation. We will continue to work with our students to develop and monitor progress and to seek support with the implementation of our plans. An independent APP statement has been prepared by our Students' Union and is included as part of this submission.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

Coventry University Group Evaluation strategy

Strategic context

Our institutional approach to evaluation is being co-ordinated centrally by the Widening Opportunities Manager working closely with the Planning team who provide detailed analysis of the Group's performance. This enables us to measure the impact of our activities by understanding our progress towards meeting the targets we have identified to support our aims and objectives. It also affords us the opportunity to re-evaluate our approaches should we identify that sufficient progress is not being made.

Examples of our planned evaluative practice include:

We are taking our innovative work on Learner analytics a stage further to address the gaps we have identified through our performance analysis, including disparity in attainment between Black students and White students. Beginning in 2019/20 we will be collecting data ensuring that students sharing particular characteristics are tracked and themes identified. We are developing responsive measures through Curriculum 2025, our new curriculum enhancement team working alongside academic course teams.

Curriculum 2025 is adopting a course by course approach. The team includes student interns. Action plans are developed based on a review of data including Learner analytics, Module Evaluation Questionnaires and Course Quality Enhancement Monitoring (CQEM) reports. CQEM reports will be reviewed annually, and a report and recommended actions submitted to QuILT, our Quality in Teaching and Learning Committee. Academic staff complete an on-line course designed to raise their awareness and increase their knowledge of key issues. The course also promotes innovative approaches to curriculum and assessment design and delivery. Following completion of the on-line course, staff complete questionnaires designed to identify changes in behaviour and approach. Case studies/examples of best practice will be shared.

Programme and Evaluation design

The OfS describes 3 levels of evaluation practice and advises that not all activity/programmes suit a L3 standard⁴³ but that it is important to consider what is/is not appropriate. With this in mind, we adopt a flexible approach to Evaluation. Evaluation plans are developed at programme design stage for areas where we are investing heavily, and where we expect to see significant contribution to our strategic aims and objectives. Evaluative activities are complementary to our strategic review and governance processes that underpin teaching and learning, strategic investment, and equality and diversity work.

We recognise that there are areas where we could improve our approach. Based on outcomes from using the OfS self-assessment tool, an action plan has been designed to further strengthen our approach to evaluation over the life of this APP (2020-2025). The plan includes the actions we will take to ensure that students continue to be actively involved in our evaluation work at both strategic and design/operation levels.

Evaluation implementation

Mechanisms: Our monitoring and evaluation is enhanced through our data driven strategic course quality review process, “**Course Quality Enhancement Monitoring**” (CQEM), and equality and diversity work. The CQEM process is directed by our Office of Teaching and Learning and provides a formal opportunity for review, reflection, evaluation of course performance, and the writing and monitoring of action plans for the enhancement of course performance. This process is conducted twice per year. Central to the CQEM process is the use of course performance reports to underpin the evaluation and action planning at a course level, supported by an online course performance dashboard. This allows course performance to be visualised at course level as well as the performance of the course portfolio at a Faculty and Coventry University Group level. The course performance dashboard is accessible to course directors and enables course teams to evaluate course performance metrics differentiated by ethnicity, gender, domicile and disability. Training and guidance is provided to all course directors on interpreting the data, particularly with respect to attainment and outcome data.

Supporting our student engagement strategy, three student interns have been appointed to the *Curriculum 2025* team. This initiative will be evaluated via existing tools and methodologies and will include reviewing the CQEM dashboard and results from the National Student Survey (NSS) and Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs).

We have subscribed to the **HE Access Tracker** (HEAT). Work is underway to develop our infrastructure and enable us to make best use of this resource which will contribute to our own and wider sector understanding of our impact on work to support equality of opportunity in access to HE.

We have a Coventry University Group subscription to **NEON** (National Education Opportunities Network), which enables colleagues from across the Group to both share and learn from examples of best practice from across the sector, as well as contributing to the debate on current live issues.

We are formally contributing to the Evidence and Impact Exchange (**TASO**). This will inform both institution and wider sector knowledge and understanding, providing examples of successful and unsuccessful interventions.

Self-assessment of evaluation: Based on outcomes using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, we have developed an action plan. The plan is designed to strengthen our approach to evaluation over the life of the 2020-2025 APP and is a key part of our strategy.

Evaluating the impact of areas where we are investing heavily: We use data analysis, including in-depth gap analysis across the four key stages of the student lifecycle and sector, and internal bench-marking, together with student feedback, to continuously monitor our progress towards achieving our APP targets. This enables us to identify any changes in intake, retention, degree outcomes and progression. Progress towards our targets is scrutinised, and specific areas for focus are identified and fed back through our internal governance

⁴³ Evidence of causal effect, usually involving a control group.

procedures. A review of the effectiveness of our financial support measures is regularly undertaken using sector toolkits and encompassing both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Flying Start includes the provision of course-related books and materials for all students. Moving to on-line provision from September 2019 enables us to investigate access by students to these resources, including actual time spent by students on reading activity. It opens up the potential for linking the findings with our Learner analytics work to help to identify patterns and behaviours that may be linked to particular student characteristics, which can be used to inform targeted interventions.

In addition to the data collections currently carried out by our Centre for Academic Writing (CAW) and Mathematics and Statistics Support (Sigma), these areas will measure the impact of their services by analysing the data collected in respect of APP target group characteristics of the users of their service. We see these services as being an important part of ensuring that all students are able to reach their full potential. Actions will be planned by CAW and Sigma to address low take-up by students from disadvantaged and under-represented groups. Impact will be measured through a combination of feedback from surveys and data from our performance analysis undertaken by the central Planning team. Outcomes will be used to define the future direction of these services.

Launch: is a new initiative designed to support students into entrepreneurial activity with a specific focus on BAME students, students with a disability and students from LPN. Impact will be measured by Coventry University Social Enterprise (CUSE), who are delivering the programme. CUSE will record the number of start-ups after course completion, and track WP characteristics of participants, including disability and ethnicity.

Learning to shape improvements

We use a combination of international, national and local data and evidence, together with analysis of our own and sector data, to inform our strategic aims and target-setting and to inform programme design that targets under-represented groups for whom the largest gaps in access, success and progression have been identified.

Examples include: Quantitative research undertaken using the OfS financial support assessment toolkit; detailed analysis of HESA/UCAS/OfS APP datasets; key messages to the sector distributed via OfS topic briefings and communications; information gathered through networks to which we have subscribed / have membership, such as NEON, Action on Access, West Midlands Care Leavers Network (WMCLN); investment in our own and external research into sophisticated “Value-added”/Learning Gain models; and work with student representatives and panels made up of students with target characteristics.

Our learning impacts programme innovation and design, supporting groups where our gaps are greatest. Examples include the introduction of a new accommodation fee bursary intended to encourage access for care leavers, and the implementation of *Curriculum 2025*, which is intended to support the elimination of multiple gaps - specifically the gap in attainment between Black students and White students. We will continue to monitor a range of data to evaluate the success of our activity.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

We will take reasonable steps to demonstrate that we comply with the provisions of our plan. An annual report prepared on behalf of our Provost, summarising our annual monitoring return, including progress against our milestones and targets, will be considered by the Group Leadership Team and the wider Coventry University Group through our committee structure, including Academic Board, committees of the Board of Governors, and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (reporting to the Vice-Chancellor), which include student representation.

Ensuring continuous improvement through monitoring and evaluation: The Deputy Director of Planning and the Widening Opportunities Manager are responsible for monitoring progress related to the assessment of performance against delivery of the APP. Our evaluation work will be co-ordinated and led centrally by the Widening Opportunities Manager to ensure that our activities are having the desired impact on our aims and objectives.

During the academic year 2019/20, the Widening Opportunities Manager will establish a reporting and monitoring process together with the Deputy Director of Planning in line with the availability of relevant data-sets. Progress towards targets will be reported semester by semester through our committee structure and, if required, appropriate actions to address areas where progress is worsening will be recommended.

The targets in the APP will be confirmed, with accountabilities clearly identified and shared with the leads with responsibility for the areas and measures described in the APP. Mitigating actions will be considered at an early stage for implementation if progress is worsening.

The Deputy Director of Planning and the Widening Opportunities Manager are together working with colleagues to develop our Business Intelligence dashboards and Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring process. This will help to ensure that priority groups will be tracked, and relevant data is made accessible to course teams.

4. Provision of information to students

Coventry University Group provides students with clear and up-to-date information to support their application to HE. Information about fee levels and financial support for 2020/21 will be clearly signposted on our website, and will be made available at Open Days and other recruitment events. Our full-time undergraduate admissions and recruitment procedures conform to best practice. Every effort is made to ensure our information is correct and relevant at the time of publication and is accessible through a range of sources, formats and media. This includes updating information on the UCAS Course Finder system, Unistats and the Student Loans Company (SLC) in a timely manner for them to populate their applicant-facing web services.

Information about fees for new entrants in 2020/21, and how these will increase in subsequent years, is also provided within this APP (resource template). This information is based on the assumption that the maximum tuition fee chargeable remains at £9,250.00. Our financial support packages for 2020/21 are outlined in this plan, and full details of the packages, eligibility criteria and any application processes will be made available and signposted on our website. Our APPs will be published and signposted on our website.

5. Appendix

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

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

Access and participation plan

Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Coventry University

Provider UKPRN: 10001726

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

Table 4a - Full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

| Full-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| First degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - First degree (Fee Level 1) | £6,500 |
| First degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - First degree (Fee Level 2) | £7,700 |
| First degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - First degree delivered at: CU Scarborough - Adult Nursing (Scarborough) and Physiotherapy (Scarborough) | £9,250 |
| First degree | CU Online - First degree | £9,250 |
| First degree | Coventry University - First degree | £9,250 |
| First degree | Coventry University - First degree in Pre Hospital and Emergency Care, Public Health Studies and Professional Practice (Critical Care) | £6,200 |
| First degree | Coventry University London - First degree | £9,250 |
| Foundation degree | Coventry University - Foundation degree | £9,250 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - Foundation year/Year 0 (Fee Level 1) | £6,500 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - Foundation year/Year 0 (Fee Level 2) | £7,700 |
| HNC/HND | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - HNC/HND (Fee Level 1) | £6,500 |
| HNC/HND | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - HNC/HND (Fee Level 2) | £7,700 |
| CertHE/DipHE | Coventry University - CertHE/DipHE | £9,250 |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - Accelerated degree (Accelerated) | £11,100 |
| Sandwich year | Coventry University - First degree (Sandwich year) | £0 |
| Sandwich year | Coventry University London - First degree (Sandwich year) | £0 |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | Coventry University - First degree (Erasmus and overseas study years) | £0 |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | Coventry University London - First degree (Erasmus and overseas study years) | £0 |
| Other | * | * |

Table 4b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

| Sub-contractual full-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
|--|---|-------------|
| First degree | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * |
| HNC/HND | King Edward VI College Nuneaton 10003624 - King Edward VI College Nuneaton - HNC Creative Media Production & HNC Business | £4,630 |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * |
| Other | * | * |

Table 4c - Part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

| Part-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
|------------------------|--|-------------|
| First degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - First degree (Fee Level 1) | £4,875 |
| First degree | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - First degree (Fee Level 2) | £5,775 |
| First degree | CU Online - First degree | £6,935 |
| First degree | Coventry University - First degree | £6,935 |
| First degree | Coventry University - First degree in Pre Hospital and Emergency Care, Public Health Studies and Professional Practice (Critical Care) | £4,650 |
| First degree | Coventry University London - First degree | £6,935 |
| Foundation degree | Coventry University - Foundation degree | £6,935 |
| Foundation degree | Coventry University - Foundation degree in Metrology | £6,200 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - Foundation year/Year 0 (Fee Level 1) | £4,875 |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - Foundation year/Year 0 (Fee Level 2) | £5,775 |
| HNC/HND | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - HNC/HND (Fee Level 1) | £4,875 |
| HNC/HND | CU Coventry, CU Scarborough and CU London - HNC/HND (Fee Level 2) | £5,775 |
| CertHE/DipHE | Coventry University - CertHE/DipHE | £6,935 |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--------|
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * |
| Other | Coventry University - Other undergraduate courses | £6,935 |

Table 4d - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2020-21 entrants

| Sub-contractual part-time course type: | Additional information: | Course fee: |
|--|-------------------------|-------------|
| First degree | * | * |
| Foundation degree | * | * |
| Foundation year/Year 0 | * | * |
| HNC/HND | * | * |
| CertHE/DipHE | * | * |
| Postgraduate ITT | * | * |
| Accelerated degree | * | * |
| Sandwich year | * | * |
| Erasmus and overseas study years | * | * |
| Other | * | * |

Targets and investment plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Coventry University

Provider UKPRN: 10001726

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:
The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.
The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

| Access and participation plan investment summary (£) | Academic year | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
| Total access activity investment (£) | £1,218,918.46 | £1,214,166.86 | £1,231,250.19 | £1,248,675.18 | £1,266,448.68 |
| Access (pre-16) | £97,509.93 | £99,460.13 | £101,449.34 | £103,478.33 | £105,547.90 |
| Access (post-16) | £1,090,389.14 | £1,083,066.95 | £1,097,528.28 | £1,112,278.83 | £1,127,324.41 |
| Access (adults and the community) | £31,019.39 | £31,639.78 | £32,272.57 | £32,918.02 | £33,576.38 |
| Access (other) | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Financial support (£) | £350,000.00 | £410,000.00 | £480,000.00 | £500,000.00 | £510,000.00 |
| Research and evaluation (£) | £132,559.41 | £135,210.59 | £137,914.80 | £140,673.09 | £143,486.55 |

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

| Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI) | Academic year | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
| Higher fee income (£HFI) | £57,041,262.00 | £58,235,500.00 | £59,840,590.00 | £60,423,767.00 | £61,340,000.00 |
| Access investment | 2.1% | 2.1% | 2.1% | 2.1% | 2.1% |
| Financial support | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| Research and evaluation | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| Total investment (as %HFI) | 3.0% | 3.0% | 3.1% | 3.1% | 3.1% |

Targets and investment plan 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Coventry University

Provider UKPRN: 10001726

Targets

Table 2a - Access

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Target group | Description (500 characters maximum) | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Baseline data | Yearly milestones | | | | | Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum) |
|---|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| | | | | | | | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | |
| Our aim is to reduce the gap (ratio) in participation between young full time undergraduate entrants from POLAR4 Q3-5 and Q1. | PTA_1 | Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN) | We have used ratios to demonstrate the progress we are aiming to make towards closing the gap between the proportions of young fulltime undergraduate entrants from POLAR4 Q3-5 and Q1. | No | The access and participation dataset | 2017-18 | 5.7:1 | 5.5:1 | 5.2:1 | 5.0:1 | 4.8:1 | 4.7:1 | The level of ambition in our target refelcts the competitive local environments in which our campuses are located, and the fact that the year from which the baseline data is drawn follows a period of expansion for the Group with the opening of campuses in HE cold spots. |
| To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups. Specifically to increase the proportion of disabled entrants. | PTA_2 | Disabled | Our aim is to increase the proportion of disabled full-time, first degree entrants to be at least in line or above the sector position (based on the recent sector average position of 14% in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18). Our target by 2024/25 is to increase the proportion to 1 percentage point above the current sector average proportion. | No | The access and participation dataset | 2017-18 | 11.1% | 11.9% | 12.7% | 13.4% | 14.2% | 15.0% | The baseline is taken from the Coventry University Group 2017/18 proportion of full-time first degree entrants who had a known disability. |
| To support access to HE for care leavers. | PTA_3 | Care-leavers | Our target is to support care leavers meeting the eligibility criteria linked to our new financial support package. | No | Other data source | 2018-19 | 6 | 10 | 22 | 36 | 40 | 42 | As of January 2019 we have identified 6 students at Coventry campus whose status has been confirmed as a result of introducing a bursary in association with Santander in 2018/19. Our target is supported by the introduction of a new bursary in the form of subsidised university accommodation from academic year 2020/21. The trajectory reflects an aim of recruiting 10+ care leavers per year and continuing to support them for the duration of their course. |
| | PTA_4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_7 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | PTA_8 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 2b - Success

| Aim (500 characters maximum) | Reference number | Target group | Description | Is this target collaborative? | Data source | Baseline year | Baseline data | Yearly milestones | | | | | Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum) |
|--|------------------|--------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| | | | | | | | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | |
| To support the National KPM 4 to eliminate the unexplained attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups: specifically between Black students and White students. | PTS_1 | Ethnicity | To decrease and eliminate the unexplained gap - Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between White students and Black students by 2024/25. Measured by an increase in the value added score for Black students. This is a foundation for reducing overall attainment gaps. | No | Other data source | 2016-17 | 0.92 Value Added score | 0.93 | 0.94 | 0.96 | 0.98 | 1.00 | The baseline data uses a value added score for 2016/17. (Kingston method). An increased value added score indicates a reduced gap between the actual proportion of students awarded a 1st or 2:1 compared to the expected proportion taking factors such as entry qualifications and subject of study into account. A score of 1 or above indicates that students have been awarded a classification at a level that would be expected given their prior attainment and subject of study. |
| To maintain a value added score of 1 or above for Asian students during the period 2024/25, as a foundation for reducing overall attainment gap for Asian students by 2030/31. | PTS_2 | Ethnicity | To maintain a value added score of 1 or above for Asian students during the period 2024/25, as a foundation for reducing overall attainment gap for Asian students. | No | Other data source | 2016-17 | 0.99 Value Added score | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | The baseline data uses a value added score for 2016/17 for Asian students. (Kingston method). A score of 1 or above indicates that students have been awarded a classification at a level that would be expected given their prior attainment and subject of study. |
| To support the National KPM 5 to eliminate the attainment gap between disabled students and non-disabled students by 2024/25. | PTS_3 | Disabled | To return to a low or zero percentage point gap in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between disabled students and non-disabled students by 2024/25 (all FT UG). | No | The access and participation dataset | 2017-18 | 6 percentage point gap | 4.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 0 | Baseline data uses 2017/18 data. |
| To support the National KPM 4 to eliminate the absolute attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups: specifically between Black students and White students. | PTS_4 | Ethnicity | To decrease the absolute gap - Percentage difference in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between White students and Black students. | No | The access and participation dataset | 2017-18 | 17 percentage point gap | 16 | 15 | 14 | 12 | 10 | The baseline data uses the absolute gap in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) between White students and Black students. |

