

**Myerscough College (10004478)**  
**2019-20 access and participation plan**

## **1. Introduction**

This Access and Participation Plan sets out the access and support arrangements for students entering higher education programmes at Myerscough College from 01 September 2019.

We are one of the largest UK further education colleges delivering higher education programmes in land based and sports subjects and we have formal approval from DfE and Companies House to use the title 'University Centre Myerscough' for our higher education provision.

All higher education programmes at the College are awarded by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). Myerscough is the largest partner college of UCLan and is an Associate School of UCLan.

Our strap line is '*Opportunities for all to Succeed*'. This core priority is reflected in the College strategic objective: '*We will lead our peers in promoting equality of educational opportunity & outcome for all*' (Myerscough College Strategic Plan 2012-22). This reflects our high level of long-term commitment to widening participation and the emphasis on quality of delivery and student support in the development of high level academic and employability skills for students from all backgrounds and priority groups.

The 2014 QAA Higher Education Review for the College commended the quality and enhancement of student learning opportunities (2 commendations) and identified 10 areas of good practice with no recommendations. The College QAA Higher Education Review report endorsed the College's commitment to widening participation and student success and identified good practice in '*the comprehensive support for learners in their transition to higher education*' and '*the wide-ranging support mechanisms targeted to meet individual needs that enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential*'.

## **2. Assessment of Current Performance**

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) widening participation and continuation data with breakdown by priority groups are not available for Colleges nationally. However, to ensure comparability in reporting, we have aligned the way in which internal data on widening participation and student success are measured to match HESA criteria as closely as possible.

We currently analyse data by key priority and underrepresented groups, including analysis by multiple dimensions of different characteristics. However, at present we don't collect data on participation, success and progression outcomes for care leavers. This is an area where we need to develop our data collection, reporting and monitoring.

### **2.1 Access**

The College is committed to widening participation and internal data on recruitment from priority groups suggests indicative performance against national widening participation indicators remains good. The table below indicates internal data on proportions of higher education students for 2017-18 according to different priority groups.

Priority Group		College 2017-18	National (HESA) 2016-17
Gender	Female	56%	57%
	Male	44%	43%
Age Group (Start of Course)	Young (<21)	41%	41%
	Mature (21+)	59%	59%
Ethnicity	BME	6%	22%
	White	82%	77%
	Unknown	12%	1%
Learning Difficulty or Disability	Known disability	13%	12%
	No known disability	87%	88%
POLAR 3	Group 1	12%	12%
	Group 2-5	88%	88%

## Analysis

- The gender gap is better than the national trend.
- Participation from mature applicants are in line with the national trend. However, this varies significantly by mode of delivery (96% mature for part time).
- Participation from BME groups remains low compared with the national trend. This is reflective of the national picture for land-based studies where there is low participation from black minority ethnic groups.
- Participation from those with learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national trend.
- The proportion of students from POLAR 3 group 1 (those areas with lowest participation) is in line with the national trend. However, this is low when compared with the regional average for the North West of England (16%).

## 2.2 Student Success

Our Strategic Plan targets for retention and achievement use internal in-year data for each year cohort as a measure of the performance during the academic year. We also introduced new Strategic Plan target for 'non-continuation' for 2017-18. This is a measure of those that enrolled for year 2 of the programme compared with those that started year 1 of the programme. This enables internal monitoring of progress against the benchmarking used by external quality review processes including the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF).

### 2.2.1 Student Continuation

Our overall TEF year 3 (2017-18) outcomes for continuation were 89%, this metric was positively flagged and 5% above benchmark. Additionally, we were above benchmark in all

categories when split by different characteristics. Internal data suggests that continuation for the current year (2017-18) remains high at 89%, above the College Strategic Plan target.

Absolute outcomes for student continuation by different priority groups were as follows:

Priority Group		Student Continuation 2016-17 – 2017-18
Age	Young (<21)	93%
	Mature (>21)	87%
Gender	Female	96%
	Male	84%
Ethnicity	All Other Ethnic Groups	84%
	White	92%
Learning Difficulty or Disability	LLDD = Yes	87%
	LLDD = No	91%
POLAR 3	Group 1	91%
	Group 2 – 5	91%

Analysis:

- The gap in continuation between young and mature students is within 6%. Further analysis shows that the main difference was in lower continuation for mature students on part time programmes.
- Continuation rates are lower for male students than for female students. Further analysis shows that the main difference was again in lower continuation for male students on part time programmes. Our continuation rates for full time provision only differed by 3 (number) students between female/male populations.
- The differences in continuation for age and gender for part time provision is largely due to the significantly higher proportion of mature male students on part time distance learning programmes.
- The percentage continuation is lower for students from other ethnic groups although the actual numbers involved are low (just 8 FT students and 7 PT students).
- Continuation rates for students with a learning difficulty or disability were lower for students with a learning difficulty or disability but within a 4% gap. However, there are subject-specific differences in continuation for students with a learning difficulty or disability.
- There was no difference in continuation for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### 2.2.2 Student Achievement

Overall in-year student achievement in 2016-17 remained high at 87%, 1% above Strategic Plan target and 2% increase on the previous year. Outcomes were higher for full time provision (90% achievement) than for part time students (83% achievement). Outcomes were also higher for final year students (achievement 89%) than for continuing students

(85% achievement). These differential outcomes suggest that the critical area continues to be year-one retention and achievement, specifically achievement (pass rate) for part time students, mainly those studying by distance learning.

Absolute outcomes for student achievement by different priority groups were as follows:

Priority Group		Student Achievement 2016-17
Age	Young (<21)	90%
	Mature (>21)	84%
Gender	Female	89%
	Male	84%
Ethnicity	All Other Ethnic Groups	86%
	White	87%
Learning Difficulty or Disability	LLDD = Yes	83%
	LLDD = No	87%
POLAR 3	Group 1	91%
	Group 2 – 5	86%

#### Analysis:

- The gap in achievement between young and mature students is within 6%. However, there is a significantly higher proportion of mature students on part time distance learning programmes and our achievement outcomes for mature students on part time programmes are 2% lower than for full time programmes.
- Female students outperform male students (within a 5% gap). This is in line with the national trend but also influenced by high achievement in Veterinary Nursing, and increased achievement in Animal Studies, both of whom have large cohorts of predominantly female students.
- The gap in outcomes for students from different ethnicities is insignificant (1%).
- Achievement rates for students with a learning difficulty or disability has improved significantly and is now within a 4% gap. However, there are subject-specific differences in outcomes for students with a learning difficulty or disability.
- The gap in outcomes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds is low (within 5%), although it is noteworthy that POLAR 3 group 1 (students from the most disadvantaged areas) outperform the other groups.

One of the key multiple dimension groups identified as a priority for monitoring by the sector is white males from disadvantaged areas. Our student achievement outcomes for this multiple dimension priority group were 86%, suggesting the performance for this group is in line with the overall College outcomes (within 1%). However, it should be noted that the numbers can become quite small when reporting multiple dimension groups (43 students for this group).

## **2.3 Student progression**

Our overall TEF year 3 (2017-18) outcomes for progression to employment or further study were 97% for full time and 99% for part time. The full time metric was positively flagged and 5% above benchmark. Additionally, we were above benchmark in nearly all categories when split by different characteristics across both full time and part time with the exception of full time POLAR 3 group 1 and part time females (both just 0.4% below benchmark). The most recent DLHE survey (2015-16 completing cohort) confirmed continued high overall levels of progression to employment or further study at 98%.

Our overall TEF year 3 (2017-18) outcomes for progression to highly skilled employment or further study were 59% for both full time part time. There were no clear trends in the data when split by different characteristics with the exception of full time POLAR 3 group 1 and full time female students, which were both significantly below benchmark. The most recent DLHE survey (2015-16 completing cohort) confirmed increased overall progression to highly skilled employment or further study had increased to 62%.

However, outcomes for progression to highly skilled employment or further study for our provision are not always a true reflection of outcomes for our graduates as some positions of high responsibility within the industries that we serve are not always recognised as graduate positions by the survey. This is particularly true of Veterinary Nursing where the role of Veterinary Nursing is not recognised as a graduate-level position by the DLHE survey. The Veterinary Nursing provision is a large cohort of predominantly female students and this was reflected in low outcomes for females in the TEF metrics for progression to highly skilled employment, despite the fact that all were employed as Veterinary Nurses.

## **3. Ambition and Strategy**

### **3.1 Strategic ambitions**

Strategic aim 3 of our College Strategic Plan (2012-22) is 'We will Create opportunities for all to Succeed'. This is underpinned by the following strategic objectives:

- We will lead our peers in promoting equality of educational opportunity & outcome for all.
- Myerscough will narrow the gaps in performance between all groups within the College

These strategic aims and objectives reflect our high level of long-term commitment to widening participation and the emphasis on quality of delivery and student support in providing opportunity for all groups of students to succeed.

These aims and objectives also confirm our strategic commitment to the principles of this access and participation plan in setting out how we will provide equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, success in and progress from higher education.

Our targets and initiatives for access, success and progression in this access and participation plan are based on the evidence in our assessment of performance and respond to the areas for development we have identified from that evidence.

We are aware of the removal of Student Opportunity funding and will continue to invest in the sustained development of long-term strategically targeted access activities that broaden the applicant pool, raise aspirations among potential applicants from under-represented groups and encourage them to apply to higher education.

Although we have a good track record in this area, the College is aware of the continued importance of student success and progression and will continue to invest in the sustained development of long-term strategically targeted success and progression activities to maintain and improve student continuation, success and progression and narrow the gaps for priority groups across the student lifecycle.

Furthermore, we are aware of the future importance of the TEF in informing student choice and will continue to align our strategic ambitions to ensure that our work supports positive outcomes for all groups of students in preparations for future iterations of the TEF.

As previously identified, at present we don't collect data on participation, success and progression outcomes for care leavers. This is an area where we need to develop our data collection, reporting and monitoring across each stage of the student lifecycle.

We have experienced a delay in converting our input focussed raising attainment target to an outcomes focussed target but we will commit to achieving this through the review of the targets that is planned in preparation for the next iteration of access and participation plans.

## **3.2 Target groups**

Based on our assessment of performance, our targeted activities will prioritise the following groups of students and stages of the student lifecycle:

### **3.2.1 Access**

- Our participation from students in POLAR 3 group 1 is in line with the national trend. However, this is low when compared with the regional average for the North West of England and this will be our target group for access work. The main focus of this work will be on outreach work with schools with a high proportion of students from under-represented socio-economic groups.
- Our participation from BME groups remains low compared with the national trend. Although this is reflective of the national picture for land-based studies, we will continue to promote access to higher education for students in these groups through our work with targeted schools and different ethnicity groups.
- Our participation from mature applicants is in line with the national trend. However, we have a much higher proportion of mature students on part time courses (96%) and we will continue to promote access to higher education for mature applicants through development of flexible and alternative modes of delivery. Part of this work will be to explore opportunities to develop degree apprenticeships in land-based subjects.
- Although our participation from those with learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national trend, we will continue to support students in this group through our applicant support initiatives.

### **3.2.2 Student success**

- Our continuation and achievement outcomes for male and mature students on part time programmes are lower than for full time programmes and this will be one of our target groups for student continuation and success measures. The main focus of this work will be on enhancing access to academic and personal support for students on our online and blended learning programmes where there is a higher proportion of mature and male students.
- Although our continuation and achievement outcomes for students with a learning difficulty or disability has improved significantly, there are subject-specific differences in outcomes for students from this group. These will be one of our target groups for student continuation and success measures. While we will continue to invest in activities that promote high levels of continuation and success for all students with a learning difficulty or disability, we will action plan to provide enhanced support for subjects where we have identified there is a greater need.

- Our students in POLAR 3 group 1 have higher success outcomes compared with those from other POLAR 3 groups and this reflects the high levels of support we provide for all our students. However, we will continue to invest in activities that promote high levels of success for students from all backgrounds through our transition to higher education and on-programme support measures.
- Although there is a difference in continuation for different ethnicity groups (the actual numbers involved were small), the gap in achievement outcomes for students from different ethnicities is insignificant. However, we will continue to invest in on-programme support for these groups, this work will be mainly through our student support services in the 'Core'.

### **3.2.3 Student progression**

- Outcomes for progression to employment or further study and for progression to highly skilled employment or further study for our students in POLAR 3 group 1 were below benchmark in TEF year 3. Progression to highly skilled employment or further study is one of our targeted areas and our progression activities to develop employability skills and raise awareness of employment opportunities will be particularly beneficial to students from POLAR 3 group 1 disadvantaged areas who may have little or no previous work experience.
- Although our progression to employment or further study for students from different ethnicities, mature students and students with a learning difficulty or disability were all above benchmark in TEF year 3, we will continue to invest in progression activities that promote high levels of employment or further study for students from all backgrounds.
- Although outcomes for progression to highly skilled employment or further study for our provision are not always a true reflection of outcomes for our students and some of the positions of high responsibility that they progress to, we will continue to invest in activities that promote progression to highly skilled employment or further study for students from all subjects and backgrounds in preparations for future iterations of the TEF.

### **3.3 Collaborative working**

We will continue to work collaboratively with our partner HEI, UCLan, to enhance awareness of UCLan student support mechanisms and improve access for our students to initiatives such as the <i></i> (the University one-stop student enquiries and information centre), 'Careers' service and study skills support initiatives at the University.

We will work with colleagues in higher education institutions and further education colleges across the north west through the Lancashire and Cumbria National Collaborative Outreach Programmes (NCOP). The project aims to support the most disadvantaged young people in England to progress into higher education by undertaking outreach activity in geographical areas where the higher education participation of young people is both low and much lower than expected. Our outreach activities will be mapped with NCOP activities to ensure that the work delivered through this access and participation plan complements the work delivered through the NCOP and check that activities with target areas are not duplicated and under-represented areas or groups are not missed.

We will continue to work collaboratively with key employers in each of our curriculum areas to promote progression to highly skilled employment for students from all backgrounds. As part of this work we will arrange subject-specific and cross-College employer events for students where key employers and industry organisations will be invited to an event where they can talk to students about career prospects and students can talk to employers about potential job opportunities. Another aspect of this work will include inviting employers in for specific events. For example, we hold a Student Showcase event for dissemination of

student dissertation work and invite key employers such as the Guide Dogs for the Blind Charity to that event as a networking opportunity for the final year students.

### **3.4 Ensuring continuous improvement through evaluation**

Our evaluation programme informs the monitoring and action planning of our Strategic Plan targets to help us understand whether we are meeting our institutional ambitions and goals. Where possible, our Strategic Plan targets are set against external benchmarks such as those used by the TEF to ensure that what we are evaluating and monitoring internally meets, or exceeds, the benchmarks by which we are measured externally.

Additionally, we undertake evaluation of some of our specific access, success and progression initiatives (for example, through an annual report and analysis of the outcomes from our Student Support Register initiative) to help us understand their impact and the contribution they are making to overall institutional targets.

We will evaluate the impact of initiatives to support access, success and progression for identified target groups through demonstrable changes in behaviour and student outcomes at each stage of the student lifecycle.

We will use data on enrolment patterns from internal data and UCAS for evaluation of access measures. We will use student outcomes for continuation, success and progression using internal data, TEF and Graduate Outcomes surveys for evaluation of success and progression measures. We will supplement this by gathering opinions from students in the form of focus groups and surveys, including internal surveys, the external NSS and Graduate Outcomes survey.

We currently evaluate the financial support we provide for students through surveys of those students in receipt of financial support to gather their own opinions on how the financial support had impacted on their access to higher education and success in their studies. Whilst this currently provides an important student perspective on the value of the financial support that we provide, we intend to build on this with additional analysis of the success and progression outcomes for those students in receipt of financial support to provide a more robust evaluation of the impact of our financial support measures.

For key student outcomes, including NSS, continuation and success, we currently produce an internal analysis document which summarises overall outcomes and identifies key areas for improvement at overall College and subject level, including analysis of outcomes by groups with different characteristics. The areas for improvement in the analysis documents are then taken forwards to our Quality Monitoring Group and subject-specific review meetings and feed into action planning for continuous improvement and both institution and subject level. This model provides a robust mechanism to identify institutional trends and variances for groups with different characteristics or specific subjects and ensure that the outcomes of evaluation can influence continuous improvement and practice at all levels.

We intend to build on this model to include similar analysis of enrolment and progression data to ensure consistent evaluation of activities and further promote continuous improvement across the student lifecycle.

### **3.5 Monitoring and delivery**

The Deputy Principal Finance and Funding and the Assistant Principal Higher Education are primarily responsible for the delivery and monitoring of this access and participation plan. Implementation and delivery of this access and participation plan will be driven through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group, Recruitment Group, Marketing Groups and the Curriculum Quality Group.

Our specific targets and milestones for 2019-20 are outlined in our 2019-20 Resource Plan. Other targets outlined in the Resource Plan set out the desired outcomes of outreach and support initiatives across the student lifecycle to improve the recruitment, retention and achievement of students from groups with different characteristics. Monitoring and



evaluation of progress against the targets will be measured using internal data streams and external data sources via UCAS, TEF metrics and HESA.

Monitoring and evaluation of progress against the targets will be reported through our Quality Monitoring Group and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group. These groups report to the Senior Management Team and ultimately to the Corporation, Quality and Standards and Finance committees of the College governing body.

Direct reports of progress towards Strategic Plan targets are also provided to the Corporation, Quality and Standards and Finance committees of the College governing body on a termly basis with a summary end-of year report.

Student oversight and involvement in monitoring of performance is facilitated through student representation on the membership of the Corporation and Quality and Standards Committees of the College governing body.

Evaluation of progress against the targets will feed into the annual Institutional Report and Action Plan, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Equality and Diversity Annual Report and action plan to ensure robust action planning for continued improvement and prioritisation of activities and initiatives that have greatest impact.

### **3.6 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The College is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and has achieved the 'Leaders in Diversity' award from the National Centre for Diversity. The award recognises our all-encompassing methodology for improving equality, diversity and inclusion practices in the workplace.

All of our policies and procedures (including those covering the activities in this access and participation plan) are subject to equality impact assessment to ensure that any adverse effects of our activities on students with protected characteristics are removed or minimised.

The measures detailed in this access and participation plan will be embedded in the work of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group, Recruitment Group and Marketing groups to ensure that the initiatives positively impact on access and success measures for identified priority groups. These groups will also evaluate outcomes from activities to inform decisions on targeting aspects of access and participation work.

The awards and activities outlined above evidence that we have taken reasonable steps to ensure that the financial support, access and retention measures covered in this access and participation plan eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization, enhance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not as detailed in the Equality Act 2010.

This access and participation plan has been consulted on, and approved by the College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group who will monitor progress and report to the Senior Management Team.

### **3.7 Student consultation and involvement**

We have consulted with the Students' Union, via the Student President and the Students' Union Liaison Officer in the development of this access and participation plan and the financial support, access and retention measures contained within it. We have provided a draft of our access and participation plan to the Student President and Students' Union Liaison Officer to give them opportunity to consult with the student body (including full time and part time students and students from all backgrounds) and express their views about the content of the plan before it was submitted for approval. No changes to the plan were suggested by the Students' Union or Students' Union Liaison Officer.

We will involve students from all backgrounds in the implementation of our access and participation plan through the activities outlined throughout the plan. Student involvement in

monitoring and evaluation will be through student feedback and surveys and this will include students from all backgrounds. Our Students' Union Liaison Officer also sits on the Associate School Senior Executive Team where progress against targets will be discussed and monitored. Additionally, the Student President sits on the Corporation and Quality and Standards committees of the College governing body who will be ultimately responsible for monitoring of performance of our access and participation plan.

#### **4. Access, Student Success and Progression Measures**

##### **4.1 Access**

Our identified target groups for access are students from low-participation areas and under-represented groups, BME, mature applicants and those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Our access activities are focused on these groups under three areas of portfolio development, outreach activities and applicant support.

##### **4.1.1 Portfolio development**

Our development of flexible part time programmes through online and blended learning delivery has proved successful in promoting recruitment of mature part time applicants (96% of part time enrolments were mature students). We will continue to invest in the development of flexible and alternative modes of delivery through fully online and blended learning programmes to support access to higher education from mature and second-career part time applicants. Part of this work will be to explore opportunities to develop degree apprenticeships in land-based subjects. Unfortunately, this area of work has not yet progressed as the degree apprenticeship standards for the majority of land-based subjects have still not yet been developed by the relevant industry bodies. However, we are working with our awarding HEI to explore opportunities for using the leadership and management standards and contextualising them to develop leadership and management apprenticeships for our specific industries. Degree apprenticeships have potential to offer an alternative model of flexible learning which may appeal to some students and provide a way of meeting employer needs.

Our investment in development of a portfolio that provides progression routes for all subjects from level 2 through to level 6 (including some to level 7) has contributed to an overall progression rate to higher education (internal and external) of 32%. We have also expanded delivery of further education programmes at our centres in East Lancashire and Merseyside and the College is now the only provider of further education programmes in land-based subjects in the Liverpool area. New investments this year include new animal studies and equine centres at our Croxteth Centre in Merseyside. These developments support long-term investment in the enhancement of opportunities for progression and social mobility for applicants in these areas which have a high proportion of low income households and traditionally low participation in land-based higher education.

However, this outcome is not as high as expected and we will continue to develop the portfolio to provide long-term enhancement of progression opportunities from further to higher education in land-based and sports subjects, particularly for students from our further education centres in East Lancashire and Merseyside.

Our curriculum also helps to enhance awareness of opportunities for studying vocational higher education to priority groups through some of the delivery activities. For example, students undertake outreach coaching work with local community and schools groups as part of the work-experience element for some of our sports programmes. This promotes strong links with BME and other priority groups such as white males from socio-economically disadvantaged areas for some of our specific sports programmes such as basketball, cricket, rugby and football.

#### **4.1.2 Outreach activities**

Outreach work with secondary schools and their feeder primary schools in the North West of England with a high proportion of students from under-represented socio-economic groups represents one of our targeted initiatives for improving long term outreach and access. We delivered over 400 schools outreach activities in 2016-17 and this has been successful in promoting access to higher education for students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups. We will continue to target areas and regions with low participation rates. Examples include specific visit opportunities for targeted schools (such as Pleckgate High School, Blackburn), targeted schools activities focusing on underrepresented geographic areas such as Preston PR1/PR2 postcodes and feeder schools to our Croxteth Centre which is one of the most deprived and underrepresented wards in the region.

We are aware of the low participation from black minority ethnic (BME) groups. We have reviewed our recruitment statistics to evaluate the impact of our activities in this area and unfortunately increased participation from students in these groups is not yet evident. Unfortunately, this is reflective of the national picture for land-based studies where there is low participation from BME groups. However, we will continue to work on improving participation from these groups through targeted activities with specific schools with high proportions of under-represented BME groups to promote careers in the land-based industries. Although it is difficult to build additional capacity for this work, we will continue to provide targeted activities include work with the Tauheedul Trust, Preston Muslim Girls School, ESSA Academy, Preston Gujarat Hindu Society and advertising in the publications such as the Asian Image newspaper.

As a specialist provider of land-based and sports subjects, we have a wide geographic catchment area and work with a large range of schools across the north of England (over 400 in 2016-17). As such, it is currently impractical for the College to sponsor or co-sponsor an individual academy or free school.

However, to support attainment-raising with schools, we collaborate with local schools to deliver on-campus vocational 14-16 programmes to year 10 and 11 students. The students on the programme are from very different backgrounds and includes a number of home-educated students. The activity helps to support their attainment and enhance awareness of vocational pathways to higher education. The programme covers three main areas of provision.

1. School Links – Accredited day release courses for under 16 learners at entry level and level one across most College areas and centres. 144 learners, 93% retention, 91% Pass, 85% achievement.
2. Access to College Programmes – Ongoing enrichment courses for specialist LLDD providers for learners aged 14 upwards. 34 learners with 100% retention, achievement and success.
3. Pupil Progression Pathway – Dealing with the process from enquiry to enrolment of non-standard pre and post 16 full time students (excluding non UK Nationals). These students are either pre 16 home educated or funded through an external organisation or post 16 students funded through an external organisation. 6 learners 83% retention and achievement. 67% progression onto next course level as post 16 learner.

The progression for students from these programmes into positive destinations was 90%. We will be approaching more local Schools to set up this form of collaboration to raise early aspirations of GCSE students and enhance awareness of vocational pathways to higher education.

#### **4.1.3 Applicant support**

Our investment in measures to provide timely information, advice and guidance to applicants has been successful and helped support an offer to enrolment conversion rate of 61% in 2017. These initiatives include a dedicated applicant information officer to provide a direct point of contact for additional support and guidance for applicants who need it most at key decision points in the UCAS calendar, and an online facility to provide clear and easy access for applicants to information such as interview arrangements, course details, travel, finance, enrolment and joining instructions. We obtain feedback from applicants and new students on their experience and will use this to target continued investment to further develop these key initiatives which are particularly beneficial for mature applicants and applicants from backgrounds with traditionally low participation in higher education who may not have access to usual information sources regarding higher education study.

We provide a series of subject-specific applicant events to provide applicants with opportunity to find out more about studying higher education and life at the College and to help them decide if we are the right choice for them. Where applicants have declared a learning difficulty or disability, the applicant events are attended by a member of the College Inclusive Learning team to discuss the support available. Those who are unable to attend the applicant events are contacted directly by the inclusive learning team to discuss the support available and are invited in for an orientation day if the applicant would find it beneficial. This is of particular benefit for applicants who may be applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), mature applicants and applicants from backgrounds with traditionally low participation in higher education.

We also invest in a series of 'Advise the Advisor' activities to promote access to higher education. Key aspects of this work include hosting two 'Careers Advisor VIP' events at the College each year for over 50 careers advisors from schools, colleges and other organisations and attendance at national events such as the national Careers Guidance Show and the North West Skills Show. These activities provide opportunity to update Careers Advisors on progression to higher education in land-based subjects and student support arrangements, so they can be more informed when advising applicants, particularly those from backgrounds with traditionally low participation in higher education who may not have access to usual information sources regarding higher education study.

## **4.2 Student success and Progression**

Our identified target groups for student success and progression are male and mature students, students from low-participation areas and under-represented groups and those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Our access activities are focused on these groups under three areas of transition to higher education, on-programme support and student progression.

### **4.2.1 Transition to higher education**

Our extended induction period for new students includes a strong focus on support for students through the initial transition to higher education. Our induction package includes a combination of centrally organised cross-College activities and subject-specific activities to support students in the early stages of their programme. To avoid information overload at the initial stages, our induction package includes an initial orientation in week one, followed by a 6 week extended induction period that includes a series of tutorials and seminars to discuss expectations, study skills, learning styles and personal development and introduce the services and support they can access as higher education students. A new addition to our induction package is the introduction of a research-based formative assessment involves students collecting and analysing primary data right from the start of their course to promote the development of student scholarship, independent learning and academic skills. This supports the transition to HE for new students and provide tutors and students with an early indication of expectations, academic level and areas where individual support may be required. To support our online and distance learning student, we have also further

strengthened our online induction package for new students with enhanced content on Prevent, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, British Values, and Student Support. The online package also includes our 'SelfSmart' initiative, a self-assessment programme that can be used as a measure learning gain for personal development and employability skills. The online induction package is of particular use to distance learning students, many of whom are from priority groups such as second career and mature students. These extended induction initiatives have been highly successful and are particularly important to support priority groups such as young students, those from low-participation areas and those in receipt of DSA. In the 2017 internal induction survey, 98% of students stated that following induction they felt more confident about their course and 97% of students stated they knew where to get help if they needed it. We intend to build on the success of these initiatives and will continue to invest in measures to further enhance the development and delivery of the extended induction period to support the transition to higher education for students from all backgrounds.

We have also developed an 'E-fest' initiative to enhance the student induction programme. The 'E-fest' is a cross-College event for higher education students to help raise awareness of the learning technologies and software resources available to them to support their studies. All higher education students are scheduled to attend the 'E-fest' in groups during induction week. At the event, a series of round table events are presented to students covering learning technologies and software such as Socrative, 'MyApps' (accessibility and study skills software), presentations from JISC and a range of other resources. This initiative has been highly successful. Almost the entire year 1 higher education student population attended the 'E-fest' enhancing their awareness of a range of learning technologies and software available to them. In the 2017 internal induction survey, 97% of higher education students agreed that following induction they were fully aware of the types of technology available to help support their studies. We will continue to invest in the development and delivery of this initiative which is particularly useful to enhance awareness of software to support study skills, for students in priority groups such as second career and mature students, ethnic minority groups and those in receipt of DSA.

Our Inclusive learning team also provides a transition scheme for students with more complex additional learning needs such as Asperger's and mobility/sensory impairments to help support a smooth transition into higher education and College life for students in those priority groups.

#### **4.2.2 On-programme support**

We have continued to develop and enhance the central student support services centre, 'The Core' to provide extensive additional academic and pastoral support for students throughout their studies and to support progression to employment or further study. The Core services include the provision of a student finance advisor to provide additional IAG on financial help available for students from low income households. Further services provided by the Core include student support officers, counsellors, the College nurse and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Co-ordinator. We will continue to invest in provision of these services which provide valuable additional support throughout their studies for students in priority groups such as second career and mature students, ethnic groups and those in receipt of DSA.

We provide access to the inclusive learning study suite for all higher education students to provide support, develop their study and research skills and help them with the planning of assignments. Our Inclusive Learning team has worked with the Education and Training Foundation to develop a new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Guide and Self-Assessment Tool to RAG rate and focus on areas of need with regards to SEND and reasonable adjustments for HE learners. We are aware of the increasing requirements of higher education providers to meet the non-medical needs of students in receipt of DSA (such as those with dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dyslexia or Asperger Syndrome) and have reviewed the direct support provided for these students. For students with a DSA, relevant

sections of the DSA assessment of need report are used to develop informed support strategies for students and monthly SEND reviews are provided by specialist support tutors for students most at risk. We are also aware of the support needs for students with a DSA who are studying on distance learning programmes through online delivery and this year we have explored the use of agencies to provide appropriate support for these groups of students. We will continue to provide direct on-campus support for students in receipt of DSA in the form of drop-in study skills sessions, access to specialist software, note-taking and regular targeted specialist sessions with an Inclusive Learning tutor. These initiatives will provide valuable additional support throughout their studies for students in receipt of DSA.

The development and implementation of our electronic Student Support Register represents one of our targeted initiatives for improving student success. The initiative assists early identification of student concerns in order to offer an appropriate level of support to improve retention, achievement and the student experience. The percentage of students who were on the Student Support Register and were retained through successful monitoring and support increased to 88% in 2016-17 (consistent with the previous year and an increase from 84% in 2014-15). Further analysis shows that 'health concerns' (particularly mental health) was the highest area of concern followed by student attendance and course concerns (academic ability and behind with work). We have reviewed these key areas of concern to action plan where further support or resources may be required. The increase in students with mental health concerns reflects the national picture and this may also be linked to attendance concerns and course concerns. The College has signed up to the 'Charter for Employers who are Positive about Mental Health', an NHS initiative run by Workways. Through our commitment to this Charter we are working to increase awareness of mental health, provide support networks and information, and make it healthier to talk about mental health in our workplace, learning and social environments. Our Student Support Register provides joined-up on-line support for tutors in monitoring 'at risk' students and we will continue to invest in this initiative to provide enhanced monitoring and support for students in priority groups with academic and / or personal difficulties, such as those receiving DSA and from low participation areas or other ethnicity groups.

We work with an extensive range of local, regional and national initiatives to improve understanding of the challenges faced by different groups and provide support for students. Our Inclusive Learning team is participating in a regional higher education Disability Support Network to provide a collaborative approach to the provision of support for students with mental health problems and specific learning difficulties. This work is in its early stages but will be an opportunity for sharing good practice in disability support with other local College and Universities. We are working with Lancashire LGBT, a registered charity whose mission is to create opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Lancashire. We are working towards achieving their 'Quality Mark' standard with a view to identifying the needs of LGBT+ people in College and working to address them, supporting the self-empowerment of LGBT+ people and achieving equality for LGBT people in College, for example, by carrying out enrichment activity during LGBT History Month. We are also working with Lancashire Constabulary to further our commitment to eliminating discrimination. In partnership with the Lancashire Hate Crime and Diversity Police Officer we are exploring options for further activity to raise awareness of hate crime and to encourage the reporting of it in College and within the local community. We have signed up to Equality and Diversity UK's 'Racism Agenda 2016-2020', a national campaign to raise awareness of racism issues and create practical tools and resources to support curriculum and the personal development of students. We are working to adopt the Alzheimer's Society 'Dementia Friends' scheme, through which the College is working to become fully 'Dementia Friendly'. We are also working with the Gypsy Roamer and Traveller Support Group to provide opportunities to study. Themed diversity awareness events have also been held across campus, such as Black History Film Club held in October to mark Black History Month, and monthly EDI prompt sheets were provided to Tutors for embedding into Schemes of Work. Our investment in these initiatives demonstrates the College's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, enhances equality of opportunity and

fosters good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **4.2.3 Student progression**

We have developed a coherent approach to the development of academic, personal and wider employability skills to support students in preparing for graduate-level employment or further study in their chosen field. The development of employability skills is embedded in our curriculum through specific career development and work-related learning modules, vocational assessments and a centralised and structured programme of course and personal tutorials. These activities are linked to our 'Graduate Employability' programme to provide a framework of learning materials, support and recognition for the development and enhancement of student employability skills. This joined-up approach to the development of graduate-level employability skills has been very successful and helped support continued high graduate-level outcomes for progression to employment or further study for our students. We will continue to invest in the further development and delivery of this employability framework which is particularly beneficial for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may have little or no previous work experience and for mature students seeking to build on their existing portfolio or start a second career.

We have continued to provide a range of extra-curricular activities to promote employability and progression for higher education students. Subject-specific employer's events are arranged for students in each subject area. These events invite key employers and industry organisations in to an event where they can talk to students about career prospects and students can talk to employers about potential job opportunities. These events may also incorporate an industry liaison meeting to between the course team and employers to discuss suggestions for further enhancements to the curriculum and opportunities for working with employers to enhance the employability of students. These initiatives have been very successful and helped support DLHE positive outcomes of 98% to employment or further study for our 2015-16 cohort. We will continue to invest in the development and delivery of these initiatives which are particularly beneficial as a step in to employment for students from disadvantaged areas who may have little or no previous work experience.

We will also introduce a new careers team in 2018-19 to deliver our employer liaison and work experience activities as part of our approach to the Gatsby benchmarks. The new careers team will also have oversight of the Graduate Employability programme. This new team will provide a more coherent approach to the development of employability skills for students.

### **4.3 Financial support**

We are aware of the financial pressures on students and will continue to invest in a series of financial support measures to help promote access and progression to higher education and to support students in their transition to higher education. However, uptake of bursaries and scholarships was not as high as expected in 2016-17 and We have reviewed the promotion and marketing of these financial support measures and we have put a number of additional measures in place to ensure clarity and maximise awareness for potential students.

Financial drop-in sessions are held twice weekly these are available to all students to discuss any financial concerns, at these meetings we take the opportunity to discuss and evaluate our current offer. A member of the finance team also attends cross-College course representative meetings to answer questions and receive feedback from students. At the end of each academic year we send a questionnaire to all students in receipt of bursary, the questionnaire identifies which students were aware of the bursaries and scholarships before they started College and how students heard about the bursary to further target our marketing to the techniques which have proved effective. We collect data from the survey on how effective our financial advice and guidance is, how financial help affected a student's

decision to start and continue their course, the ease of the application process, the allocation of the bursary as requested by students and satisfaction rates.

From the survey of those students in receipt of financial support, 84% stated that the financial support had enabled them to take up their studies, 84% also stated that they would have found it difficult to stay on the course without the financial support and 92% stated that they were more likely to continue and complete their studies as a result of the financial support.

The evaluation confirms that financial support remains important to students. However, as uptake of financial support has not increased, we will continue to invest in the financial support measures detailed below but we will focus our increased investment on other access, success and progression measures described elsewhere in our access and participation plan.

We will provide financial support to eligible students through the Myerscough College Higher Education Bursary Scheme. A limited number of bursaries are available, the bursaries will vary and will be tailored to those in the greatest need and who meet the criteria. The maximum award per student will be £2,000 (pro-rata for part-time students). Funds are limited and therefore initial allocations will be a maximum of £750 (pro-rata for part-time students). This will be reviewed later in the academic year, subject to take-up and availability of funds. This is a one-year benefit, not a recurrent annual entitlement and annual applications must be submitted. Students will be able to apply for bursaries in more than one academic year during their studies if they wish to do so. Students will be able to select how they would like the funds to be allocated through a financial bursary and/or discounted accommodation, course equipment, food and travel or other similar institutional services. To be eligible for a bursary, students must be enrolled on an undergraduate course and have declared household income of less than £25,000 (including benefits) to ensure students with the greatest need receive the maximum award. Meeting essential eligibility criteria does not guarantee or equate to an entitlement to a bursary. Full details of eligibility and support arrangements will be published for potential applicants on the College website in the 2018-19 academic year.

We will continue to provide a series of Scholarships and a 'Welcome Package' for 2019-20 to complement the access measures and bursary arrangements and provide additional financial support thereby providing new students with a full and robust package of support and access measures.

A significant 'Welcome Package' will be provided to help support full time students in their first year of study and support their transition into higher education. This will include a waiver of the resources and facilities fee and other benefits such as free gym membership and £50 voucher to help with initial book purchases. These benefits will be made available to all new full time entrants and will be of particular benefit to those from low-income households.

All students who progress from FE to full time HE at Myerscough will also receive a £500 cash award in the first year of their programme. This will be of particular benefit to promote progression and social mobility for internal applicants from areas with a high proportion of low income households and traditionally low participation in higher education, particularly for students progressing from our further education centres in East Lancashire and Merseyside.

We will also make available 20 Scholarships consisting of a cash payment of £1000 each to support students with their studies. Some of the Scholarships will be prioritised for applicants from targeted under-represented groups (students from disadvantaged areas, BME groups and students with a learning difficulty or disability) and applicants who have undertaken extensive voluntary work or community work with under-represented groups to help raise awareness of higher education opportunities among these groups. Successful applicants for Scholarships must meet one or more of the following criteria:



- Evidence of external representation of their School or previous College at regional level or wider in their chosen subject through competitions, exhibitions, presentations or other similar activities.
- Extensive evidence of volunteering work or charity fund-raising work.
- Evidence of extensive community work with under-represented groups.

Applicants must also choose Myerscough as their first choice, be on a full-time undergraduate course resident in the UK or Europe and enrolled on the programme (i.e. not withdrawn or suspended) at the time of each payment. Scholarships are paid in the first year of study subject to the following criteria:

- Half the scholarship will be paid before Christmas as long as students have >90% attendance (excepting extenuating circumstances)
- Half the scholarship will be paid at the end of year 1 as long as students have successfully passed all modules at the June assessment boards (excepting extenuating circumstances)

Full details of the scholarships and the application form will be published for potential applicants on the College website in the 2018-19 academic year.

We are aware that financial support on its own is not the most effective support measure and will monitor the impact of direct financial support to ensure that the funds are being targeted correctly. This will include monitoring of the demand for Scholarships from under-represented groups.

## **5 Investment**

The total OfS countable spend on specific access activities for underrepresented groups will be approximately £81,000 for 2019-20. This level of spend will be focussed on the access initiatives detailed above under three key areas of portfolio development, outreach activities and applicant support.

The total OfS countable spend on specific success and progression activities for priority and underrepresented groups will be approximately £135,000 for 2019-20. This increased spend will be focussed on the support initiatives detailed above under three key areas of transition to higher education, on-programme support and progression.

The overall allocation of financial support for 2019-20 through the Myerscough Higher Education Bursary Scheme and other financial support measures detailed above is approximately £168,000. The amount allocated is based on the proportion of students from low participation areas and is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure sufficient funds are available.

The total expenditure on financial support and additional access and success measures outlined in our access and participation plan is £384,000. This total is based on estimates of the proportion of students from priority and underrepresented groups and indicates overall levels of spend in 2019-20 of approximately 23.3% of the fee income above the basic fee.

The total investment we will make on access, participation and progression beyond that identified in our access and participation plan is £419, 000 (£134,000 on access initiatives, £220,000 on success measures and £65,000 on progression activities).

This is consistent with levels of spend in previous years. We will maintain this approach, where appropriate, to prioritise sustained investment in activities and infrastructure that support access and student success in the light of any future changes to higher education funding.

## 6 Provision of information to Students

Information for current and prospective students on the fees for the duration of their course and financial support available will be detailed in the College prospectus and on the College website along with this access and participation plan. We will ensure that information is provided to UCAS and other key organisations in a timely manner to populate their applicant-facing web services.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG) on tuition fees and financial support for higher education students are provided by our student enquiries, student finance, student services, admissions, course tutors and marketing teams. A series of course advice events and open days are held throughout the year to provide IAG to prospective students and many external marketing events are attended, including UCAS events.

All full time applicants are offered opportunity to attend subject-specific applicant events where information regarding the fees and the financial support available through the College can be discussed further. Where applicants have declared a learning difficulty or disability the applicant events are attended by a member of our inclusive learning team to discuss the support available.

We have also set up an online facility to provide clear and easy access for applicants to information such as interview arrangements, course details, travel, finance, enrolment and joining instructions.

Our Inclusive Learning team provides specialist advice for students with additional learning needs and those in receipt of DSA. Our central student support services centre, 'The Core', provides a student finance advisor and other sources of support on academic, personal and career development for current students. These teams continue to provide advice and support for students throughout their programme to ensure that appropriate IAG is provided through all stages of the student life-cycle.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

The College may increase tuition fees annually by the inflationary amount based on the Retail Price Index (RPI-X) and/or agreed amount set each year by the Government.

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Honours degree Yr 1	£9,250
Foundation degree	Foundation degree Yr 1	£9,250
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-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		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£3,900
Foundation degree		£3,900
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		£2,925
Postgraduate ITT		£2,085
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

**Table 8a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Socio-economic (please give details in the next column)	This target is for widening participation. We will continue to improve and expand our outreach activities as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan to remain above the HESA widening participation Polar 3 group 1 benchmark for students from low participation neighbourhoods.	Yes	2013-14	11%	18%	19%	19%	20%	Outreach target to demonstrate commitment to widening participation from the start of the student lifecycle. As a College we do not have access to HESA data for our students. The College has adjusted internal reporting criteria to reflect HESA POLAR 3 group 1 criteria. (Minor change to wording of target to replace Access Agreement with Access and Participation Plan)	
T16a_02	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Completion/Non continuation (please give details in the next column)	This target is for in-year student retention and completion. We will continue to improve and expand our retention and success activities as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan to remain above the TEF completion benchmark.	No	2014-15	94%	95%	96%	96%	97%	As a College we do not have access to HESA data for our students. We have amended our internal reporting criteria for retention to match HESA completion criteria as closely as possible. This will enable us to publish comparable data and set realistic and comparable targets. (Minor change to wording of the target to replace Access Agreement with Access and Participation Plan and replace HESA non-completion benchmark with TEF completion benchmark)	
T16a_03	Progression	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	This target is for progression to highly skilled employment or further study. We will continue to enhance student employability and progression through the retention and success activities as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan to improve graduate level prospects for our students.	Yes	2012-13	59%	68%	70%	70%	72%	Progression focused target to demonstrate commitment to supporting students across the whole student lifecycle. Progression to highly skilled employment or further study outcomes for Myerscough provision are not always a true reflection of outcomes for our graduates as some positions of high responsibility within the industries that we serve are not always recognised as graduate positions by the survey. Actions to remedy this are currently also being explored through relevant professional bodies. (Minor change to wording of the target to replace Graduate Prospects with progression to highly skilled employment or further study and replace Access Agreement with Access and Participation Plan)	
T16a_04	Student success	Disabled	<b>Other statistic</b> - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	This target is for the difference in success outcomes of students with a declared learning difficulty or disability. We will continue to improve and expand our retention and success activities targeted specifically at students in receipt of DSA as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan to reduce the gap in outcomes for students with a declared learning difficulty or disability.	Yes	2013-14	6%	4%	4%	3%	3%	New success target focussing on reducing the difference in outcomes for students with a declared learning difficulty or disability. (Minor change to wording of target to replace Access Agreement with Access and Participation Plan)	

**Table 8b** - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	This target is for the number of schools outreach activities. We will continue to develop outreach activities with schools in the North West of England including schools with a high proportion of students from under-represented socio-economic groups.	Yes	2014-15	408	420	425	430	435	Outreach target to demonstrate commitment to widening participation from the start of the student lifecycle. Extensive work with Schools is already undertaken and the College will continue to invest in developing further outreach activity. This will include working with Lancashire and Cumbria National Collaborative Outreach Programmes.	
T16b_02	Student success	Multiple	Student support services	This target is for the percentage of students who are on the Student support Register and are retained through successful monitoring and support. The College will continue to implement and enhance the Student Support Register to provide academic and pastoral support for students.	No	2014-15	84%	87%	88%	89%	90%	Achievement of this target is linked to the retention targets outlined in Table 7a. (Note not all students who withdraw are on the Student Support register so the milestones are not a direct match to the retention milestones).	
T16b_03	Progression	Other (please give details in Description column)	Contextual data	This target is for the percentage of High Grades (2.1 and Firsts for honours degrees or Merit/Distinction for other awards). We will continue to promote high levels of student achievement through the retention and success activities as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan.	No	2014-15	48%	49%	50%	50%	52%	Performance focused target to demonstrate commitment to student retention and success across the whole student lifecycle and provide contextual data to complement the Completion/Non-Continuation target. (Minor change to wording of target to replace Access Agreement with Access and Participation Plan)	
T16b_04	Access	Attainment raising	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	This target is for the number of year 10 and 11 students engaged in on-campus vocational 14-16 programmes in collaboration with local schools	Yes	2015-16	198	202	204	206	208	Attainment-raising target in collaboration with schools. Students on the programme are from very different backgrounds with an increasing proportion of home-educated students on the programme. The activity helps to support their attainment prepare the students for progression to vocational further and higher education.	