



Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University

# Access and Participation Plan

2026-27 to 2029-2030

## Abbreviations

<b>ABCS</b>	Association between Characteristics	<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual Plus
<b>APP</b>	Access and Participation Plan	<b>LSC</b>	London School of Commerce
<b>BAME</b>	Black, Asian Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic	<b>LSP</b>	Learner Support Plan
<b>BI</b>	Business Intelligence	<b>LTE</b>	Learning and Teaching Enhancement
<b>CCCU</b>	Canterbury Christ Church University	<b>NEON</b>	National Education Opportunities Network
<b>CL</b>	Care Leaver	<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>CLPP</b>	Care Leaver Progression Partnership	<b>NNECL</b>	National Network for the Education of Care Leavers
<b>COG</b>	Closing Our Gap	<b>NSS</b>	National Student Survey
<b>CPD</b>	Continuous Professional Development	<b>NS-SEC</b>	National Statistics Socio-economic Classification
<b>CRM</b>	Customer Relationship Management	<b>OfS</b>	Office for Students
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education	<b>PAT</b>	Personal Academic Tutor
<b>E&amp;I</b>	Equity and Inclusion	<b>PG</b>	Postgraduate
<b>EORR</b>	Equality of Opportunity Risk Register	<b>PGR</b>	Postgraduate Research
<b>ESL</b>	Elizabeth School, London	<b>PLSP</b>	Placement Learner Support Plan
<b>FE</b>	Further Education	<b>POLAR</b>	Participation of Local Areas
<b>FSM</b>	Free School Meals	<b>PT</b>	Part Time
<b>FT</b>	Full Time	<b>Q1</b>	Quintile 1 (2,3,4,5)
<b>FTE</b>	Full Time Equivalent	<b>SCE</b>	School and College Engagement
<b>GBS</b>	Global Banking School	<b>SLC</b>	Student Loans Company
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation	<b>SMT</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>GTRSB</b>	Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen, Boater	<b>SOC</b>	Standard Occupational Classification
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education	<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
<b>HEAT</b>	Higher Education Access Tracker	<b>SU</b>	Students' Union
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution	<b>SWS</b>	Student Wellbeing Services
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency	<b>TASO</b>	Transforming Access and Student Outcomes
<b>IAG</b>	Information, Advice and Guidance	<b>TEF</b>	Teaching Excellence Framework
<b>ICE</b>	Industry, Careers and Enterprise	<b>TOC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>IMD</b>	Index of Multiple Deprivation	<b>TUNDRA</b>	Tracking Underrepresentation by Area
<b>KMMS</b>	Kent and Medway Medical School	<b>UCAS</b>	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
<b>KMPF</b>	Kent and Medway Progression Federation	<b>UG</b>	Undergraduate
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator	<b>UKMC</b>	UK Management College
<b>KS4</b>	Key Stage 4	<b>VLE</b>	Virtual Learning Environment
		<b>WP</b>	Widening Participation
		<b>YG</b>	Year Group

# Introduction and Strategic Aim

Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) is deeply committed to changing lives and increasing social mobility through widening participation in higher education. Our mission is to pursue excellence in education and research; inspired by our Church of England Foundation, we are passionate about transforming individuals, creating knowledge and enriching communities to build sustainable futures. Our purpose and educational strategy are to provide learning opportunities inclusive of all students from diverse backgrounds, ensuring they feel a sense of belonging as part of the CCCU community.

CCCU embraces a diverse student and staff community with over 38,000 students and 1,700 staff. 90% of those students are undergraduate. Our full-time mature student population (21 and over) is 89% at undergraduate level, nearly triple that of the sector average of 29%. With 64.1% of our full-time undergraduates from IMDQ1 and IMDQ2, nearly two thirds of our undergraduates have challenging socio-economic backgrounds coming from areas of rural and coastal deprivation in the South-East or areas of inner-city deprivation in London. This is significantly higher than the sector average of 45%. 21.2% of our young (18 yr old) full-time undergraduate student entrants are from Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised ethnic backgrounds, below the sector average (35.2%) but higher than the Kent and Medway population (17% of under 24 year olds).

This submission of our APP 26-30 will present additional University strategy and approaches that have developed since the previous submission.

The University's Vision 2030 strategic framework is based on our values of being Sustainable and Ethical; Innovative and Courageous; Compassionate and Inclusive; Collaborative and Creative. Based on these values our strategic aims are arranged with four pillars - Student Learning, Life and Futures; Research Enterprise and Innovation; Our Impact; People, Culture and Community – around a central aim of Shaping Sustainable Futures. The underpinning strategies to achieve the aims (Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Research and Enterprise; Digital; People; Finance; and Estates) have been built on our values and mapped to the cross-cutting themes of sustainability, compassion, wellbeing, partnerships, inclusivity, and global.

These values and themes also underpin our Access and Participation Plan for the next four years as we strive towards an equitable future for all our students, regardless of background or circumstance. We are committed to a range of actions designed to foster an inclusive learning community across the diversity of our staff and student populations with the aim of providing an excellent learning experience delivering increasingly equitable outcomes. We have set ourselves ambitious targets to eliminate gaps in access, success and progression, informed by our analysis of performance and developed in partnership with our student body.

Success will be delivered through collaboration, challenge, targeted interventions informed by our student body, personal and professional development and policy and procedural changes and our strategy will be continually informed by the study of sector best practice, case studies and reports published by HESA, Advance HE, Universities UK, TASO and the Office for Students.

Our Strategic Vision 2030 recognises that the world is changing along with the needs of our students. We have been reviewing our portfolio and our educational model to better meet the needs of future graduates. Our new Academic Framework will allow us to deliver the ambitions of Vision 2030, and ensure the quality of student experience, the attractiveness of our portfolio, and the financial sustainability of our delivery model.

The aims of the new Academic Framework are to deliver:

- i. The ambitions of Vision 2030 and our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, with outstanding outcomes and experience for all of our students.
- ii. An innovative, integrated curriculum that embeds industry and enterprise, research, sustainable and compassionate futures, inclusivity & internationalisation, and interdisciplinary skills with core subject knowledge.
- iii. An improved educational journey and delivery model with streamlined processes and regulations that support outstanding student experience and outcomes.

Students will benefit through:

- A clearer educational journey through their studies
- Industry, careers and enterprise opportunities embedded into every course to improve progression into graduate level employment
- Authentic assessment and real-world learning, allowing students to achieve their potential
- Inclusive student-centred Learning Experience Design to measurably improve outcomes
- Additional non-credit-bearing study abroad and year in industry opportunities between level 5 and 6 with funding opportunities available
- An inclusive and innovative curriculum that delivers courageous, collaborative, creative graduates ready to solve global challenges and shape compassionate and sustainable futures
- Interdisciplinary opportunities to develop the breadth of human skills that graduates need.

Greater focus in the curriculum on supporting transitions and progression across the student journey will support continuation and completion, and refreshed approaches to inclusion and assessment will improve the attainment of students. Finally, the new framework will allow students to progress through the University from Foundation Year to Postgraduate awards under a coherent and consistent course design model.

All courses are moving to the new Academic Framework over time at a pace that is deliverable, starting with a selection of subject areas for commencement in 2025. From 2026, almost all direct-taught undergraduate courses will embark on the new framework, with courses at collaborative providers to follow at the point of periodic course review and re-approval or new course approval.

In Vision 2030 and in our Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy we are committed to a curriculum that is innovative, research-leading, transdisciplinary, digital, inclusive, compassionate, focused on wellbeing, international, global, entrepreneurial and industry-engaged. We have distilled these characteristics into three distinctive curriculum hallmarks and three graduate attributes. All students will graduate from a Canterbury Christ Church education, able to shape sustainable futures by being courageous, creative and collaborative through their experience of a curriculum which is innovative, inclusive and industry responsive.

## Risks to Equality of Opportunities and Objectives

### Indications of Risk

Unexplained gaps in access, success and progression through higher education among student groups are indications of risk to equality of opportunities.

We analysed the Access and Participation Dataset from the Office for Students to identify statistically significant gaps in outcomes. Subsequently, we carried out a secondary analysis, leveraging supplementary internal data and insights and analysing various intersections of disadvantage and outcomes by subject area to identify the following indications of risk most pertinent to our students.

1. Under-representation of Care Leavers in higher education
2. A 5-percentage point gap at KS4 (raw grades) between disadvantaged and all pupils from participating schools
3. Unexplained under-representation of white male IMDQ1-2 directly taught students at CCCU
4. Unexplained under-representation of students with a reported disability at commercial partner providers
5. Unexplained socio-economic completion gap
6. Unexplained ethnicity awarding gap
7. Graduate level employment gap between students with and without a reported disability
8. Socio-economic graduate level employment gap
9. Unexplained gap in graduate level employment between Black and White students

We have identified three primary groups with repeated unexplained gaps versus their comparators. The three overarching groups, with sub-groups and intersections contained within, are:

1. **Black and Asian students** (Black students for Attainment and Progression, Asian students for Attainment)

2. **Students with a reported disability** (disability access at commercial partner providers and progression overall)
3. **Low socio-economic** (Care Leavers, disadvantaged learners and white male IMDQ1-2 for Access, IMDQ1 for Continuation, Completion and Progression)

## Approach to identifying the key risks to equality of opportunity

Based on national research and evidence, the sector Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, provided by the OfS, and our own internal analysis and consultation, we have identified eight key risks to equality of opportunity that students from the primary groups above may experience at CCCU. These risks shown in Table 1 cover the whole of the student lifecycle and our intervention strategies focus on mitigating these risks. We utilised the Access and Participation Dataset from the Office for Students to pinpoint the most significant gaps.

Subsequently, we examined these differences in greater detail, leveraging supplementary data and insights through consultation with our staff and student community to gain a richer insight into the root causes impacting our learners. A summary of this assessment can be found in Annex A. The data showed that there are indications of risk at all points in the student lifecycle and this has informed our data driven objectives and targets outlined in this plan.

**Table 1.**

Barriers to Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attainment – pre HE	Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
Cost Pressures	Mental Health
Sense of Belonging	Systemic Bias
Accessibility	Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms

## Defining the Risks

**Barriers to developing knowledge, skills and attainment pre-HE:** Prior attainment at Key Stage 4 - Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds may encounter multiple barriers that hinder their ability to develop the knowledge, skills, and attainment required for progression to university, even if they aspire to attend. This is exacerbated in Kent and Medway, where students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to benefit from the grammar school system. These barriers can include limited access to education resources and materials, financial constraints, external responsibilities, psychological barriers and environmental factors.

**Insufficient provision of information, advice and guidance pre-HE:** The quality of careers information, advice and guidance is variable and inconsistent. Overall, 36% of students in the UK said they had not taken part in any careers related activities (Holt-White et al, 2022) Students may not have equal opportunity to receive relevant support, advice and guidance that sufficiently reflects their specific circumstances reducing their ability to engage productively and gain the most from their experience to support positive outcomes

**Cost pressures:** Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds often face financial barriers that can hinder their access to higher education and limit their full participation in university life. These challenges may include difficulties affording course materials, transportation, unpaid placements, or other employability opportunities. Financial constraints may restrict their ability to engage in social activities with peers.

**Mental health:** Sector-wide there has been an increasing number of students experiencing mental health difficulties, stress, or low emotional wellbeing, leading to serious consequences like loneliness, disengagement from studies, or withdrawal from higher education. Although mental health challenges can affect any student, individuals from underrepresented backgrounds may be at greater risk and face extra obstacles when accessing support.

**Sense of belonging:** Sense of belonging plays a critical role in supporting student wellbeing, progression, and academic success. Students who feel less connected to their peers and institution may face isolation, mental health challenges, and a lack of support. Students may not feel that they belong in a higher education institution when they arrive at CCCU. In addition, a lack of positive role models may also influence their choices and

experiences. Limited diversity in senior leadership, course materials, or curriculum for instance, can reduce students' sense of belonging and willingness to seek help when facing inequality or bias. Students with disabilities, or those from ethnically diverse backgrounds, are particularly at risk of lower sense of belonging and may experience higher levels of isolation.

**Systemic bias:** Students from ethnically diverse backgrounds, those with disabilities, or those from lower-income households may encounter additional obstacles in their education and university experience. These challenges may be experienced at all stages of the student life-cycle and may result in unfair treatment, or prejudice, whether intentional or unconscious. The effect systemic bias can have a negative impact on individual and populations of students. Such experiences can leave students feeling disconnected and excluded, potentially affecting their ability to continue their studies, achieve academic success and complete their degree.

**Accessibility:** Covering physical spaces, opportunities and materials. Students from lower socio-economic groups may find it harder to access extra-curricular and employment opportunities due to background, circumstance and cost pressures. Students with disabilities may encounter additional challenges due to inaccessible learning environments or materials. Such barriers can significantly hinder a student's ability to fully participate in academic activities and social interactions, potentially impacting their engagement, academic performance, overall university experience and progression into employment.

**Lack of appropriate progression support mechanisms:** Some students may feel under-prepared for graduate employment during their time at university. This can result from limited cultural awareness, a lack of opportunity or access to opportunity. Some students may be disadvantaged by opportunity hoarding of limited resources by more socio-economically advantaged students. Such instances can harm students' emotional wellbeing and career-readiness, potentially affecting their continuation, ability to complete their studies and academic achievement.

Based on the assessment of performance and referencing the Equality of Risk Register to further understand risks to equality of opportunity, we have identified local and sector-wide risks associated with the various phases of the student lifecycle that will be addressed through targeted interventions detailed later in the plan.

## Objectives

By considering the three primary target groups above in combination with their indications of risk, we have developed the following high-level objectives for the Access and Participation Plan:

1. To improve attainment for disadvantaged students in outreach partner schools through sustained and impactful interventions
2. To support the progression of students from disadvantaged backgrounds into HE
3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree
4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1<sup>st</sup>/2.1 degree classification
5. To ensure equality of progression into employment for all students regardless of socio-economic background, disability and ethnicity through targeted removal of barriers to engagement, opportunities and support

Each intervention strategy is linked to these five objectives. The table below gives the indications of risk for the target student groups we have identified, along with associated objectives and targets.

**Table 2.**

	Indication of Risk	Underlying CCCU Risk	EORR Risk	Objective	Target
1	Under-representation of Care Leavers in	2. Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance, 3. Cost Pressures, 4.	Information and guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3),	To increase the number of Care Leaver students who progress into Higher Education and to Canterbury Christ Church University, University for	To increase the number of new Care Leaver entrants to 85 by 2029/30 (PTA_1)



	higher education	Sense of belonging	Application Success Rates (risk 4)	the Creative Arts and University of Kent in particular	
2	A 5-percentage point gap at KS4 between disadvantaged and all pupils from participating schools	1. Barriers to Developing Knowledge, Skills and Attainment pre-HE	Knowledge and Skills (risk 1), Information and Guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3)	To increase self-efficacy, academic resilience and KS4 attainment of pupils attending attainment-raising outreach interventions  To improve attainment for disadvantaged students in outreach partner schools through sustained and impactful interventions	To increase self-efficacy and academic resilience of participating pupils by five percentage points by 2029/30 (PTA_2) To close the gap in Key Stage 4 literacy attainment participating pupils and the school average (mid prior attainers) by 2029/30 (PTA_3)
3	Unexplained under-representation of white male IMDQ1-2 directly taught students at CCCU	2. Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance, 3. Cost Pressures	Information and guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3), Application Success Rates (risk 4)	To support the sector-wide and local issue of decreasing participation in HE for white working-class boys by increasing participation at CCCU	To increase the proportion of directly delivered white and male IMDQ1-2 students at CCCU to 9.7% by 2030 (PTA_4)
4	Unexplained under-representation of students with an identified disability at commercial partner providers	2. Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance, 4. Sense of belonging, 7. Accessibility	Information and Guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3)	To enable largely mature and non-UK students at commercial partners to access financial and pastoral support through disability disclosure and/or identification of a disability	To increase the proportion of students identified as having a disability at partner providers by 5% by 2030 (PTA_5)
5	Unexplained socio-economic completion gap	3. Cost Pressures, 4. Sense of belonging, 5. Mental Health, 7. Accessibility	Knowledge and skills (risk 1), Academic support (risk 3), Personal support & wider experience (risk 4), Mental health (risk 5), Cost pressures (risk 6)	To ensure that all students are able to complete their degree, regardless of socio-economic background	To close the gap in continuation between IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 to 3.5% by 2030 (PTS_1) To close the gap in completion between IMDQ1 and IMDQ5 by 3.3% by 2030 (PTS_2)
6	Unexplained ethnicity awarding gap	3. Cost Pressures, 4. Sense of belonging, 5. Mental Health, 6. Systemic bias, 7. Accessibility	Knowledge and Skills (risk 1), Insufficient academic support (risk 6), Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Cost Pressures (risk 10)	To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that obtain a 1 <sup>st</sup> /2.1 degree classification	To increase the proportion of Black students that graduate with a 1 <sup>st</sup> /2.1 degree classification by 18.2 percentage points by 2030 (PTS_3) and proportion of Asian students by 15.4 percentage points by 2030 (PTS_4)

<b>7</b>	Graduate level employment gap between students with and without a reported disability	3. Cost pressures, 4. Sense of belonging, 5. Mental Health, 6. Systemic bias, 7. Accessibility, 8. Lack of appropriate progression support mechanisms	Insufficient academic support (risk 6), Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Cost Pressures (risk 10), Capacity issues (risk 11), Progression from Higher Education (risk 12)	To ensure that students with a disability have equal opportunity to gain graduate employment or further study	To reduce the graduate level employment gap between students with and without a disability (PTP_1) to 2.9% by 2030
<b>8</b>	Socio-economic graduate level employment gap	3. Cost pressures, 4. Sense of belonging, 5. Mental Health, 7. Accessibility, 8. Lack of appropriate progression support mechanisms	Insufficient academic support (risk 6), Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Cost Pressures (risk 10), Capacity issues (risk 11), Progression from Higher Education (risk 12)	To ensure that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background have equal opportunity to gain graduate employment or further study	To reduce the graduate level employment gap between IMD Q1 students on courses that do not require professional registration and IMD Q5 students on the same courses to 2.5% by 2030 (PTP_2)
<b>9</b>	Unexplained gap in graduate level employment between Black and White students	3. Cost pressures, 4. Sense of belonging, 5. Mental Health, 6. Systemic bias, 8. Lack of appropriate progression support mechanisms	Insufficient academic support (risk 6), Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Cost Pressures (risk 10), Capacity issues (risk 11), Progression from Higher Education (risk 12)	To ensure that black students have equal opportunity to gain graduate employment or further study	To reduce the graduate level employment gap between Black students on courses that do not require professional registration and White students on the same courses by 3 percentage points by 2030 (PTP_3)

## Intervention Strategies and Expected Outcomes

Our plan from 2026 onwards is designed to be more streamlined and acknowledges progress made since the previous submission, in particular the development and embedding of several interdependent whole-university strategies, policies and frameworks designed to improve continuation, completion and attainment.

To achieve our objectives, we have developed intervention strategies aimed at addressing each of the eight identified risks to equal opportunities. This ensures our access and participation work targets the underlying causes of inequality. Below, we outline each intervention strategy, along with its corresponding objectives, targets and risk indicators.

We have adopted an intersectional approach in recognition that many of the challenges faced by students are multi-faceted and that risks interact with one another. In recognition of this, many activities intersect across multiple intervention strategies, because they support mitigation of multiple underlying risks to equality of opportunity. For example, according to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, factors that contribute to students having poor mental health include moving away from home, developing a new social identity, academic and financial pressures, social deprivation, common health problems and pre-existing neurodevelopment conditions, as well as the absence of familiar social and emotional support networks. This underlines the intersectionality of risks.

Our approach therefore recognises that activities aiming to increase students' sense of belonging or addressing cost pressures will also support their mental health. Likewise, our approach to supporting students' mental health aims to increase their agency and understanding of the impact of actively building an authentic sense of belonging. Each activity is only listed once in full, against a particular risk, but we have mapped each activity



against associated risks in Annex B to provide an overview of cross-interventions and the intersection of Indications of Risks where we recognise the impact of the activity on other key risks and measured outcomes.

## **Intervention Strategy 1: Barriers to developing knowledge, skills and attainment pre-HE**

This intervention strategy has been developed to address Risk 1: Barriers to developing knowledge, skills and attainment pre-HE and EORR risks: Knowledge and Skills (risk 1), Information and Guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3) Some students may lack equal opportunities to develop the knowledge and abilities needed for successful entry into higher education

Working in partnership with KMPF schools and HEAT, we have identified a 5-percentage point gap at KS4 between students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and all pupils from participating schools.

Addressing this risk through the activities outlined in this intervention strategy will support the following objective:

1. To improve attainment for disadvantaged students in outreach partner schools through sustained and impactful interventions

The focus of this intervention will be to support attainment in schools of the most disadvantaged learners in the region. We will deliver this through our strong and established collaborative outreach provision with other local universities through the Kent and Medway Progression Federation (KMPF) that incorporates the regional UniConnect programme.

Canterbury Christ Church University has a long history of working in collaboration to support its widening access objectives. Outreach partnerships with schools, colleges, local authorities, charities, federations, universities and third sector organisations are at the heart of our mission to support widening participation. We work strategically with 50 schools and colleges as a founding member of the KMPF since its inception in 2011.

Members will also work together to ensure that the KMPF (including UniConnect) Hub is effective and works seamlessly with the established federation throughout its externally funded period and is retained through APP allocation thereafter. Impact data from our collaborative work has shown that young people selected for support are likely to be more successful at every stage than their peers in progressing to and achieving in HE.

The University's UniConnect activities have helped to complement our APP attainment raising work in recent years. In May 2022 its flagship programme, Inspiring Minds, won the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) Outreach Initiative of the Year award and is a sustained informal science learning programme targeted at LPN students who work towards a Bronze Crest award in science.

Demonstrable evidence of the impact of Inspiring Minds has also been highlighted as an example of effective outreach both in the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) Impact of Interventions for Widening Access to Higher Education report and the NEON Innovation Series report.

The robust evaluation methodology that underpins Inspiring Minds has been incorporated into the wider APP attainment raising activities and the legacy of the UniConnect sees Inspiring Minds incorporated into our APP funded attainment raising series to ensure the impact and legacy of this award-winning UniConnect initiative.

Another programme developed within the University's UniConnect team is Change Makers. Change Makers is an innovative literacy and oracy based in-school programme that involves year seven pupils from schools across Kent who are encouraged to use their voices and creative skills to produce poems, letters, placards, and comics to explore their identities and shed light on issues that hold personal and social significance. While oracy was not the initial intended focus of the programme, qualitative feedback from cohort one indicated value in the oracy element. Other initial feedback from cohort one highlights benefits including improved communication skills, enhanced confidence, and academic resilience. Positive trends have emerged in students' understanding of the value of reading and literacy across curriculum subjects, and increased confidence when debating and speaking in a group has also been suggested by the data.

Collaborative interventions, including the Change Makers literacy and oracy programme at one of our partner KMPF schools, Hartsdown Academy, have significantly improved GCSE outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged students. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving standard 9-4 passes in both English

and Mathematics has risen substantially from 14% in 2018/19 to 47% in 2022/23. Overall, the percentage of pupils achieving these results has more than doubled from 18% in 2018/19 to 42% in 2022/23, demonstrating the tangible impact of sustained and targeted attainment-raising activities.

Intervention Strategy 1: Barriers to developing knowledge, skills and attainment pre-HE		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Change Makers – Eight session project for year 7 learners. Existing, improvements and further development.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Materials for resources; Hospitality;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attitude towards learning</li> <li>Increase in reading confidence</li> <li>Increase in academic resilience (reading for purpose)</li> <li>Improve pleasure of reading (extra-curricular reading).</li> <li>Oracy: pupils are more confident in constructing a verbal argument as well as greater knowledge retention, vocabulary acquisition and reasoning skills</li> <li>Continued increase in students' understanding of the relationship of curriculum subject to real-world opportunities and challenges.</li> <li>Increase in literacy attainment. Increase in academic attainment at KS4.</li> <li>Increased % of students achieving 9-4/9-5 in EBacc.</li> <li>Increased Attainment 8 score at individual level student and school level.</li> <li>Increased likelihood of students applying and going to HE.</li> <li>Creation of research-engaged evidence base for what works to increase literacy attainment for different target groups. (long term)</li> </ul>
Targeted activity for KS3 learners in year 9. Suite of outreach activity to strengthen oracy and deepen knowledge and benefits of Higher Education. Activities will develop oracy and interdisciplinary thinking through Epistemic Insight approaches, bridging Key Stage 3 and 4 by introducing Year 9 pupils to the kind of collaborative, enquiry-rich learning that underpins undergraduate teaching at CCCU	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Software for Online delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attitude towards learning.</li> <li>Improved academic resilience.</li> <li>Attitudinal shifts in their understanding of the relationship between school subjects.</li> <li>Greater confidence in using a range of disciplinary perspectives to inform their analysis and evaluation of complex issues.</li> <li>Increase in academic attainment at KS4. Increased Attainment 8 score at individual level student and school level. Increased likelihood of students applying and going to HE</li> <li>Oracy: pupils are more confident in constructing a verbal argument as well as greater knowledge retention, vocabulary acquisition and reasoning skills</li> </ul>
Inspiring Minds – Year 10	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Transport; Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive influence on students' intentions to continue into STEM based education and/or careers as well as their perceptions and attitudes to science and HE more generally</li> <li>Increased knowledge and likelihood of application to university</li> <li>Over 80% of Students pass their Bronze CREST Award</li> <li>Increase in applications to HE (and particularly for STEM) for participants.</li> <li>In the medium-term, participants will be more likely to choose post-16 STEM routes</li> </ul>
Virtual Medical Society – Years 9-11 Open to students from Kent and Medway schools (preference given to WP students and those in non-selective schools). 14 sessions	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners broaden their understanding of subject and its wider applications (short-term)</li> <li>Increased GCSE science attainment (medium-term)</li> <li>Increased progression to HE (long-term).</li> </ul>

take place between October-May, where school students interact and learn from a junior doctor, medical students, and other KMMS academics. Targeted at students interested in a health-related career.	Software for Online delivery.	
Total cost of activities and evaluation for intervention strategy	£315k p/a to cover activity development, promotion, delivery and evaluation note budget predictions are subject to achieving projected student FTE in forecast).	
Evidence-base & rationale	To increase the likelihood of students achieving 9-4/9-5 across the EBacc subject areas it is necessary for them to access the secondary school curriculum, including having clear understanding of the nature of knowledge formation within and across the humanities and sciences (known as epistemic insight). This requires the ability to read and comprehend the purpose and context of written information across a range of disciplinary perspectives in order to analysis and evaluate the context (via "long answer" GCSE style questions in terminal assessments). Evidence suggests that there is a positive relationship between reading enjoyment and attainment and this sustained programme will attempt to support this evidence base. Furthermore, it will add to the research base that increased understanding of the nature of knowledge (epistemic insight) increases students' academic engagement through increases in perceived relevance of a wider range of academic disciplines to career and social issues.	
Evaluation	<p>Independent Evaluation undertaken by KMPF. This will involve baselining participants in years 7, 9 and 11 and will include self-efficacy and academic resilience measures. In addition, there will be pre and post surveys for each sustained intervention.</p> <p>As KS4 exams are taken once, a pre/post measure for one cohort is not possible. It is also not possible to measure yearly progress between YG7 and 11 for the cohort, hence the secondary objective to measure academic self-efficacy and academic resilience not only as an impact measure for specific interventions but as a proxy progress measure towards our attainment target.</p> <p>We are aiming for type 3 Evaluation for our Primary KS4 attainment target and type 2 for our Secondary objective.</p> <p>We will start disseminating findings from this Plan on our website, as well as the KMPF website for collaborative provision, by Spring 2027. We will also share our findings at the KMPF Summit (with local teachers and advisers), at conferences where appropriate and through the HE Evaluation Library</p>	

## Intervention Strategy 2: Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance

This intervention strategy has been developed to address Risk 2: Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance and EORR risks: Information and guidance (risk 2), Perception of Higher Education (risk 3), Application Success Rates (risk 4). Students may not have equal opportunity to receive relevant support, advice and guidance that sufficiently reflects their specific circumstances reducing their ability to engage productively and gain the most from their experience to support positive outcomes.

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Care Leavers and students with a disability that study at commercial partner providers.

Addressing this risk through the activities outlined in this intervention strategy will support the following objectives:

2. To support the progression of students from disadvantaged backgrounds into HE
3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree

Addressing a local and sector-wide risk through a broad range of outreach interventions. Targeted outreach will support aspirations and seek to improve engagement and understanding of HE progression of participants. Key stage 4 outreach will deepen learners' understanding of higher education and support a strong UCAS application as well as equip participants with the tools to succeed once at university.

**Care Leavers (PTA\_1).** Care experienced young people do not always see HE as an option; a number of recurring issues were identified by the longitudinal research conducted by Jackson et al (2005), including: lack of information and guidance before attending; low expectations and little encouragement from social workers; reluctance by the local authority to provide financial assistance; difficulty in finding accommodation especially during the holidays; inability to meet educational expenses, leading to engagement in extensive paid work; and the absence of social support at university. According to Cotton et al research studies have started to identify "aspects of resilience which have enabled these students to overcome difficulties faced ('risk factors'), through having access to so-called 'protective factors' (Stein, 2006, 2008; Driscoll, 2011, 2013; Munson, 2013). Examples of protective factors include: strong self-motivation; relationship with a significant adult; stable school experiences; feeling in control; positive identity; supportive social networks; and undertaking extracurricular activities or volunteering (Stein, 2006; Munson, 2013). The Pathways into and through higher education for young people with experience of children's social care study found that care leavers – and those who have ever been in care – are four times less likely to enter higher education by age 22 (Feinstein et al, 2025)

In support of our collaborative APP target supporting the progression of Care Leavers from Kent and Medway into higher education, we have developed a wide range of relationships with local authorities and charities. These include Virtual Schools from Kent and Medway, Young Lives Foundation and Kent Refugee Action Network. We are also members of the Care Leaver Progression Partnership in Kent and the Southeast Regional Group of the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers. These groups share best practice and opportunities, working towards the shared aim of supporting attainment and progression of care-experienced students. The University has signed the Care Leaver Covenant with a range of support embedded for the Care Leaver community at all stages of the student life cycle. We are also a founding member of a new Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children Progression Partnership that focusses on support of refugee and asylum seeker children that are in local authority care.

In partnership with the University of Kent and University for the Creative Arts, we provide CPD for social workers and other professionals, virtual workshops for foster carers supporting students applying to university and lead the delivery of Spring School—a three-day, non-residential programme for young people in Years 9–14 (and FE equivalent).

**White Male IMDQ1-2 (PTA\_4).** While socio-economically disadvantaged male students are less likely to attend higher education than their female counterparts, there is considerable disparity by ethnic background. Progression into higher education is particularly low among white working-class boys. Research has shown that at age 15, white male economically disadvantaged pupils were the group least likely to progress to higher education by age 19, at only 13.7% in 2022/23 (Explore Education Statistics, Gov.uk). Despite white, male economically disadvantaged boys being the smallest group in higher education in England, only four universities included a widening access target in their 2025/26 APP submissions (Hillman et al, 2025)). We intend to focus much of our outreach delivery in schools on supporting the aspirations of this most under-represented group.

**Students with a Disability (PTA\_5).** Since the disparity between the proportion of students with declared disabilities taught at CCCU campuses compared with those taught at our collaborative institutions was identified, we have undertaken a review together with collaborative providers into our practices for disabled student data capture, sharing and management. The review offered an opportunity to establish new routes for collaboration with providers on this issue. We work with our partner institutions to continually improve disability data capture, encourage routine disclosure, ensure support services and infrastructure are available to deliver this alongside appropriate student support, and monitor and challenge progress in this area.

We have committed to a target to increase the proportion of students identified as having a disability at partner provider institutions. The student demographic of our larger commercial partner providers is predominantly mature (>95%) and non-UK national. Through consultation with partners including students, we agree that age and nationality are likely to be contributing factors for reduced disability disclosure. We do not expect to reach the levels of reported disability at our CCCU campuses in Kent and Medway (22.6%) but have set a realistic yet ambitious target to incrementally increase the rate of reported disability at our partner providers.

We will deliver this through a series of campaigns and training for staff developed and delivered in collaboration with providers. We will also ensure that commitments to capture and support disability disclosure are aligned with current and developing CCCU and partner Equity and Inclusion policies and student support procedures. We expect this to result in an increase in disability access figures. Since our previous APP submission, we have already seen a modest rise in disability disclosure from 2.5% to 3%. Once identified, students with a disability at CCCU and collaborative providers will receive targeted support in line with our student success targets within the plan.

Intervention Strategy 2: Insufficient Provision of HE Information, Advice and Guidance		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
White male IMDQ1-2 - Key Stage 2 Outreach. A range of outreach activities to support the aspirations of learners. Activities will support schools' careers strategies and focus on: Career pathways Academic resilience Supporting aspirations Removing perceived barriers to higher education Developing communication skills Confidence in the classroom	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Materials for resources; Hospitality;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attitude towards learning</li> <li>Increase in communication confidence</li> <li>Improved academic resilience</li> <li>Increased likelihood of students progressing to Level 3 studies (intermediate outcomes)</li> <li>Increased likelihood of students applying and progressing to HE</li> </ul>
White male IMDQ1-2 - Key Stage 3 Outreach. A range of outreach activities to support the aspirations of learners. Activities will support schools' careers strategies and focus on:  Career pathways Supporting aspirations Removing perceived barriers to higher education post-16 options Increased understanding of higher education	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Materials for resources; Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved attitude towards learning</li> <li>Improved academic resilience</li> <li>Reflection on skills and techniques learnt throughout project</li> <li>Increased likelihood of students applying and progressing to HE</li> </ul>
White male IMDQ1-2 - Post 16 outreach. A range of outreach activities to support the aspirations of learners and to remove any perceived barriers to higher education. Examples of activities include:  Campus visits Finance talks UCAS application workshops Personal Statement Workshops Student Life talks Year 12 Summer Schools	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Transport; Hospitality; accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge of higher education</li> <li>Increased likelihood of students applying and going to HE</li> <li>An increase in applications to HE for participants</li> </ul>
Spring school – Non-residential spring school for 25 children in care (years 9-12), delivered in collaboration with the University of Kent and University for the Creative	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase confidence to progress onto and succeed at Higher Education (short-term)</li> <li>Increase sense of belonging in a university environment (short-term)</li> <li>Increased knowledge and awareness of Higher Education options (short-term)</li> </ul>



Arts. Existing, improvements and further development.	Materials for resources; Hospitality; support with travel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of students who progress to Level 3 study (short and medium-term)</li> <li>• Increase progression to HE (medium and long-term)</li> <li>• Increased number of young people who disclose they are care experience on UCAS application (medium and long-term)</li> </ul>
Opening Doors: Foster Carer Programme – work in collaboration with the KMPF and partners, and the Medway Virtual Schools to deliver a series of 4 online workshops, working with 10 foster carers at each session to enable them to support their young people into HE. Programme to run twice a year.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Software for Online delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate course, student finance and graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests/career aspirations (short-term)</li> <li>• Foster Carers feel more prepared to support young people with their progression choices (medium-term)</li> <li>• Increase number of young people taking part in outreach opportunities (medium-term)</li> <li>• Increase progression to HE (medium-term)</li> </ul>
CPD for professionals working with Children in Care and Young Care Leavers – work in collaboration with KMPF and partners, and the Kent and Medway Virtual Schools to deliver two CPD sessions per year, working with 10-20 professionals per session to enable them to support young people into and through HE.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors; Software for Online delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate course, student finance and graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests/career aspirations (short-term)</li> <li>• Increase number of young people taking part in outreach opportunities (medium-term)</li> <li>• Increased progression to HE (medium-term)</li> </ul>
Membership of the Care Leaver Progression Partnership (CLPP) – continued involvement in and contribution to CLPP alongside other organisations in Kent & Medway.	Annual membership levy	
Membership of National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) – sharing best practice and opportunities and working toward national progression aims.	Annual membership levy	
Additional pilot activities for Children in Care in Kent and Medway - to be developed in partnership with virtual schools in Kent and Medway – targeted activity for KS4 and KS5 children in Care to deepen knowledge and benefits of HE and additional support available to Care Leavers.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Student Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase confidence to progress onto and succeed at Higher Education (short-term)</li> <li>• Increase sense of belonging in a university environment (short-term)</li> <li>• Increased knowledge and awareness of Higher Education options (short-term)</li> <li>• Increase number of students who progress to Level 3 study (short and medium-term)</li> <li>• Increased progression to HE (medium and long-term)</li> </ul>
Disability reporting campaign to prospective and current students. To reduce any negative perceptions around disability reporting during application process. To highlight the benefits to students of disability disclosure. Campaign developed with collaborative providers.	Campaign Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Materials for resources; support with travel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase understanding of and confidence in support for students reporting a disability</li> <li>• Increase in the number of students reporting a disability during application, enrolment process and in the first semester of study</li> </ul>



Guidance for Teaching assistants, tutors and student wellbeing staff at partner providers. Focus on early identification of students who may have unverified learning difference	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of students engaging with learning difference assessment and eg dyslexia screening</li> <li>• Increase in the proportion of students reporting a disability at collaborative providers</li> </ul>
Total cost of activities planned	£230k p/a to cover activity development, promotion, delivery, evaluation and financial awards	
Evidence-base & rationale	<p><b>White male IMDQ1-2:</b> There is a sector-wide and local issue of decreasing participation in HE for white working-class boys The Office for Students Data Dashboard and our own secondary analysis of performance shows White male IMDQ1-2 students make up 8.7% of the population following a decline over a four-year period. In contrast to our sustained engagement with participants in our attainment-raising intervention strategy, activity will focus on larger volumes of target students for maximum impact. As an institutional access target, interventions will be delivered to post-16 as well as pre-16 students to support strong UCAS applications as well as student success target</p> <p><b>Care Leavers:</b> We have conducted a literature review and incorporated the findings into this strategy. The interventions have been co-designed by student ambassadors with relevant lived experience from across the universities who share this target, who also support the delivery of the programme where possible, and the Virtual Schools from Kent and Medway. Through the KMPF the Care Leaver Progression Partnership (CLPP) and the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers, we work with stakeholders in different organisations across Kent and Medway including Kent County Council and both Virtual School Kent and Medway.</p> <p><b>Disability reporting at Partners:</b> There is a significant disparity in the reporting rate of students directly delivered compared to those at partner institutions. Assumption is this relates to student demographic with higher proportion of mature and non-UK and naturalised students at external providers and their reduced likelihood to disclose. The interventions will be developed and delivered in collaboration with providers and targeted at all students at application, enrolment and first year of registration with provider.</p>	
Evaluation	<p><b>White male IMDQ1-2:</b> Independent Evaluation undertaken by KMPF. We expect to be able to conduct a robust Type 1 evaluation only. All participants will be added to HEAT. Our evaluation for this group of students will mainly consist of case studies with students. We will start disseminating findings on our website, as well as the KMPF website for collaborative provision,</p> <p><b>Care Leavers:</b> Given the very small number of participants in each intervention, we expect to be able to conduct a robust Type 1 evaluation only. All participants will be added to HEAT, and it is our hope that we will be able to aggregate cohorts in time. Our evaluation for this group of students will mainly consist of case studies with students and foster parents and a possible vignette study with professionals.</p> <p><b>Disability reporting at Partners:</b> We expect to be able to conduct a robust Type 1 evaluation only. Our evaluation for this group of students will mainly consist of case studies with students. There is limited research into why reported disabilities is low amongst mature and non-UK or naturalised students compared to young UK students and the impact of these interventions seek to enhance sector understanding. We will start disseminating findings on our website, as well as the KMPF website for collaborative provision, by Spring 2026. We will also share our findings with commercial partners, at conferences where appropriate and through the HE Evaluation Library.</p>	

### Risk 3: Cost Pressures.

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 3: Cost pressures, Risk 5: Mental Health, Risk 7: Accessibility and Risk 8: Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms and EORR risks: Insufficient

Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Cost Pressures (risk 10), Capacity issues (risk 11), Progression from Higher Education (risk 12).

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Care Leavers and students with a disability. We recognise that our commuter students will also likely be impacted and have noted the concern from our student consultation about this group. There is only a small indication of risk for commuters according to our analysis, but the majority will be able to benefit from financial support as our data also shows that they are likely to belong to other target groups. We also recognise that cost pressures play a significant role in the progression of marginalised groups into postgraduate studies, in particular students from Black Heritage backgrounds are significantly less likely to participate in postgraduate research programmes.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

2. To support the progression of students from disadvantaged backgrounds into HE
3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree
4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1st/2.1 degree classification
5. To ensure equality of progression into employment for all students regardless of socio-economic background, disability and ethnicity through targeted removal of barriers to engagement, opportunities and support

Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds often face financial barriers that can hinder their access to higher education and limit their full participation in university life. These challenges may include difficulties affording course materials, transportation, unpaid placements, or other employability opportunities. Financial constraints may restrict their ability to engage in social activities with peers and may impact their ability to access services and opportunities as well negatively impact their mental health.

In partnership with the Students' Union, a working group has been operating since 2022 to identify ways in which the University can help to mitigate the impact on students of the recent cost of living crisis and trend towards inflation. An online student Cost of Living Hub was launched as part of a wider "Money Matters, You Matter" campaign. The hub brings together the range of support, initiatives, and opportunities which have been implemented by the working group, so far, into one central place. This includes increased hardship funding, discounted food on campuses through a Helping Hand menu, and warm spaces to come together as a community over complimentary hot drinks.

The Library and Learning Resources Team have worked in collaboration with The University of Kent and The University of Greenwich to introduce the policy to no longer charge fines on overdue items to remove financial barriers for students accessing our collections.

Several of the bursaries and grants listed below are administered by a dedicated team embedded within our cross-functional Student Wellbeing Services, ensuring that students' support needs are considered in an intersectional and trauma-informed way (working to minimise the number of times a student needs to tell their story). In many cases, support with application for hardship funds is provided as part of a package of ongoing support. In the case of Care Leavers, the bursary is just one part of a tailored package of support, including allocation of a named support worker.

Intervention Strategy 3: Cost Pressures		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Partner School Award 60 £500 p/a awards for partner school students that progress to CCCU.	Staff Administration; up to £30,000 annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced concern about cost pressures</li> <li>Increased rate of continuation for recipients</li> <li>Increased sense of belonging</li> </ul>
Care Leaver Bursary – £1,200 p/a for statutory care-leavers of the UK who meet the eligibility criteria. Part of	Staff Administration; £60,000 expected annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce concern about cost pressures</li> <li>Increased progression to HE</li> </ul>

package of support including allocation of named wellbeing support worker.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of care-experienced young people who disclose they are care experienced on UCAS application</li> <li>• Increased sense of belonging</li> </ul>
CCCU Grant £600 annual payment to FT and PT student from income backgrounds of up to £25,000	Staff Administration; £3,574,000 - £3,664,000 expected annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced concern about cost pressures</li> <li>• Increased rate of continuation for recipients</li> <li>• Increased sense of belonging</li> </ul>
Access to Learning Fund Varied amounts up to a maximum £3,750 for students in extreme financial hardship. Includes support with travel.	Staff Administration; £600,000 expected annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced concern about cost pressures</li> <li>• Increased rate of continuation for recipients</li> </ul>
Disability Support Variable amounts up to a maximum of £300 for students with a disability to support associated costs including disability assessment (incl. dyslexia), IT/specialist equipment and other services	Staff Administration; £150,000 expected annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced concern about cost pressures</li> <li>• Increased rate of continuation for recipients</li> <li>• Increased sense of belonging</li> </ul>
Career Development Fund Variable amounts up to £500 to support access to extra-curricular career development opportunities to target groups.	Staff Administration; £50,000 expected annual expenditure, promotional materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of students accessing the Career Development Fund</li> <li>• Students from target groups, especially those from traditionally low social-economic backgrounds experience a wider range of opportunities that enhance their graduate capital (Tomlinson, 2017)</li> </ul>
Cost of living support. A range of targeted savings to reduce financial burden on students including library and catering derived from student consultation	Staff Administration; £75,000 expected annual expenditure, promotional materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced concern about cost pressures</li> <li>• Increased rate of continuation for recipients</li> <li>• Increased sense of belonging</li> </ul>
ABC to PhD Scholarships: aimed at increasing access to postgraduate research for Black students	Staff Administration promotion activities; workshops; mentoring activities; travel costs; cost of summer schools; networking; hospitality; outreach; research development £150,000 expected annual expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of Black students that access postgraduate research.</li> <li>• To reduce the barriers and concerns related to cost when accessing PGR programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Total cost of activities planned</b>	£4,750,000 on average p/a to cover promotion, administration, evaluation and financial awards	
<b>Evidence-base &amp; rationale</b>	Via dedicated pulse surveys undertaken by the Students' Union and through ongoing consultation, students have told us that pressure on their finances is the most significant barrier to success and impacts time spent on campus, ability to access opportunities and services, sense of belonging and mental health. Across the sector, more than three-quarters (78%) of students were concerned that the rising cost of living may affect how well they do in their studies and 49% of students felt they had financial difficulties (ONS 2023)	
<b>Evaluation</b>	The impact of financial awards will be measured using the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit.	

## Risk 4: Mental Health

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 5: Mental Health and EORR risks: Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7) and Mental Health (risk 8)

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Black and Asian students and students with a disability.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree
4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1st/2.1 degree classification
5. To ensure equality of progression into employment for all students regardless of socio-economic background, disability and ethnicity through targeted removal of barriers to engagement, opportunities and support

The proportion of home students (students who normally live in the UK) who disclosed a mental health condition to their university increased rapidly from under 1% in 2010/11 to 5.7% in 2021/22 (HEPI). In a separate study from TASO, they found the percentage of undergraduate students at HEPs across the UK who said they had experienced mental health difficulties rose from 6% in 2016/17 to 16% in 2022-23 (Kings' Policy Institute).

The consequences of mental health issues for students can be serious and range from poor academic performance and dropping out of university to self-harm and suicide. Data on students in England shows students with a declared mental health condition were less likely than average to continue in higher education after their first year, gain a higher education qualification, achieve a first or upper second-class degree or gain positive outcomes after graduation (OfS Insight brief).

Strengthening student wellbeing has been outlined as a key commitment in the University's Vision 2030. This commitment recognises the interconnection between student mental health and a sense of belonging: 'We will place student wellbeing at the centre of our students' experience to ensure that every student thrives through an inclusive and compassionate student journey, innovative curriculum and a strong sense of belonging with successful outcomes for all.'

Our new Academic Framework provides a consistent and evidence-based structure for achieving this, with new graduate attributes closely aligned to our distinctive valued-focused wellbeing model which fosters emotional literacy and a strong sense of purpose based on compassion for self, others and the earth as the foundation for the development of courageous, collaborative, creative leaders ready to shape sustainable futures.

The associated supported course design process fosters the development of innovative, inclusive and industry-responsive curricula designed to learning outcomes which foster these attributes and which are closely aligned to the pillars of the evidence-based Education for Mental Health Toolkit (AdvanceHE), which recognises that wellbeing is integral to student learning and success. Our intervention strategies are embedded within this new Framework and closely aligned to these evidence-based pillars.

A TASO-funded project has been underway since 2024/25 to help us develop a consistent evaluation framework for collecting high-quality evidence of the impact of our interventions on students' wellbeing, sense of belonging, engagement and success. This evaluation framework is also designed to support our ambition to achieve a University Mental Health Charter Award.

Our holistic institutional approach is also being extended through our approach to supporting our partner institutions. As our wider student experience policies, procedures, systems and processes are being updated and streamlined we are building in frameworks and support for our collaborative institution staff to ensure that their systems and processes are adapted to comply with our institutional policies, procedures and data requirements.

Risk 4: Mental Health		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Education for mental health: Rollout of courses designed on our new Academic Framework begins in 2025 and expands in 2026 to cover all new starters. Carefully scaffolded design, with coherent curricula and well-planned learning, teaching and assessment strategies, embedded academic skills development, and a clear sense of purpose mapped to graduate attributes Engagement with new compulsory online Success Modules at Level 0 and Level 4 will foster students' personal development and psychological literacy as the basis for wellbeing, belonging and success.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Materials for resources; Academic Framework design and delivery; Development of learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased student wellbeing and sense of purpose</li> <li>Increased confidence to continue, complete and progress (short-term)</li> <li>Increase sense of belonging in a university environment (short-term)</li> <li>Increased knowledge and awareness of capacities to engage in Higher Education options (short-term)</li> <li>Improved attainment</li> </ul>
Enhanced transition, orientation and induction: A newly developed team will develop a revitalised institutional approach to pre-arrival communication, transition, in-person registration, orientation and induction leading into and reinforcing engagement with the new Success Modules as the foundation for personalised action planning for engagement with learning and support. Includes training and support for academic staff. Enhanced orientation and induction programmes will be developed for specific groups of students, including care-leavers, autistic/neurodiverse and disabled students.	Staff Development & delivery; Staff Administration; Materials for resources; Development of new modules and diagnostics to identify learning and pastoral needs; Development of processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased confidence to continue, complete and progress (short-term)</li> <li>Increase wellbeing and sense of belonging in a university environment (short-term)</li> <li>Increased knowledge and awareness of capacities to engage in Higher Education options (short-term)</li> <li>Increase in number of students who continue and complete.</li> </ul>
Embedded student support: Student and academic services have been comprehensively redesigned with new systems, processes, policies and staffing structures to provide embedded, proactive and responsive advice and support for learning. A new (digital and physical) Student Hub and enquiry management system will provide a single point of access for students. Investment in an integrated case management system to document, track and monitor student support needs and actions, to raise awareness of risk student profiles, and to target further interventions across the student lifecycle and touchpoints, supporting cross-functional accountability for proactive identification of student needs and delivery of effective, joined-up support and adjustments. New staff training packages will be developed for continuous improvement in anticipatory and inclusive teaching practice and student support. Investment in a senior support services role to oversee liaison with collaborative partner institutions to disseminate best practice in student support and safeguarding.	Investment in buildings, systems, staff development, case management system (annual licence: £25,000), 1 x 1.0FTE staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge and awareness of capacities to engage in studies (short-term)</li> <li>Students report feeling better supported</li> <li>Increase number of students who engage with learning and assessment to the best of their abilities, continue, complete and attain (medium term)</li> <li>Increase number of students with an identified disability receiving appropriate reasonable adjustments (medium and long-term)</li> </ul>
Enhanced mental health and wellbeing provision: The evidence suggests that students from Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic backgrounds are less likely to disclose mental health difficulties. As part of this intervention, we aim to provide culturally sensitive mental wellbeing support including practitioner staff development interventions for greater cultural competence, increasing the number of	Staff administration; recruitment; 2x1.0 FTE staff;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are culturally competent; increase in the diversity of practitioners and/or provision</li> <li>Increased engagement from Black and Asian students accessing wellbeing services</li> <li>Improved continuation, completion and attainment of students</li> </ul>



practitioners from diverse backgrounds, establishing partnerships with external organisations that cater for diverse communities and advancing our mental health equality resources to increase access to service, enhance experience and improve outcomes.		
Strengthened engagement support: Enhanced systems, processes and staff allocation to provide proactive identification and intervention for low engagement in learning and assessment and other indications of additional support needs. Investment in more effective technology and enhanced data collation/dashboards to identify students at risk. Dedicated teams and processes to proactively reach out to students and support progression conversations to identify support needs. Updated policy and guidance for both students and staff, complemented by review and development of a refreshed approach to Personal Academic Tutoring with a consistent framework for conducting routine progression conversations.	Staff development and delivery; updated policy and guidance; procurement of systems, improved data environment and reporting mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved continuation and completion</li> <li>• Students feel better supported</li> </ul>
Strengthened student data: Maturing use of the new case management system to provide cohort tracking accessible to academic staff, and services with responsibility for interventions and evaluation. Further development of student survey methodology piloted in 2024/25 including improved Module Evaluation and refinement of innovative 'survey as intervention' methodology, tested via a TASO-funded project, for collecting regular measures of student wellbeing and belonging. Embedding innovative reflective 'Check In Tool' within the new Success Modules supported by regular communication/pulse survey campaigns.	£65,000 p/a to support co-research/ survey participation and licences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in reported student wellbeing, sense of belonging, use of support, and engagement in learning.</li> <li>• Increase in continuation, completion and attainment</li> </ul>
Total cost of activities planned	£320,000 p/a to cover research, resource development, promotion, delivery, licences and evaluation	
Evidence-base & rationale	<p>Our intervention strategy is aligned to the evidence-based Advance HE Education for Mental Health Toolkit which identifies the following key pillars supporting student wellbeing and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Scaffolded design</u> – Well-supported transitions into and progressions through the student journey, with scaffolded preparation for learning and assessment. “Transition is a crucial element for student success, persistence and wellbeing... students need support, via the curriculum, to socially integrate, academically integrate, develop self-belief and manage their wellbeing.”</li> <li>• <u>Learner development/meta learning</u> – “Students need to learn how to learn... and to understand the role of self-management/emotion regulation.”</li> <li>• <u>Learning focus/purpose &amp; meaning</u> – A coherent curriculum and salient sense of purpose. “Students find learning meaningful when it has personal significance... connects to their lives interests and values.”</li> <li>• <u>Social belonging</u> – A psychologically safe learning environment and inclusive learning community “Use orientation/induction to focus on creating cohort identity, a safe social environment and social rules”</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Embedded support</u> – Effective (re-)engagement strategies and empowering academic staff “with the resources and skills to signpost/support students supportively and effectively.”</li> </ul>
Evaluation	Via participation in a TASO-funded project focused on developing Type 3 methodologies for evaluating mental health and wellbeing interventions, we are consolidating a robust evaluation framework for year-on-year audit of the impact of our interventions. This includes focused Theory of Change methodology, methods for linking survey data with institutional data, and conducting implementation and process evaluation to explore our findings. We also have a strong commitment to participatory approaches, in line with our Vision 2030 commitment to co-creation with students, as a method for strengthening our understanding while iteratively developing and continuously improving our approaches.

## Risk 5: Sense of Belonging

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 4: Sense of belonging, Risk 5: Mental Health, Risk 6: Systemic bias, Risk 7: Accessibility and EORR risks: Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7), Mental Health (risk 8), Capacity issues (risk 11)

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Black and Asian students and students with a disability.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree
4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1<sup>st</sup>/2.1 degree classification

The extent in which a student feels a sense of belonging and connectiveness to their peers, the university, the learning and teaching environment and the community can have a direct impact on their participation and success outcomes. Students that feel a greater sense of belonging are more likely to be engaged, build social networks, progress on time, complete their degree and achieve greater academic success. Through consultations with our students and our own internal assessments, we have identified that our Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are at greater risk of feeling isolated and a lack of belonging. The reasons for this are multi-faceted and include (but not limited to) lack of representation, the curriculum design in particular assessment design, economic disadvantage and experiences of discrimination. The new Academic Framework embeds our new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, our Closing our Gap strategic commitments and adopts a student-centred approach that acknowledges the unique demographic of CCCU students and our commitment to promoting equity of opportunity at all stages of the student journey and success and progression outcomes.

Intertwined with sense of belonging is students' mental health and wellbeing. Education for Mental Health toolkit (AdvanceHE) underlines the decades of research demonstrating that social connection is a basic human need and vital for wellbeing, as well as the recognition that social belonging is vital for student persistence, learning and academic performance, while a lack of psychological safety can reduce learning. Research making recommendations for building belonging in HE (Blake et al, 2022) highlights the integrated components of connection, inclusion, support and autonomy which are reflected in our intervention strategies.

The activities detailed in this intervention have been developed in consultation with students, reflect the challenges highlighted by our learners and includes mechanisms to embed inclusive practice across our courses, review staff development activities and provide opportunities to promote inclusion, community, positive

wellbeing and compassion for our learners (particularly our Black, Asian and students from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds). The interventions foster targeted student partnership and peer learning opportunities to shape our curriculum, enhance the student experience and build a sense of belonging and mattering.

Risk 5: Sense of Belonging		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Peer support and student partnership: Building on an established peer mentoring programmes and incorporating learning from a pilot project published as an example of practice on the TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in HE) Student Mental Health Evidence hub, a universal student teamwork and leadership approach will be fostered as a key orientation and induction intervention embedded with in-person teaching for our suite of Success Modules. Collaborate with the Students' Union to further develop student partnership and student voice/representation practices to benefit from enhanced co-creation skills and mindsets.	Staff Development and information, Student Development and information, staff Administration, Success modules; participatory research and student positions to support an enhanced Student Voice strategy £40,000 p/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased wellbeing, belonging, confidence to progress and succeed in HE.</li> <li>Develop evaluation activity to gather qualitative and quantitative feedback</li> </ul>
Thrive-The Black Leadership Programme: aimed at students from Black heritage. The programme design falls under 4 strands: Wellbeing, Belonging, Leadership and Academic Support. The programme is trauma informed and designed to empower students from Black and Black Mixed heritage background through the use of the growth mindset, positive affirmations and action learning sets. Students will engage in a series of community building activities that will adopt a student-centred approach and compassionate pedagogy. Using a mixture of mentoring, inspirational speakers, mental wellbeing advocates, the programme offers a supportive learning space that fosters sense of belonging, build leadership skills, provide opportunities for information, advice and guidance sharing and the development key academic skills to help guide them towards academic success.	Staff development and delivery; Staff administration; Facilitators; Materials for resources; Guest speakers; Hospitality; Support with travel costs for students; £40,000 p/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the confidence of Black students in the own academic ability</li> <li>Increasing in the awareness of Black students in relation their access to high quality information, advice and guidance through the use of internal and external facilitators</li> <li>Increase in the attainment of Black students</li> <li>Increase in participant knowledge of the various options available to them</li> <li>Increase in the continuation, completion, attainment and progression of Black students</li> <li>Increased student wellbeing and sense of purpose</li> </ul>
Community of Practice Leadership Programme: A programme designed for health care students and aims to equip students with the skills to co-construct collective leadership towards building belonging and inclusion within everyday life and professional practice that recognises and celebrates the beauty of our diversity. The programme incorporates professional standards from regulatory bodies focusing on prioritising people and promoting professionalism and trust, whilst also exploring collective responsibility to building compassion for ourselves and others.	Staff development and delivery; Staff administration; Facilitators; Materials for resources; Guest speakers; Hospitality; £10,000 p/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the continuation, completion, attainment and progression of students from marginalised groups</li> <li>Improved academic success</li> <li>Increased student wellbeing and sense of purpose</li> <li>Reduction in the number of fitness to practice cases</li> </ul>

Closing our Gap Student Success Funding Scheme: Establishment of the Closing our Gap Student Success Funding Scheme to provide funding for projects across CCCU that are aimed at increasing the sense of belonging among Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students and/or eliminating the ethnicity awarding gap. Staff from across the university to bid for funding for interventions at various stages of development. Funded projects will be student-centred, create inclusive learning environments, increase belonging, create opportunities for cultural change, inclusive policies and promote student success.	Staff administration: £40,000 per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of innovative approaches to addressing the ethnicity awarding gap; promote whole-institutional engagement/accountability in addressing the ethnicity awarding gap; enhanced learning experiences for students</li> </ul>
Assessment adjustments: through the implementation of our Academic Framework we will be reviewing assessment strategies to promote authentic and inclusive assessments.	Staff development; Staff administration; student ambassadors; student partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in attainment; increase in student confidence to progress beyond higher education; increase in sense of belonging</li> </ul>
CCCU Student Success & Interdisciplinary Modules: embedded in the new Academic framework are a series of student success and interdisciplinary modules each curated to support transition in to higher education and (re)orientation at Levels 0, 4 and 5. Success modules develop students' capacity for inclusive teamwork and leadership, empowering them as both agents and beneficiaries of belonging. Through embedded curriculum support, students gain skills and knowledge to thrive at university and beyond via diverse learning, teaching, and assessment activities. nb, PSRB courses will follow an alternative approach to learning design integration.	Staff development; Staff administration; student ambassadors; student partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel more prepared for university</li> <li>• Exposure to the wider university, enhancing opportunities to build social connections</li> <li>• Increase in continuation and progression to the next level of study</li> </ul>
Develop a staff development strategy to support staff in fostering proactive community building and teamwork activities within course delivery.	Staff development and delivery; Staff administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff develop the skills, expertise and confidence to foster</li> <li>• Increased wellbeing, belonging, confidence to progress and succeed in HE.</li> </ul>
<b>Total cost of activities planned</b>	£160,000 annually	
<b>Evidence-base &amp; rationale</b>	The ethnicity awarding gap remains persistent across the HE sector and at CCCU. We have conducted a literature review and incorporated the findings into this strategy. The interventions have been selected from TASO and OfS best practice as well as other recent publications connected to what works to reduce gaps and increase rates of continuation and completion as well as cross over interventions connected to attainment. We have incorporated internal data assessments and feedback from our students and staff to inform this intervention strategy.	
<b>Evaluation</b>	By adopting a mixed method approach to our evaluation, we aim to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what works. Our evaluations for the above interventions will utilise longitudinal data tracking and will include a mixture of type 1, 2	

and type 3 evaluations depending on the nature of the intervention and the availability of robust comparisons.

We will start disseminating findings by Spring 2027. We will also share our findings in our committee and subcommittee environments associated with enhancing course performance and metrics associated with Learning, Teaching and Assessment, and Education and Student Experience. Externally we will publish findings via our website, journals and conferences.

## Risk 6: Systemic Bias

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 6: Systemic Bias and EORR risks: Insufficient Academic Support (risk 6) and Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7)

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for Black and Asian students.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1st/2.1 degree classification

Within higher education systemic bias can be exhibited in many forms that include the lack of culturally appropriate academic and pastoral support, unconscious bias, inaccessible systems and processes, lack of inclusive curriculum design and learning, teaching and assessment practices, lack of social and cultural capital and increased rates of academic misconduct and fitness to practice cases. Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students are at a greater risk of experiencing systemic bias impacting on their sense of belonging, mental wellbeing and academic success.

From 2025, the Academic Framework provides a foundation that enables us to strengthen our joined-up approach to student success and increasing attainment. Through collaboration, the framework brings together key strategic aims and strategies related to learning, teaching and assessment, wellbeing, equity and inclusion and our Closing our Gap Strategic framework. Through quantitative and qualitative insights gathered at CCCU and drawing upon insights across the sector, we recognise that the barriers to success are multifaceted and the awarding gap between different population of students persist even when students enter with similar grades.

Since its launch in 2020, the University's Closing our Gap Strategic Framework has aimed to reduce the awarding gap between White students and their Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic counterparts by adopting a whole-institutional approach that centres the voices and lived experiences of our students. Through co-creation with our students and establishing collaborative partnerships across all areas of the University and with external stakeholders (e.g., schools and colleges, practice learning providers and local organisations) we have categorised the focus of our work in to three strands: Curriculum, Culture and Community. Within each strand we have adopted an evidence-based approach to reform our systems and organisational culture, enhanced the delivery of our inclusive curriculum framework, established our decolonising the curriculum health check and enhanced academic research for a better understanding of what works.

Whilst the gap has narrowed it remains a priority for CCCU and, together with the Students' Union, we remain committed to closing the degree awarding gap for our Black and Asian students and other student profiles with diversity characteristics. In setting our interventions we have taken an evidence-led approach based on the progress we have made so far, our staff and student voice and by drawing upon best practice from across the sector and our ambitions to raise attainment within our Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic student populations.

Many of our most underrepresented and disadvantaged students that are characterised within IMD Q1 (and IMD Q2) are also from Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic communities, care-leavers, identify as individuals with a disability, commuters and/or come from low socio-economic backgrounds. In recognition of this, to address this target, we will build IMD as a cross-intervention into our continuation, completion and

attainment targets. By adopting an intersectional approach to close the gap between our Black and Asian students and their White counterparts in addition to tackling the gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students, we also aim to address the disparity between students that are FSM eligible and non-FSM eligible as many of our FSM eligible students fall into IMD Q1 (and IMD Q2). Therefore, we have not included a separate intervention strategy for this target as it will cut across other success interventions.

Our interventions to address the ethnicity awarding gap (including the gap between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5) and are grounded in our commitment equity, inclusion, quality, and measurable outcomes. Historically, we have focused on narrowing the gap between our White students and their Black and Asian counterparts, however, in recognition of the persistent systemic challenges faced by ethnically diverse students at CCCU and across the HE sectors, we have re-focused our targets to reflect the need increase the proportion of our Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1<sup>st</sup>/2.1 degree. The interventions are strategically designed to remove systemic barriers that disproportionately impact the academic outcomes of our Black and Asian students by fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. We have adopted an evidence-based approach and drawn on direct student and staff insights and analysis of our internal data to ensure a holistic student-centred approach focused on removing barriers to success, enhancing academic support, promoting a positive sense of belonging and positive health and wellbeing across the whole of the student life cycle. Thereby, this approach seeks to meaningfully reduce the disparity in the degree outcome between White students their Black and Asian counterparts.

Risk 6: Systemic Bias		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
The development of strengthened CPD offerings for staff and students: Through our Education and Student Success Team and in collaboration with the Student Wellbeing, Community & Belonging Directorate, (Staff-facing) People, Culture and Inclusion Team, and Christ Church Students' Union and where appropriate external organisations, we will deliver an ambitious package of professional development workshops that will focus on inclusive practice, compassionate pedagogy, racial bias and allyship. Through the workshops, we aim to provide staff and students the opportunity to engage in critical conversations and reflective practices that will enable us to be intentional and comprehensive in our approach to inclusion and ensuring that it is embedded in key academic and operational processes. As part of this intervention, we will identify and roll out a series of mandatory training for all staff and identify role specific training needs. Our approach to CPD will include collaboration and delivery of workshops to key external providers that provide placements and practice learning opportunities for students, this includes NHS trusts, Schools and Colleges and private-sector organisations. This will enable us to enhance inclusion within placements.	Staff development; student development; external stakeholder development; staff administration; licences and software for online modules; support with travel costs/incentives for students; external training providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are culturally competent, feel supported and empowered to implement changes and facilitate critical conversations that will promote inclusive practices</li> <li>Staff are more culturally competent; have enhanced support for students as a result of culturally competent staff;</li> <li>Reduction in academic misconduct cases</li> </ul>
Student Curriculum Partners and Student Experience Partners: Learner involvement is central to addressing the success of all students and thus, the development of two schemes that will promote co-creation with students and ensure that we are adopting a student-centred approach across all areas of the university. The Student Curriculum Partners will work collaboratively with Course teams, the university's Closing our Gap Strategic Lead and the University's Strategic Lead for Retention and Success to co-create, interrogate and share their perspectives on CCCU's curricular with a key focus on race and ethnicity.	50 x Student Curriculum Partners (£50,000 per year) 25 x Student Experience Partners (£25,000 per year) 0.4 FTE staff Student development; Staff development; Student salaries;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established critical partners through co-creation with our students; increase in the representation and course belonging</li> <li>Increase in the number of/diversity of students utilising key professional services across the university</li> </ul>



The Student Experience Partners will work with key professional services departments across the university to co-create and share their experiences, perspectives and provide insights in to making services inclusive.	staff administration	
Decolonising the Curriculum Health Check: Designed in collaboration with staff and students our Decolonising the Curriculum Health Check aims to displace hegemonic norms from which many curricular stems in order to re-imagine and re-build an education that promotes inclusion, belonging and is reflective of our staff and students and their lived experiences. The Decolonising the Curriculum Health Check is one element of inclusive practice strategies that is embedded into the new academic framework, which also entails ensuring accessibility and supporting students with disability, or mental health difficulty, from a range of marginalised backgrounds and it is used continuously as a tool for learning and teaching enhancement and quality assurance. In combination with the health check staff (and students) will engage in CPD and workshops focused on decolonising the curriculum and decolonising professional services. This will further enhance learning and provide opportunities to put learning into tangible actions. The health check and the workshops will be further supported by the development of a decolonising the curriculum toolkit and working closely with academic and professional service departments to enable them to offer an enriched curricula and services that is representative of all members of our community.	Staff development and training; Staff administration; Resources and materials for the development of the toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of courses across CCCU that have a decolonised the curriculum</li> <li>• Increase in confidence and awareness of staff on how to decolonise the curriculum, decolonising professional services and share best practice;</li> <li>• Reduction in academic misconduct cases</li> </ul>
Authentic assessments: the redesign of the new academic framework to provide students with a range of mechanisms to demonstrate learning and meet learning outcomes	Staff development and training; Staff administration; Student partners/ambassador time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased in first time submission rates</li> <li>• Increase in first pass rates</li> <li>• Increased continuation, completion and attainment rates</li> <li>• Reduction in academic misconduct cases</li> </ul>
Total cost of activities planned	£180,000 annually	
Evidence-base & rationale	<p>Evidence across the sector indicates that the reasons behind the ethnicity awarding gap is multi-faceted and, therefore, requires multiple inter-connected interventions to address the organisational and cultural structures that enable the significant disparities between the degree outcomes of White students and their Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students. A positive sense of belonging and good mental and wellbeing is essential to the success of each student. Research conducted at CCCU through our student insight surveys, students experience surveys, the NSS and through consultations with our staff and students indicated that Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students at CCCU are less likely to feel like they belong compared to their White counterparts, this is also mirrored across the HE sector. The evidence suggests that we must focus on opportunities to build community, a positive sense of self, enhance our wellbeing provision for students and equip staff with the tools to change the culture and operational structures within the university if we are to increase the proportion of Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised Ethnic students obtaining a 'good degree' and reduce the ethnicity awarding gap.</p>	



## Evaluation

By adopting a mixed method approach to our evaluation, we aim to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what works. Our evaluations for the above interventions will include a mixture of largely Type 2 and Type 3 evaluations depending on the nature of the intervention (occasional Type 1 evaluations will be used where appropriate). As part of our commitment to understanding what works, we will be sharing our findings internally and externally starting spring 2026.

## Risk 7. Accessibility

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 7: Accessibility and Risk 8: Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms and EORR risks: Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7) and Cost pressures (risk 10)

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, Black and Asian students and students with a disability.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

3. To increase equality of opportunity for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to stay on course and complete their degree
4. To increase the proportion of Black and Asian students that graduate with a 1st/2.1 degree classification
5. To ensure equality of progression into employment for all students regardless of socio-economic background, disability and ethnicity through targeted removal of barriers to engagement, opportunities and support

Students from lower socio-economic groups may have find it harder to access extra-curricular and employment opportunities due to background, circumstance and cost pressures. Students with disabilities may encounter additional challenges due to inaccessible learning environments or materials. Such barriers can significantly hinder a student's ability to fully participate in academic activities and social interactions, potentially impacting their engagement, academic performance, overall university experience and progression into employment.

In recent years we have strengthened our digital offering to make learning more accessible to our students. This has included the use of ReCap to capture and recorded lectures, enhancement of our assistive learning technologies, and greater offerings within our electronic library. We have carried out extensive work to update our templates for Learning Support Plans (LSPs) and Placement Learning Support Plans (PLSPs), as well as increasing efficiency in developing plans for individual students. This includes more streamlined processes to ensure that LSPs are in place prior to arrival at CCCU. We have updated our advice and guidance for staff and students to take into account neurodivergent conditions and the interventions strategies we have set out aim to further enhance our understanding and approach to pedagogical practices and academic support for creating inclusive and accessible learning environments.

## Risk 7. Accessibility

Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Enhancing Provisions for Assistive Technology: we will continue to increase the number and range of assistive technologies to provide opportunities for flexible and accessible learning	Staff development; staff administration; development of staff and student policy and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in attainment</li><li>• Increase in student confidence to progress beyond higher education</li><li>• Increased sense of belonging</li></ul>

Enhancing the digital capabilities of staff through CPD: CPD programmes for staff and external stakeholders to develop/enhance their digital competency skills in order to empower staff to explore flexible ways of working. This will enable staff to enhance learning by exploring different modes of learning, teaching and assessment	Staff development; staff administration; development of staff and student policy and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in staff confidence; enhanced student experience; increased sense of belonging; improved accessibility; increase in student attainment</li> </ul>
Learning Support Plans & Placement Support Plans: continue to provide learning support plans and placement support plans for students and including promoting early disclosure of disability/impairment, cognitive and learning difficulties	Staff development; staff administration; development of staff and student policy and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in staff understanding of the needs of each student</li> <li>• Increase in awareness and understanding of practice learning providers to provide inclusive learning environments</li> <li>• Increase in attainment</li> <li>• Increase in student confidence to progress beyond higher education</li> <li>• Increase in sense of belonging</li> </ul>
Work Experience. Increase the number of target students undertaking paid and unpaid work experience, including year in industry, Unitemps assignments and volunteering.	<p>Staff time – co-ordination, tracking</p> <p>Marketing materials to promote opportunities to students and external organisations. £30,000p/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased engagement with work-related opportunities from target groups</li> </ul>
The academic framework (industry, careers and enterprise (ICE) module): Launch ICE 30 credit module (2026) ensuring that students from the target groups have the same opportunities and exposure to industry and enterprise experience.	Staff time and administration; industry engagement to source and develop client projects £80,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students taking part in a client project or innovation challenge resulting in improved graduate outcomes</li> </ul>
Enhancing the mental health and wellbeing provision: The university is working towards gaining the Mental Health Charter as part of our commitment to our students and staff. As part of this intervention, we will work to enhance the diversity of our wellbeing team through increasing representation and ensuring that the services provided are culturally sensitive, review and implement a range of wellbeing support (online and in-person)	Staff administration; recruitment; 2x1FTE staff;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved retention; students feel better supported; improved success</li> </ul>
<b>Total cost of activities planned</b>	£275,000 annually	
<b>Evidence-base &amp; rationale</b>	We have conducted a review of current literature and incorporated findings into the development of our interventions strategy that includes the commitment to provide proactive and continuous academic support for male students.	
<b>Evaluation</b>	The mixed method approach will incorporate a mixture of Type 1, 2 and 3 evaluations so that we gain a rich understanding of what works. This will include pre-and post-intervention data and comparison to control groups. Our approach will incorporate quantitative and qualitative methods. We are committed to sharing our learning and we will aim to publish findings internally and externally starting spring 2027.	

## Risk 8: Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms

This intervention strategy has been designed to mitigate Risk 8: Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms and EORR risks: Insufficient Personal Support (risk 7) and Cost pressures (risk 10)

Our assessment (see Annex A) found that this risk is likely to be affecting our students and contributing to inequitable outcomes for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, Black and Asian students and students with a disability.

Mitigation of this risk, via the activity outlined in this intervention strategy, will contribute to the following objectives:

5. To ensure equality of progression into employment for all students regardless of socio-economic background, disability and ethnicity through targeted removal of barriers to engagement, opportunities and support

Some students may feel under-prepared for graduate employment during their time at university. This can result from limited cultural awareness, a lack of opportunity or access to opportunity. Some students may be disadvantaged by opportunity hoarding of limited resources by more socio-economically advantaged students. Such instances can harm students' emotional wellbeing and career-readiness, potentially affecting their continuation, ability to complete their studies and academic achievement.

For this APP, we have undertaken some secondary analysis of the data to identify subject areas where there are significant gaps in Progression outcomes. Our analysis identified graduate level employment gaps between black and white students, and students from IMDQ1 and Q5 on courses that do not require professional registration (e.g. teaching, nursing, policing)

Whilst the latest Progression data shows that the gap has reduced – and in some cases been eliminated – between White students and those of other ethnic groups, this is primarily due to courses such as Nursing (which have a high proportion of Black students) achieving a high percentage of students progressing into graduate employment.

Our overall approach to closing gaps in progression will be to align the APP targets with delivery of our core services and activities to students, focusing (where relevant) on working with courses that have higher number of students from those groups. The implementation of the new academic framework from 2025 will ensure that all students undertake a new 30-credit industry, careers and enterprise (ICE) module. This provides authentic learning experiences through either client projects or an innovation challenge, designed to provide real-world scenarios for all students, regardless of their individual characteristics, and therefore providing equality of opportunity.

Risk 8: Lack of Appropriate Progression Support Mechanisms		
Activity	Inputs	Outcome Indicators
Future 360 (employability framework): increase the number of target students that undertake meaningful interactions with employers outside the curriculum e.g. mentoring, volunteering.	Staff time including academic resource to source meaningful interactions with employers and support administrative activity.  £40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industry panels for all Schools established.</li> <li>Employability and student enterprise activities identified and supported through co-delivery with academics, Careers and Enterprise, external industry speakers, employers and alumni.</li> <li>Increased engagement with extra-curricular work-related experience</li> </ul>
Career readiness self-assessment: Through the Preparing for your Professional Future student success module, Handshake and increased use of Career Pulse aligned to specific employability interventions to measure learning gain	Staff time and costs for research and development; software costs £20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data available for all students who have completed survey that indicates their level of career readiness and demonstrates learning gain.</li> <li>Number of students who have set up a Handshake profile and have accessed the careers service (either online or in-person)</li> <li>Increased engagement with the Careers and Enterprise service</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students report increased preparedness and confidence to enter the graduate workplace or self-employment/enterprise.</li> </ul>
GradForce (intensive employability programme for final-year students): scale up GradForce to reach a greater number of students, prioritising students from the target groups and with greatest support needs	Staff time; increased budget, promotional materials £20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded programme available to all final year students</li> <li>GradForce Plus support provided to specific target groups</li> <li>Increased pool of local employers actively engaging with the university and recruiting students from GradForce pool</li> <li>Improved career preparedness and graduate employment outcomes for GradForce alumni</li> </ul>
Student enterprise: continue to develop and promote the student enterprise programme, ensuring that students from the target groups are fully represented and grow the entrepreneurial culture/network across our UG and PG body	Staff time; allocated budget, promotion, materials Staff development Seed money for proof of concept and idealisation/business start-ups. 20 students @£1500 each £30,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Enterprise programme expanded with opportunities for multi-disciplinary enterprise projects established</li> <li>Increased number of students from target groups establish careers as freelancers and/or to set up their own businesses</li> <li>Student enterprise activity is encouraged and supported with an increase in the commercialisation of ideas/spin-off activities</li> </ul>
Alumni Futures Mentoring Programme: continue to deliver the alumni/employer Futures Partners mentoring programme, ensuring that we have mentors available to support students from all our target groups	Staff time; 0.5 FTE allocated to coordinate mentoring programme £15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pool of trained mentors, drawn both from our alumni community and beyond.</li> <li>A database of students who have registered to be mentored.</li> <li>Students report increased preparedness and confidence to enter the graduate workplace or self-employment/enterprise.</li> </ul>
Total cost of activities planned	£125,000 p/a	
Evidence-base & rationale	<p>To increase the progression rates for our target student groups, our intervention strategy is informed by data from the OfS data dashboard and TEF metrics that highlight inequities between progression levels across the different student groups. The underpinning rationale for these interventions is informed by an established body of research-based evidence that demonstrates the importance of placements or substantive work experience/internships in improving students' preparation for the graduate workplace, and their ability to secure suitable jobs after graduation. Our student demographic (with over half coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds) can result in our students lacking the necessary confidence, aspiration or 'social capita' to secure graduate employment. This intervention strategy therefore contains a range of measures to address this, for example GradForce and the Career Development Fund. Since the beginning of the fund, we have seen students access career development, work experience, and professional networking opportunities that would have otherwise been denied to them because of their socio-economic status. Many of these students have progressed to set up their own businesses, secure senior roles and are now returning to mentor the students that follow. Through continued investment, and the development of other employability and enterprise initiatives within and outside the curriculum, we are seeing our graduate outcomes improve annually.</p>	
Evaluation	<p>The intervention strategy above will be evaluated using mainly Type 1 and 2 evaluation, with long-term graduate outcomes measured by future Graduate Outcomes surveys. Due to Graduate Outcomes being a 'lag' indicator, several lead indicators have been identified to enable us to monitor on an ongoing basis the impact of our activities and interventions, and the extent to which each of the target student groups is engaging with – and successfully completing – the above interventions. The results of our evaluation will be shared internally and published on our web pages and the HE Evaluation Library from 2027 onwards on an annual basis.</p>	

## Whole Provider Approach

Leadership of Access and Participation is embedded throughout the institution. At Senior Management Team (SMT) level the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise and Business Development) work, together with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience), and through them Heads of School, and with the institutional strategic leads for student success and Closing Our Gap to ensure ownership of the agenda by the academic community. Directors of other key professional service areas – the Directorate for Student Wellbeing, Community & Belonging and the Directorate for Graduate Futures, along with the Strategic Lead for Access and Participation – are also closely aligned with and accountable for key aspects of this agenda.

Through our senior leadership team, we have worked to embed inclusion and accountability across all areas of the institution. Within our new People Strategy there is a commitment to improve our understanding of our staff characteristics before developing clear aims and objectives to diversify our staff community, to better reflect the characteristics of our students. We have made a number of appointments and structural changes to ensure that we have strategic leadership that provides opportunities for transformational cultural change.

The current transformational change programme proposes a new Student Success team reporting to the Associate Dean of Education and Student Success, bringing together oversight of APP and TEF frameworks, support for and monitoring of Course Performance planning, including cementing the University-wide Evaluation Framework, to support the delivery of interventions and action plans to deliver positive student outcomes within academic units and course teams.

The Governing Body, Senior Management Team, Academic Board and its Committees regularly and systematically receive reports on dimensions of student experience at all stages of the student lifecycle and including the APP. The dedicated TEF and APP Strategic Group, chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) and with senior representatives from the academic and professional services community as well as student representation, oversees the development and delivery of the APP.

Our approach to improving student outcomes in our APP is not only embedded within our institution but also championed through our relationships with external partners in the NHS, within the education community and via our Strategic Industry Advisory Board linked to our recent developments in Engineering. Civic responsibility is important to our university community and staff are encouraged to engage in a range of initiatives that relate to our APP objectives. Examples include a campaign to promote becoming a Governor at a local school and developing local partnerships with, as an example, the Kent Refugee Action Network.

**Commercial Partnerships.** The infrastructure and oversight arrangements for commercial partnerships provide robust governance, compliance, and accountability, ensuring all necessary assurances are in place

Links have been established together to ensure that alongside our Partnership Oversight Sub-Committee we have developed a regulated meeting environment with key staff whose remits are focussed to APP targets, to review available student outcomes data, discuss existing success and progression interventions, evaluate and review these alongside co-developing others as data trends are revealed to ensure they are effective and impactful depending on the stage in the partnership. These regulated meeting environments and communication methods will ensure oversight and further insight connected to continuation and progression/attainment are gathered across cohorts and levels of learning. Additionally, strengthened sharing of best practice and development materials and activities focussed to improving metrics (Retention and Success) and discussion of professional services /student support arrangements will guarantee the cross fertilisation and alignment of best practice approaches moving forwards and build on capacity to be agile and respond to shifts in metrics trends as they emerge and within the Quality Cycle.

Moving forwards in the light of our partnership arrangements, we acknowledge the differences between direct and collaborative students, but we have combined the previously separate targets for these into one target for our total student population. This acknowledges our whole institution approach and allow us to evolve interventions in collaboration with providers and share best practice. Where gaps in outcomes are identified, we are committed to working with and supporting partners to ensure they develop and evaluate specific interventions that are tailored effectively to the needs of their student groups. The Partner Management Group (PMG) and the Partner Strategic Group (PSG) ensures robust governance and oversight for each large commercial provider. The PMG for each partnership brings together the provider, the University faculty/faculties



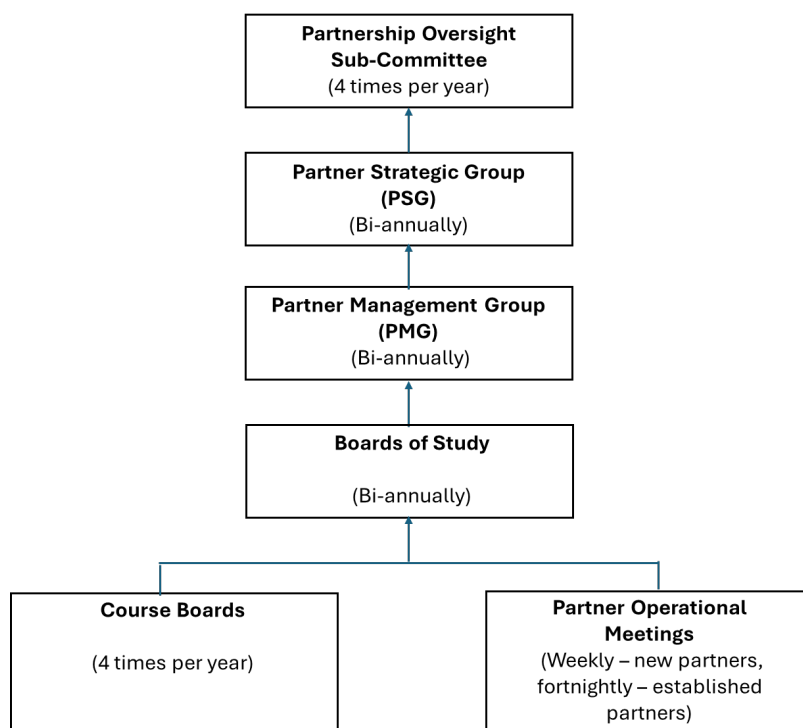
and relevant professional service departments, and the UK Partnerships and Apprenticeships Unit (UKPAU), to maintain broad oversight of the development and delivery of academic and professional service activities pertinent to the success of the partnership.

The PMG is scheduled to meet twice a year. Access and Participation, along with other Key Performance Indicators (Level pass rate, student satisfaction, average attendance, first attempt pass rate etc) are standing items on the agenda to oversee progress against APP targets and interventions.

In addition, the fortnightly operational meetings in the case of each provider (and weekly during the first year of the partnership) with comprehensive membership from the University and partner professional service departments (including UKPAU). These groups feed into the agenda of each PMG meeting where matters relating to the operational aspects of the partnership including APP delivery are reviewed and can be escalated as necessary.

With overall strategic leadership and responsibility for the partnership in the context of changing regulatory requirements, the PSG focuses on reducing risk and providing assurances by working with the provider, ensuring the partnership flourishes from a quality and financial perspective. Each PSG is scheduled to follow PMG meetings. Standing items on the agenda includes KPIs, the APP, subject portfolio, changes to the external regulatory framework and associated risk, ongoing operational management issues and student numbers. The PMG membership comprises, Managers, Heads and Directors of units whereas the PSG comprises of a more senior membership (PVC level and above), providing necessary assurances and reflecting the escalating seniority of each group.

#### Cycle of Governance meetings:



**Continuous Improvement Process.** A number of institutional KPIs including Access and Participation plan targets provide senior managers and governors with measures of success and areas for improvement through our Continuous Improvement Process. We introduced Course Performance Plans in 2022 which bring together several TEF and OFS B Condition metrics, along with NSS data and Access and Participation Plan targets, in order that we have an integrated and streamlined approach to course action planning. Our collaborative providers are aligned to our institutional approach to Continuous Improvement. This includes the Partnership Oversight Sub-Committee with a cross institutional remit to review continuous improvement using a similar template that contains key metrics. Also, a data dashboard has been developed that contains overall partner



performance against key metrics and a comparison of subjects in direct and collaborative provision. This will allow us to identify risk areas in a systematic and consistent way.

**The Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS)** Launched in 2020 and based in Canterbury, the Kent and Medway Medical School is a collaboration between CCCU and the University of Kent, building on the two institutions' existing high quality clinical teaching and research strengths.

The vision for KMMS is to encourage aspiring doctors from all backgrounds to seriously consider medicine as a career. KMMS is committed to widening access to medical degrees and has ambitious targets to recruit students who have the talent and aspiration to study medicine and are from under-represented groups or disadvantaged backgrounds. Contextual data will be used proactively to ensure an equitable admissions process. Eligible students from a widening participation background will receive a contextualised 10 and lower conditional academic offer and further consideration will be given to applicants at all stages of the admission process.

**Diverse Pathways and Flexible Provision.** Many of our degrees are also offered with an additional foundation year, giving students greater flexibility even if they fall slightly short of the entry requirements. A foundation year provides an introduction to studying at university, offers a supportive environment to develop the self-confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding for further study. We are finding that the foundation year option is appropriate for school-leavers or mature learners returning to study. Higher and degree apprenticeships offer an alternative route to higher education for both school leavers and those already established in their careers.

Canterbury Christ Church University offers a range of dynamic, industry-focused apprenticeship courses helping employers and employees to succeed. We currently offer higher and degree apprenticeships areas within Health, Business and Engineering and are continually developing new apprenticeships to respond to market changes and business requirements. Our April 2022 Apprenticeship Ofsted Report has highlighted the advantages of this flexible provision, particularly for non-traditional learners. We are also undertaking initial scoping work to engage with the Higher Technical Qualifications agenda and, working with FE college partners, offering HTQ badged qualifications in appropriate areas.

### **Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater community students**

Given the low numbers of students identifying as GTRSB students at enrolment at university, it is challenging to monitor trends. With fewer than ten declared GTRSB students currently at the University this will not be an explicit target group for the institution. However, following our review of the most recent census data together with the most recent list of registered GTRSB sites in the UK, a significant proportion of the GTRSB community is to be found in the Southeast. We will therefore keep a watching brief and explore opportunities to engage in a meaningful way with the local GTRSB community.

### **Service Children and Military Families**

Service Children / Military family was a new field on UCAS applications introduced for the 2023 cycle. We therefore have limited data on the population and outcomes for these students at CCCU. We will keep a watching brief on the outcomes data for these students as it matures. Despite the limited data, we are a founding member of the Service Children's Alliance Partnership (SCiP) Hub for the South-East, focussing on Kent and Medway, to support service children and their families, as well as children of service veterans. The Hub will be a useful incubator for the SCE team to pilot and evaluate any outreach targeted at service children. We hosted a Service Children conference at CCCU in May 2025 with the focus on collaboration to make effective use of the Service Children Pupil Premium with schools, charities, MOD and SCiP in attendance. These recent developments are in addition to our existing commitments to supporting military families through the University's Armed Forces Covenant.

Whilst we may not have sufficient data to be in a position to commit to a specific widening access target in this Plan, we have a strong foundation of support for service children and military families and will consider adding meaningful targets in the following APP submissions based on data analysis.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Sexual orientation does not significantly impact APP outcomes. We proudly support our LGBTQIA+ community as a long-standing Stonewall Diversity Champion and lead sponsor of Pride Canterbury. Our CCCU LGBTQIA+ network and student society foster inclusion, advocacy, and safe spaces, actively shaping university policies on gender and sexual identity.

## Faith

Whilst there are apparent statistical differences in experience and outcomes for students for different faiths, these were found to not be statistically significant once variations between people from different ethnic backgrounds are accounted for. Follow up analysis showed that the attainment rates for white students of faith and no faith were identical, for example. Therefore, the statistically significant gaps relating to faith are captured within our existing attainment targets and interventions.

## Student Consultation

We've collaborated with students from target groups to shape our targets and strategies, primarily through our Equitable Outcomes Student Advisory Panel. This panel reviews and guides APP development and implementation, with representation from commercial partner students. We engage collaborative providers through surveys and campaigns to address diverse needs. The Students' Union Council contributes to APP development through meetings and representation on the TEF/APP Strategic Group. This consultation has directly influenced measures to reduce cost pressures and enhance belonging across all campuses and partners

## Statement from Canterbury Christ Church University Students' Union representative:

"We at the Students' Union have a continued strong engagement with the Access and Participation Plan. We exist to support and empower every student and ensure all students, regardless of their background, have their best student life. We have a diverse student body supported by a diverse range of student representatives who drive change and serve to ensure lesser-heard voices are amplified. In recent years in particular, the work we have done as a Students' Union has shifted towards supporting our International Student Population, which has grown significantly in recent years, as shown by our Student Leadership Team now being two-thirds International Students. This year's cultural events will be bigger and better than ever, with Eid celebrations, Diwali, and One World Week being a celebration of food, music and culture to help students from all backgrounds and cultures feel that they belong at CCCU.

Since the last submission, we are proud to have established our own Student Union Hub back on the main Canterbury campus, which provides a friendly, warm and student-focused space. This is a place for students to meet with a student-only kitchen and a free coffee machine to ease cost pressures. This third space has meant we can more actively engage with students who do not engage with the SU in more formal ways and ensure we are amplifying a representative Student Voice.

To support removing barriers to engagement, we have been working to support students through the Cost of Living and Learning Crisis. This is being implemented through a pantry, free breakfast club and by working in collaboration with the wellbeing team to deliver additional financial support where needed. We know that this is not enough, and the cost of living is a 'new normal' which negatively affects the whole student experience with knock-on effects on student mental health and feelings of isolation.

This year, we are also working with the University on a number of Closing Our Gap co-design initiatives to better understand and combat the barriers to engagement, including membership costs and lower commitment activities, as well as supporting the 'Change-Makers' outreach project to encourage students to be drivers in the change they want to see. "

Sadia Haleema, President (Academic Life)

## Evaluation of the Plan

We are committed as a whole institution to delivering the highest possible standards of evaluation for the interventions outlined in this Plan. The recently created dedicated APP impact evaluation lead post, supported by a CCCU working group and evaluation framework, ensures consistent, sector-aligned practices—drawing on TASO's and OfS's evaluation toolkits

Strategic context. We will continue to draw on expertise from across the University, involving students and researchers, to investigate the impact of specific interventions developed for target groups at all stages of the

student lifecycle. We carry out a training needs analysis connected to appraisal of relevant staff, implement development as appropriate and evaluate its impact. We intend to increase our evaluation expertise and capacity through a dedicated resource as part of our investment in Research and Evaluation.

Our work will be evidence-informed by utilisation of sector best practice and research in addition to learning from our own research, scholarly practice and deep understanding of our data. As well as attending key fora, network conferences and study days, we will adopt the models of best practice where positive impact has already been demonstrated.

We are a founding member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) Service, which provides higher education providers with data and intelligence to effectively target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activities. Through the HEAT national community, we collaborate on the development of knowledge, skills, tools, resources and methodologies required for robust evaluation. The HEAT membership therefore supports our delivery of robust evaluation which will produce high quality evidence of what works and what does not work within our context.

HEAT membership avoids duplication, shares sector resources, and provides key data via links to HESA and DfE, reducing requests to schools. It enables peer feedback on evaluations, fostering knowledge exchange, transparency, and improvement. By offering data, tools, and systems, HEAT strengthens evaluation literacy and impact evidence across higher education.

Collaborative evaluation with our member universities and FE colleges in the KMPF (encompassing KaMCOP, our Uni Connect partnership) allows us to independently evaluate the impact that our combined widening access work has on local student outcomes. Collating student engagement data through HEAT allows us to understand the extent of engagement across universities, and the journey that outreach participants make longitudinally.

Data sharing and baselining agreements are already in place for access monitoring and evaluation work in accordance with GDPR considerations. Our student data/academic management information dashboard is already implemented and widely used, with ongoing developments planned (e.g., the reporting of Black student data separately from Asian, mixed and other ethnic group students). The data dashboard provides real-time student data that enables us to provide a rapid response where needed. Considerations around the use of data include GDPR, confidentiality, and secure data-sharing protocols. Our investment in evaluation includes subscription to HEAT, part of our contribution to the KMPF, allocating portions of staff time and specific roles.

We have recently moved into the post-entry HEAT evaluation space to replicate the tracking of our outreach interventions into student success and progression activity where possible. We are members of the HEAT post-entry working group to support with the development of additional HEAT functionality.

Each evaluation is tailored to its intervention, using mixed methods to assess effectiveness. We've created a Theory of Change for every strategy, outlining measurable outputs and outcomes. Evaluations range from type one to three, aiming for type three where feasible. Our institution-wide approach includes staff training on evaluation design, led by the APP Impact Evaluation Manager to ensure that interventions at School and course level are informed by evidence-based approaches that demonstrate impact.

We will evaluate each intervention and the overall plan to assess effectiveness and guide future work. Findings will be shared internally through student networks, including the Students' Union Council and Equitable Student Outcomes Advisory Panel. We are committed to publishing evaluation results in the Higher Education Evaluation Library and other platforms. Our assessments will cover both individual programmes and the broader approach, ensuring inclusivity for all underrepresented and target groups

We use the OfS financial evaluation toolkit (survey and interviews) as part of our ongoing engagement with target student groups. For the purposes of evaluation of financial support under this Plan we will make use of the statistical package of the toolkit.

## Investment

An overall average annual investment of £6,355,000 of our annual higher fee income will be made by the University to meet its objectives detailed within our intervention strategies. This is an increase on our previous submission and reinforces our continued commitment to improving access, success and progression outcomes for all of our students, regardless of background or circumstance.

**Financial Support.** Over the past eight years, 40-45% of our undergraduates have come from low-income families. Our financial support strategy aligns with previous Access and Participation Plans, focusing on aiding financially vulnerable students to meet access, completion, attainment, and progression targets. Support includes the CCCU grant, tailored bursaries (e.g., Care Leaver Bursary, Career Development Fund), and need-based aid (e.g., Access to Learning Fund). Impact will be assessed using the evaluation toolkit and student surveys.

The following table indicates financial support arrangements for 2026/27. Overall quanta will be kept under review in the light of ongoing evaluation.

<b>CCCU Grant (full-time and part-time entrants)</b>	£600 per year for each year of study for students from low-income households
Income backgrounds of up to £25,000 fees for each year of study are more than £6,355 (full-time) or £4,765 (part-time) normally reside in England studying at Canterbury Christ Church University. not already in receipt of government educational support of £5,000 or more per year, including the NHS Learning Support Fund, and Department for Education Bursaries and Scholarships (but excluding SLC maintenance grants or loans)	
<b>Access to Learning Fund</b>	Varied amounts up to a maximum £3,750 for students in extreme financial hardship
Awards based on needs assessment Variable, depending on need, for new entrants and continuing students	
<b>Disability Support</b>	Variable amounts up to a maximum of £300 for students with a disability to support associated costs including disability assessment (incl. Dyslexia), IT/specialist equipment and other services
Awards based on needs assessment of students with a disability Variable, depending on need	
<b>Care Leaver Bursary</b>	£1,200 p/a for statutory care-leavers of the UK who meet the eligibility criteria. In addition to targeted support through the designated members of staff in Student Wellbeing Services, the option of year-round accommodation, guaranteed part-time employment as a student ambassador and priority access to the Career Development fund.
For statutory care-leavers of the UK (people who are under 25 years of age and have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who were in care on their 16th birthday OR students who are recognised by the Foyer Federation; or students who have been homeless prior to entry (verified with the Local Authority, the Foyer Federation or relevant organisation) Income background below £25,000 Not in receipt of other CCCU financial support (this award supersedes the CCCU Grant)	
<b>Career Development Bursary</b>	Up to £500 per Student to support work experience opportunities.
Variable amount up to £500 based on need To be eligible students must belong to at least one of the APP target groups	
<b>Partner School Award</b>	£500 p/a for partner school students engaged in outreach activity
For students who studied at one of our KMPF outreach partner schools or Kent FE colleges within the past five years Continued payment dependent on employment status as School and College Engagement ambassador	

An estimated total of £4,614,000 - £4,704,000 will be allocated in financial support to eligible students across all year groups in each year of this APP cycle.

## Provision of Information to Students

The University ensures accurate course and recruitment information for prospective and current students, reviewing it annually with Legal, Finance, Quality and Standards, Marketing, and Student Recruitment teams to comply with GDPR and CMA guidelines. We collaborate with potential students and the Students' Union to test clarity before publication. This information is shared through multiple channels:

**Website pages.** Our website provides detailed course information, including tuition fees, additional costs, and funding links. All pages can be downloaded as dated PDFs, and we archive past versions of the online prospectus, allowing rollback if needed. We also share timely updates with UCAS and the Student Loans Company (SLC) for their student-facing platforms.

**Student Financial Support Booklet.** This provides students with information about Student Tuition Fee and Maintenance Loans, University awards and bursaries, and other sources of financial support.

**Open Days and Applicant Day.** Talks about fees, finance and financial support are also provided to prospective students at Open Days and Applicant Days.

**Outreach talks with pupils at local schools.** The SCE team works with local schools and FE colleges to provide information to pupils about studying at university. This includes information about tuition fees, loans, bursaries and other financial support, and how to budget effectively for their time at university.

**Emails from the CRM system** provide prospective students with links to fee, funding, and Student Finance England details, along with embedded videos explaining higher education financing, budgeting tips, and cost-of-living support. CRM segmentation ensures targeted communications for different student groups



## Annex A

### P1. Access and Participation Plan 2025-2030 Data Review

28/03/25

#### 1.0 Introduction

This analysis looks primarily at the data included in the latest OfS Access and Participation Plan dataset, released in July 2024. The Planning and BI team reconstructed the measures from the national dashboard internally, allowing for enhanced analysis — including, where relevant, the separation of directly delivered and collaborative provision.

There are five key measures in the Access and Participation dataset corresponding to stages in the student lifecycle. In addition to three indicators used in the TEF and monitoring B3 regulations (Continuation, Completion, and Progression) there is a measure for Access, the number of students accessing HE with different characteristics and backgrounds, and a measure of Attainment, the proportion of students on degree programmes<sup>[1]</sup> receiving first or upper second class honours.

Section 2 provides an overview of CCCU performance for full-time undergraduates. Section 3 looks at the stages of the student lifecycle in more detail, including trends in the data, differences between direct delivery and collaborative provision and issues for other modes and levels of study where data allows.

#### 2.0 Overview

Figure 1 (overleaf) looks at the four-year aggregated averages of the measures for full-time undergraduates. Although the overall performance figures are shown in the first line, shading has been determined by Planning & BI team using performance against comparator groups. For example, the splits for students from ethnic minority backgrounds have been compared with those of students from white backgrounds.

For the measures other than Access, the shading is as follows:

	A difference in performance that is on the margins of statistical significance
	A statistically significant difference in performance
	A statistically significant difference that is also below the average for English HEIs.

For the Access measure medium blue shading signifies a group that CCCU recruits a smaller proportion of than the average for English HEIs. Where the shading is light blue this difference is statistically marginal.

Annex 1 shows the same summary data for all English providers and highlights that many of the issues highlighted at CCCU are reflected nationally. Obviously, this does not make them any less of a priority for CCCU.

**Figure 1: Overview of CCCU performance in the APP dataset – Full-time undergraduates**

	Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate	Access	Continuation	Completion	Attainment	Progression
	Overall	100	82.1	83.4	71.4	73.0
Sex	Female	54.1	85.7	86.3	73.4	74.4
	Male	45.7	77.6	77.3	66.3	69.2
Age	Mature (21 or over)	76.5	80.2	82.0	73.0	80.1
	Young (<21)	23.5	86.0	84.2	70.5	68.6
Ethnicity	Asian	4.7	78.4	83.9	57.6	68.6
	Black	12.9	80.9	76.8	40.7	72.4
	Mixed	4.3	74.9	77.7	69.3	71.2
	Other ethnicity	1.3	73.5	72.0	53.8	70.1
	White	76.8	83.8	85.1	78.0	73.5
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	9.5	84.9	80.5	72.5	69.7
	Reported disabilities (none)	90.5	81.8	84.0	71.2	73.8
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	2.6	88.1	81.3	68.7	71.7
	Mental health condition	2.6	82.2	77.8	76.7	68.3
	Multiple impairments	2.2	87.4	81.9	69.9	70.1
	No disability reported	90.5	81.8	84.0	71.2	73.8
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	1.6	80.9	80.5	76.9	71.8
	Social or communication impairment	1.0	84.1	81.6	73.4	57.9
FSM	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	23.2	82.7	75.4	62.9	64.4
	FSM - not eligible	76.8	87.8	86.7	72.4	69.8
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	23.8	77.7	76.7	45.3	71.4
	White, IMD Q1&2	37.3	81.2	81.3	74.8	71.5
	Female IMD Q1&2	31.7	83.9	83.2	66.5	71.9
	Male IMD Q1&2	29.5	75.0	72.1	58.6	69.9
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	8.0	83.8	79.2	53.3	65.5
	White, POLAR Q1&2	32.1	86.5	83.8	74.6	68.2
	Female POLAR Q1&2	24.7	87.4	86.9	74.1	69.5
	Male POLAR Q1&2	15.3	83.5	75.7	65.0	64.0
Gaps	TUNDRA - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-1.1	1.3	1.7	-6.8	1.7
	POLAR4 - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-5.0	3.2	-2.2	2.6	5.6
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	-24.9	8.5	8.1	14.6	2.6
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	8.0	10.9	22	-	19.9
Commuter	Commuter	84.8	80.6	81.7	71.7	74.6
	Non-commuter	15.2	88.4	85.8	71.6	71.2
Care Leaver	Care Leaver (16+)	1.9	85.9	100.0	58.6	57.1
	Non care leaver	98.1	86.8	84.6	72.4	72.9
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	85.4	82.5	83.7	71.4	73.4
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	6.3	84.4	82.7	73.7	69.1
	Not heterosexual or LGB	8.3	77.5	70.7	61.4	67.8

\*\* Intersections highlighted where they provide added explanatory value

The top line of Figure 1 highlights that CCCU is below the English HEI average<sup>[2]</sup> on the Continuation, Completion and Attainment measures overall.

As last year, **Male students** continue to perform on average less well than female students on the four outcome measures and significantly below sector on the Completion, Attainment and Progression measures. Over the last four years CCCU has recruited similar numbers of male and female students. However, historically CCCU recruited more women than men, particularly on courses such as nursing and primary teaching. This has been offset by the recent expansion of collaborative provision which has been predominantly in the business

and management subject area and has had a higher proportion of male students. To some extent differences in performance may be subject rather than gender related.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Mature students** have slightly lower rates of Continuation and Completion than young students. The difference is not large but is statistically significant. However mature students are more likely to progress into graduate level jobs or further study than young students.

Mature students may have had time to develop other job-related skills and to build better social networks to find graduate level jobs. Indeed, nationally, mature students are more likely to have found graduate level employment than young students. However, the contrast is more marked at CCCU than nationally (see Annex 1). At CCCU, 80.1% of mature students have a positive progression measure compared with 68.6% of young students. The difference is only 2.7% nationally<sup>[4]</sup>. Further improving the employability outcomes of **young students** could be one focus of the new Access and Participation Plan.

The performance splits by ethnicity indicates significant disparities between students from **Black, Asian, Mixed Heritage and Other Minoritised backgrounds** and the White counterparts for all success outcome measures. The contrast is most marked in attainment of good degrees, where students from all ethnically diverse backgrounds are significantly less likely to gain a good degree than they are nationally. The gap is largest for Black students (37.3%) and this has understandably been a key focus of our Closing our Gap strategic commitments. Whilst the gap has closed slightly it remains a priority for CCCU. The gap is also more than 20% for Asian students and students from Other Ethnic backgrounds. CCCU also recruits fewer Asian students than English HEIs do on average, although the Asian community in Kent and Medway is also relatively small (see next section).

Overall CCCU recruits fewer students with **reported disabilities** than the average for English HEIs, although this is primarily because very few students with collaborative providers report disabilities. Overall students who report disabilities are slightly less likely to complete their studies and to progress to graduate level employment or further study. Students with mental health conditions are less likely to complete their degree, whilst those with cognitive or learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia) are less likely to attain 1st or 2i class degrees.

The remaining splits in the table are indicators of **socio-economic disadvantage**. Students who were eligible for **Free School Meals**, an indicator of low income in parental households, are slightly less likely to continue their studies after one year and less likely to complete them (markedly so at CCCU). They are also less likely to attain 1<sup>st</sup> and 2i degree classifications and to progress to graduate level jobs or further studies within 15 months of completing their studies.

The pattern is similar for students that come from postcodes that are amongst the 20% most deprived in the **2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** or from postcodes with **low participation** in Higher Education in either the **POLAR 4** or **TUNDRA** measures (the first uses Census data whilst the latter uses tracking data from DfE), or from students with *characteristics* associated with low participation (**ABCS**). There are one or two exceptions. Students from areas of low participation do not perform particularly poorly on the attainment measure and students from areas of deprivation are no less likely to progress to graduate level jobs or study.

The intersections shown in the table are those which are provided in the national dashboard as the splits are most likely to have sufficient numbers for statistical analysis to be robust. The intersections are shaded only where differences in performance appear to be driven by the combination of both characteristics. For example, the attainment rate for students from **ethnic minority backgrounds from areas of multiple deprivation** is below that of ethnic minority students alone and below that of students from areas of socio-economic deprivation alone.

Similarly, the Continuation, Completion and Attainment rates for **male students from IMD quintile 1 or 2 (most deprived) areas** are lower than those of male students or students from IMD quintile 1&2 areas alone.

### 3.0 Collaborative Provision

Reflecting the recent growth in collaborative provision at CCCU, it should be noted that about 66% of students in the 4-year aggregated Access measure are with collaborative providers, 51% (up from 18% last year) of those in the Continuation measure and only 1% of the students in the other measures. As most collaborative students are mature students, they also have less influence on splits that are focused on young people.<sup>[5]</sup> Figure 2 breaks down the overview table into directly delivered and collaborative provision for the access and continuation measures. This highlights some of the similarities and distinctions between the challenges facing CCCU on campus and working with its collaborative providers.

**Figure 2:** Access and continuation overview - directly delivered and collaborative performance

		Access (directly delivered)	Access (collaborative)	Continuation (directly delivered)	Continuation (collaborative)	Completion (directly delivered)	Completion (collaborative)	Attainment (directly delivered)	Attainment (collaborative)	Progression (directly delivered)	Progression (collaborative)
Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate		100	100	87.1	77.3	83.5	79.8	71.5	69.6	73.2	69.8
Sex	Female	65	48.7	88.8	81.4	86.5	78.2	73.6	70.1	74.7	67.5
	Male	34.7	51.3	83.9	73.7	77.1	82.4	66.2	68.4	68.9	77.9
Age	Mature (21 or over)	37.2	96.3	86.8	77.8	82.2	79.0	73.3	70.2	81	70.0
	Young (<21)	62.8	3.7	87.3	66.9	84.2	81.6	70.5	57.1	68.6	68.7
Ethnicity	Asian	4.6	7.1	88.5	75.7	85.1	61.5	57.3	63.2	67.9	76.2
	Black	13.1	7.1	85.2	74.5	76.7	79.8	39.8	54.2	73.8	54.5
	Mixed	4.3	5.0	86.2	62.8	78.5	56.3	69.4	66.7	70.6	-
	Other ethnicity	0.9	12.1	83.9	71.9	72.5	60.0	55.3	-	68.6	-
	White	77.1	68.8	87.6	79.7	85.1	84.6	78.1	76.8	73.5	74.3
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	22.6	3.0	86.4	72.4	80.7	73.5	72.7	62.1	70	60.1
	Reported disabilities (none)	77.4	97.0	87.3	77.5	84.1	80.6	71.2	70.4	73.9	71.6
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	6.8	0.4	88.6	79.2	81.4	76.5	69	40.0	72.1	40.0
	Mental health condition	6.6	0.7	85.3	57.3	78	70.0	77.1	55.6	68.8	53.0
	Multiple impairments	4.9	0.9	87.7	85.9	81.9	83.3	70.3	57.1	71.5	50.0
	No disability reported	77.4	97.0	87.3	77.5	84.1	80.6	71.2	70.4	73.9	71.6
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	2.4	1.0	83.7	71.6	81.6	58.3	76.5	87.5	70.9	81.1
	Social or communication impairment	1.9	0.0	83.7	100.0	81.1	-	73.4	-	57.9	-
FSM	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	22.4	36.8	83.8	65.3	75.4	69.6	62.9	-	64.5	53.3
	FSM - not eligible	77.6	63.2	88.3	69.8	86.7	86.3	72.4	58.3	69.8	68.0
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	17.2	27.2	85.3	73.4	76.8	74.7	44.8	55.0	72.2	60.6
	White, IMD Q1&2	28.0	42.1	85.5	78.4	81.2	87.0	74.9	71.4	71.7	64.2
	Female IMD Q1&2	29.8	32.7	87.2	80.8	83.3	78.6	66.7	63.3	72.5	59.8
	Male IMD Q1&2	15.4	36.5	81.8	72.4	71.5	82.7	58.3	64.1	69.9	70.0
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	8.1	7.7	86.3	42.9	79.2	77.8	53.3	-	65.1	-
	White, POLAR Q1&2	33.2	23.2	87.1	71.3	83.8	81.8	74.6	-	68.3	50.0
	Female POLAR Q1&2	25.7	16.4	87.9	73.1	87	77.8	74.1	-	69.6	60.0
	Male POLAR Q1&2	15.4	14.3	85.3	55.1	75.5	83.3	65.0	-	64.0	-
Gaps	TUNDRA - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-4.1	23.8	2.2	-15.6	1.8	-8.5	-6.7	-	1.9	-
	POLAR4 - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-6.3	5.8	4.7	1.9	-2.2	2.6	2.5	-	5.4	81.1
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	-7	-33.9	3.7	7.2	8.1	4.7	14.4	18.7	2.6	2.2
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	8.1	6.9	7.1	2.4	22.7	21.5	-	-	20.7	8.3
Sexual Orientation	Commuter	62.5	96.2	85.7	77.3	81.8	79.6	71.8	69.9	75.0	70.5
	Non-commuter	37.5	3.8	89.4	78.0	85.8	80	71.6	71.4	71.2	65.9
	Care Leaver (16+)	1.2	2.4	77.1	90.0	100.0	-	58.6	-	57.1	-
	Non care leaver	98.8	97.6	87.4	86.1	84.6	82.6	72.4	71.0	73.0	70.1
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	88.4	83.8	87.2	77.1	83.8	80.8	71.4	70.7	73.7	67.8
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	9.3	4.6	87.6	79.4	82.5	88.2	73.7	75.0	68.4	90.0
	Not heterosexual or LGB	2.3	11.6	80.5	76.9	72.4	33.3	64.3	33.3	66.9	-

In terms of Access, CCCU's collaborative provision is more gender balanced but strongly focused on mature students and with a higher proportion of students from Other ethnic minority backgrounds.

However, it should be noted that in the Access measures the main ethnicity split is for 18-year-olds only. As most of our collaborative provision is taken up by mature students, the ethnicity profile for Access measures is based on a very small number of students. When ethnicity is included in intersection data (e.g. IMD), it includes students of all ages.

Students at the new large collaborative providers are much less likely to report disabilities. To some extent this is likely to be a side effect of the higher proportions of mature and ethnic minority students, both of whom are less likely to declare disabilities (particularly learning difficulties or mental health conditions). Reducing any potential stigma associated with declaring disabilities may be as important as ensuring students are not excluded by the recruitment process.

Figure 2 also highlights that although our collaborative provision is predominantly recruiting mature students, when young students are recruited, they are less likely to be from low participation areas.

In terms of continuation, collaborative and directly delivered provision are more similar in the areas highlighted for potential intervention. However, young students with collaborative providers have lower continuation rates than mature. Collaborative students from ethnic diverse backgrounds also have lower continuation rates than white students. Small numbers mean that apparent differences in the other split measures focused on young students are not statistically significant for collaborative provision.

### **Large collaborative partners**

Figures 3 and 4 show Access and Continuation figures broken down for the four large collaborative providers in the APP dataset; the Global Baking School (GBS), London School of Commerce (LSC), Elizabeth School of London (ESL) and London South East Colleges (LSEC).

Where split measures in the table have a base of 30 students or fewer the numbers have been italicised and greyed out, they should be viewed as indicative at best.

Figure 3 shows that CCCU students studying at these collaborative providers are much more likely to be mature students and, apart from at LSEC, much less likely to report disabilities. The reasons for the latter are not clear and CCCU is working with its partners to ensure that students feel free to report disabilities, that this is clearly recorded and that they are able to access suitable support.

Only young students are considered in the TUNDRA and POLAR participation in HE measures. The data suggests that the small number of young students that do come to study through our collaborative providers are less likely to be from low participation areas. However, students with collaborative providers are, in general, much more likely to be from areas of multiple deprivation.



Normally, participation rates and measures of deprivation have similar geographies. This suggests that the mature students studying through our large collaborative partners have quite a different profile from young students studying at these institutions.

**Figure 3: Access – large collaborative partners (GBS, LSC,ESL and LSEC)**

Full-time UG students		GBS	LSC	ESL	LSEC
		Access	Access	Access	Access
Sex	Overall	100	100	100	100
	Female	47.4	49.0	49.7	80.4
	Male	52.6	51.0	50.2	19.6
Age	Mature (21 or over)	97.1	97.1	93.3	81.7
	Young (<21)	2.9	2.9	6.7	18.3
Ethnicity	Asian	18.2	-	5.6	-
	Black	-	4.0	5.6	40.0
	Mixed	4.5	6.0	-	13.3
	Other ethnicity	13.6	24.0	8.3	6.7
	White	63.6	64.0	80.6	40.0
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	3.5	1.3	2.0	22.5
	Reported disabilities (none)	96.5	98.7	98.0	77.5
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	0.4	0.1	0.4	8.8
	Mental health condition	0.8	0.4	0.4	2.9
	Multiple impairments	1.1	0.4	0.5	6.7
	No disability reported	96.5	98.7	98.0	77.5
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	0.9	0.4	-	3.7
	Social or communication impairment	-	0	-	0.4
FSM	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	40.3	49.2	28.2	35.9
	FSM - not eligible	59.7	50.8	71.8	64.1
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	32.6	19.4	19.3	36.8
	White, IMD Q1&2	42.1	40.8	48.2	18.6
	Female, IMD Q1&2	34.2	29.2	33.0	42.9
	Male, IMD Q1&2	40.5	30.8	34.1	12.5
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	11.0	2.2	6.0	11.4
	White, POLAR Q1&2	33.0	9.3	21.9	6.8
	Female, POLAR Q1&2	23.0	5.9	15.8	13.6
	Male, POLAR Q1&2	21.2	5.4	11.7	4.5
Gaps	TUNDRA - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	11.9	46.7	27.0	25.0
	POLAR4 - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	6.6	24.9	7.1	13.6
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	-44.5	-16.2	-29.3	-8.8
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	-1.6	15.2	-6.5	29.6
Commuter	Commuter	96.7	95.2	96.2	94.1
	Non-commuter	3.3	4.8	3.8	5.9
Care Leaver	Care Leaver (16+)	2.3	2.7	2.7	1.5
	Non care leaver	97.7	97.3	97.3	98.5
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	83.4	83.6	84.3	93.8
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	5.1	4.2	3.9	3.1
	Not heterosexual or LGB	11.5	12.2	11.8	3.1
Maximum Denominator		13,045	6,380	2,936	240

Continuation rates (Figure 4, overleaf) are available in the APP dataset for GBS, LSC and LSEC, and the number of students included is much smaller, as fewer cohorts were in their second year in the dataset. This means that a greater number of split measures either have no data or are reliant on small numbers (italicised and greyed out).

The table does suggest however that continuation rates are lower for male students at these partners. LSEC aside, continuation rates also appear to be lower for young students, although because of the small numbers in the cohort, the differences between young and mature students are statistically marginal.

Similarly, while there appear to be differences in continuation rates between students from different ethnic backgrounds, these are not statistically significant. Differences by age and ethnicity will need to be monitored as larger cohorts come through.

**Figure 4:** Continuation – large collaborative partners

		GBS	LSC	ESL	LSEC
Full-time UG students		Continuation	Continuation	Continuation	Continuation
Sex	Overall	77.3	77.3	32.8	82.4
	Female	82.5	80.0	39.4	83.8
	Male	73.2	74.8	24.0	77.4
Age	Mature (21 or over)	78.0	77.6	34.7	81.9
	Young (<21)	58.1	70.9	22.2	85.3
Ethnicity	Asian	76.5	68.2	-	88.9
	Black	73.7	73.9	-	83.7
	Mixed	66.7	57.9	-	63.2
	Other ethnicity	71.9	71.8	-	-
	White	79.5	80.0	34.7	88.1
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	69.3	71.8	-	82.0
	Reported disabilities (none)	77.6	77.4	32.8	82.4
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	73.9	-	-	87.5
	Mental health condition	55.6	53.8	-	77.8
	Multiple impairments	88.4	71.4	-	80.0
	No disability reported	77.6	77.4	32.8	82.4
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	68.3	84.6	-	77.8
FSM	Social or communication impairment	-	-	-	-
	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	61.2	57.1	-	84.6
	FSM - not eligible	50.0	72.7	-	94.1
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	73.9	70.2	-	84.7
	White, IMD Q1&2	77.8	79.3	34.8	92.7
	Female, IMD Q1&2	81.3	79.6	36.4	84.2
	Male, IMD Q1&2	71.8	73.7	35.3	86.7
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	39.3	-	-	-
	White, POLAR Q1&2	65.3	80.0	-	-
	Female, POLAR Q1&2	68.8	80.0	-	-
	Male, POLAR Q1&2	49.1	75.0	-	-
Gaps	TUNDRA - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-19.1	-14.8	22.2	14.0
	POLAR4 - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	11.1	-24.3	-	87.5
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	7.7	6.2	-44.4	1.3
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	2.7	4.2	-33.3	-82.1
Care Leaver	Commuter	77.4	77.2	32.1	81.9
	Non-commuter	76.3	78.2	-	87.5
	Care Leaver (16+)	89.7	90.9	-	-
	Non care leaver	86.1	86.2	80.0	83.0
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	77.2	76.8	31.9	83.8
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	77.7	81.9	-	85.7
	Not heterosexual or LGB	76.4	78.9	20.0	42.9
	Maximum Denominator	7,389	4,264	58	238

Two collaborative partners, LSC and LSEC, also have small numbers of students with attainment data, and this is shown in Figure 5, below. Given the limited numbers, the data should be treated with caution, but is included here for completeness.

**Figure 5:** Attainment – large collaborative partners (LSC and LSEC)

		LSC	LSEC
Full-time UG students		Attainment	Attainment
Sex	Overall	60.4	66.4
	Female	56.1	69.7
	Male	70.0	54.2
Age	Mature (21 or over)	61.1	67.0
	Young (<21)	-	-
Ethnicity	Asian	66.7	50.0
	Black	54.8	55.0
	Mixed	-	60.0
	Other ethnicity	-	-
	White	62.7	79.3
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	-	47.1
	Reported disabilities (none)	60.6	69.8
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	-	-
	Mental health condition	-	40.0
	Multiple impairments	-	-
	No disability reported	60.6	69.8
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	-	-
FSM	Social or communication impairment	-	-
	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	-	-
Intersections	FSM - not eligible	-	-
	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	65.5	37.0
	White, IMD Q1&2	58.8	77.3
	Female, IMD Q1&2	53.5	60.5
	Male, IMD Q1&2	80.0	33.3
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	-	-
	White, POLAR Q1&2	-	-
	Female, POLAR Q1&2	-	-
Gaps	Male, POLAR Q1&2	-	-
	TUNDRA - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-	-
	POLAR4 - low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	-	-
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	-69.6	28.6
Commuter	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	-	-
	Commuter	61.4	66.0
Care Leaver	Non-commuter	53.8	81.8
	Care Leaver (16+)	-	-
	Non care leaver	23.1	68.3
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	65.2	67.0
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	-	-
	Not heterosexual or LGB	21.4	-
Maximum Denominator		96	113

Section 4 looks at trends and patterns in the data across the student lifecycle, including further analysis of directly delivered and collaborative provision in the Access and Continuation measures.

## 4.0 Student Lifecycle

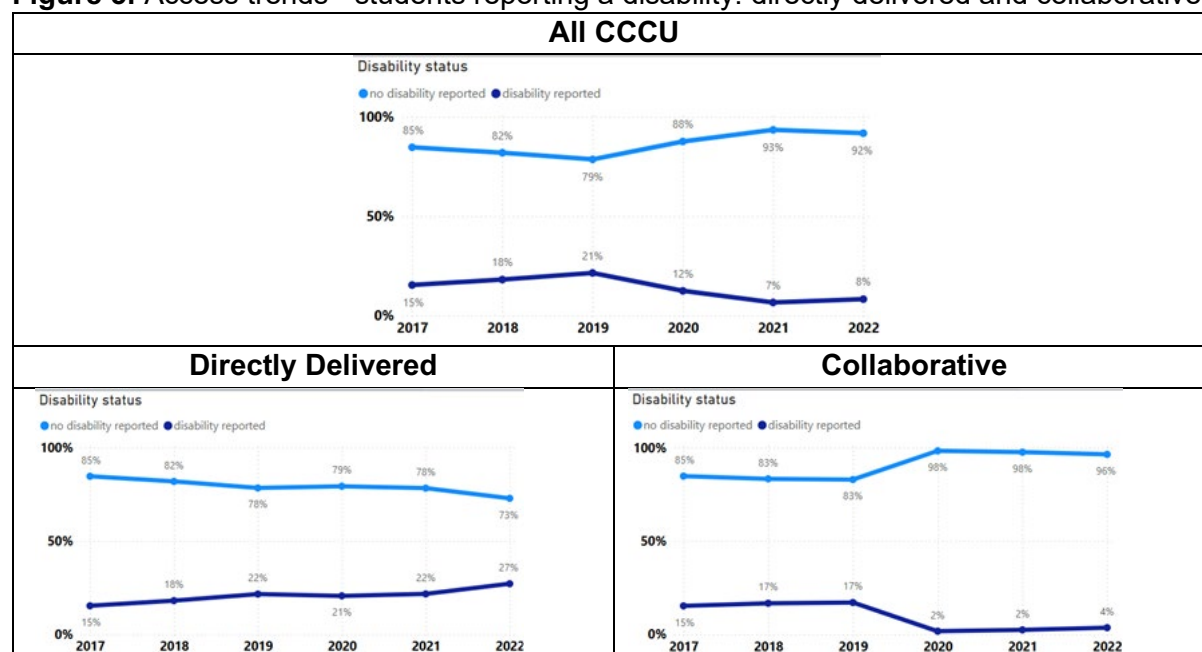
### 4.1 Access

At CCCU there has been a notable change in the gender profile of students over the last three years as a result of new collaborative provision. In 2019/20 66.4% of entrants were female, by 2021/22 this had dropped to 50.9%, and, in the latest data is at 53.4%. Around 57% of all HEI undergraduate full-time students are female and this proportion has not changed significantly over the last 6 years. Under or over representation by gender is a different issue in different subject areas. CCCU is working to improve the recruitment of female scientists and technicians at the same time as encouraging more men to consider careers in nursing and primary teaching.

There has been a similarly dramatic increase in mature new entrants at CCCU, which have increased from 40 to 80% over the last 2 years. Some 98.6% of GBS and LSC entrants in 2022-23 were mature students (aged 21 or over at first registration). To the extent to which access for mature students is a widening participation issue, CCCU's new collaborative providers are outperforming the sector.

The proportion of CCCU entrants reporting a disability has, however, fallen significantly. Only 8% of CCCU entrants in 2022/23 reported a disability compared with 21% in 2019/20. The proportion of directly delivered students reporting a disability (27% in 2022/23) has been consistent over the last three years but only 4% of students with collaborative providers have reported a disability in the latest year (Figure 5).

**Figure 5:** Access trends - students reporting a disability: directly delivered and collaborative

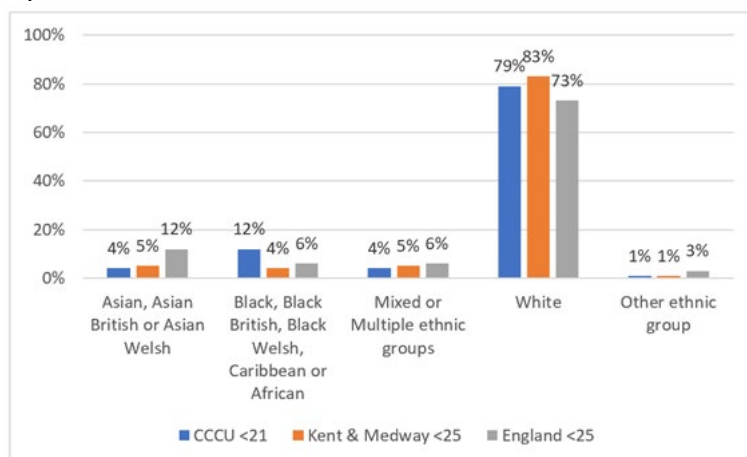


Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

It is likely that this reflects a lower recognition of learning disabilities amongst students with collaborative providers (such as mature students and students from different nationalities and ethnic groups). The hypothesis is that students with disabilities are being recruited in similar numbers in collaborative providers undetected and are not 'excluded' as such. However, this hypothesis needs evidencing. It is also important that undeclared and unsupported disabilities do not lead to poor outcomes for students in terms of completion, attainment, and progression.

Only 21% of young CCCU entrants to full-time undergraduate courses are ethnic minority backgrounds compared with 35% across the sector. However, as we noted in our TEF submission, CCCU students include a significantly higher proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds than there are in Kent and Medway, the immediate hinterland of the university. Across Kent and Medway people from ethnic diverse background represent just 11.4% of the population (17% of the 25 or under year old population).

**Figure 6:** Access – Ethnicity of CCCU young entrants compared with local and national populations



Source: OfS APP dataset 2022-23 CCCU young entrants (<21 years), Census 2021 young population (<25 years). FT UG.

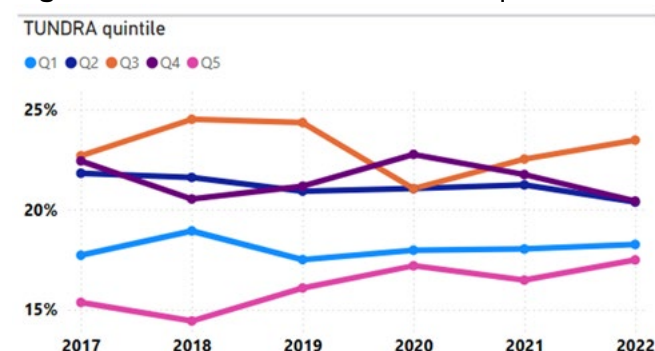
Only the ethnicity of young entrants is included in the Access measure and, as most collaborative students are mature students, the measure mostly reflects direct delivery.

The participation in HE measures (TUNDRA<sup>[6]</sup> and POLAR4) are similarly focused on young students and mostly reflect direct delivery. If all students had equal access to CCCU, we would expect both measures to be around 20% in each quintile. However, the TUNDRA measure shows that, whilst participation from students in low participation areas Q1 is better than from Q5, both are below 20% and below the middle quintiles (Figure 7).

This suggests that the headline comparison measure may be slightly misleading. CCCU is recruiting fewer students from high participation areas than average, as students from more affluent areas may be more likely to apply to universities less focused on vocational skill areas (e.g., Russell Group). Comparison of new entrants from Q1 areas with the proportion from Q3 or Q4 areas might be a better measure. This suggests that whilst recruitment from low participation areas is high for the sector, there is still room for improvement.



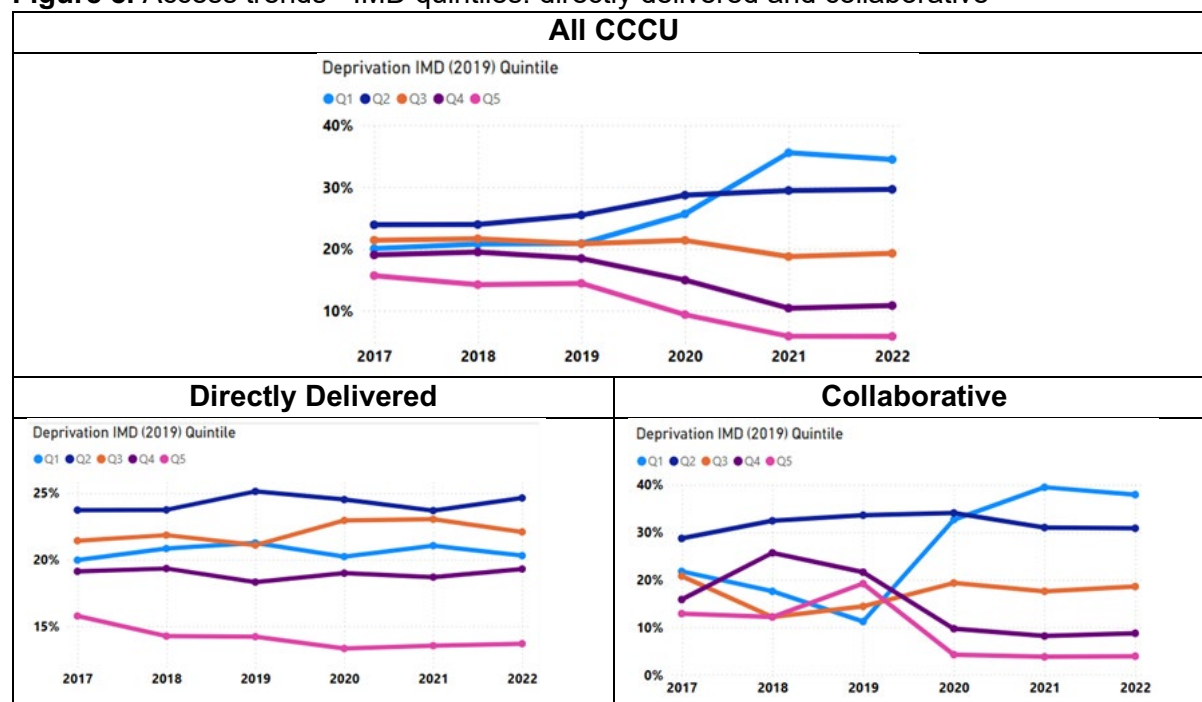
**Figure 7. Access trends – TUNDRA quintiles: Young (under 21) entrants**



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

The trend in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) split measure shows that CCCU's recruitment from areas with highest levels of socio-economic deprivation (IMD Q1) is significant and has grown further in the last two years because of new collaborative provision (mature students are included in the IMD measure).

**Figure 8. Access trends - IMD quintiles: directly delivered and collaborative**



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

The IMD measure included 125 collaborative students in 2019/20, 2,410 in 2020/21 and 9,630 in 2021/22. In 2022/23, 69% of collaborative students in were from IMD quintiles 1 and 2 (38% from IMD Q1).

The Free School Meals (FSM) measure also highlights that recruitment of young students from households with low income is above average for CCCU; 23% in aggregate over the last 4 years. The figures have remained relatively stable (23% were eligible in 2022-23). As the measure is focused on young entrants few collaborative students are included. Nationally, entrants eligible for FSM represent 19% of those going into full-time UG study in aggregate over the last 4 years.

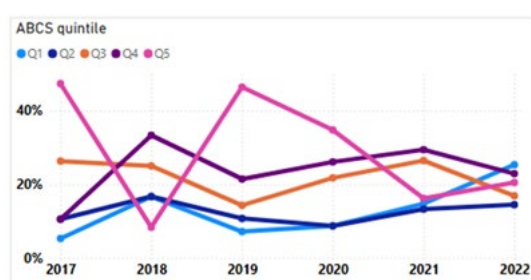
The Associations Between Characteristics of Students (ABCS) is based on a series of data models developed for different stages in the student lifecycle. The ABCS Access model only looks at young students (aged under 21 at first registration). Models for later stages include mature students.

The measures built into the ABCS model include a series of area based, household related and personal characteristics:

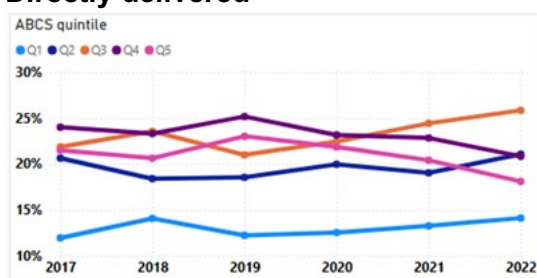
- Area based – IMD, IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index), Adult HE qual quintile, TUNDRA
- Household – parents' socio-economic category (NS-SEC), whether parents have HE qualifications, FSM eligibility and whether experienced formal social care.
- Personal - ethnicity, disability, local or distance learner, sex and gender

Whilst the measure does include a variety of characteristics, more than two thirds of them are related to socio-economic deprivation in one way or another. Figure 8 highlights that only 15% of CCCU entrants in 2022/23 were in ABCS quintile 1 (21% were in Q2). However, this was significantly above the average for English HEIs (7% in Q1 and 14% in Q2).

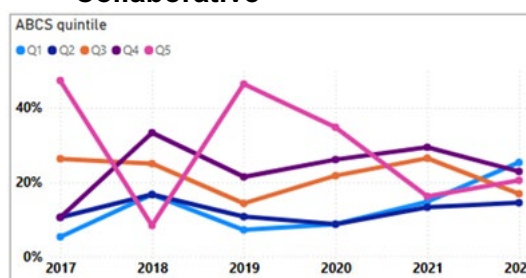
**Figure 9.** Access trends - ABCS quintiles: directly delivered and collaborative  
**All CCCU**



#### Directly delivered



#### Collaborative



#### Other modes of study

Only 3% of CCCU undergraduate entrants are part-time and of those the majority (95%) are mature students who do not feature in many of the Access measures. There are 150 students in the 4 year aggregate IMD measure; whilst not statistically significant the pattern appears to reflect that of full-time undergraduates with fewer students in both the bottom and top quartiles.

Similarly, only 2% of CCCU's entrants were apprentices, 96% of whom were mature entrants and with fewer students from the top quintile but not statistically significant differences. Some 19% had recorded disabilities in the 4-year aggregate figures.

## Intersections

Intersections between the IMD and ethnicity show that students from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds have increased as a proportion of CCCU students in the last year amongst both white and ethnic minority backgrounds. Some of this is related to partner intakes but there has also been a long decline in the proportion of entrants coming from white affluent backgrounds.

Nevertheless, intersection analysis also showed that the proportion of direct delivery white male students from more deprived socio-economic areas is relatively small (9% of new entrants) compared with white females from similar areas (19% of new entrants). If anything, the proportion of white males from IMD 1 & 2 neighbourhoods has also fallen slightly over the last four years (down from 10% in 2019/20). This will therefore be an area for CCCU outreach activities to focus on.

The influence of the new collaborative providers is also clear in the intersection between IMD and gender. The proportion of white female students from more affluent backgrounds has fallen while the proportion of students who are male and from disadvantaged backgrounds has grown significantly.

## 4.2 Continuation

The continuation measure looks at whether students are still studying one year and 15 days after their initial registration. Trends in the measure nationally show a sharp increase in continuation 2019/20 followed by a downturn in 2020/21. This pattern is also reflected in the CCCU data and corresponds to the impact of temporary changes in progression regulations during the Covid pandemic to compensate for the disruption and difficulties faced by students.

The increase in continuation during Covid appears to have applied to students quite equally across different socio-economic and personal characteristics.

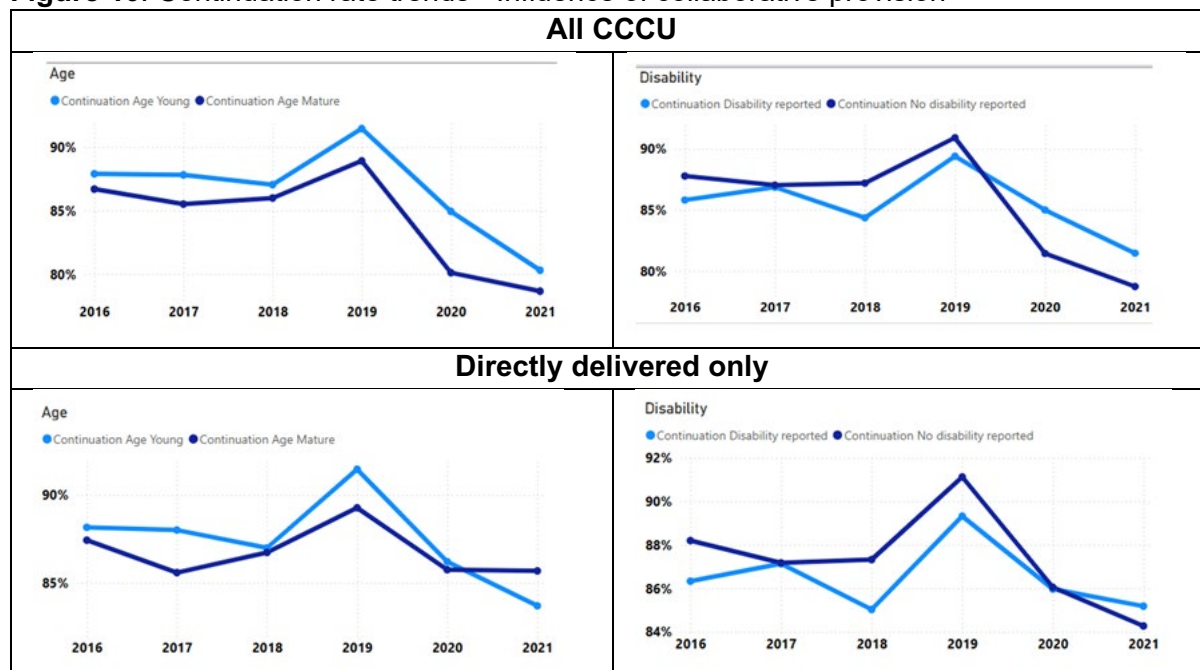
However, the fallback in continuation rates in 2020/21 went further than the national trend and seems to have affected some student groups disproportionately. Further analysis suggests that data from new partners has had a significant impact on figures for the latest year and particularly for mature students and students with no reported disabilities (Figure 10).

Collaborative provision accounts for 49% of the 4-year aggregated measure of continuation at CCCU (18% last year) but just 2% of measures focused on young students. This rises to 45% of continuation measure values in 2020/21 (6% of young students) but falls to 1% or below in all measures in previous years.

The years in this measure are the year of student entry, so students in the latest year shown (2021/22) with a positive continuation outcome were still with the university in 2022/23 the latest year in the underlying data.

Trend diagrams of continuation for collaborative provision are available but because they are based on so few students prior to 2021/22 they are subject to quite a lot of near random fluctuations.

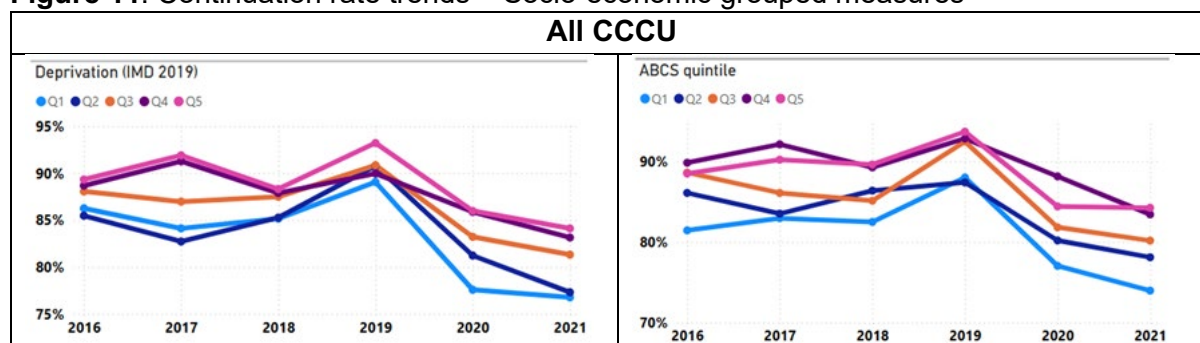
**Figure 10: Continuation rate trends - Influence of collaborative provision**



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

Figure 11 highlights that although collaborative provision in 2021/22 influences continuation rates overall, the socio-economic related continuation split measures (such as the IMD and ABCS) seem to have fallen by similar amounts in each quintile. Both measures show that the steep rate of decline evident in 2019/20 has slowed in the latest year.

**Figure 11: Continuation rate trends – Socio-economic grouped measures**



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

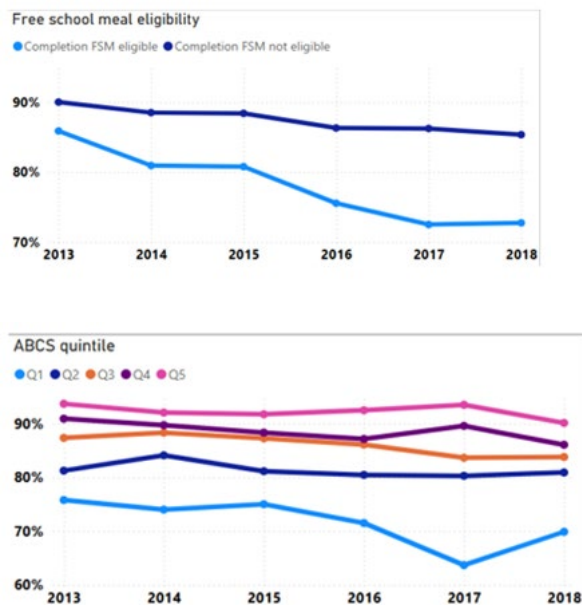
Whilst there are statistically significant differences in continuation by ethnicity, they are small and have not increased over time.

### 4.3 Completion (tracked measure)

The completion measure tracks students from first registration to completion of their qualification and do not yet include provision from our new collaborative providers. The year labelling reflects the year of first registration.

The summary in section 2 highlighted that completion rates were significantly lower for students from less affluent backgrounds. The trend charts suggest that completion rates for these students widened slightly between 2016 and 2017 but have narrowed in the latest year (Figure 12).

**Figure 12:** Completion rate trends and socio-economic measures



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

The trend in the Free School Meals eligibility measure suggests that, since 2015, completion rates for those eligible had fallen further than for other students, although the rate of decline had slowed in the latest year. The 4-year aggregated completion rate was 75.4% compared with 86.7% for those who were not eligible (83.1% nationally compared with 90.9 nationally). The data for ABCS quintiles shows less of a clear downward trend but performance for quintile 1 (those least likely to continue) declined last year but have picked up again in the latest data (from 64% to 70%).

Whilst completion rates are lower for some ethnic minority groups, there is no clear pattern in trends by ethnicity.

#### 4.4 Attainment

The attainment measure focuses on first degree courses, unlike other measures which include other undergraduate courses such as Foundation Degrees, Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education. [\[7\]](#) Apprenticeships and integrated master's degrees are included. The Attainment measure considers the proportion of students at completion who gain a first or upper second class degree. Students on full-time first degrees account for 95% of the students in the measure.



Students from ethnic minorities are significantly less likely to be awarded first and upper second degrees than white students. This is true nationally, but the awarding gap between ethnic minority and white students is large at CCCU, typically twice the size as the English HE provider average (Figure 13).

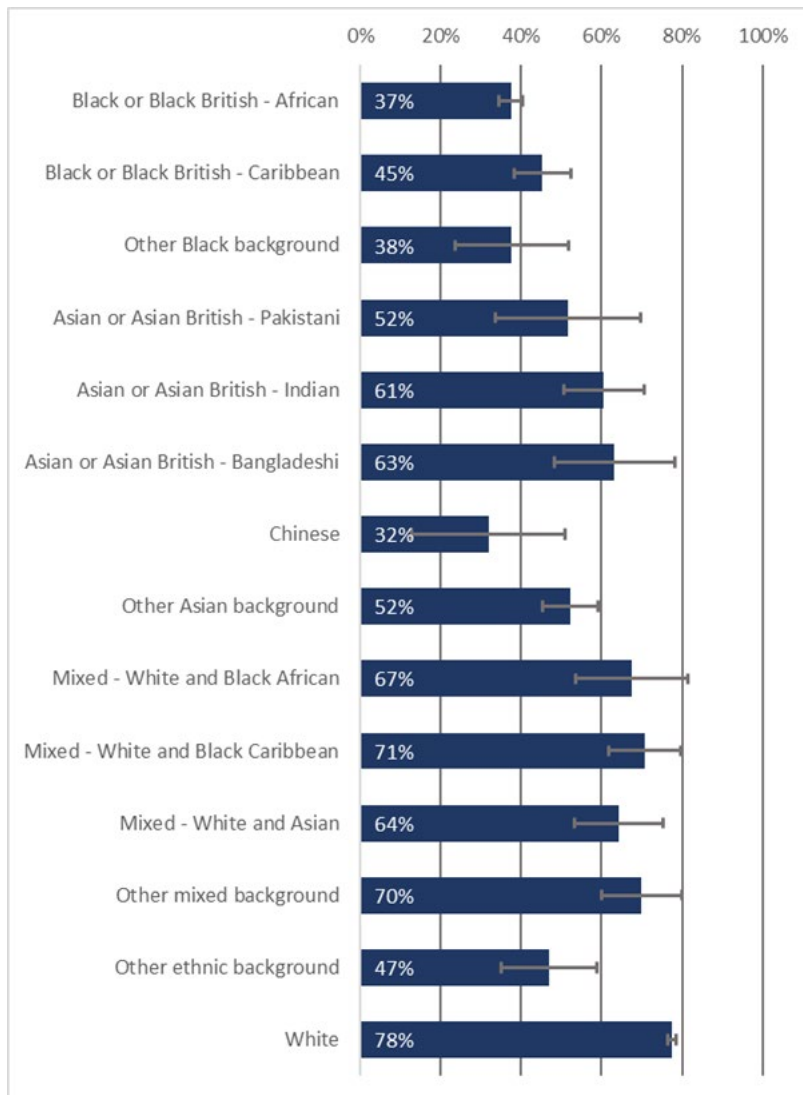
**Figure 13:** Awarding gaps by broad ethnic background – 4-year aggregated – All CCCU

	CCCU	CI 95%	Gap	Sector	Gap
Asian	57.6	+/-5.0	20.4	75.7	8.5
Black	40.7	+/-2.8	37.3	64.0	20.2
Mixed	69.3	+/-5.3	8.7	80.7	3.5
Other ethnicity	53.8	+/-10.9	24.2	73.7	10.5
White	78.0	+/-1.0	0.0	84.2	0.0

Source: OfS APP dashboard. FT UG.

Further analysis by more detailed ethnic groupings (Figure 14) confirms that awarding gaps are persistent across different categories and that differences within the broad groups (e.g. between Black students of African and Black students of Caribbean heritage) are mostly not statistically significant. The relatively high attainment gap for Chinese students compared with other Asian students is a potential exception but the figure is based on just 22 qualifying Chinese students over four years.

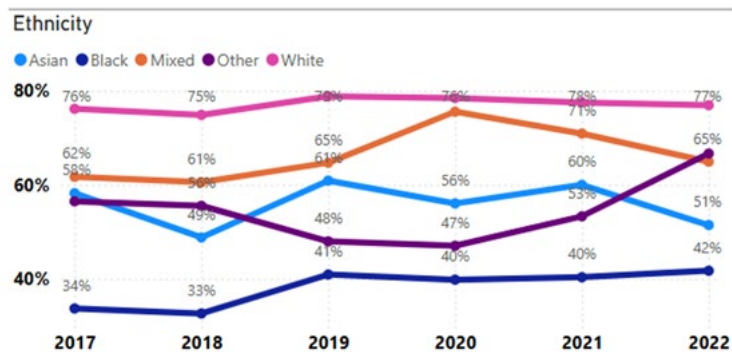
**Figure 14:** Proportion of students attaining 1<sup>st</sup> or 2i degrees by narrow ethnic group.



Source: CCCU analysis of OfS APP dataset. All CCCU FT UG. 4 year aggregated – 2018-2021 data.

Trends in the attainment measure awarding gap highlight that whilst awarding gaps for most ethnic minority students have closed slightly over the last 2-3 years, the challenge remains substantial.

**Figure 14:** Trends in 1sts and 2i degrees by broad ethnic background – All CCCU

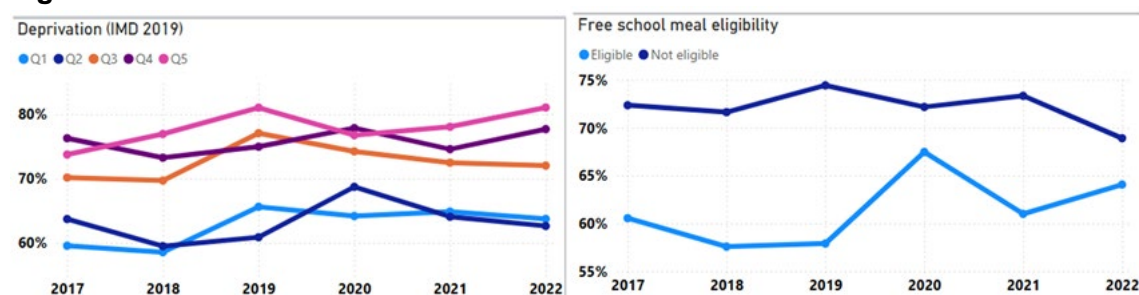


Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

Extensive data analysis undertaken at the start of the Closing our Gap project that highlighted the gaps were not a side effect of subject mix or other student or course characteristics, including socio-economic factors.

Nevertheless, the aggregated dataset highlights that socio-economic factors also influence attainment rates. Figure 15 shows that there has been no clear pattern in attainment trends by IMD quintile but there was a decrease in attainment for students eligible for free school meals in 2021/22. Whilst statistically significant it is not clear why this would be the case. It is possible that it is a statistical outlier as the trend has reversed in the latest year.

**Figure 15:** Attainment trends and socio-economic measures



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

## 4.5 Progression

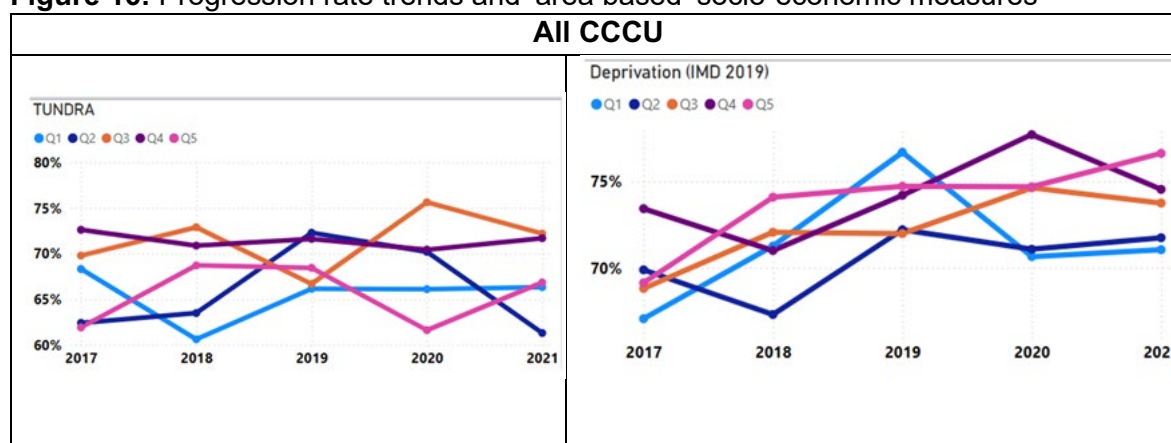
The Progression measure is from the Graduate Outcomes survey and is the proportion of students who were in graduate level occupations (SOC codes 1-3, Managers, Professionals and Associate Professionals) or further study one year and 15 months after completion of their initial studies. The data does not yet include provision from our large new collaborative providers.

There have been five Graduate Outcomes surveys published to date. The measure year labels are based on the year of completion of studies, the latest data is for students who completed in 2021/22 and were interviewed in 2023/24.

The aggregated data suggests that, unlike the other measures, ethnicity is not a statistically significant factor in progression to the labour market. This could in part reflect the subject choices of students, there is a higher proportion of black students on health courses (with high employment rates) for example.

The figures also suggest that the relationship between 'area based' socio-economic factors and progression outcomes is relatively weak, with a lot of year-on-year variation in progression outcomes by TUNDRA and IMD quintiles for example (Figure 16).

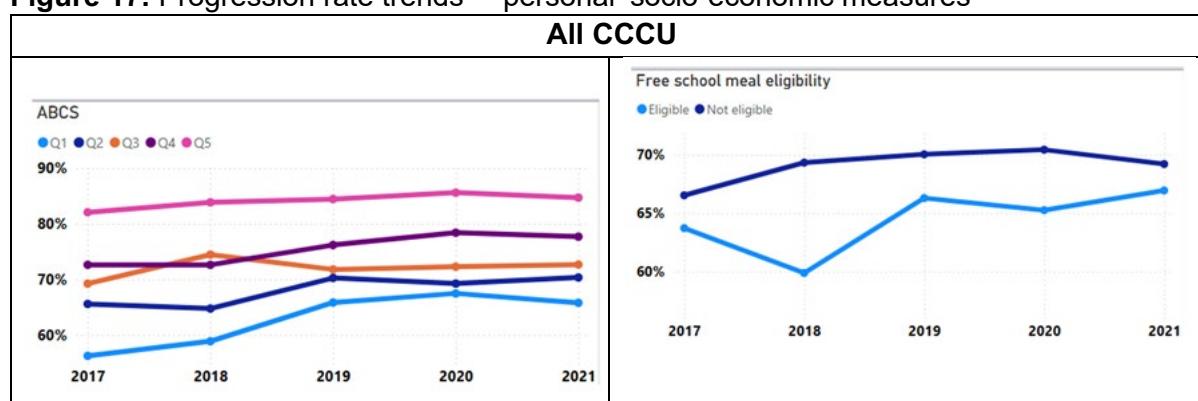
**Figure 16:** Progression rate trends and ‘area based’ socio-economic measures



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

However, when we look at socio-economic factors that are not area based, there is a clearer relationship with progression outcomes. Figure 17 shows that students eligible for Free School Meals are less likely to have positive progression outcomes and there is a clear and quite consistent relationship between progression outcomes and ABCS quintiles.

**Figure 17:** Progression rate trends – ‘personal’ socio-economic measures



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

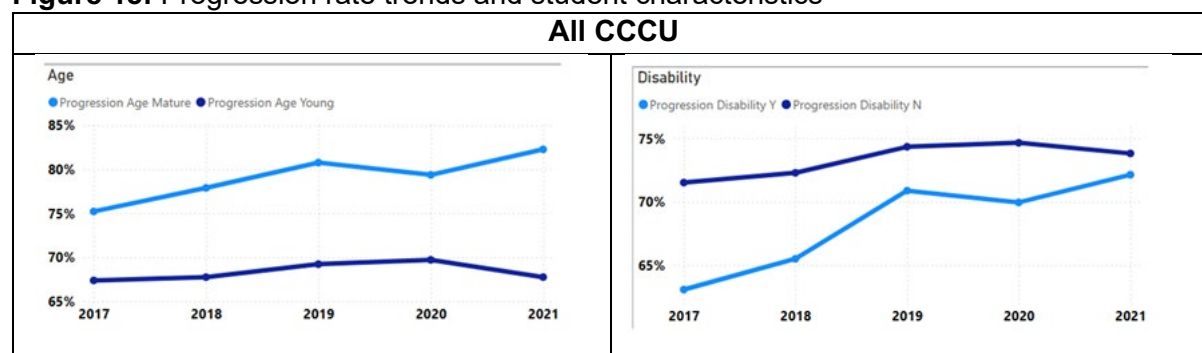
It is not immediately clear why this might be the case. However, exploration of the [national dashboard for ABCS<sup>\[8\]</sup>](#) for progression highlights that the parental background of students (parents socio-economic group and whether they went to university) play a more significant and direct role in the ABCS quintiles than they do in area based measures of deprivation.

Parental background seems to be more important for progression outcomes than other student outcome measures. One reason is the ‘social capital’ parents and family networks can provide. Where parents are graduates in managerial and professional positions themselves, this may lead to direct introductions and recommendations for placements, internships or jobs or just indirect advantages like enhanced knowledge and understanding of the opportunities in the labour market for high skilled employment.

The aggregated summary in section 2 also highlighted that progression rates are lower for young students and students with disabilities, albeit for different reasons (the former may primarily be related to experience, the latter may be more related to direct or indirect discrimination in the labour market).

Figure 18 shows that the progression rate for mature student improved more than the rate for young students in the latest survey. However, in previous analysis of the Graduate Outcomes survey, Planning and BI estimated that two thirds of the improvement in graduate level employment in 2019/20 was due to changes in subject mix. Health subjects grew as a proportion of the overall graduate population, subjects that have good progression rates and significant numbers of mature and female students.

**Figure 18:** Progression rate trends and student characteristics



Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

As CCCU offers a high number of professionally regulated courses such as teaching and nursing, we also look at progression outcomes for courses that aren't overseen by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Figure 19 shows that the overall progression rate for these non-PSRB courses is 64.6%, compared to 73% across all courses. The data highlights a 10-percentage point progression gap between Black and White students, as well as significant differences linked to social deprivation. For instance, analysis using ABCS characteristics shows a 16.5 percentage point gap in progression between students from the most deprived backgrounds (quintile 1) and those from the least deprived (quintile 5). Data shown is all CCCU, some 3,500 although only 160 of these are from collaborative providers.

**Figure 19. Progression – All CCCU, non-PSRB regulated courses**

CCCU (Direct and Collaborative)				Non-PSRB courses only			
	Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate	Progression	Denominator	Progression	Denominator		
	Overall	73.0	5,352	64.6	3,501		
Sex	Female	74.4	3,933	64.3	2,381		
	Male	69.2	1,415	65.2	1,117		
Age	Mature (21 or over)	80.1	2,051	69.4	1,069		
	Young (<21)	68.6	3,301	62.5	2,432		
Ethnicity	Asian	68.6	243	56.1	138		
	Black	72.4	722	56.2	393		
	Mixed	71.2	153	69.5	117		
	Other ethnicity	70.1	42	61.6	32		
	White	73.5	4,145	66.1	2,786		
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	69.7	1,031	62.9	723		
	Reported disabilities (none)	73.8	4,321	65.0	2,778		
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	71.7	414	63.8	265		
	Mental health condition	68.3	252	63.5	194		
	Multiple impairments	70.1	156	63.5	107		
	No disability reported	73.8	4,321	65.0	2,778		
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	71.8	137	66.1	97		
	Social or communication impairment	57.9	72	51.2	60		
FSM	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	64.4	477	61.2	378		
	FSM - not eligible	69.8	2,586	62.8	1,867		
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	71.4	726	57.7	409		
	White, IMD Q1&2	71.5	1,334	63.9	903		
	Female IMD Q1&2	71.9	1,553	60.9	927		
	Male IMD Q1&2	69.9	522	63.9	396		
	White, male, IMD Q1&2						
	White, female, IMD Q1&2						
	Ethnic minority, male, IMD Q1&2						
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	65.5	184	57.7	132		
	White, POLAR Q1&2	68.2	1,092	61.9	792		
	Female POLAR Q1&2	69.5	911	61.4	616		
	Male POLAR Q1&2	64.0	369	61.2	310		
Gaps	TUNDRA - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	1.7	580	484	1.9	433	375
	POLAR4 - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	5.6	591	478	6.4	441	352
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	2.6	887	931	3.7	561	634
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	19.9	816	877	16.5	596	362
Commuter	Commuter	74.6	2,697	65.9	1,693		
	Non-commuter	71.2	2,605	63.4	1,789		
Care Leaver	Care Leaver (16+)	57.1	7	50.0	6		
	Non care leaver	72.9	4,472	64.9	2,960		
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	73.4	4,744	64.8	3,059		
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	69.1	283	62.3	204		
	Not heterosexual or LGB	67.8	74	63.0	59		

Source: OfS APP dataset, CCCU Model. FT UG.

## 5.0 Other categories in the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register

The APP guidance notes a long list of other student characteristics to investigate to support the development of the Access and Participation Plan. Planning and BI are undertaking further work in this area to identify some of these groups in the student records and where there are sufficient numbers to track them in the APP dataset to consider related patterns and trends in the five measures.



The OfS note that where local data is not available or there are not sufficient numbers for statistically robust analysis it may be safest to assume that the issues highlighted in the national EORR apply (see Annex 2), albeit the issues may only apply to a limited number of students and require proportional responses and investment.

## Annex 1: Overview Performance for All Providers

**Figure A1:** Summary for All English HE Providers – FT UG

Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate		Access	Continuation	Completion	Attainment	Progression
Sex	Overall	100	89.3	87.5	80.5	72.4
	Female	56.9	90.7	89.8	81.7	71.7
	Male	43.1	87.4	84.6	78.7	73.5
Age	Mature (21 or over)	28.5	82.8	80.0	72.5	72.2
	Young (<21)	71.5	91.8	90.0	82.5	72.5
Ethnicity	Asian	15.4	89.6	87.3	75.7	70.0
	Black	10.6	84.8	81.1	64.0	69.4
	Mixed	5.5	88.3	85.7	80.7	73.3
	Other ethnicity	2.8	86.4	84.3	73.7	69.9
	White	65.6	90.2	88.7	84.2	73.2
Disability	Reported disabilities (any)	17.4	88.8	85.7	80.3	71.0
	Reported disabilities (none)	82.6	89.4	87.8	80.5	72.8
	Cognitive or learning difficulties	5.7	91.0	88.5	79.5	73.9
	Mental health condition	4.9	86.7	82.5	81.6	68.8
	Multiple impairments	3.3	88.7	85.0	80.5	70.9
	No disability reported	82.7	89.4	87.8	80.5	72.8
	Sensory, medical or physical impairment	2.3	88.6	85.5	80.5	71.4
	Social or communication impairment	1.1	87.6	83.4	77.1	60.9
FSM	FSM - Free School Meals eligible	18.8	87.3	83.1	72.2	65.8
	FSM - not eligible	81.2	92.5	90.9	83.5	72.3
Intersections	Ethnic minority, IMD Q1&2	22.1	85.9	82.6	69.0	67.0
	White, IMD Q1&2	21.5	86.2	83.7	78.2	68.6
	Female IMD Q1&2	25.2	88.0	86.3	74.2	67.5
	Male IMD Q1&2	18.5	83.0	78.6	71.4	68.5
	Ethnic minority, POLAR Q1&2	8.7	90.9	87.9	72.8	69.7
	White, POLAR Q1&2	19.5	89.5	87.0	80.9	68.8
	Female POLAR Q1&2	16.5	91.0	89.7	79.9	68.1
	Male POLAR Q1&2	11.7	88.3	83.9	76.1	70.4
Gaps	TUNDRA - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	18.0	3.5	5.0	6.1	6.3
	POLAR4 - Low participation areas (Q1 vs Q5)	17.7	4.8	6.9	9.9	8.4
	IMD - Socio-economic deprivation (Q1 vs Q5)	-2.8	8.5	10.7	17.0	10.2
	ABCS - Characteristics of students (Q1 vs Q5)	27.2	14.1	23.2	NA	19.9

Note: Significance here based on <3ppt vs headline, dark blue and >=2.5 < 3 vs headline, light blue

## Annex 2: Equality of Opportunity Risk Register

**Figure A2:** Risks to access, participation and success by student characteristic

	Access					On Course							Progr
	Knowledge and skills	Information & guidance	Perception of HE	Application success rates	Ltd choice of course / delivery mode	Insufficient academic support	Insufficient personal support	Mental health	Ongoing impacts of coronavirus	Cost pressures	Capacity issues	Progression from HE	
Student characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Eligible for FSM													
No parental experience of HE													
Care experienced													
Children in need													
Estranged													
Mature													
Disabled													
Special educational needs													
Reporting a mental health condition													
Male													
Female													
Studied non-typical KS5 (e.g. BTECs)													
Vocational Learners													
Changed gender identity since birth													
Reporting as LGB sexual orientation													
Reporting 'other' as sexual orientation													
Black - any other background													
Black or black British - Other													
White-British													
Mixed ethnicity													
Black													
White													
Black of black British - Caribbean													
Mixed white and black Caribbean													
Mixed white and black African													
Mixed or Other ethnicity													
Black British-Caribbean													
Asian or Asian British - Other													
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi													
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani													
Black or Black British - African													
Gypsy, Traveller, or Roma ethnic groups, or the													
Reporting a religion or belief as Spiritual													
Reporting a religion or belief as Muslim													
Reporting a religion or belief as Christian													
Reporting a religion or belief as Sikh													
Reporting a religion or belief as Buddhist													
SEC long term unemployed													
SEC Routine or semi-routine occs													
SEC Lower supervisory and technical occs													
SEC small employers and own account workers													
SEC intermediate occs													

### P3. EORR Supplementary Analysis

CCCU (Direct and Collaborative)						
Sexual Orientation	Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate	Access	Continuation	Completion	Attainment	Progression
	Heterosexual	85.4	82.5	83.7	71.4	73.4
	Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	6.3	84.4	82.7	73.7	69.1
	Not heterosexual or LGB	8.3	77.5	70.7	61.4	67.8

**Sexual orientation** does not appear to be a statistically significant influence on the APP experience and outcomes indicators.

Commuter status	Full-time UG students - 4 yr aggregate	Access	Continuation	Completion	Attainment	Progression
	Commuter	84.8	80.6	81.7	71.7	74.6
	Non-commuter	15.2	88.4	85.8	71.6	71.2

**Commuting** (students remaining at home when they study at CCCU) has a small but statistically significant effect on continuation, completion, and progression. Commuting students are slightly less likely to continue and complete. This could be the classic reasons in the literature (less socially engaged, harder to balance studying with other commitments etc).

However commuting students are more likely to progress into the labour market. This appears to be a subject mix effect – progression rates for commuters and non-commuting students within each of the three faculties are almost identical. Students on medicine, health and social care subjects have the highest progression rates.

<sup>[1]</sup> The 'Other undergraduate' category, which includes those on Certificates and Diplomas, is excluded from the Attainment measure.

<sup>[2]</sup> The sector figures on the APP dashboard are for all English HE providers, including colleges and specialist providers.

<sup>[3]</sup> Previous analysis of the TEF dataset revealed, for example, that the three health related CAH2 subjects accounted for 27% of students at CCCU but 33% of female students, 44% of black and 44% of Asian students and 49% of mature students.

<sup>[4]</sup> Mature (21 and over) progression 72.2% versus Young (under 21) 72.5% (Full-time, All undergraduates)

<sup>[5]</sup> In the Access measure, this includes splits by TUNDRA, ABCS and FSM

<sup>[6]</sup> **TUNDRA** is an area-based measure like POLAR Low Participation Neighbourhoods. However, it is based on tracking data rather than surveys and looks at the proportion of state school pupils in England by area that go into Higher Education. It tracks students to see if there is a geographical pattern (by home postcode) to progression to HE.

<sup>[7]</sup> Apprenticeships and integrated degrees are included

<sup>[8]</sup> <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/associations-between-characteristics-of-students/progressing-from-full-time-higher-education/>

## Annex B: Intersecting Intervention matrix

The following table provides an overview of cross-interventions and the intersection of Indications of Risks where we recognise the impact of the activity on other key risks and measured outcomes.

	IS1. Knowledge, Skills and Attainment pre-HE	IS2. HE Information, Advice and Guidance	IS3. Cost Pressures	IS4. Mental Health	IS5. Sense of Belonging	IS6. Systemic Bias	IS7. Accessibility	IS8. Progression Support Mechanisms
Change Makers	✓							
KS3 Outreach	✓	✓						
Inspiring Minds	✓							
Virtual Med-Soc	✓							
White male IMDQ1 outreach		✓			✓			
Spring School		✓						
Opening Doors		✓						
CPD for Care Leaver professionals		✓						
CLPP and NNECL membership		✓						
Additional care-experienced outreach		✓			✓			
Disability disclosure campaign		✓						
Guidance for commercial partnership staff		✓						
Partner School award			✓	✓	✓			
Care Leaver bursary			✓	✓	✓			
CCCU Grant			✓	✓				
Access to Learning Fund			✓	✓				
Disability Support			✓	✓	✓			
Career Development Fund			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cost of Living Support			✓	✓	✓			
ABC to PHD Scholarships			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Education for mental health				✓				
Enhanced transition, orientation and induction				✓	✓			
Embedded student support				✓				
Enhanced mental health and wellbeing provision				✓	✓			
Strengthened engagement support				✓				
Strengthened student data				✓				
Peer support and student partnership					✓			
Thrive: The Black Leadership Programme					✓	✓	✓	✓

Closing our Gap Student Success Funding Scheme					✓	✓		
Community of Practice Leadership Programme					✓	✓		
Assessment adjustments					✓	✓		
Inclusive Practice and Allyship CPD						✓		
Student Curriculum Partners and Student Experience Partners						✓		
Decolonising the Curriculum Health Check					✓	✓		
Enhancing Provisions for Assistive Technology							✓	
Enhancing the digital capabilities of staff through CPD							✓	
Learning Support Plans & Placement Support Plans							✓	
Work Experience							✓	✓
ICE Module							✓	✓
Increase diversity of mental health provision							✓	
Future 360 (employability framework)							✓	✓
Career readiness self-assessment								✓
GradForce								✓
The student enterprise programme							✓	✓
Alumni Futures Mentoring Programme								✓