Futureworks Training Ltd.

Access & Participation Plan: 2020-21 to 2024-25

1. Assessment of performance

All data are from OfS data dashboard.
N = No data available; DP = Data suppressed under Data Protection.

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access

Futureworks has consistently enrolled a larger proportion of students from areas with low participation in Higher Education than the sector as a whole. Although the Futureworks 2017/18 E-IMD Q1 data is higher than Q5, we had a 4.8 percentage point gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5.

New enrolments by POLAR4 quintile (actual numbers, rounded)				
Quintile	**Comparison**	**2015/2016**	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
1	Futureworks	23.2% (35)	16.5% (20)	16.0% (20)
1	Sector	11.7%	11.8%	12.0%
2	Futureworks	18.3% (25)	16.5% (20)	24.8% (30)
2	Sector	15.7%	15.7%	15.7%
3	Futureworks	22.5% (30)	23.3% (30)	24.0% (30)
3	Sector	19.1%	19.1%	19.0%
4	Futureworks	15.5% (20)	20.3% (25)	14.4% (20)
4	Sector	23.1%	23.0%	23.0%
5	Futureworks	20.4% (30)	23.3% (30)	20.8% (25)
5	Sector	30.4%	30.4%	30.3%

New enrolments by English IMD quintile (actual numbers, rounded)				
Quintile	**Comparison**	**2015/2016**	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
1	Futureworks	25.4% (50)	18.1% (35)	23.2% (40)
1	Sector	20.9%	21.2%	21.6%
2	Futureworks	21.2% (40)	25.8% (45)	22.6% (40)
2	Sector	19.7%	19.9%	20.0%
3	Futureworks	18.1% (35)	20.9% (40)	19.0% (30)
3	Sector	18.6%	18.4%	18.5%
4	Futureworks	20.7% (40)	15.4% (30)	19.0% (30)
4	Sector	19.2%	19.0%	18.9%
5	Futureworks	14.5% (30)	19.8% (35)	16.1% (25)
5	Sector	21.7%	21.5%	21.0%

Success (Continuation)

Although the results are not statistically significant, there is an 9.9 percentage point gap between the continuation rates of POLAR 4 Q1 and Q4 students in the most recent year, and a 21.7 percentage point gap between E-IMD Q1 and Q5 students. We will explore the reasons underlying the lower performance of the Q1 students so that we can better understand how to provide more effective support.

Students continuing by POLAR4 quintile (actual numbers, rounded)			
Quintile	Comparison	2015/2016	2016/2017
1	Futureworks	75.8% (25)	86.4% (20)
1	Sector	90.1%	90.0%
2	Futureworks	92.3% (25)	86.4% (20)
2	Sector	91.4%	91.7%
3	Futureworks	84.4% (25)	90.3% (30)
3	Sector	92.0%	92.1%
4	Futureworks	81.8% (20)	96.3% (25)
4	Sector	92.5%	92.6%
5	Futureworks	89.7% (25)	93.5% (30)
5	Sector	94.3%	94.3%

Students continuing by English IMD quintile (actual numbers, rounded)			
Quintile	Comparison	2015/2016	2016/2017
1	Futureworks	83.7% (40)	72.7% (25)
1	Sector	87.2%	87.0%
2	Futureworks	85.4% (35)	95.7% (45)
2	Sector	89.1%	89.1%
3	Futureworks	94.3% (35)	81.6% (30)
3	Sector	91.4%	91.3%
4	Futureworks	85.0% (35)	100.0% (30)
4	Sector	93.0%	92.7%
5	Futureworks	85.7% (25)	94.4% (35)
5	Sector	94.1%	94.2%

Success (Attainment)

Data by POLAR4 and E-IMD quintile for attainment is limited to academic year 2017/18. There is a 10.9 percentage point gap in attainment between highest performing and lowest performing E-IMD quintiles.

Students achieving good honours by POLAR4 quintile (rounded)		
Quintile	Comparison	2017/2018
1	Futureworks	N
1	Sector	73.8%
2	Futureworks	76.9% (10)
2	Sector	76.8%
3	Futureworks	70.8% (15)
3	Sector	78.2%
4	Futureworks	85.7% (10)
4	Sector	79.0%
5	Futureworks	83.3% (15)
5	Sector	83.2%

Students achieving good honours by English IMD quintile (rounded)		
Quintile	Comparison	2017/2018
1	Futureworks	73.1% (20)
1	Sector	66.3%
2	Futureworks	57.1% (10)
2	Sector	72.7%

3	Futureworks	84.0% (20)
3	Sector	78.1%
4	Futureworks	75.0% (15)
4	Sector	81.7%
5	Futureworks	77.8% (15)
5	Sector	84.4%

Progression

The data supplied in the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey were limited to just five students between quintiles 1 and 2. We are developing an alumni tracking system, which, along with the upcoming Graduate Outcomes Survey, should increase the volume of data available. This is an area we will monitor over the lifetime of this Plan.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access

In 2017/18 there were 25 new enrolments who identified themselves as Asian, Black, Minority Ethnic or Other ethnicity (ABMO), compared with 145 new enrolments who identified themselves as White. The percentage of ABMO students in each new intake for the last three years is lower than the sector average – a difference in academic year 2017/18 of 16.4 percentage points.

New enrolments by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
Futureworks (ABMO)	17.3% (35)	9.6% (20)	14.7% (25)
Sector (ABMO)	29.5%	30.4%	31.1%
Futureworks (White)	82.7% (160)	90.4% (170)	85.3% (145)
Sector (White)	70.5%	69.6%	68.9%

Due to the low numbers, meaningful analysis of the disaggregated data is not possible.

New enrolments by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
Futureworks (Asian)	4.1% (10)	DP	DP
Sector (Asian)	12.9%	13.3%	13.7%
Futureworks (Black)	5.1% (10)	DP	DP
Sector (Black)	10.2%	10.4%	10.5%
Futureworks (Mixed)	7.7% (15)	4.3% (10)	7.1% (10)
Sector (Mixed)	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%
Futureworks (Other)	DP	DP	DP
Sector (Other)	1.8%	1.9%	2.2%
Futureworks (White)	82.7% (160)	90.4% (170)	85.3% (145)
Sector (White)	70.5%	69.6%	68.9%

Success (Continuation)

The number of ABMO students is small, and the differences in continuation rates for ABMO students compared with White students are not statistically significant. Nonetheless, there is a 12.8 percentage point gap in continuation between ABMO students and White students at Futureworks for 2017/18.

Students continuing to the second year by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)		
	2015/2016	2016/2017
Futureworks (ABMO)	91.2% (30)	77.8% (15)
Sector (ABMO)	89.2%	89.0%
Futureworks (White)	85.8% (140)	90.6% (155)
Sector (White)	91.9%	91.9%

Due to the low numbers, meaningful analysis of the disaggregated data is not possible.

Students continuing to the second year by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)		
	2015/2016	2016/2017
Futureworks (Asian)	N	N
Sector (Asian)	91.3%	90.9%
Futureworks (Black)	N	N
Sector (Black)	86.4%	86.2%
Futureworks (Mixed)	93.3% (15)	N
Sector (Mixed)	89.8%	89.6%
Futureworks (Other)	N	N
Sector (Other)	88.6%	89.2%
Futureworks (White)	85.8% (140)	90.6% (155)
Sector (White)	91.9%	91.9%

Success (Attainment)
The data for 2017/18 shows a negative gap in attainment rates of White students compared with ABMO students. Again, the differences are not statistically significant.

Students achieving good honours by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Futureworks (ABMO)	N	N	85.7% (10)
Sector (ABMO)	63.6%	65.9%	67.6%
Futureworks (White)	59.7%(45)	68.8% (10)	72.7% (70)
Sector (White)	79.2%	80.3%	81.3%

Due to the low numbers, meaningful analysis of the disaggregated data is not possible.

Students achieving good honours by ethnicity (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Futureworks (Asian)	N	N	N
Sector (Asian)	66.4%	61.9%	70.5%
Futureworks (Black)	N	N	N
Sector (Black)	54.6%	56.6%	58.1%
Futureworks (Mixed)	N	N	N
Sector (Mixed)	72.6%	74.4%	77.1%
Futureworks (Other)	N	N	N
Sector (Other)	65.1%	66.9%	67.3%
Futureworks (White)	59.7%(45)	68.8% (10)	72.7% (70)
Sector (White)	79.2%	80.3%	81.3%

Progression to employment or further study

We have extremely limited progression data for BAME graduates, in part due to the very small numbers of BAME students at Futureworks, and also because of the low response rate to the DLHE survey. We are developing an alumni tracking system, which, along with the upcoming Graduate Outcomes Survey, should increase the volume of data available. This is an area we will monitor over the lifetime of this Plan.

For 2015/16 the sample size of the BAME graduates was only 12, from a total number of all graduates of 81; for 2016/17 the number of BAME graduates in the survey was only 5. In January 2018 only 50% of 2016/17 BAME graduates were in employment of any kind, compared with 81% of White students in employment of any kind – a 31 percentage point gap. Despite the small sample sizes, we are confident that these results present a true picture of the situation – a wide disparity in the progression rates of BAME and White graduates.

1.3 Mature students

Access

The data show that the access rates for mature students is comparable with the sector, and we have no expectation that this will change over the lifetime of this Plan.

New enrolments by age (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Futureworks (Mature)	28.3% (55)	29.3% (55)	28.2% (50)
Sector (Mature)	26.9%	27.4%	27.8%
Futureworks (Young)	71.7% (140)	70.7% (135)	71.8% (125)
Sector (Young)	73.1%	72.6%	72.2%

Success (Continuation)

The data show that the continuation rate of mature students has generally been lower than for young students, with a difference of 5.5 percentage points in 2016/17.

Students continuing to the second year by age (actual numbers, rounded)		
	2015/2016	2016/2017
Futureworks (Mature)	92.9% (50)	85.5% (45)
Sector (Mature)	86.0%	85.5%
Futureworks (Young)	84.5% (120)	91.0% (120)
Sector (Young)	92.5%	92.6%

Success (Attainment)

The attainment of our mature students has shown an upward trend but is lower than the attainment of our young students, the gap for 2017/18 being 1.8 percentage points. This is an area we will monitor over the lifetime of this Plan.

Students achieving good honours by age (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Futureworks (Mature)	57.9% (10)	N	73.5% (25)
Sector (Mature)	67.5%	68.5%	69.8%
Futureworks (Young)	60.7% (35)	N	75.3% (60)
Sector (Young)	76.9%	78.5%	79.3%

Progression to employment or further study

The data on progression for mature students is limited, due to the low completion rates for the DLHE survey. As noted above, we are developing an alumni tracking system, which, along with the upcoming Graduate Outcomes Survey, should increase the volume of data available. This is an area we will monitor over the lifetime of this Plan.

1.4 Disabled students

Access

The proportion of our students who have declared a disability, specific learning difficulty and/or mental health condition is above the sector average. However, because of low numbers the differences are not statistically significant.

New enrolments declaring a disability (actual numbers, rounded)			
	2015/2016	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
Futureworks (Disabled)	18.2% (35)	16.5% (30)	19.0% (35)
Sector (Disabled)	12.9%	13.7%	14.6%
Futureworks (Non-disabled)	81.8% (160)	83.5% (155)	81.0% (140)
Sector (Non-disabled)	87.1%	86.3%	85.4%

Disaggregating the data results in such small numbers that no valid analysis is possible.

New enrolments declaring a disability: disaggregated (actual numbers, rounded)				
Disability Type	**Comparison**	**2015/2016**	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**
Cognitive And Learning	Futureworks	10.6% (20)	9.0% (15)	8.6% (15)
Cognitive And Learning	Sector	5.9%	5.7%	5.5%
Mental Health	Futureworks	DP	DP	DP
Mental Health	Sector	2.3%	2.9%	3.5%
Multiple Impairments	Futureworks	DP	DP	DP
Multiple Impairments	Sector	1.9%	2.1%	2.3%
Sensory Medical and Physical	Futureworks	DP	DP	DP
Sensory Medical and Physical	Sector	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%
Social and Communication	Futureworks	DP	DP	DP
Social and Communication	Sector	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%

Success (Continuation)

The percentage of disabled students continuing to the second year is in line with that of non-disabled students, with a negative gap in 2017/18.

Students continuing to the second year by disability status (actual numbers)		
	2015/2016	**2016/2017**
Futureworks (Disabled)	88.9% (30)	90.3% (30)
Sector (Disabled)	90.2%	90.3%
Futureworks (Non-disabled)	86.4% (140)	89.2% (140)
Sector (Non-disabled)	91.2%	91.1%

Disaggregating the data results in such small numbers that no valid analysis is possible.

Students continuing to the second year by disability type (disaggregated)			
Disability Type	Comparison	2015/2016	2016/2017
Cognitive And Learning	Futureworks	90.5% (20)	88.2% (15)
Cognitive And Learning	Sector	92.0%	92.4%
Mental Health	Futureworks	N	N
Mental Health	Sector	87.3%	87.7%
Multiple Impairments	Futureworks	N	N
Multiple Impairments	Sector	88.7%	89.4%
Sensory Medical and Physical	Futureworks	N	N
Sensory Medical and Physical	Sector	90.0%	89.9%
Social and Communication	Futureworks	N	N
Social and Communication	Sector	90.4%	88.9%

Success (Attainment)

The percentage of Futureworks students declaring a disability who obtain a good honours degree is higher than for other Futureworks students, though the small numbers mean that the differences are not significant. This is an area we will monitor over the lifetime of this Plan.

Students achieving good honours (actual numbers)			
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Futureworks (Disabled)	64.7% (10)	N	83.3% (20)
Sector (Disabled)	72.7%	74.0%	75.2%
Futureworks (Non-disabled)	58.7% (35)	62.5% (10)	72.5% (65)
Sector (Non-disabled)	75.4%	76.8%	77.8%

Disaggregating the data results in such small numbers that no valid analysis is possible.

Students achieving good honours by disability type: disaggregated (actual numbers, rounded)				
Disability Type	Comparison	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Cognitive And Learning	Futureworks	N	N	80.0% (10)
Cognitive And Learning	Sector	71.7%	73.0%	74.7%
Mental Health	Futureworks	N	N	N
Mental Health	Sector	76.2%	77.0%	76.8%
Multiple Impairments	Futureworks	N	N	N
Multiple Impairments	Sector	72.8%	74.5%	74.6%
Sensory Medical and Physical	Futureworks	N	N	N
Sensory Medical and Physical	Sector	74.1%	74.2%	76.3%
Social and Communication	Futureworks	N	N	N
Social and Communication	Sector	66.0%	69.3%	70.8%

Progression to employment or further study

We have limited progression data for graduates who have declared a disability, in part due to the low response rate to the DLHE survey. In January 2018 only 50% of 2016/17 graduates who declared a disability were in employment of any kind, compared with 65% of students with no declared disability – a 15 percentage point gap. We anticipate higher response rates with the introduction of the Graduate Outcomes survey and the development of our own improved alumni tracking processes, as noted above.

1.5 Care leavers

Futureworks has not actively sought to recruit care leavers and has historically had an extremely low care leaver intake each year (one new entrant in 2018/19). These low numbers prohibit meaningful analysis of Access, Success and Progression data. Nevertheless, we have decided to identify this group as a priority, and by the end of a 5-year period we aim to recruit 10 care leavers per annum – see Aims and Objectives, below.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

We have explored intersections of disadvantage, but the relatively small size of the student body means that the numbers in the various intersection groups are extremely low, and meaningful analysis is not possible (see Appendix 3 for detailed data). We have explored data related to Access for:
- Ethnicity and Gender
- POLAR4 Quintile and Ethnicity
- POLAR4 Quintile and Gender
- Gender and Disability

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

Carers
The number of our students who are carers has increased in recent years, but currently we have very few enrolled. We have become increasingly aware of their needs, and we have conducted interviews with them to better understand what support we can provide. The small numbers prevent meaningful analysis.

People estranged from their families, People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, Refugees, Children from military families
We have over time enrolled very small numbers of students from these groups; however, we have no data available. All students will be asked to declare if they belong to one or more of these groups as part of their enrolment from 2019/20 onwards, to enable us to monitor their performance and inform future support measures.

1.8 Peer comparison

We have undertaken an analysis of Futureworks' performance compared with peer institutions for 2017/18 (see Appendix 4). Because of the widely differing characteristics of small, specialist providers, and the distinctive course portfolios offered by each of the institutions, any comparisons must be treated with caution. The comparisons indicate that our performance is broadly in line with these institutions, and in some cases, we outperform them.

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

We aim to enable individuals to realise their potential, whatever their background. Based on the analysis of our present performance measures relating to Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression, we are prioritising the following groups where the data suggests that Futureworks is underperforming in certain aspects:

- Students from areas of low higher education participation.
- BAME students.
- Students who have declared a disability and/or a specific learning difficulty and/or who are on the autistic spectrum.

- Mature students.
- Care leavers (Although the data are insufficient to draw any conclusions, we have decided to identify this group as a priority – see Aims and Objectives, below).

2.2 Aims and objectives

We are committed to pursuing the following overarching strategic aims:

- Playing our part in shifting the employment profile of the creative and media industries to fairly reflect all groups in society, actively shaping the future character of the sectors by producing and supporting graduates who reflect the diverse nature of our society.
- As an HE provider in a major regional creative and media hub, we will work with the community to promote the engagement of underrepresented groups within the industries we serve and broadening the perspectives of the industry and of the groups who are currently underrepresented.
- Changing the profile of our student body so that it represents the socio-economic and cultural profile of our society and ensuring that our students, whatever their background and profile, experience the same continuation, attainment and progression rates.
- Working with local, regional and national organisations in the development of measures, systems and activities to improve progression rates, with the objective of shifting the present unbalanced profile of creative and media professionals.
- Within Futureworks, nurturing a culture which embeds the philosophy, values and concepts which underpin these goals.

Objectives/Targets

Our targets have been influenced by a number of considerations:

- The need to address gaps in performance between Futureworks and the Higher Education sector.
- The need to address gaps in Futureworks performance between individuals from underrepresented groups and other individuals.
- Where Futureworks data is insufficient to provide significant results, we have considered the overall sector situation, being conscious of gaps which exists in the sector. We do not regard non-significant results as indicating that we should not be concerned about the performance of students in the groups concerned. We are not complacent, and therefore in some instances we have set targets even where the differences are not statistically significant. We will carefully monitor the data and the support we provide to the students concerned.
- In addressing the wider set of student groups where national data indicates there are equality gaps/support needs, we have chosen to target Care Leavers.
- The small numbers of students at Futureworks means that we have been unable to set meaningful objectives and targets based on disaggregated data or intersections of characteristics.

Access Targets:

A1. Close the gap in access between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 from 4.8pp to 0pp (currently 20.8% vs 16%) over a 5-year period.

A2. Close the gap in access between BAME/ABMO students and the sector from 16.4pp to 0pp (currently 14.7% vs 31.1%) over a 5-year period.

A3. Increase the number of care leavers enrolling at Futureworks from 1 per year to 10 per year over a 5-year period.

Success (Continuation) Targets:

SC1. Close the gap in continuation between POLAR4 Q1 and the highest performing quintile(s) from 9.9pp to 0pp (currently 86.4% vs 96.3%) over a 5-year period.

SC2. Close the gap in continuation between Mature & Young students from 5.5pp to 0pp (currently 85.5% vs 91.0%) over a 3-year period.

SC3. Close the gap in continuation between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 from 21.7pp to 0pp (currently 72.7% vs 94.4%) over a 5-year period.

SC4. Close the gap in continuation between BAME/ABMO students and White students from 12.8pp to 0pp (currently 77.8% vs 90.6%) over a 5-year period.

Success (Attainment) Targets:

SA1. Close the gap in attainment between IMD Q1 and the highest performing quintile(s) from 10.9pp to 0pp (currently 73.1% vs 84.0%) over a 5-year period.

Progression Targets:

P1. Close the gap in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between Disabled & non-disabled graduates from 15pp to 10pp (currently 50% vs 65%) over a 5-year period.

P2. Close the gap in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between BAME/ABMO and White graduates from 31pp to 16pp (currently 81% vs 50%) over a 5-year period.

It is our aim to close these progression gaps entirely over a 10-year period.

Monitoring, analysis and evaluation

While working towards the above targets, we will expand and enhance our data collection and analysis systems so that we can more effectively identify data relating to underrepresented groups, resulting in more meaningful monitoring, analysis and evaluation. We have already taken the first steps, with the appointment of a Data and Compliance Manager, who has responsibility for designing and implementing the new systems. Over the period of this Plan we will also undertake research projects with potential applicants, applicants, students and alumni to enhance our understanding of the challenges facing individuals from underrepresented groups.

3. Strategic measures

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview of strategy

Our strategy is based on an overarching Theory of Change, which is set out in the Outcomes Chain Diagram below and is described in a Narrative Theory of Change in Appendix 2. A referenced evidence base is presented in Appendix 5.

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Staff time Materials costs Expenses including travel and venue hire Marketing/advertising costs Staff and student development activities Student time Alumni time External consultancy Contributions from national, regional and local organisations Contributions from schools, colleges and community groups	Organisation structure and culture changes	• A programme of staff and student development to ensure that the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of the Access & Participation Plan are understood and fully embedded throughout the organisation. • Clear responsibilities defined throughout the organisation for achieving access and participation aims and goals, revising organisational structures and responsibilities where appropriate. • All policies, strategies, systems and procedures reviewed to ensure that they support and promote the Access & Participation Plan. • Revised marketing strategy and recruitment activities to raise the Futureworks profile and project Futureworks as an attractive, welcoming and supportive environment for individuals from underrepresented groups. • Revised budgeting/resource allocation processes to ensure that they address the requirements for funding the Access & Participation Plan. • Create databases and systems for increasing the range of measures of success in Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression. • Create systems to monitor and review the implementation of the Access & Participation Plan.	The A&P strategy is embedded in the organisational culture. Contributes to the achievement of all targets.
	Access measures	• Established networks and relationships with key influencers, including parents, teachers, leaving care teams, careers advisers, community groups, community learning, supplementary/community schools, cultural and media organisations, alumni and role models. • Identified needs and perceptions of individuals from underrepresented groups and how they may be motivated and supported in undertaking higher education. • Programmes engaging on an ongoing basis with individuals from underrepresented groups, from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education. • Programmes of engagement with schools and colleges, providing support and resources aimed at raising attainment at Key Stages 4/5. • A system of alternative and more flexible entry pathways to take account of inbuilt disadvantage in existing entry criteria. • Programme of additional support through pre-admission communications and events and in the transition to admission/induction.	Elimination of gap in access of POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 students. Elimination of gap in access of BAME/ABMO and White students. Increase in the number of enrolled care-leavers.
	Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures	• All current curricula reviewed to ensure inclusivity; all new curriculum proposals or amendments support the Access & Participation Plan. • The learning, teaching and assessment strategies and student services mission revised to ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups. • The systems and resources for supporting students are strengthened and extended to ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.	Elimination of gaps in continuation of BAME, POLAR4 Q1 and Mature students, and in attainment of E-IMD Q1 students.
	Financial support measures	• Bursaries • Fee waivers • Hardship funds • Subsidies	Support for students where funding is a barrier to participation, continuation and attainment.
	Collaborative partnership measures - engaging with local and national education institutions, employers and organisations which promote and support underrepresented groups	• Collaborative partnerships with national, regional and local organisations representing and promoting the interests of groups underrepresented in higher education and in the creative and media industries. • Outreach collaborative activities in partnership with schools, colleges and community groups. • Collaborative partnerships with local authorities and other agencies to create networks of expertise and advice. • Collaborative partnerships with other higher education providers.	Enhanced understanding of the needs of under-represented groups, leading to greater attractiveness and more effective support of continuation and attainment.
	Progression/employability/skills measures	• Improved student professional and personal development components within programmes to enhance employability skills. • Enhanced support provided for seeking and obtaining employment. • Partnerships with external organisations to enhance careers advice and support and help identify employment opportunities.	Reduce gaps in progression experienced by students from underrepresented groups.

FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS	OTHER ASSUMPTIONS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
• Access activities will successfully engage key influencers and individuals, leading to improved access performance. • Improvements to curriculum will improve attainment and continuation rates. • Financial support measures will help attract and retain underrepresented applicants. • Collaborative partnerships will lead to greater numbers of applicants from under-represented groups and improved attainment, continuation and progression rates. • Improvements to student professional and personal development programmes will lead to improved progression rates.	• The comparatively limited resources of a small provider can produce effective results. • The required human resource skills can be met by in-house expertise, enhanced by external consultancy and staff development. • National, regional and local organisations will be willing to collaborate with a small, specialist HE provider. • Local schools will be willing to collaborate with a small, specialist HE provider.	• The socio-environmental context in which certain groups are underrepresented in HE. • Funding prioritisation in schools and colleges. • Changing economic environment may influence individual perceptions and employment opportunities. • Variable demand for Higher Education. • Employment trends. • Demand for graduates in the creative industries.

We believe that our existing culture celebrates, supports and promotes inclusivity. A recent survey of how our students feel about Futureworks and diversity found that 86% agreed or strongly agreed that Futureworks takes equality & diversity seriously. Through the Student Experience Surveys our students have consistently expressed that they are extremely satisfied with the experience of being a student at Futureworks. As the Student Experience Survey is anonymous we have not been able to disaggregate the data, for example to analyse the satisfaction of BAME students.

Nevertheless, the Assessment of Performance indicates that there are areas where we are under-performing with underrepresented groups. In addressing this under-performance, we recognise that although we have a range of policies and activities in place to support and improve student access, continuation, attainment and progression, we now need to undertake an extensive re-assessment to ensure that we are addressing the specific challenges of closing the gaps in our performance with underrepresented groups.

We recognise that in establishing our access and participation strategies we need to reframe the concepts, philosophies, policies and practices which will improve our performance in recruitment and achieving success with underrepresented groups, and that we need to embed these fundamental changes throughout the organisation through cultural and structural transformation. All staff and students can play a part in building a whole student lifecycle approach – ensuring a student profile which is more representative of society, and

supporting all students, according to their individual needs, whatever their background or profile, in achieving academic and career success.

We will achieve our goals and targets through the adoption of a whole provider strategic approach, pursuing a range of measures aimed at accomplishing a major shift in organisation culture and in our methods of attracting and supporting students throughout the whole student lifecycle:

- Organisation structure and culture measures – embedding the Access and Participation strategy in the organisation culture.
- Access measures – active steps to increase participation by underrepresented groups.
- Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures – building an inclusive approach to curriculum design, learning, teaching, assessment and student support.
- Financial support measures – supporting students where funding is a barrier to success.
- Collaborative partnership measures – engaging with local, regional and national education institutions, employers, and organisations which promote and support underrepresented groups, to broaden our student profile and learn how to more effectively attract and support students from underrepresented groups.
- Progression/employability measures – to close the gap experienced by students from underrepresented groups.

Alignment with other strategies

Our existing strategies and policies will be reviewed to ensure that they support the aims and objectives of this Access and Participation Plan, and an Employability Policy will be created.

Alignment with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
This Plan complements our EDI Policy, and its associated action plan. The achievement of EDI objectives will also contribute to the achievement of the Access and Participation Plan. For example, we have for some years recognised the importance of increasing the representation of students from BAME backgrounds and female students: both these groups are underrepresented in the industries which our courses are designed to serve, and Futureworks aims to play a part in changing the national landscape. Although women are not an underrepresented group as defined in this Access and Participation Plan, it is anticipated that the intersection of characteristics will bring benefits to both Plans. For example, an outreach activity may be designed to encourage female applicants (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion), applicants from groups of low socioeconomic status (Access and Participation) and BAME applicants (both Access and Participation and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*).* In implementing the Access and Participation Plan we will use equality impact assessments where appropriate. We recognise the need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and those who do not, and within this Plan we are taking steps to address this. We are satisfied that this Access and Participation Plan complies with the Equality Act 2010

Alignment with Learning and Teaching Strategy
The Learning and Teaching Strategy, and its associated processes are important elements in achieving the aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan, in that they aim to ensure that programme delivery contributes to success for all students and that unconscious discrimination is minimised.

- ❖ *We recognise that academic support must meet the diverse needs of students from differing educational, social and cultural backgrounds and so the strategies should be designed to enable all students to demonstrate their potential and to remove obstacles. The forthcoming revision of strategies and policies will result in the creation of new Learning Teaching and Assessment Policies, with an associated Continuous Enhancement Plan, which will address issues relating to access and participation, as well as equality, diversity and inclusion, e.g. ensuring that assignments are designed to be inclusive, reflecting a diverse socio-cultural-economic environment, as defined by both the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Access and Participation Plan.*

Alignment with the Student Support Policy
Student support is an important element in helping students from underrepresented groups to achieve Continuation, Attainment and Progression aims and objectives.

- ❖ *The existing student support philosophy is that we provide support which meets the needs of the individual student, whatever their background or circumstances, and so we already provide additional support for students from underrepresented groups. For example, support for students with mental health issues and wellbeing is embedded throughout the whole organisation in a number of ways, including mental awareness sessions for staff and students, counselling referral to mental health specialists and sessions on how to support students with anxiety and mental health problems. This policy will be reinforced in the updated Student Support Policy, which will explicitly address issues relating to this Plan.*

Alignment with the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy
The existing Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy states: "Futureworks aims to ensure universal access to its courses, and recognises the importance of the recruitment and selection process in achieving this … Futureworks will not set any arbitrary or unnecessary entry requirements which may result in direct or indirect discrimination relating to gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, social background, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or sexual orientation".

- ❖ *In reviewing the Student Recruitment and Admissions Policy, attention will be paid to the extent to which the Policy supports the Access and Participation Plan, and how the Policy should be reinforced, if necessary.*

All strategies, policies and plans are regularly monitored and evaluated through the Futureworks governance processes of management and committee structures, which ensures a coordinated approach. Management coordination of the various strategies will be ensured though the Management and Planning Committee, and through the close working relationships inherent in a smaller organisation.

Strategic measures
To achieve our aims and objectives, we will implement the following strategic measures, which are set out in full in Appendix 1.

Organisation structure and culture measures
Fundamental to our strategy is a whole provider approach, with the embedding of the Access and Participation Plan through a root-and-branch critical examination of our organisation culture, requiring an evaluation and review of structure, roles, policies and systems, underpinned by a comprehensive staff development strategy. We will:

1. Embed this Access and Participation Plan in the organisation culture.

    - ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by treating the Plan as a major organisational step-change, enhancing our understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups and adopting a whole organisation approach, channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

2. Establish a programme of staff and student development to ensure that the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of this Access and Participation Plan are understood and fully embedded throughout the organisation.

    - ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by addressing the significant challenges ahead, channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

3. Define clear responsibilities throughout the organisation for achieving aims and goals, revising organisational structures and responsibilities where appropriate.

    - ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring effective coordination of the strategy, identifying capability gaps and channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

4. Review all policies, strategies, systems and procedures to ensure that they support and promote this Access and Participation Plan.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that the organisational framework supports the strategy.*

5. Revise the marketing strategy and recruitment activities to raise the Futureworks profile and project Futureworks as an attractive, welcoming and supportive environment for individuals from underrepresented groups.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to attract more applicants from underrepresented groups.*

6. Revise the budgeting/resource allocation processes to ensure that they address the requirements for funding this Access and Participation Plan.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that necessary resources are provided.*

7. Increase the range of measures of success in Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression by creating new databases and systems.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by enabling ongoing monitoring and evaluation of performance in reducing gaps.*

8. Create systems to monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of this Access and Participation Plan.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that the Plan is effectively implemented and that targets are met.*

Access measures

Our Access measures are primarily aimed at achieving higher representation of the following groups:

- Individuals from low participation neighbourhoods/socio-economic backgrounds
- BAME students
- Care leavers

We will be monitoring enrolment and attainment of other groups, specifically people estranged from their families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, Refugees, Children from military families and carers. We will use the data gathered to inform our interventions.

A first step in addressing these aims has been the creation of the full-time post of Widening Participation Officer, who is responsible for organising and coordinating widening participation interventions and outreach activities.

In aiming to increase the participation of individuals from these groups, our goals are three-fold: to better understand their attitudes and motivations; to actively engage with the individuals, their groups and communities; to work with them in building their confidence and motivation to undertake higher education. Many of the measures will involve collaborative partnerships (explained below), with our focus being the Greater Manchester region and the North West. We will:

1. Work with key influencers, including parents, teachers, leaving care teams, careers advisers, community groups, community learning, supplementary/community schools, cultural and media organisations, alumni and role models to build relationships and explore ways of progressing. We have established a database of key staff members at schools and sixth forms/colleges using POLAR4 and IMD data and our relationship with GMHigher/NCOP to ensure effective targeting of groups and individuals (see Collaborative partnership measures section, below).

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by establishing and building dialogues and relationships with key influencers who understand the differing needs of individuals from underrepresented groups and can help us develop relationships with individuals and formulate programmes of activities.*

2. Undertake research to broaden and deepen our understanding of the differing needs and perceptions of individuals from underrepresented groups and how they may be motivated and supported in undertaking higher education, and to provide a basis for planning programmes and activities.

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by developing an understanding of how students may be encouraged to undertake higher education, and identifying the support needs at pre- and post-application/transition stages.*

3. Develop a programme of activities and experiences to engage on an ongoing basis with individuals from underrepresented groups, from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education. We aim to:
   - help individuals to better understand the higher education experience
   - provide sampled experiences of a higher education environment
   - provide direct experience of learning at undergraduate level through sampling and undertaking projects
   - enable current students and alumni meeting individuals and groups to share experiences and act as role models
   - build confidence
   - provide information and facilitate discussion about financial support opportunities (see Financial support measures section, below).

The goal is to create a strategy based on a joined-up approach, leading from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education.

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by establishing and building dialogues and relationships with individuals from underrepresented groups.*

4. Engage with schools and colleges to provide support and resources aimed at raising attainment at Key Stages 4/5.
   - Investing in specialist equipment/facilities at schools/colleges.
   - Providing advice and guidance on curriculum development at schools and colleges.
   - Presentation/workshop delivery to KS3/4 in schools and KS5+ in colleges.
   - Staff and student-led workshops, study skills sessions, awareness days, sample teaching/practical sessions.
   - Hosting summer schools, focusing on personal and skills development.
   - Providing CPD for teachers at schools and colleges to help them understand the demands of undergraduate study in the creative industries.

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to raise student attainment and meet university entrance standards.*

5. Institute a system of alternative and more flexible entry pathways to take account of inbuilt disadvantage in existing entry criteria, for example using contextual information to consider an application in its educational and/or socio-economic context; considering personal/social/domestic issues and challenges an applicant has faced in their education which may have affected their performance; providing summer English tuition for individuals without GCSE English.

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by reducing inbuilt system disadvantage in the applications/admissions process.*

6. Provide additional support through pre-admission communications and events and in the transition to admission/induction.

❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by providing ongoing support and advice to ease the transition to higher education.*

Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures

We are adopting a whole student lifecycle approach, reviewing every aspect of the student experience, from the curriculum on offer, through induction/transition, learning, teaching and assessment, to graduation and employability, along with the support provided at every stage. The key question to be addressed, is: how can we ensure that the ways in which we deliver the student experience address the particular needs of individuals from underrepresented groups? We will:

1. Review all current curricula to ensure inclusivity and introduce a requirement that all new curriculum proposals or amendments support the Access and Participation strategy.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by making our programmes more attractive and inclusive and that they meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups.*

2. Review and revise the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Student Support Policy to ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.

    ❖ *Contributes to Continuation, Attainment and Progression aims and objectives by enabling students to demonstrate their potential and removing obstacles.*

3. Strengthen and extend the systems and resources for supporting students and ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.

    ❖ *Contributes to Continuation, Attainment and Progression aims and objectives by helping students through the provision of support in meeting the academic and personal challenges and ensuring that mental health and wellbeing needs are addressed.*

Financial support measures

We will:

1. Provide funding support, which is specifically available to students from underrepresented groups, in the form of travel subsidies for open days/interviews, bursaries, hardship fund payments, and a limited number of tuition fee waivers.

    ❖ *Contributes to Access and Continuation aims and objectives by helping to attract applicants from underrepresented groups who may be deterred because of the perceived costs of undertaking higher education and helping to increase retention, as students may be less likely to leave the programme through financial difficulty.*

The types of funding support we have chosen are based on external research on the effectiveness of financial support methods (although the evidence is mixed), and on evidence gained from our own experience of providing financial support. Two of the funds are restricted to students in their first semester, which is a challenging time for new students coping with their finances. The emphasis is on supporting Access and Continuation, through reducing stress and decreasing the likelihood of withdrawal, with consequent improved Attainment performance.

The types of funding support we will provide have the following purposes:

- Hardship fund: provides financial support to a student who is struggling with unforeseen hardship. Examples include supermarket vouchers or the purchase of a travel card to pay for travel between home and Futureworks.
- Entrance bursary: to help with the financial challenges encountered when transitioning into higher education.
- Sundries bursary: provides a financial contribution towards the cost of a specific item, without which a student would be placed at a disadvantage when studying, or would not be able to begin or continue

their studies. Examples include the payment of the student contribution towards an SpLD assessment, DSA-funded laptop or accommodation deposit.

- Open day/interview travel subsidy: provides financial support to individuals who may have difficulty attending Futureworks for an open day and/or interview.
- Scholarship/fee waiver: full fee waiver for the 3-year duration of the course to support outstanding applicants from underrepresented groups.

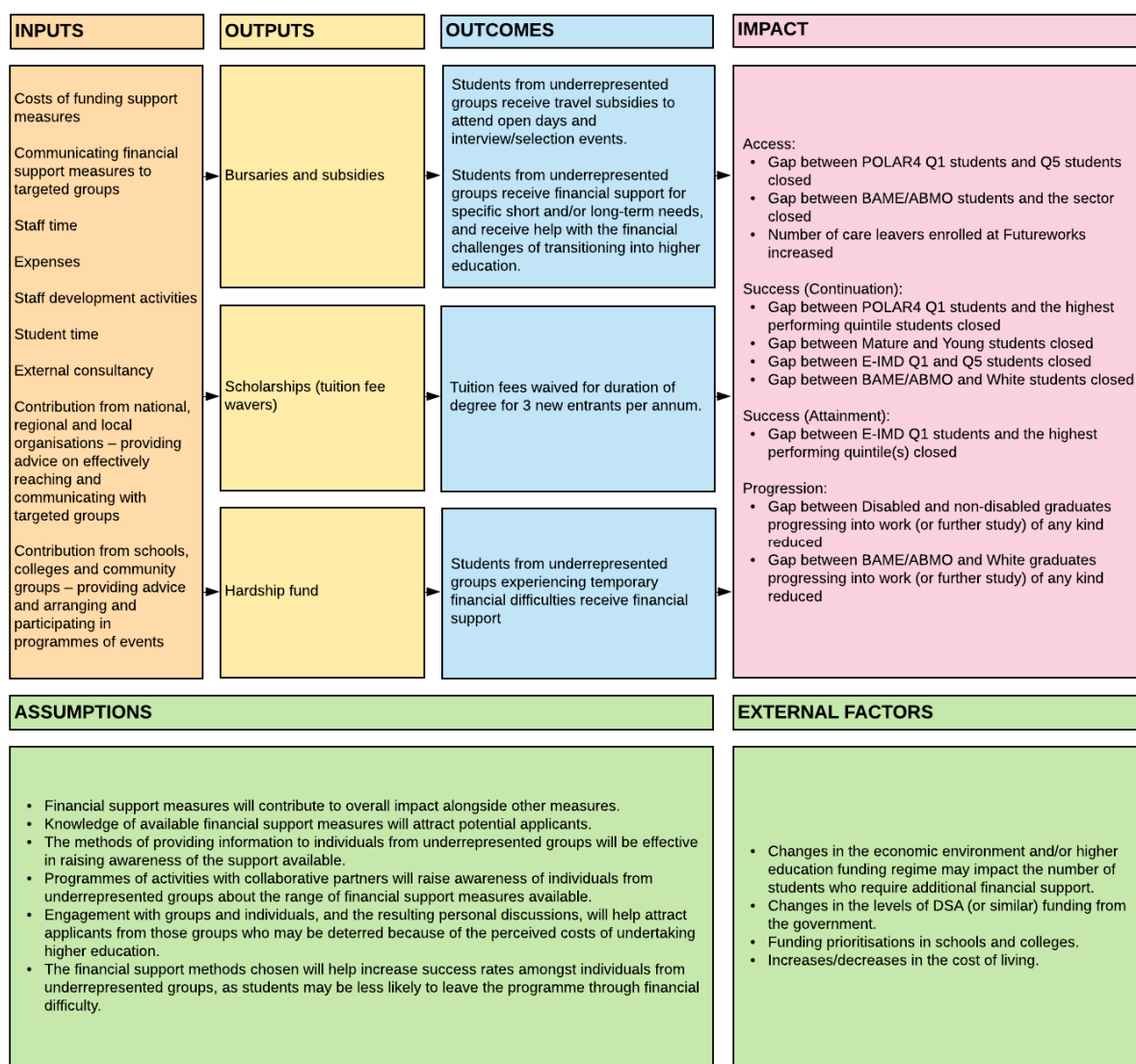In summary, the funding types and their basic features are:

Type of fund	Amount	Eligibility criteria	Year of study	Process	Application deadline
Hardship fund	£50 - £500	> Experiencing temporary hardship > Fully enrolled as a student > Widening participation student	Years 1, 2 & 3	Limited fund, allocated on a first come, first served basis	End of semester 2
Entrance bursary	£500	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Year 1 only	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	Second week in October
Sundries bursary	Up to £500	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Year 1 only	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	Second week in October
Open day/interview travel subsidy	Up to £50	> 1st time recipient (per cycle) > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Pre-enrolment	All applications granted	14-days after event
Scholarship (full tuition fee waiver)	£9,250 p.a. for 3 years	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	N/A	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	31st August (prior to entry)

The number of Entrance Bursaries and Sundries Bursaries are limited by the total size of the budgeted funds. The number of Scholarship/Fee waivers awarded to new entrants will be limited to three per annum. Awards of Entrance Bursaries, Sundries Bursaries and Scholarships/Fee waivers are decided by the Access and Participation Steering Group panel, which will meet quarterly. In arriving at its decisions, the panel will use a points system. An applicant will receive 3 points for each underrepresented group of which they are a member. The groups identified are: students from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups; BAME students; mature students; students with disabilities; care leavers; carers; people estranged from their families; people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; refugees, children of military families. Applicants who fall into multiple categories will receive 3 points for each category.

Applicants will be ranked according to their total scores, and they will be considered by the panel in order of ranking. In arriving at their decisions, the panel will judge the motivation and potential of the applicant through reference to a personal statement required as part of the application process.

We will monitor the outcomes and impact of these measures annually, employing the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit as appropriate, adjusting the balance of the different measures, the points allocation process and the criteria employed, in response to monitoring and evaluation outcomes and reflecting the relative progress in meeting the various targets.

Financial support outcomes chain diagram, below. A referenced evidence base is presented in Appendix 5.

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Costs of funding support measures Communicating financial support measures to targeted groups Staff time Expenses Staff development activities Student time External consultancy Contribution from national, regional and local organisations – providing advice on effectively reaching and communicating with targeted groups Contribution from schools, colleges and community groups – providing advice and arranging and participating in programmes of events	Bursaries and subsidies Scholarships (tuition fee wavers) Hardship fund	Students from underrepresented groups receive travel subsidies to attend open days and interview/selection events. Students from underrepresented groups receive financial support for specific short and/or long-term needs, and receive help with the financial challenges of transitioning into higher education. Tuition fees waived for duration of degree for 3 new entrants per annum. Students from underrepresented groups experiencing temporary financial difficulties receive financial support	**Access:** • Gap between POLAR4 Q1 students and Q5 students closed • Gap between BAME/ABMO students and the sector closed • Number of care leavers enrolled at Futureworks increased **Success (Continuation):** • Gap between POLAR4 Q1 students and the highest performing quintile students closed • Gap between Mature and Young students closed • Gap between E-IMD Q1 and Q5 students closed • Gap between BAME/ABMO and White students closed **Success (Attainment):** • Gap between E-IMD Q1 students and the highest performing quintile(s) closed **Progression:** • Gap between Disabled and non-disabled graduates progressing into work (or further study) of any kind reduced • Gap between BAME/ABMO and White graduates progressing into work (or further study) of any kind reduced

ASSUMPTIONS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
• Financial support measures will contribute to overall impact alongside other measures. • Knowledge of available financial support measures will attract potential applicants. • The methods of providing information to individuals from underrepresented groups will be effective in raising awareness of the support available. • Programmes of activities with collaborative partners will raise awareness of individuals from underrepresented groups about the range of financial support measures available. • Engagement with groups and individuals, and the resulting personal discussions, will help attract applicants from those groups who may be deterred because of the perceived costs of undertaking higher education. • The financial support methods chosen will help increase success rates amongst individuals from underrepresented groups, as students may be less likely to leave the programme through financial difficulty.	• Changes in the economic environment and/or higher education funding regime may impact the number of students who require additional financial support. • Changes in the levels of DSA (or similar) funding from the government. • Funding prioritisations in schools and colleges. • Increases/decreases in the cost of living.

Collaborative partnership measures

We have a long-standing partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), and we will seek to engage in collaborative activities in conjunction with them and develop a coordinated approach. We are at an early stage of developing further collaborative partnerships. For example, we are engaged in discussions with GMHigher (funded by NCOP) and have adopted their Regional Progression Framework. Our newly appointed Widening Participation Officer will be developing a range of collaborative partnerships with organisations which promote and support the interests of underrepresented groups and with schools, colleges and community groups. Other organisations we will be seeking to collaborate with include NEON (The professional organisation supporting those involved in widening access to H.E.), Salford Disability Forum and Breakthrough UK (people with disabilities), BAME in Games, Greater Manchester Leaving Care teams (care leavers). We will:

1. Build networks of expertise and advice through developing collaborative partnerships with national, regional and local organisations which represent and promote the interests of groups underrepresented in higher education and in the creative and media industries, particularly those from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups, BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by helping develop a better understanding of the needs of individuals from these groups, helping to establish and build relationships with them, and helping us to attract and support them in entering higher education, and in their subsequent academic life and beyond.*

2. Develop outreach collaborative activities in partnership with schools, colleges and community groups, particularly those with high numbers of individuals from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups, BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to establish and build relationships with individuals from underrepresented groups and provide support to help them realise their potential.*

3. Build collaborative partnerships with local authorities and other agencies to create networks of expertise and advice, especially relating to individuals from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers*.*

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by helping develop a better understanding of how to attract and support individuals from underrepresented groups and help to establish and build relationships with them.*

4. Establish collaborative partnerships with additional higher education providers.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by enabling joint activities, the sharing of experience and the creation of joint research projects.*

Progression/employability/skills measures
The Futureworks student experience is focused on developing high levels of professional and employability skills, enabling our graduates to enter and sustain a professional career in the creative industries – this is one of our core values. The dominance of freelance work in this sector, and the slower start to the launch of a career which often results, makes it difficult to measure the progression success of our graduates, but the available evidence suggests that students from underrepresented groups are less successful in obtaining employment. The challenge for us is to learn how we can enhance the outcomes for students from underrepresented groups, working in partnership with external organisations to improve the support we give to these students. For students from underrepresented groups we will:

1. Improve student professional and personal development components within programmes to enhance employability skills.

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

2. Enhance support provided for seeking and obtaining employment.

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

3. Build partnerships with external organisations to enhance careers advice and support and identify employment opportunities*.*

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

3.2 Student consultation

Student engagement has been a central component in the formulation of this Access and Participation Plan. At an early stage in the development of this Plan we created an Access and Participation Steering Group, whose remit is to oversee all Futureworks Access and Participation activities, with membership including at least one student member from each underrepresented group. Student members are reimbursed for their time.

To ensure continued the diversity of student membership, the Widening Participation Officer will develop relationships with students from underrepresented groups, who will be invited to join the Steering Group.

The Group met three times to discuss the formulation of this Plan, and the student members contributed a number of proposals, including undertaking research to aid understanding of the causes of low continuation, attainment and progression, suggesting ways in which existing students could engage in mentoring and outreach activities, and recommending how the financial support measures could be publicised. The Steering Group will continue through the lifetime of this Plan, and its responsibilities will include:

- Oversight of the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the Plan.
- Review and revision of institutional policies and strategies.
- Assessment of applications for financial support.
- How to achieve effective communication with the wider student body.
- Facilitating student members to act as ambassadors to encourage engagement by the wider student body.

The wider student body will play a pivotal role in achieving the aims and objectives of this Plan, through:

- Participation in outreach programmes and activities.
- Providing support for students via the Student Mentoring Scheme.
- Development activities, including an induction programme and ongoing training/support.
- Contributions to the Futureworks Annual Conference.
- Providing input and feedback, e.g. through surveys, consultations and focus groups.

All students with responsibilities relating to the Access and Participation Plan will receive awareness and development programmes appropriate to their roles.

The Access and Participation Plan, and associated activities and reports, including the results of student input, will be published on the Futureworks website, and disseminated through other channels, to ensure that all students are kept informed and have the opportunity to contribute. Awareness of the Plan will also form part of the annual Students as Partners training and will be discussed in the Student Partner Committee & Student Partner Forums.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

In designing our evaluation strategy, we have followed the regulations and guidance provided by Office for Students, and we have assessed the strategy using the Evaluation self-assessment tool. As a small, specialist provider with no previous experience of designing and implementing programmes of intervention, we are developing all of our Access and Participation activities from the ground up. At this early stage of development, many of the features of this strategy are not yet in place; however, we have clear plans to ensure that the programmes that we design will meet the expectations set out in the self-assessment tool, and in some areas we anticipate that we will exceed the basic expectations. In designing and implementing our evaluation processes we will involve partners, including schools, local authorities and other external organisations with appropriate expertise.

Strategic context

In the previous section we identified our targets, the overall strategy we intend to pursue, and the strategic measures we will put in place to achieve these, and we demonstrated that our aims and objectives and the resulting strategic measures are evidence-based. Evaluation of the success of these measures is integral to our strategy; formative evaluation will be used to periodically adjust the implementation of the Plan and the implementation of the measures.   Summative evaluation will be undertaken of the success in meeting targets

and the effectiveness of the various measures we initiate. Our overarching Theory of Change forms the framework upon which our evaluation will be based.

We have begun the process of shaping the organisation culture to enhance awareness of the importance of evaluation, including:

- Developing systems to produce reliable data for use in the quantitative evaluation of our strategic measures and interventions.
- Creating an Access and Participation Steering Group, with staff and student membership, providing strategic oversight of evaluation.
- Development of evaluation skills, to form part of Staff Development Plans and staff induction processes from 2019/20.

Programme design

We have developed a Table of Strategic Measures (See Appendix 1), in support of our Theory of Change. These were produced in partnership with the student body and will provide a basis for our programme designs. When finalised, our programmes of intervention will have clear objectives, aimed at achieving the targets set out in this Plan, will be evidence-informed, and will be designed and structured to ensure that evaluation is built into each and every activity.

We are in the process of developing data collection and analysis systems to enable quantitative measures and analysis of outcomes and impacts, and we have begun the process of identifying qualitative methods of assessing performance.

As a relatively new provider we have the advantage of approaching our strategy and programme designs with a fresh perspective, enabling us to harness the enthusiasm of the staff and student bodies and encourage a broad range of ideas and initiatives.

Evaluation design

The evaluation design will be based on an evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategic measures, informed by research. This will be achieved by employing a range of methods, including the use of quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the monitoring process.

In formulating our strategic measures, we have adopted an evidence-based approach. The evaluation will test:

- Whether each measure has been appropriate in the Futureworks context.
- Whether each measure has been successfully implemented.
- The impact of each measure on the intended target.
- The success in achieving targets.

Evaluation of financial support measures will reference our Financial Support Theory of Change, and will utilise the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit. Our intention is to design a range of evaluations to test our achievements against each of the targets. At the time of preparing this Plan we are at an early stage in our evaluation design and we intend to bring in appropriate third-party expertise to inform our approach.

As part of our ongoing enhancement of data collection, analysis and evaluation systems we are planning to undertake a small number of research projects which will explore the performance of students from

underrepresented groups, utilising control groups where appropriate and practicable. In the context of a relatively small student body (under 500 students) this will be challenging, and in some instances it may be impossible to reach valid conclusions due to small sample sizes; to overcome this limitation we will seek collaborations with other providers, to reach larger populations.

We will undertake a self-assessment of our evaluation design using the OfS evaluation self-assessment tool, in order to satisfy ourselves that the evaluation design is robust, providing an evidence-based evaluation of our strategic measures, based on measurable outcomes, and that we have a system for following through on the formative evaluations we will undertake, resulting in ongoing adjustments to the Plan and its implementation.

Our evaluation process will comply with all Futureworks policies, including the Ethical Practice Policy, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and all legal requirements relating to data protection.

Evaluation implementation

Evaluation will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will delegate responsibility for management of the evaluation processes to the Vice-Principal, who will be assisted by the management team. Oversight of the evaluation process will be the responsibility of the Access and Participation Steering Group. The results of the evaluations will be reported in the first instance to the Access and Participation Steering Group, which will submit a report to the Board of Directors, including their recommendations, along with recommendations from the Vice-Principal.

Learning to shape improvements

The Board of Directors will receive reports on the outcomes of the evaluation processes, along with recommendations from the Access and Participation Steering Group and from the Vice-Principal. The Board will initiate a programme of actions based on the evaluation reports and recommendations, as well as Impact Assessments and external feedback. The programme of actions may include:

- Proposing revisions to the Access and Participation Plan and/or its ongoing implementation.
- Adjusting evaluation methodologies.
- Revision of organisation strategies.
- Changes to organisation policies.
- Organisation restructuring.
- Initiating staff development activities.
- Formulation of budgets to facilitate re-allocation of resources.

We will share the outcomes of our evaluation activities:

- Internally, with staff and students through:
    - Publication on myFutureworks VLE
    - Presentation of reports to Academic Board, Management and Planning Committee, School Committees, Student Partner Committee
- Externally with appropriate partners, including schools and colleges, local authorities and other higher education providers.
- Externally across the sector, where appropriate.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Monitoring of this Plan will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors, who will delegate responsibility for the management of the monitoring process to the Vice-Principal, who will be assisted by the Widening Participation Officer. Oversight of the monitoring process will be the responsibility of the Access and Participation Steering Group. The results of the monitoring will be reported to the Access and Participation Steering Group, which will submit reports to the Board of Directors, including their recommendations, along with recommendations from the Vice-Principal. The Board of Directors may propose to revise the Access and Participation Plan and its ongoing implementation, informed by advice and recommendations from the Access and Participation Steering Group and the Vice-Principal.

In support of its monitoring responsibilities, the Access and Participation Steering Group will receive reports on:

- Progress towards targets.
- Progress with strategic measures.
- Results of surveys, e.g. Student Experience Survey, Module Evaluation Questionnaires, as well as surveys commissioned by the Steering Group, e.g. of students, staff, collaborative partners.
- Outputs from focus groups.
- Data analyses, e.g. student profiles, enrolment and performance data. The collection, storage and analysis of data is the responsibility of the Data and Compliance Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that data management meets legal and ethical requirements.

The monitoring reports will also be:

- Published on the Futureworks website
- Discussed at School and Department team meetings
- A standing agenda item at School meetings (with staff and student membership), which are held twice a year.
- A standing agenda item at Student Partner meetings.

The outcomes of the monitoring process will input into the evaluation process.

4. Provision of information to students

The Futureworks Access and Participation Plan will be published on MyFutureworks VLE and website.

The Futureworks website provides full and clear information regarding tuition fees, the availability of financial support, level of funding and criteria for eligibility, along with a financial support application form, accessible for all applicants. This information is also provided in the Futureworks prospectus and made available in printed form to prospective students at events such as open days.

We also ensure that timely and accurate tuition fee information is published via UCAS, the Student Loans Company and WhatUni.

All applicants who receive an offer to study with us are sent, at the time an offer is given:
- The aggregate cost per year of the programme, the course duration and total course cost. They are advised that there may be inflationary fee increases during subsequent years of study.
- A copy of our tuition fees terms and conditions.
- The availability of financial support, including criteria for eligibility, the level of funding available in each year of their study, and an application form.

All of the above information is accessible to enrolled students via the myFutureworks VLE.

Detailed explanations of the additional financial support measures available as part of this Access and Participation Plan will be added to our website, along with the eligibility criteria and how to apply. This information will also be published as printed literature, which will be distributed at events such as open days, other recruitment events and access activities. Dedicated parent and advisor information will be provided via the website and displayed information at Open Days. A brief summary will be included in the undergraduate prospectus with signposting back to the website and direct contacts for further information.

We will be producing leaflets and other printed literature about the financial support measures specifically aimed at individuals from underrepresented groups, tailored to the particular needs and issues relating to specific groups, designed in association with our partners, who have specialist knowledge of the information required and the questions likely to be raised by individuals in differing circumstances.

In ensuring that the right information and support is provided to the right people at the right time, we are setting up systems for identifying enquiries and applications from individuals belonging to the targeted groups. This will trigger a process where the individual concerned will be sent information about higher education study and about the financial support measures available to them, specifically designed with them in mind, with an offer of ongoing support.

We will provide all prospective students and their families with clear information about fees and financial support, and there will be an individualised approach to admissions handling to ensure appropriate information is provided to each enrolee, with personal advice. We aim to be proactive in contacting the individuals, answering their questions and addressing their concerns.

An important element of our outreach work will be to ensure that full and clear information about studying at Futureworks, and higher education in general, will be provided to students, teachers/advisers, parents/carers and other stakeholders, utilising the GMHigher Regional Progression Framework to convey the most relevant information at the appropriate stages. Wherever possible we will engage in discussions with stakeholders to explain how our financial support measures can help students who may be anxious about the financial commitments involved in studying in higher education.

All information, including printed material and website information, is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains up to date.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Table of Strategic Measures
Appendix 2: Narrative Theory of Change
Appendix 3: Intersection data tables
Appendix 4: Peer comparison
Appendix 5: References

Futureworks Training Ltd.

Access & Participation Plan: 2020-21 to 2024-25

Appendix 1 – Table of Strategic Measures

1. Organisation structure and culture measures

Contributes to which aims and objectives	Strategic measure	How it contributes to aims and objectives
	Embed the Access and Participation Plan in the organisation culture.	*Successful implementation of the Plan demands a major organisational step-change, adopting a whole provider approach and channelling organisational and individual energies towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	- Incorporate the aims of the Access & Participation Plan (APP) within the Terms of Reference of the Board of Directors. - Revise the organisation management structure, committee structure and student partnership structure to ensure they serve the aims and objectives of the APP. - Assign responsibilities for implementing, monitoring, reviewing, evaluating and adjusting the APP. - Review all policies and strategies to ensure they support the aims and objectives of the APP. - Revise the budgeting/resource allocation processes to ensure that appropriate funding is available to support the aims and objectives of the APP. - Formulate a programme of staff and student development to ensure organisation-wide awareness of aims, objectives and responsibilities relating to the APP. - Revise the careers support systems to ensure that they provide appropriate support for students from underrepresented groups. - Create an Access & Participation Steering Group with staff and student membership to monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of the APP.	

	Establish a research project with the aim of enhancing our understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups.	*Enhanced understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups, enabling a better informed approach to policy-making.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	- Establish a research project to identify the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups, and the reasons why some of these students under-perform compared with other groups. - Work with external collaborative partners in the development of additional research projects. - Use the outcomes to inform the development of policies and strategies across the organisation, including curricula, learning teaching and assessment strategies, and student support systems.	
	Establish a programme of academic and support staff and student development to ensure that the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of the Access & Participation Plan are understood and fully embedded throughout the organisation.	*Addressing the significant challenges ahead, identifying capability and perception gaps and channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	- Identify staff and student development needs, adopting a whole provider approach to organisational transformation, addressing, inter alia: - Understanding and embedding the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of the access and participation agenda. - Increasing awareness of the importance and benefits to the individuals, to the organisation and to the broader society. - Identifying the contribution to be made by each individual, e.g. senior management, Heads of School/Department, administrators, Programme Leaders, tutors, Student Partners, students involved in recruitment and mentoring activities, school and college liaison staff, career advisors, counsellors. - Enabling staff and students to understand the specific needs of students from different groups, e.g. disabled students, BAME students, mental health awareness. - The need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and those who do not. - Based on the identified needs, formulate a staff and student development implementation plan and programme, to include the Board of Directors and the management team. - Create and implement a monitoring, review and evaluation process for the staff and student development programme.	

	Define clear responsibilities throughout the organisation for achieving Access and Participation aims and goals, revising organisational structures and responsibilities where appropriate.	*Identifying capability gaps and channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	- Identify and assign responsibilities for managing the implementation of the APP, including, where appropriate: - Board of Directors - Vice-Principal - Head of Student Affairs - Widening Participation Officer - Admissions Team - Heads of School - Programme Leaders - Student Welfare Officer - Academic staff - Support staff - Amend job descriptions where required. - Incorporate objectives and targets into the appraisal system, to hold post holders accountable for successful implementation of the APP.	
	Review all policies, strategies, systems and procedures to ensure that they support and promote the Access and Participation Plan.	*Ensuring that the organisational framework supports the strategy.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Review and revise all policies, strategies, systems and procedures, ensuring that they support and promote the APP, including the following policies and strategies: - Admissions - Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Staff Recruitment & Selection - Staff Training & Development - Student Support	

	Revise the marketing strategy and review recruitment activities to raise Futureworks' profile and project Futureworks as an attractive, welcoming and supportive environment for individuals from underrepresented groups.	*Helping to attract more applicants from underrepresented groups.*

Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	Revise the marketing strategy to increase engagement on a personal basis in order to engage more effectively with individuals from underrepresented groups, helping to broaden their perspectives and aspirations, and attracting more applicants from those groups.
	
	• Increase representation at recruitment events of students, alumni and staff from underrepresented groups.
	• Offer events and tours of Futureworks tailored to individual needs, enabling engagement with us in a way which suits the needs of groups with limited HE aspirations.
	• Expand the use of Skype/phone interviews to meet the needs of applicants such as those who may have difficulty visiting Futureworks because of cost, commitments (e.g. carers), or have travel problems (e.g. due to disabilities).
	• Use Futureworks "pathway programmes" as an access pathway for students who do not meet standard entry requirements and/or feel they would benefit from non-degree level study before embarking on a degree course. Encourage applications to pathway programmes from underrepresented groups by:
	   o Publicising the opportunities by providing information on our website and by working with teachers and school careers advisors to create awareness of pathway programmes.
	   o Inviting anyone expressing an interest to discuss the range of programmes available, and giving advice on the application process.
	   o Establishing scholarships for interested/talented students from underrepresented groups who might otherwise not be able to access pathway programmes.
	   o Providing additional support to pathway programme students as required (e.g. study skills, software skills).
	• Collaborate with local artists to provide advice and guidance to young people who aspire to contribute to alternative arts scenes e.g. urban underground music/arts.	

Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Revise the budgeting/resource allocation processes to ensure that they address the requirements for funding the APP.	*Ensuring that necessary resources are provided for successfully implementing the Access & Participation Plan.*
	Restructure the organisational budget to facilitate the financing of the Access & Participation Plan, for example by funding: • Additional posts • Additional equipment • Additional expenses such as collaborative partnership ventures, attendance at local, regional and national events • Staff and student development	

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	Create databases and systems for increasing the range of measures of success in Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression.	*Enabling ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation of performance in reducing gaps.*

Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Expand and enhance data collection and analysis systems and processes relating to underrepresented groups:
	• Create databases and systems for producing a broader range of performance measures relating to Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression
	• Ensure a high response rate for the Graduate Outcomes Survey by raising awareness of the Survey and keeping alumni details up to date.
	• Produce a fuller range of annual analyses relating to:
	    o overall student performance, particularly addressing data relating to progression into employment and further study
	    o performance of identified groups, including underrepresented groups
	    o performance of sub-groups
	    o multiple dimensions of disadvantage
	    o comparisons between applications and entrants
	    o student satisfaction - exploring methods of measuring satisfaction of underrepresented groups compared with other students	

	Create systems to oversee the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the Access & Participation Plan.	*Ensuring that the Access & Participation Plan is effectively implemented and that targets are met.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Establish a steering group of students/staff/external professionals to have oversight of the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the APP. The Steering Group will take a whole-company approach to the monitoring, review and evaluation process, and will set its own objectives and priorities, subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The Steering Group will submit regular reports to the Board of Directors. It will determine its own methodologies and evidence sources, amongst which may be: • Course materials and assignments. • Commissioned surveys and focus groups of students, potential applicants, staff and others. • The outputs from data measurement and analysis systems. • Training and development activities and outcomes related to the APP.	

2. Access measures

Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	Work with key influencers, including parents, teachers, leaving care teams, careers advisers, community groups, community learning, supplementary/community schools), cultural and media organisations, alumni and role models to build relationships and explore ways of progressing.	*Establishing and building dialogues and relationships with key influencers who understand the differing needs of individuals from under-represented groups and can help us develop relationships with individuals and formulate programmes of activities.*
	We have established a database of key staff members at schools and sixth forms/colleges using POLAR4 and IMD data and our relationship with GMHigher/NCOP to ensure effective targeting of groups and individuals (see collaborative partnership measures section 5, below). • Identify priority influencers. • Hold one-to-one and group meetings to engage in dialogues aimed at building relationships and generating ideas. Work with leaving care teams to establish methods of building relationships with individuals in care and care leavers.	
Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	Undertake research to broaden and deepen our understanding of the differing needs and perceptions of individuals from under-represented groups and how they may be motivated and supported in undertaking higher education, and to provide a basis for planning programmes and activities.	*Developing an understanding of how students may be encouraged to undertake higher education and identifying the support needs at pre- and post-application/transition stages.*
	• Organise discussion groups and surveys to explore individual needs and perceptions of higher education. • Identify methods of reaching and communicating with targeted groups. • Explore use of social media as a way of communication and keeping in touch • Improve information provided to make it more user-friendly and welcoming.	

Contributes to Access aims and objectives	Develop a programme of activities and experiences to engage on an ongoing basis with individuals from under-represented groups.	*Establishing and building dialogues and relationships with individuals from under-represented groups.*
	We are producing a 5-year programme of outreach and Futureworks based activities, working in collaboration with key influencers. The goal is to create a strategy based on a joined-up approach, from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education. All activities will be matched to Gatsby benchmarks. Amongst the potential activities to be explored are: • Existing students to engage in mentoring and outreach activities, providing role models and first-hand experience in school/college and Futureworks settings • Staged event programmes for individuals in care and care leavers • Projects/workshops at schools, colleges, community group meeting centres and at Futureworks. Note - In arranging activities, we recognise the importance of avoiding singling out identified students. Activities will be structured to ensure students feel part of an inclusive group, and not publicly identified.	
Contributes to Access aims and objectives	Engage with schools and colleges to provide support and resources aimed at raising attainment at Key Stages 4/5.	*Helping to raise student attainment and meet university entrance standards.*
	We plan to work with school and college partners in helping to raise attainment by students and help them to attain university entrance standards. Among the potential projects to be considered are: • Investing in specialist equipment/facilities at schools/colleges. • Providing advice and guidance on curriculum development at schools and colleges. • Presentation/workshop delivery to KS3/4 in schools and KS5+ in colleges. • Staff and student-led workshops, study skills sessions, awareness days, sample teaching/practical sessions. • Hosting summer schools, focusing on personal and skills development. • Providing CPD for teachers at schools and colleges to help them understand the demands of undergraduate study in the creative industries.	

	Institute a system of alternative and more flexible entry pathways to take account of inbuilt disadvantage in existing entry criteria.	*Reducing inbuilt system disadvantage in the applications/admissions process.*
Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	We have commenced the development of a contextual admissions process, which aims to: • Formulate a contextual admissions policy • Create an eligibility database • Produce systems for processing applications which enable application of the contextual admissions policy	
	Provide additional support through pre-admission communications/events and in the transition to admission/induction.	*Providing ongoing support and advice to ease the transition to higher education.*
Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	• Introduce a system for identifying all enquiries and applications from members of under-represented groups. • Create information-giving materials especially designed for individuals from the targeted groups, giving advice about academic and personal support and the financial support measures available. • Create letters and other communications tailored to individual circumstances, offering support with their potential needs and inviting them to keep in touch on an ongoing basis. • Hold event days to encourage identified applicants to keep in touch, increase their understanding of what is expected of them, and what they can expect of us, and help build their confidence. • Invite successful applicants to our "Running Start" pre-enrolment sessions, to give them additional support and advice prior to enrolment. • Hold one-to-one support sessions during induction, to ensure they are aware of the support available, that they understand what is expected of them and what they can expect of us.	

3. Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="2">Contributes to all aims and objectives</td>
<td>Review all current curricula to ensure inclusivity, and introduce a requirement that all new curriculum proposals and amendments support the Access & Participation Plan.</td>
<td>Making our programmes more attractive and inclusive, and ensuring that they meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">The Access & Participation Steering Group will be tasked with:
• Reviewing current curricula to ensure representation and inclusivity
• Scrutinising all new curriculum proposals and amendments to ensure that they support the aims of the APP and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td rowspan="2">Contributes to Continuation, Attainment & Progression aims and objectives</td>
<td>Review and revise the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Student Support Policy to ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.</td>
<td>Enabling students to demonstrate their potential and removing barriers to success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">The Access & Participation Steering Group will:
• Review and revise the Learning and Teaching Strategy
• Identify opportunities for cross-programme collaboration to help build a sense of community
• Review and revise assessment policies, strategies and processes
• Review and revise the student services mission
• Expand the use of inclusive learning strategies to enable individuals from underrepresented groups to demonstrate their ability to achieve learning outcomes and attain their potential.
• Further develop lecture capture & assistive technology solutions to support independent learning strategies.
• Monitor, review and evaluate application of these strategies
• Establish mechanisms for reviewing coursework, reference material and assignments.</td>
</tr>
</table>

	Strengthen and extend the systems and resources for supporting students, and ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.	*Helping students through the provision of support in meeting the academic and personal challenges, and ensuring that mental health and wellbeing needs are addressed.*
Contributes to **Continuation, Attainment** & **Progression** aims and objectives	Strengthen and extend the systems for identifying and providing additional support for students from underrepresented groups who need further help with academic, practical and study skills: • Ensure academic staff are fully aware of policies and support mechanisms, and their individual roles. • Ensure students are fully aware of support mechanisms available. • Proactively engage with all applicants to enable the earliest identification of additional needs, in order to provide tailored support from induction onwards, and in developing academic and practical skills, ensuring that the specific need of each student are addressed. • Expansion of student support services, which includes the counselling service. • Review the student induction programme to enhance support for transition into HE. • Expand the provision of mental health and wellbeing awareness sessions. • Introduce a Mental Health Policy. • Review the benefits of extending the current referral system for practical support sessions on audio programmes to include all programmes. • Introduce a system of additional classroom support on a referral basis for students who need further help with academic, practical and study skills. • Build on our established success with the Running Start programme. Running Start is an award-winning pre-enrolment orientation event created to help students who would benefit from enrolling in a more focussed, relaxed and quieter environment. • Broaden the scope of Continuing Development Weeks to include sessions available to students in developing career focussed, academic and study skills and personal issues such as mental health awareness. • Introduce a system of staff mentoring for students to supplement existing academic and personal tutor systems. • Introduce systems of experienced students mentoring students at earlier stages academically, professionally and personally, supported by training. • Actively encourage and support the creation of student societies, social and support groups, internally and externally, to help foster a supportive community. • Enhance existing methods of assessing the effectiveness of student support by holding periodic meetings with targeted student groups.	

4. Financial support measures

Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Provide funding support which is specifically available to students from under-represented groups, in the form of travel subsidies for open days/interviews, bursaries, hardship fund payments, and a limited number of fee waivers.	*Helping to attract applicants from underrepresented groups who may be deterred because of the perceived costs of undertaking higher education and helping to increase retention, as students may be less likely to leave the programme through financial difficulty.*
	Establish the following financial support funds for students from under-represented groups: • Hardship fund: provides financial support to a student who is struggling with unforeseen hardship. Examples include supermarket vouchers or the purchase of a travel card to pay for travel between home and Futureworks. • Entrance bursary: to help with the financial challenges encountered when transitioning into the higher education environment. • Sundries bursary: provides a financial contribution towards the cost of a specific item, without which a student would be placed at a disadvantage when studying, or would not be able to begin or continue their studies. Examples include the payment of the student contribution towards an SpLD assessment, DSA funded laptop or accommodation deposit. • Open day/interview travel subsidy: provides financial support to individuals who may have difficulty attending Futureworks for an open day and/or interview. • Scholarship: full fee waiver for the 3-year duration of the course. Establish and operate systems for allocating funding support: • Create a points-based system, with awarding decisions made by the Access and Participation Steering Group panel, meeting quarterly. Monitor the outcomes and impact of these measures, employing the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit, adjusting the balance of the different measures and the criteria employed in response to monitoring and evaluation activities and reflecting the relative progress in meeting the various targets.	

5. Collaborative partnership measures

	Build collaborative partnerships with national, regional and local organisations representing and promoting the interests of groups underrepresented in higher education and in the creative and media industries.	*Helping develop a better understanding of the needs of individuals from these groups, establishing and building relationships with them, and helping to attract and support them in entering HE, and in their subsequent academic life, and beyond.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Work collaboratively with national, regional and local organisations representing and promoting the interests of groups underrepresented in higher education and in the creative and media industries: • Develop a better understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups. • Identify recruitment events and activities which may encourage applicants from underrepresented groups. • Help raise the aspirations of individuals from underrepresented groups. • Enhance student support pre and post enrolment to meet the differing needs of individuals from underrepresented groups. • Integrate APP activities with activities relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies to maximise the potential outcomes. • Establish networks to improve employability skills and access to the job market.	
	Build collaborative partnerships with local authorities and other agencies to create networks of expertise and advice.	*Helping develop a better understanding of how to attract and support individuals from underrepresented groups and helping to establish and build relationships with them.*
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Within the Greater Manchester region, build collaborative partnerships with organisations which act as a centre of expertise, support and networking for the underrepresented groups identified within this Plan, for example, to support Care Leavers.	

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	Develop outreach collaborative activities in partnership with schools, colleges and community groups.	*Helping to establish and build relationships with individuals from underrepresented groups, and helping to raise their aspirations and provide support to help them realise their potential.*
Contributes to **Access** aims and objectives	Arrange collaborative programmes of activities with schools, colleges and community groups. Where appropriate, the activities will be specifically designed for members of the targeted groups. Examples include: • University experience days, for school and college students to visit Futureworks for taster sessions/days. • Futureworks students to visit schools/colleges to mentor potential applicants, offering information, advice and guidance. • School/college-based activity days, such as making a short film and experiencing the various roles in a film crew. • Sponsor an Arts Award programme. • Introductory HE talks for Key Stage 5 students • Futureworks students delivering talks to schools about their final projects. • Application workshops to provide guidance on writing personal statements and developing interview techniques and portfolios. • Workshops for teachers and careers advisors, providing an opportunity to meet Futureworks staff, explore our facilities, and understand our mission. • Invite students and careers advisors to our degree show. • Arrange practical hands-on events with early years groups in local schools.	
Contributes to **all** aims and objectives	Establish collaborative partnerships with other higher education providers.	*Contributes to all aims and objectives by enabling sharing of experience and creating joint research projects.*
	• Establish partnerships with other Greater Manchester higher education providers through GMHigher (funded by NCOP). • Create joint research projects to test the effectiveness of selected strategic measures.	

5. Progression/employability/skills measures

Contributes to **Progression** aims and objectives	Improve student professional and personal development components within programmes to enhance employability skills.	*Helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*
	Build relationships with creative and media industry representatives to create opportunities to enhance the professional and personal development components within programmes.	
Contributes to **Progression** aims and objectives	Enhance support provided for seeking and obtaining employment.	*Helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*
	Provide targeted support for students from underrepresented groups, who may have additional barriers to overcome in finding employment, establishing themselves as freelancers, or progressing to further study: • Support final year students from underrepresented groups by developing skills in finding employment or progression to further study • Provide specialist careers advice and support to Care Leavers in their final year of study who are facing additional difficulties. • Enhance our incubation support for student-led start-ups, providing office space and mentoring and proactively encouraging students from underrepresented groups to participate. • Support the delivery of guest lectures and facilitate discussions with alumni and industry professionals, acting as role models for students from underrepresented groups.	

	Build partnerships with external organisations to enhance careers advice and support and identify employment opportunities*.*	*Helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*
Contributes to **Progression** aims and objectives	Review industry engagement policies and practices to ensure that they contribute to the achievement of Access and Participation goals: • Review the Terms of Reference of the Industry Advisory Group to ensure aims and objectives contribute to Access and Participation goals • Use the expertise and networking contacts of the Industry Advisory Group to establish a network of business mentors from underrepresented groups and increase the involvement of creative and media professionals in preparing students for their professional careers. • Collaborate with external organisations to obtain help and guidance on supporting underrepresented groups into employment or further study. • Enhance engagement in professional networks. • Expand the scope and range of collaborative live briefs. • Careers focus day activities, building employability skills. • Support the delivery of guest lectures and facilitate discussions with alumni and industry professionals, acting as role models for students from underrepresented groups.	

Futureworks Training Ltd.

Access & Participation Plan: 2020-21 to 2024-25

Appendix 2 – Narrative Theory of Change

General context

Introduction

We currently attract significant numbers of students from groups which are typically underrepresented in higher education. This can be attributed to a number of factors:
- The ability to undertake an undergraduate degree in a fully-equipped professional-standard learning environment, located in central Manchester, with a specialist facility at nearby MediaCityUK;
- Highly-motivated and committed staff who make students feel welcome, whatever their background;
- Students enjoy a friendly and supportive environment, with small class sizes;
- Students with disabilities receive first-class support;
- Career opportunities are good, and students are supported in finding employment by professional staff with extensive industry experience.

Beneficiaries

- Students aiming for a creative/media career
- Students attracted to a small institution
- Graduate employers seeking well-qualified entrants with industry-equivalent experience

Intended beneficiaries

- Individuals from groups which are underrepresented in higher education.
- Creative and media industries will benefit from increased diversity in their recruitment.

Wider social, political and economic circumstances

- Expanding creative and media industries
- Expanding 18-21 demographic
- Increasing consciousness of societal inequalities and the reducing opportunities for social mobility
- National prioritisation of widening access to higher education
- We are at the heart of a major conurbation, with schools and colleges of a broad social mix

Individual capacities

- Existing staff have a range of appropriate skills, knowledge and experience.
- We have identified gaps in skills, knowledge and experience relating to the requirements resulting from the objectives of the Access and Participation Plan.

Interpersonal relationships

- A small organisation working in a dynamic organisation environment, with positive, productive interpersonal relationships
- Relationships with relevant local, regional and national organisations are underdeveloped

Institutional setting

- A small institution
- A fully-equipped professional-standard learning environment, located in a major conurbation with a creative and media industry hub having national status.

Wider infrastructural system

Good urban transport infrastructure, including a bus, tram and rail network, with excellent road and rail links to other parts of the country.

Aims and Objectives

We are committed to pursuing the following overarching strategic aims:

- Playing our part in shifting the employment profile of the creative and media industries to fairly reflect all groups in society, actively shaping the future character of the sectors by producing and supporting graduates who reflect the diverse nature of our society.
- As an HE provider in a major regional creative and media hub, we will work with the community to promote the engagement of underrepresented groups within the industries we serve and broadening the perspectives of the industry and of the groups who are currently underrepresented.
- Changing the profile of our student body so that it represents the socio-economic and cultural profile of our society and ensuring that our students, whatever their background and profile, experience the same continuation, attainment and progression rates.
- Working with local, regional and national organisations in the development of measures, systems and activities to improve progression rates, with the objective of shifting the present unbalanced profile of creative and media professionals.
- Within Futureworks, nurturing a culture which embeds the philosophy, values and concepts which underpin these goals.

Objectives/Targets

Our targets have been influenced by a number of considerations:

- The need to address gaps in performance between Futureworks and the Higher Education sector.
- The need to address gaps in Futureworks performance between individuals from underrepresented groups and other individuals.
- Where Futureworks data is insufficient to provide significant results, we have considered the overall sector situation, being conscious of gaps which exists in the sector. We do not regard non-significant results as indicating that we should not be concerned about the performance of students in the groups concerned. We are not complacent, and therefore in some instances we have set targets even where the data is not statistically significant. We will carefully monitor the data and the support we provide to the students concerned.
- In addressing the wider set of student groups where national data indicates there are equality gaps/support needs, we have chosen to target Care Leavers.

- The small numbers of students at Futureworks means that we have been unable to set meaningful objectives and targets based on disaggregated data or intersections of characteristics.

Access Targets:

A1. Close the gap in access between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5 from 4.8pp to 0pp (currently 20.8% vs 16%) over a 5-year period.

A2. Close the gap in access between BAME/ABMO students and the sector from 16.4pp to 0pp (currently 14.7% vs 31.1%) over a 5-year period.

A3. Increase the number of care leavers enrolling at Futureworks from 1 per year to 10 per year over a 5-year period.

Success (Continuation) Targets:

SC1. Close the gap in continuation between POLAR4 Q1 and the highest performing quintile(s) from 9.9pp to 0pp (currently 86.4% vs 96.3%) over a 5-year period.

SC2. Close the gap in continuation between Mature & Young students from 5.5pp to 0pp (currently 85.5% vs 91.0%) over a 3-year period.

SC3. Close the gap in continuation between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 from 21.7pp to 0pp (currently 72.7% vs 94.4%) over a 5-year period.

SC4. Close the gap in continuation between BAME/ABMO students and White students from 12.8pp to 0pp (currently 77.8% vs 90.6%) over a 5-year period.

Success (Attainment) Targets:

SA1. Close the gap in attainment between IMD Q1 and the highest performing quintile(s) from 10.9pp to 0pp (currently 73.1% vs 84.0%) over a 5-year period.

Progression Targets:

P1. Close the gap in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between Disabled & non-disabled graduates from 15pp to 10pp (currently 50% vs 65%) over a 5-year period.

P2. Close the gap in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between BAME/ABMO and White graduates from 31pp to 16pp (currently 81% vs 50%) over a 5-year period.

It is our aim to close these progression gaps entirely over a 10-year period.

Monitoring, analysis and evaluation

While working towards the above targets, we will expand and enhance our data collection and analysis systems so that we can more effectively identify data relating to underrepresented groups, resulting in more meaningful monitoring, analysis and evaluation. We have already taken the first steps, with the appointment of a Data and Compliance Manager, who has responsibility for designing and implementing

the new systems. Over the period of this Plan we will also undertake research projects with potential applicants, applicants, students and alumni to enhance our understanding of the challenges facing individuals from underrepresented groups.

Strategic measures

To achieve our aims and objectives, we will implement the following strategic measures:

Organisation structure and culture measures
Fundamental to our strategy is a whole provider approach, with the embedding of the Access and Participation Plan through a root-and-branch critical examination of our organisation culture, requiring an evaluation and review of structure, roles, policies and systems, underpinned by a comprehensive staff development strategy. We will:

1. Embed the Access and Participation Plan in the organisation culture.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by treating the Plan as a major organisational step-change, enhancing our understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups and adopting a whole organisation approach, channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

2. Establish a programme of staff and student development to ensure that the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan are understood and fully embedded throughout the organisation.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by addressing the significant challenges ahead, channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

3. Define clear responsibilities throughout the organisation for achieving aims and goals, revising organisational structures and responsibilities where appropriate.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by helping to identify capability gaps and channelling organisational and individual energy towards achieving aims, objectives and targets.*

4. Review all policies, strategies, systems and procedures to ensure that they support and promote the Access and Participation Plan.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that the organisational framework supports the strategy.*

5. Revise the marketing strategy and recruitment activities to raise the Futureworks profile and project Futureworks as an attractive, welcoming and supportive environment for individuals from underrepresented groups.

    ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to attract more applicants from underrepresented groups.*

6. Revise the budgeting/resource allocation processes to ensure that they address the requirements for funding the Access and Participation Strategy.

    ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that necessary resources are provided.*

7. Increase the range of measures of success in Access, Continuation, Attainment and Progression by creating new databases and systems.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by enabling ongoing monitoring and evaluation of performance in reducing gaps.*

8. Create systems to monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of the Access and Participation Plan.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by ensuring that the Plan is effectively implemented and that targets are met.*

Access measures

Our Access measures are primarily aimed at achieving higher representation of the following groups:

- Individuals from low participation neighbourhoods/socio-economic backgrounds
- BAME students
- Care leavers

We will be monitoring enrolment and attainment of other groups, specifically people estranged from their families, people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, Refugees, Children from military families and carers. We will use the data gathered to inform our interventions.

A first step in addressing these aims has been the creation of the full-time post of Widening Participation Officer, who is responsible for organising and coordinating widening participation interventions and outreach activities.

In aiming to increase the participation of individuals from these groups, our goals are three-fold: to better understand their attitudes and motivations; to actively engage with the individuals, their groups and communities; to work with them in building their confidence and motivation to undertake higher education. Many of the measures will involve collaborative partnerships (explained below), with our focus being the Greater Manchester region and the North West. We will:

1. Work with key influencers, including parents, teachers, leaving care teams, careers advisers, community groups, community learning, supplementary/community schools, cultural and media organisations, alumni and role models to build relationships and explore ways of progressing. We have established a database of key staff members at schools and sixth forms/colleges using POLAR4 and IMD data and our relationship with GMHigher/NCOP to ensure effective targeting of groups and individuals (see Collaborative partnership measures section, below).

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by establishing and building dialogues and relationships with key influencers who understand the differing needs of individuals from under-represented groups and can help us develop relationships with individuals and formulate programmes of activities.*

2. Undertake research to broaden and deepen our understanding of the differing needs and perceptions of individuals from under-represented groups and how they may be motivated and supported in undertaking higher education, and to provide a basis for planning programmes and activities.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by developing an understanding of how students may be encouraged to undertake higher education, and identifying the support needs at pre- and post-application/transition stages.*

3. Develop a programme of activities and experiences to engage on an ongoing basis with individuals from under-represented groups, from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education. We aim to:
   - help individuals to better understand the higher education experience
   - provide sampled experiences of a higher education environment
   - provide direct experience of learning at undergraduate level through sampling and undertaking projects
   - enable current students and alumni meeting individuals and groups to share experiences and act as role models
   - build confidence
   - provide information and facilitate discussion about financial support opportunities (see Financial support measures section, below).

   The goal is to create a strategy based on a joined-up approach, leading from initial awareness-building through to admission/induction and the transition to higher education.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by establishing and building dialogues and relationships with individuals from under-represented groups.*

4. Engage with schools and colleges to provide support and resources aimed at raising attainment at Key Stages 4/5.
   - Investing in specialist equipment/facilities at schools/colleges.
   - Providing advice and guidance on curriculum development at schools and colleges.
   - Presentation/workshop delivery to KS3/4 in schools and KS5+ in colleges.
   - Staff and student-led workshops, study skills sessions, awareness days, sample teaching/practical sessions.
   - Hosting summer schools, focusing on personal and skills development.
   - Providing CPD for teachers at schools and colleges to help them understand the demands of undergraduate study in the creative industries.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to raise student attainment and meet university entrance standards.*

5. Institute a system of alternative and more flexible entry pathways to take account of inbuilt disadvantage in existing entry criteria, for example using contextual information to consider an application in its educational and/or socio-economic context; considering personal/social/domestic issues and challenges an applicant has faced in their education which may have affected their performance; providing summer English tuition for individuals without GCSE English.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by reducing inbuilt system disadvantage in the applications/admissions process.*

6. Provide additional support through pre-admission communications and events and in the transition to admission/induction.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by providing ongoing support and advice to ease the transition to higher education.*

Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures

We are adopting a whole student lifecycle approach, reviewing every aspect of the student experience, from the curriculum on offer, through induction/transition, learning, teaching and assessment, to graduation and employability, along with the support provided at every stage. The key question to be addressed, is: how can we ensure that the ways in which we deliver the student experience address the particular needs of individuals from underrepresented groups? We will:

1. Review all current curricula to ensure inclusivity, and introduce a requirement that all new curriculum proposals or amendments support the access and participation strategy.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by making our programmes more attractive and inclusive and that they meet the needs of students from underrepresented groups.*

2. Review and revise the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Student Support Policy to ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.

   ❖ *Contributes to Continuation, Attainment and Progression aims and objectives by enabling students to demonstrate their potential and removing obstacles.*

3. Strengthen and extend the systems and resources for supporting students and ensure that they meet the particular needs of students from underrepresented groups.

   ❖ *Contributes to Continuation, Attainment and Progression aims and objectives by helping students through the provision of support in meeting the academic and personal challenges and ensuring that mental health and wellbeing needs are addressed.*

Financial support measures

We will:

1. Provide funding support which is specifically available to students from under-represented groups, in the form of travel subsidies for open days/interviews, bursaries, hardship fund payments, and a limited number of tuition fee waivers.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access and Continuation aims and objectives by helping to attract applicants from underrepresented groups who may be deterred because of the perceived costs of undertaking higher education and helping to increase retention, as students may be less likely to leave the programme through financial difficulty.*

The types of funding support we have chosen are based on external research on the effectiveness of financial support methods (although the evidence is mixed), and on evidence gained from our own experience of providing financial support. Two of the funds are restricted to students in their first semester, which is a challenging time for new students coping with their finances. The emphasis is on supporting Access and Continuation, through reducing stress and decreasing the likelihood of withdrawal, with consequent improved Attainment performance.

The types of funding support we will provide have the following purposes:

- Hardship fund: provides financial support to a student who is struggling with unforeseen hardship. Examples include supermarket vouchers or the purchase of a travel card to pay for travel between home and Futureworks.
- Entrance bursary: to help with the financial challenges encountered when transitioning into higher education.
- Sundries bursary: provides a financial contribution towards the cost of a specific item, without which a student would be placed at a disadvantage when studying, or would not be able to begin

or continue their studies. Examples include the payment of the student contribution towards an SpLD assessment, DSA-funded laptop or accommodation deposit.

- Open day/interview travel subsidy: provides financial support to individuals who may have difficulty attending Futureworks for an open day and/or interview.
- Scholarship/fee waiver: full fee waiver for the 3-year duration of the course to support outstanding applicants from underrepresented groups.

In summary, the funding types and their basic features are:

Type of fund	Amount	Eligibility criteria	Year of study	Process	Application deadline
Hardship fund	£50 - £500	> Experiencing temporary hardship > Fully enrolled as a student > Widening participation student	Years 1, 2 & 3	Limited fund, allocated on a first come, first served basis	End of semester 2
Entrance bursary	£500	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Year 1 only	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	Second week in October
Sundries bursary	Up to £500	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Year 1 only	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	Second week in October
Open day/interview travel subsidy	Up to £50	> 1st time recipient (per cycle) > Home-funded > Widening participation student	Pre-enrolment	All applications granted	14-days after event
Scholarship (full tuition fee waiver)	£9,250 p.a. for 3 years	> Fully enrolled as a student > Home-funded > Widening participation student	N/A	Review and approval by A&P Steering Group panel	31st August (prior to entry)

The number of Entrance Bursaries and Sundries Bursaries are limited by the total size of the budgeted funds. The number of Scholarship/Fee waivers awarded to new entrants will be limited to three per annum. Awards of Entrance Bursaries, Sundries Bursaries and Scholarships/Fee waivers are decided by the Access and Participation Steering Group panel, which will meet quarterly. In arriving at its decisions the panel will use a points system. An applicant will receive 3 points for each underrepresented group of which they are a member. The groups identified are: students from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups; BAME students; mature students; students with disabilities; care leavers; carers; people estranged from their families; people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; refugees, children of military families. Applicants who fall into multiple categories will receive 3 points for each category.

Applicants will be ranked according to their total scores, and they will be considered by the panel in order of ranking. In arriving at their decisions the panel will judge the motivation and potential of the applicant through reference to a personal statement required as part of the application process.

We will monitor the outcomes and impact of these measures annually, employing the OfS Financial Support Evaluation Toolkit as appropriate, adjusting the balance of the different measures, the points allocation process and the criteria employed, in response to monitoring and evaluation outcomes and reflecting the relative progress in meeting the various targets.

Collaborative partnership measures

We have a long-standing partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), and we will seek to engage in collaborative activities in conjunction with them and develop a coordinated approach. We are at an early stage of developing further collaborative partnerships. For example, w*e are engaged in discussions with GMHigher (funded by NCOP) and have adopted their Regional Progression Framework. Our newly appointed Widening Participation Officer will be developing a range of collaborative partnerships with organisations which promote and support* the interests of underrepresented groups and with schools, colleges and community groups. Examples of organisations we will be seeking to collaborate with include NEON (The professional organisation supporting those involved in widening access to H.E.), Salford Disability Forum and Breakthrough UK (people with disabilities), BAME in Games, Greater Manchester Leaving Care teams (care leavers). *We will:*

1. Build networks of expertise and advice through developing collaborative partnerships with national, regional and local organisations which represent and promote the interests of groups underrepresented in higher education and in the creative and media industries, particularly those from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups, BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by helping develop a better understanding of the needs of individuals from these groups, helping to establish and build relationships with them, and helping us to attract and support them in entering higher education, and in their subsequent academic life and beyond.*

2. Develop outreach collaborative activities in partnership with schools, colleges and community groups, particularly those with high numbers of individuals from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups, BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers.

   ❖ *Contributes to Access aims and objectives by helping to establish and build relationships with individuals from underrepresented groups and help to raise their aspirations and provide support to help them realise their potential.*

3. Build collaborative partnerships with local authorities and other agencies to create networks of expertise and advice, especially relating to individuals from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups BAME groups, people with disabilities and care leavers.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by helping develop a better understanding of how to attract and support individuals from underrepresented groups and help to establish and build relationships with them.*

4. Establish collaborative partnerships with additional higher education providers.

   ❖ *Contributes to all aims and objectives by enabling joint activities, the sharing of experience and the creation of joint research projects.*

Progression/employability/skills measures

The Futureworks student experience is focused on developing high levels of professional and employability skills, enabling our graduates to enter and sustain a professional career in the creative industries – this is one of our core values. The dominance of freelance work in this sector, and the slower start to the launch of a career which often results, makes it difficult to measure the progression success of our graduates, but the available evidence suggests that students from underrepresented groups are less successful in obtaining employment. The challenge for us is to learn how we can

enhance the outcomes for students from underrepresented groups, working in partnership with external organisations to improve the support we give to these students. For students from underrepresented groups we will:

1. Improve student professional and personal development components within programmes to enhance employability skills.

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

2. Enhance support provided for seeking and obtaining employment.

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

3. Build partnerships with external organisations to enhance careers advice and support and identify employment opportunities*.*

   ❖ *Contributes to Progression aims and objectives by helping to enhance the progression rates of students from underrepresented groups.*

Assumptions and evidence base

Because we have no established track record of a systematic and structural approach to Access and Participation, we have used external published evidence sources to inform our strategic measures and associated activities. Much of the evidence is limited, and the validity of some of the established measures has been questioned by some researchers. In formulating our plans, therefore, we have taken note of the caution advised by researchers, and we intend to manage the activities in ways which maximise the impact of the measures we implement, and attempt to avoid the potential pitfalls. We will monitor the effects of our strategic measures and activities to build our own evidence base wherever practicable. The relatively small size of our organisation, with the resulting small sample sizes available, will limit the validity of our own results, and we will collaborate with other institutions to help overcome this limitation.

Organisation structure and culture measures
Embedding the access and participation strategy in the organisation culture will underpin our strategy, and will require a comprehensive programme of activities, including:
- Defining clear responsibilities throughout the organisation for achieving aims and goals.
- Revising organisational structures and responsibilities.
- Enhancing our understanding of the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups.
- Reviewing all policies, strategies, systems and procedures, including marketing, admissions, learning, teaching and assessment, equality, diversion and inclusion, staff recruitment and selection, staff training and development, student support.
- Establishing a programme of staff and student development to ensure that the philosophy, values, aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan are understood and fully embedded throughout the organisation

These changes will make a major contribution to achieving the aims and objectives of this Plan by:
- Focusing organisational energies on achieving the aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan.
- Enhancing the attractiveness of the organisation to individuals from underrepresented groups.

- Enhancing the attainment and continuation rates through changes to strategies such as curriculum design, programme delivery and assessment methods and support systems, to take greater account of the differing needs of different groups.

Evidence E1: based on their analysis of the literature, Moore at al (2013) (1)*, recommended:*

> *"Continue to examine organisational culture and to explore the fitness for purpose of current structures and practices. Engagement and identity are crucial to student success and engendering a sense of belonging. In seeking to embed holistic widening participation strategies, work should be done on identifying areas where changes may be required, particularly in relation to organisational culture, learning, teaching and assessment, student experience, financial support and programme delivery models"*

> *"Emphasise and prioritise staff development and continuous professional development (CPD) for those working within the HE sector and those supporting under-represented groups to access HE opportunities".*

Access measures

Many of the measures set out in our Plan will contribute to the achievement of Access goals and objectives. In planning measures specifically aimed at Access goals and objectives we have made the following assumptions:

- The measures we are planning will help build confidence and motivation to undertake higher education.
- A better understanding of the attitudes and motivations of the identified individuals will help us communicate more effectively with them, and help the process of increasing their awareness of the experience of higher education and how they may achieve their goals.
- Actively engaging with groups and communities as well as directly with individuals will increase the effectiveness of our engagement.
- Working with key influencers will also help build relationships, improve our understanding and enable us to explore ways of progressing.

Evidence E16: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *found evidence that improving HE information, advice and guidance can have a positive effect for low income students, disadvantaged students and those from income groups with low progression to HE. They found a more positive attitude to HE and an increase in the intention to apply to HE.*

Evidence E13: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "The literature stresses the key role of partnerships – cross-sector and inter-sector ...."*

Curriculum, learning, teaching, assessment and student support measures

Improving our curriculum, programme delivery and assessment methods to take particular account of the needs of students from underrepresented groups, strengthening our student support systems, including pre-entry support provision, staff and peer mentoring, focusing additional support on addressing the needs of students from underrepresented groups, will improve attainment and continuation rates through:

- Ensuring that curriculum, delivery and assessment methods do not disadvantage students from underrepresented groups.
- Providing additional proactive intervention where appropriate.
- Helping students to develop coping strategies to meet academic and personal challenges.
- Providing additional academic and personal support, including staff and peer mentoring.

Evidence E2: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *found evidence that mentoring was effective for low income students and students from low socio-economic groups, groups underrepresented in HE, students with experience of care and under-performing pupils. They found an increase in aspirations and applications to apply for HE.*

Evidence E3: Moore et al (2013) (1) *examined research which addressed "the student lifecycle from transition and induction through to completion and exit". They found a range of factors which contributed to retention and success, and we intend to pay particular attention to the factors they identified, noting their finding that "Fostering a sense of belonging lies at the heart of retention and success". They found that factors influencing continuation and attainment included academic concerns, feelings of isolation or not fitting in, and worries about achieving future aspirations. The evidence they found suggests that retention and success are best addressed by approaches which seek to develop:*
- *supportive peer relations*
- *meaningful interaction between staff and students*
- *knowledge, confidence and identity as successful HE learners*
- *an HE experience that is relevant to students' interests and future goals.*

They further noted that
- *"Key transition points require particular attention"*
- *"Efforts to realise already high aspirations should continue throughout the whole learner journey rather than being confined to pre-entry outreach activities".*
- *"Potential learners need personalised support to help them to make decisions and implement them... higher education providers need to be clear on what contribution they can make and which target groups are a priority in relation to their overall organisational objectives".*

Evidence E4: The HEA literature syntheses (Brooks, Dec 2012) (2) *found that "... for less affluent groups ... financial worries are often exacerbated by the fear of academic failure". This suggests that for such students additional personal and academic support to supplement financial support may be crucial.*

Evidence E5: The HEA literature synthesis on widening access (Gazely and Aynsely, Dec 2012) (3) *identified a number of factors relating to pre-entry and transition support associated with improved student retention and success.*

Evidence E6: The HEA literature synthesis on the role of HE students in widening access (Sanders and Higham, Dec 2012) (4) *found that HE mentors can play an important part through the impact on target learners and in supporting student retention and success.*

Evidence E7: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *found staff mentoring to be effective with students identified as underperforming, students from BAME groups, mature students, and students at risk of dropping out from HE, resulting in improved retention, completion and attainment rates.*

Evidence E8: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *also found peer mentoring to be effective with first year undergraduates, students identified as underperforming, students with little or no experience of HE (e.g. first in family to attend), and students at risk of dropping out from HE, resulting in improved progression to year two of study, improved retention, completion and attainment rates.*

Financial support measures
Creating a new framework for student financial aid/funding support which takes particular account of the needs of students from underrepresented groups will help:

- Attract applicants from underrepresented groups who may be deterred because of the perceived costs of undertaking higher education.
- Help increase retention, as students may be less likely to leave the programme through financial difficulty.

Evidence E9: Torgerson et al (2014) (7)*; HEA literature syntheses on Widening Access (Brooks, Dec 2012)* (2)*; The Scottish Framework for Fair Access* (3)*.*

Evidence E10: Meta-synthesis of interventions by Torgerson et al (2014) (7) *suggests that providing financial aid may result in increased enrolment and academic achievement. Moore et al (2013) noted "The literature suggests that financial support is most successful when it is relatively easy to understand and apply for and efforts are made to raise awareness amongst potential beneficiaries".*

Evidence E11: The HEA literature syntheses on Widening Access (Brooks, Dec 2012) (2) *found that financial concerns can be a significant factor for students, particularly those from less affluent families.*

Evidence E12: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *found extensive evidence that bursaries, scholarships and grants may have a positive impact for lower income students, resulting in improved retention/qualification completion and improved attainment.*

Evidence E19: Harrison and Hatt (2011) (8) *suggest that the purpose of bursaries "needs to be reconceptualised and extended …. to encompass the whole student experience". We have taken note of the findings and proposals identified by Harrison and Hatt in formulating our student financial support plans.*

Collaborative partnership measures
Increasing collaborative partnerships with national, regional and local organisations will help establish and build relationships with individuals from underrepresented groups, which will help to:

- Develop a better understanding of the needs of individuals from these groups, help to establish and build relationships with them.
- Change Futureworks culture by increasing awareness of the effects of attitudes, behaviours, policies and practices and the opportunities for potential changes and their effects.
- Develop strategies which will attract greater numbers of applicants from under-represented groups.
- Improve student support through increased awareness of the particular needs of specific groups.
- Improve attainment and continuation rates through new approaches to learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- Improve progression to employment by establishing partnerships to support graduates as they seek and enter employment.

Evidence E13: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "The literature stresses the key role of partnerships – cross-sector and inter-sector ...."*

Increasing collaboration with schools and colleges through pre-entry outreach activities will help raise aspirations by young people from underrepresented groups by:

- Helping us to establish and build relationships with them, aiming to raise their aspirations and provide support to help them realise their potential.
- Generating increased awareness of the opportunities that higher education will open for them and their potential to embark on a higher education programme.
- Offering opportunities for building confidence in their ability to meet the challenges of higher education.

Evidence E15: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "The literature stresses the key role of partnerships – cross-sector and inter-sector....".*

Evidence E16: The Scottish Framework for Fair Access (3) *found evidence that improving HE information, advice and guidance can have a positive effect for low income students, disadvantaged students and those from income groups with low progression to HE. They found a more positive attitude to HE and an increase in the intention to apply to HE.*

Building collaborative partnerships with local authorities and other agencies to create networks of expertise and advice will help:

- Develop a better understanding of how to attract and support individuals from underrepresented groups, and help to establish and build relationships with them.

Evidence E15: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "The literature stresses the key role of partnerships – cross-sector and inter-sector....".*

Collaboration with other higher education providers will enable:

- *Sharing of experience*
- *Creation of joint research projects.*

Evidence E15: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "The literature stresses the key role of partnerships – cross-sector and inter-sector....".*

Progression/employability/skills measures
Improving our student professional and personal development programmes, skills development, the support provided for seeking and obtaining employment, our careers service, our links with the creative and media industries and other external organisations will improve progression rates by:

- Helping students to identify a broader range of career opportunities.
- Providing additional skills and support for students in applying for and securing employment.
- Providing additional skills and support for students undertaking a freelance career.

Evidence E18: Moore et al (2013) (1) *found that "Embedding employability into the curriculum can benefit all students and is regarded as best practice. Employability of disadvantaged groups can also be supported by innovative and targeted approaches, although there is little empirical evidence to suggest what works".*

Enablers

- Developing an organisation culture and policies which support the Access and Participation strategy.
- Reviewing the organisation structure and creating/redefining roles to support the Access and Participation strategy.
- Building on the positive attributes of a small organisation with skilled, professional, motivated staff.
- Extending our collaborative activities with external partners to better understand the needs of individuals from underrepresented groups and to extend the skills and knowledge base available in support of the Access and Participation strategy.

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3. **Gazeley, L and Aynsley, S.** The contribution of pre-entry interventions to student retention and success. A literature synthesis of the Widening Access, Student Retention and Success National Programmes Archive. *Higher Education Academy.* [Online] 2012. [Cited: May 2, 2019.]

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6. **Torgeson, Carole, et al.** *Higher Education access: Evidence of effectiveness of university access strategies and approaches.* Durham : Durham University, 2014.

7. *Expensive and failing? The role of student bursaries in widening particpation and fair access in England.* **Harrison, Neil & Hatt, Sue.** 6, s.l. : DOI, 2011, Studies in Higher Education, Vol. 37.

8. *Evaluating outreach activities: overcoming challenges through a realist 'small steps' appraoch.* **Harrison, Neil & Waller, Richard.** 2-3, s.l. : DOI, 2017, Studies in Higher Education, Vol. 21.

**Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21**

Provider name: Futureworks Training Limited

Provider UKPRN: 10022087

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Students paying £7,250	£7,250
First degree	Students paying £9,250	£9,250
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Office for Students

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Futureworks Training Limited

Provider UKPRN: 10022087

Investment summary

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

Note about the data:
The investment forecasts below in access, financial support and research and evaluation does not represent not the total amount spent by providers in these areas. It is the additional amount that providers have committed following the introduction of variable fees in 2006-07. The OfS does not require providers to report on investment in success and progression and therefore investment in these areas is not represented.

The figures below are not comparable to previous access and participation plans or access agreements as data published in previous years does not reflect latest provider projections on student numbers.

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£162,496.00	£188,233.00	£166,755.00	£166,755.00	£166,755.00
Access (pre-16)	£40,624.00	£47,058.00	£41,688.00	£41,688.00	£41,688.00
Access (post-16)	£81,248.00	£94,117.00	£83,379.00	£83,379.00	£83,379.00
Access (adults and the community)	£40,624.00	£47,058.00	£41,688.00	£41,688.00	£41,688.00
Access (other)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Financial support (£)	£43,485.00	£72,397.00	£106,118.00	£106,118.00	£106,118.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£22,887.00	£28,959.00	£30,319.00	£30,319.00	£30,319.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£1,089,845.00	£1,378,995.00	£1,443,780.00	£1,443,780.00	£1,443,780.00
Access investment	14.9%	13.7%	11.5%	11.5%	11.5%
Financial support	4.0%	5.2%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%
Research and evaluation	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%
Total investment (as %HFI)	21.0%	21.0%	21.0%	21.0%	21.0%

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Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage point difference in new enrolments of POLAR4 quintile 5 students compared with quintile 1	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	4.8pp gap	4pp gap	3pp gap	2pp gap	1pp gap	0pp gap	2017/18 new enrolments with POLAR4 data available, 20 (16%) were from Q1; 25 (20.8%) were from Q5, from a body of 180 enrolments (inc. those with no POLAR4 data, e.g. EU).
To reduce the gap in participation in HE for students from underrepresented groups	PTA_2	Ethnicity	Percentage point difference in new enrolments of ABMO/BAME students compared with the sector	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	16.4pp gap	15pp gap	12pp gap	9pp gap	5pp gap	0pp gap	Outreach engagement with BAME applicants/candidates will build over time, having a cumulative effort, which is reflected in the non-linear approach to the targets set.
To increase participation in HE for care-leavers	PTA_3	Care-leavers	Actual number of new enrolments at Futureworks who are care-leavers	No	Other data source	2017-18	1 student	2 students	4 students	6 students	8 students	10 students	Increase from 1 student (0.5% of new enrolments) to 10 students (c. 6% of new enrolments) over 5 years.
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_1	Socio-economic	Percentage point difference in non-continuation rates between IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	21.7pp gap	18pp gap	16pp gap	12pp gap	6pp	0pp gap	2016/17 - 25 students (72.7%) who were IMD Q1 progressed into year 2 compared with 35 students (94.4%) progressing into year 2 who were IMD Q5.
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_2	Ethnicity	Percentage point difference in non-continuation rates between ABMO/BAME and White students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	12.8pp gap	10pp gap	7pp gap	4pp gap	1pp gap	0pp gap	2016/17 - students identifying as BAME, 15 students (77.8%) progressed into year 2 compared with 155 students (90.6%) identifying as White.
To reduce the attainment gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_3	Socio-economic	Percentage difference in degree attainment between IMD Q1 and the highest performing quintile	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	10.9pp gap	9pp gap	7pp gap	5pp gap	3pp gap	0pp gap	2017/18 - 20 students (73.1%) who were IMD Q1 achieved good honours compared with 20 students (84%) who were IMD Q3 (Note: numbers rounded).
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_4	Mature	Percentage point difference in non-continuation rates between Mature and Young students	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	5.5pp gap	3pp gap	1pp gap	0pp gap	0pp gap	0pp gap	2016/17 graduates, 45 students (85.5%) who were Mature progressed into year 2 compared with 120 students (91%) progressing into year 2 who were Young.
To reduce the non-continuation gap for students from underrepresented groups	PTS_5	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	Percentage point difference in non-continuation rates between POLAR4 Q1 and the highest performing quintile	No	The access and participation dataset	2016-17	9.9pp gap	8pp gap	6pp gap	4pp gap	2pp gap	0pp gap	2016/17 - 20 students (86.4%) who were POLAR4 Q1 progressed into year 2 compared with 25 students (96.3%) progressing into year 2 who were POLAR4 Q4.
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the progression gap for graduates from underrepresented groups	PTP_1	Disabled	Percentage point difference in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between disabled and non-disabled graduates	No	Other data source	2016-17	15pp gap	14pp gap	13pp gap	12pp gap	11pp gap	10pp gap	Aiming to reduce the gap by 5pp over 5 years, with a longer term aim of closing this gap entirely over a 10 year period. Data source: DLHE.
To reduce the progression gap for graduates from underrepresented groups	PTP_2	Ethnicity	Percentage point difference in progression into work (or further study) of any kind between ABMO/BAME and White graduates	No	Other data source	2016-17	31pp gap	28pp gap	25pp gap	22pp gap	19pp gap	16pp gap	Aiming to half the gap over 5 years, with a longer term aim of closing this gap entirely over a 10 year period. Data source: DLHE.
	PTP_3												
	PTP_4												
	PTP_5												
	PTP_6												
	PTP_7												
	PTP_8												