

Futureworks

Access and Participation Plan 2024-25 to 2027-28

1. About Futureworks

Founded in 2007, and with over 400 students currently enrolled on nine full-time first degree courses, Futureworks is a Manchester-based higher education provider which specialises in producing high quality graduates for the creative industries. In the sixteen years since our inception, our students have gone on to professional careers in sound, film and games at some of the biggest names in the world. The teaching staff at Futureworks are fundamental to the success of our approach. Our team are some of the most qualified and experienced in the industry: Oscar and BAFTA-award winning editors and producers, game artists and designers, visual effects artists, music producers and mastering engineers for industry giants like BBC, ITV, HBO, Rockstar UK, DC Comics, Realtime, Hit Factory New York.

Supporting our expert teaching team are a world-class line up of guest speakers who bring unparalleled experience and expertise to our curricula. These include industry heavyweights who have worked on some of the biggest productions in the world for household names like Electronic Arts, Disney, Dreamworks and Warner Bros.

1.1 Mission and Strategic Aim

Our mission is to provide high quality vocational education which leads to sustainable employment - facilitating the development of creative and entrepreneurial skills that enable our students to contribute culturally and economically to society. One of our core values is to provide an inclusive learning environment which supports students from all backgrounds to achieve their full potential.

We are committed to playing our part in shifting the employment profile of the creative and media industries to reflect our diverse society, actively shaping the future character of the sector by developing and supporting graduates, and enabling every individual to realise their potential, whatever their background.

Through the lifetime of this Access and Participation Plan we aim to shift the profile of our student intake to better reflect the socio-economic and cultural profile of society, and for our students to succeed both academically and professionally, whatever their background and profile.

As a higher education provider in a major regional creative and media hub, we actively work with national and regional organisations, and with the local community, to promote the engagement of underrepresented groups within the industries we serve. We also seek to broaden the perspectives of the industry, and of the groups who are currently underrepresented, with the objective of shifting the profile of the creative sector. Futureworks will continue to nurture a culture which embeds the philosophy, values and concepts which underpin this aim.

These values are at the core of Futureworks' mission; however, we acknowledge that there is still work to be done in these areas - our summary of the Assessment of Performance

undertaken in the preparation of this Plan sets this out in detail (see Annex A). In addressing the gap between our aspirations and our achievement, we now need to reframe our concepts, philosophies, policies and practices. In 2019 we adopted a whole provider approach to Access and Participation, with staff and students playing a vital role in working towards creating a student demographic which is more representative of society, and supporting of all students according to their individual needs. By embedding a whole student lifecycle approach, we are actively enabling students, whatever their background or profile, to achieve academic and career success. This Plan sets out the challenges we face, and our strategy for addressing those challenges.

2. Risks to equality of opportunity

Futureworks have identified the following key risks to equality of opportunity that will be addressed in this plan. The risks have been identified following an Assessment of Performance, drawing on Office for Students and UCAS data, and the Equal Opportunities Risk Register. A summary of this assessment, which includes consideration of statistical uncertainty, is provided at Annex A.

As Futureworks has a relatively small student population, analyses of disaggregated groups and intersections of characteristics provide limited opportunity for meaningful interpretations of the data. Nevertheless, we have set objectives and targets, and designed interventions, which relate to specific combinations of characteristics where, as an institution, we have insufficient data to draw statistically valid conclusions (for example, women who identify as Asian, Black, Mixed, or other non-White ethnicity).

In identifying potential risks, we recognise that the full effects of coronavirus are still unknown, and that this risk may have resulted in lower progression rates to higher education for some students, depending on their individual circumstances and characteristics. We have not identified any specific coronavirus-related risks, however.

The following table sets out the indications of risk we have identified, along with their related risks to equality of opportunity. We have linked the indication of risk and the underlying risk using the national picture as set out in the EORR, and using insights from our review of the literature. In Annex B, we note a range of research and insights that help us to understand the challenges which are more likely to be present for each target group.

We have taken this approach in large part because of the absence of robust evidence from our own student cohorts regarding the specific nature of the underlying risk(s) that result in the indication of risk. We have, therefore, applied the evidence from the sector (EORR and our review of the literature) to provide insight and, as a longer-term ambition, are committed to a range of evaluation and research with our own students to better understand the underlying risks over the life of this Plan. We will consider these in the context of the national /sector picture as part of the research and evaluation.

Student Lifecycle Stage	Indication of Risk	Potential Risks to Equality of Opportunity
Access	New entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4 are underrepresented when compared with the UK school population.	Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perception of higher education Application rates Limited choice of course type and delivery mode

	<p>New entrants who declare their ethnicity as ABMO are underrepresented when compared with the English higher education sector average.</p> <p><i>New entrants who identify as female and declare their ethnicity as ABMO are especially underrepresented at Futureworks.</i></p>	<p>Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perception of higher education Application rates</p> <p><i>Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perception of higher education Application rates Limited choice of course type and delivery mode</i></p>
	<p>New entrants who are mature students are underrepresented when compared with the English higher education sector average.</p>	<p>Information and guidance Perception of higher education Application rates Limited choice of course type and delivery mode</p>
	<p>Care-experienced, GRTs and other minority groups are underrepresented when compared with the English higher education sector average.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills Information and guidance Perception of higher education Application rates</p>
On course	<p>Students with a declared disability are less likely to complete their first year of study than students with no declared disability.</p> <p><i>Students with declared mental health issues are especially less likely to complete their first year of study than students who have not declared a mental health issue.</i></p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support Cost pressures Capacity issues</p> <p><i>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support</i></p>
	<p>Students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO are less likely to complete their first year of study than students who declare their ethnicity as White.</p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support Mental health</p>
	<p>Students from ABCS quintile 1 are less likely to complete their first year of study than students from other ABCS quintiles.</p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support</p>
	<p>Male students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals are less likely to complete their course of study than other students.</p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support Cost pressures Capacity issues</p>
	<p>Students from IMD quintile 1 are less likely to complete their course of study than students from other IMD quintiles.</p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support</p>
	<p>Students with a declared disability are less likely to achieve a “good honours” degree than students with no declared disability.</p>	<p>Insufficient academic support Insufficient personal support Cost pressures Capacity issues</p>
Progression	<p>Students with a declared disability are less likely to be engaged in managerial</p>	<p>Progression from higher education</p>

	or professional employment, or further study, or other positive outcomes, 16 months after the completion of their course than students with no declared disability.	
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Every indication of risk to equality of opportunity identified through our review of the data (as set out in our Assessment of Performance Summary in Annex A) has an accompanying objective (see section 3), with the following exceptions:

- 1) “New entrants who identify as female and declare their ethnicity as ABMO are especially underrepresented at Futureworks” - this intersection of characteristics is underrepresented nationally in the creative industries. We are planning to address this disparity through our intervention strategies related to ABMO recruitment, and will place particular emphasis on opportunities, successes and female/ABMO role-models; however, due to our limited size and reach we are not confident that we can address the risk to this demographic effectively.
- 2) “Care-experienced, GRTs and other minority groups are underrepresented when compared with the English higher education sector average” - as a small, regionally-focused and highly specialist provider of higher education, our ability to address risks related to such a small proportion of the population is extremely limited. We also run the risk of making individuals identifiable through publishing data on such a small demographic. Nonetheless, we are committed to improving representation of these groups in higher education, and rather than setting a numerical target we have opted instead to commit to ensuring the growth of this important demographic at Futureworks over the lifetime of this Plan. The intervention strategies in Section 4 which address a range of target groups will also automatically include provision for those who are care-experienced, even where this is not explicitly stated.
- 3) “Students with declared mental health issues are especially less likely to complete their first year of study than students who have not declared a mental health issue” - the risk to these students, who are a subset of the “students with a declared disability” group, will be addressed through intervention strategies designed to target the full range of disability support needs (see sections 3 and 4 for details).
- 4) “Students from ABCS quintile 1 are less likely to complete their first year of study than students from other ABCS quintiles” - the data for this group is very small (in the most recent year ABCS quintile 5 is just five people) and, as ABCS is a very new measure, rather than set a target, we intend to focus our energies on our other target groups where we feel the data is better understood and where we are more likely to make a meaningful impact. We are committed to closely monitoring this new dataset, however, and will set targets in the future once datasets are larger (if the data warrants this).
- 5) “Students from IMD quintile 1 are less likely to complete their course of study than students from other IMD quintiles” - the completion gap between IMD quintile 1 and quintile 2 is 12%, whereas the completion gap between quintile 1 and quintile 5 is just 6%. As IMD quintile 2 would also be considered an underrepresented group, it is not clear how an intervention might address these different groups in any meaningful fashion.

2.1 Analysis of disaggregated data

We performed a comprehensive disaggregated analysis as part of our Assessment of Performance for the following groups:

- disabled students, including those with mental health conditions, specific learning difficulties, multiple disabilities and physical impairments.
- ethnicity, including individual ethnic groups.

Due to the size of our student population, the numbers in the disaggregated groups are extremely low (in many cases ones and twos), making it impossible to derive reliable conclusions from the data, particularly when statistical uncertainty is so high. We hope to mitigate this by:

1. Building a picture over time as our data sets become larger, and ensuring ongoing monitoring of these larger datasets, seeking to set additional commitments and targets with the OfS should the datasets reveal any further gaps in performance;
2. SEER membership, which provides the opportunity to work with other providers and collaboratively evaluate / analyse data as part of a larger data set which is relevant to smaller and specialist institutions;
3. Undertaking a range of deeper qualitative evaluation and insights which will provide deeper understanding where quantitative datasets are small.

3. Objectives

Through our assessment of performance, we have identified a number of indications of risk (section 2, above). The indications of risk prioritised by this Plan are addressed through the objectives set out in the table below (and are described in full in tables 5b/5d/5e of Annex C). Please note that all percentages are rounded.

Student Lifecycle Stage	Ref. No.	Objective	Target	Intervention Strategy Number
Access	PTA_1	Increase the proportion of new entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals at KS4 to match the proportion of the UK school population which is eligible for Free School Meals over five years.	Increase the proportion of new entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals at KS4 from 18% to 24% by August 2028.	IS1, IS3
	PTA_2	Increase the proportion of new entrants who declare their ethnicity as ABMO to match average ABMO representation across the English HE sector over five years.	Increase the proportion of new entrants who declare their ethnicity as ABMO from 18% to 35% by August 2028.	IS1, IS2, IS3
	PTA_3	Increase the proportion of mature entrants to match average mature student representation across the English HE sector over five years.	Increase the proportion of mature entrants from 20% to 29% by August 2028.	IS2, IS3
Continuation	PTS_1	Increase the proportion of students with a declared	Increase the proportion of students	IS3, IS4

		disability who complete their first year of study to match the proportion of students without a declared disability and who complete their first year of study over five years.	with a declared disability who complete their first year of study from 69% to 80% by August 2028.	
	PTS_2	Increase the proportion of students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO who complete their first year of study to match the proportion of students who declare their ethnicity as White and who complete their first year of study over five years.	Increase the proportion of students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO who complete their first year of study from 71% to 78% by August 2028.	IS3, IS4
Completion	PTS_3	Increase the proportion of male students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals who complete the programme to match the proportion of male students who were not eligible for Free School Meals and who complete their programme of study over five years.	Increase the proportion of male students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals who complete the programme from 69% to 88% by August 2028.	IS3, IS4
Attainment	PTS_4	Increase the proportion of students with a declared disability who achieve a first or upper-second class degree to match the proportion of students without a declared disability and who achieve a first or upper-second class degree over five years.	Increase the proportion of students with a declared disability who achieve a first or upper-second class degree from 65% to 71% by August 2028.	IS3, IS4
Progression	PTP_1	Increase the proportion of students with a declared disability who are engaged in managerial or professional employment, or further study, or other positive outcomes, 16 months after the completion of their course to match the proportion of students without a declared disability and are engaged in managerial or professional employment, or further study, or other positive outcomes, 16 months after the completion of their course over ten years.*	Increase the proportion of students with a declared disability who are engaged in managerial or professional employment, or further study, or other positive outcomes, 16 months after the completion of their course from 52% to 69% by August 2033 (62% by August 2028).	IS5

* Please note that the measure for progression outcomes has changed since the publication of our previous A&P Plan in 2019 (from DLHE to GO) which are not comparable measures. We have reviewed the targets that were set in 2019 and have determined that the new target set out above is both ambitious and achievable.

4. Intervention strategies and expected outcomes

Intervention strategy 1 – Working with schools/colleges at Key Stages 3-5

Interventions designed to engage with young people in schools and colleges.

Objectives and targets: [PTA_1] [PTA_2] (see section 3 above for details)

Related risks to equality of opportunity for groups targeted by Intervention Strategy 1:	
Possible risks to equality of opportunity for the targeted demographic groups (in the EORR)	<i>Knowledge and skills, information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates, limited choice of course type and delivery mode.</i>
Risks to equality of opportunity identified as relevant to Futureworks' context which are addressed by this Intervention Strategy	<i>Knowledge and skills, information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates.</i>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes
1. School and College Partnerships Development and maintenance of effective and targeted school and college relationships (c. 20-25) to facilitate Activities 2 and 3, below, utilising our relationship with GMHigher (Uni Connect) where appropriate.	0.2 FTE admin Expenses (travel, materials, printing, etc.)	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. • Identification of mutual goals and expectations. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration to design and agree the details, content and delivery processes/ schedules of Activities 2 and 3, below. • Identification and uptake of opportunities to further develop and improve collaborative practice to achieve the objectives. • Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice.
2. Subject Linked Attainment Raising Practical activities, workshops and other activities focused on attainment raising via weekly after school workshops at three schools, with school visits to Futureworks each term and Arts Award certification (worth up to 16 entry tariff points) at year end. Activities to be designed and agreed in collaboration with schools and colleges, however, will broadly include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development and practice • Links to school curriculum LOs • Development of cognitive and metacognitive skills 	Tablets/ Chromebooks. Content creation. Learning materials. Additional tutor costs. Certification fees. 0.2 FTE admin. Staff training. Travel.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mock assessment and/or predicted grades. • Improved creative skills. • Achievement of Arts Award certification.

<p><i>Note: it is intended that these three schools will also engage with Activity 3, below.</i></p>			
<p>3. Preparation for HE: Information, Advice and Guidance Provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) focused on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HE knowledge, awareness and aspirations (linked to career pathways). Termly visits to approximately 20 schools and colleges. 2. HE pathways, application and selection processes, and finance. Termly visits to approximately 10 (likely of the 20) schools and colleges. <p>Delivered via engaging and interactive sessions and, where possible, personalised support.</p>		<p>Content creation. Laptop. Additional delivery costs. 0.1 FTE admin. Staff training. Graphic design. Printing.</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and awareness of HE. • Increased knowledge and awareness of job opportunities in the creative industries. • Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process (Activity 3.2). • Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans (Activity 3.2). • Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection process (Activity 3.2). • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications to HE. • Offers from HE providers. • Enrolments in HE.
<p>Total cost of activities per year</p>			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£66,000	£52,000	£42,000	£42,000

Evidence base and rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. We have also drawn on conversations with school and college stakeholders regarding the types and format of activities that they would find useful and be able to effectively and efficiently engage with, to facilitate the achievement of the stated objectives.

We recognise from the research that disadvantaged students tend to have lower attainment outcomes than their peers (DfE, 2017; OFFA, 2018; EPI, 2020), which affects their progression to HE as well as future outcomes and prospects (OfS, 2022). The evidence also suggests that disadvantaged students are more likely to consider HE later (UCAS, 2021), which can limit their choices. Therefore, interventions should start early, and we have targeted our activity from KS3.

Evidence suggests that linking current academic studies with an individual's future ambitions can increase student motivation and engagement with academic work, as it is seen as personally relevant (EEF, 2016; Midgley et al., 2000). Our focus on subject-specific activities

(creative skill development, careers in the creative industries) draws on evidence that students are more likely to think about and choose a degree subject area earlier in their educational journey (UCAS, 2021), which opens up conversations about the possibilities of HE at earlier stages (e.g. KS3-4). We want to use this to help develop a sense of belonging, which encourages persistence with studies (Hausmann et al., 2007) and is linked to higher academic achievement (Walton & Cohen, 2007). We also draw on the evidence that teaching young people academic skills such as metacognition, and self-regulation can improve their attainment outcomes by encouraging them to self-reflect on how they learn best (Hattie, Biggs, Purdie 1996; Mannion & Mercer, 2016; EEF, 2021).

Our literature review also highlights that providing careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) about HE can help them make more informed decisions (TASO, 2023) and provide them with guidance that may not otherwise have been available to them (Thomas and Quinn, 2007). This is even more the case for specialist subjects such as creative arts (PEC, 2020) Within this, we seek to personalise support where possible (UCAS, 2021).

We have also considered anecdotal feedback we have received in discussions with schools and colleges, which has highlighted the desirability of activities that provide subject-specific skills development that aligns with curriculum learning outcomes, but is not necessarily embedded into curriculum (schools cited logistical barriers to this approach). Activities which provide information and advice about pathways and entry to higher education, linked with industry information and career opportunities, are also desirable. See Annex B for further information.

Evaluation

We intend to evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards of evidence to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. As well as evaluating each individual activity, we will explore how each activity contributes towards achieving the desired outcomes and, where appropriate, the overall objective. We will start the strategy in the 2024-25 academic year, and we intend to disseminate relevant interim findings every year.

In 2023-24, as part of the preparation for the launch of these activities, we will also explore and consider the appropriateness of a comparison group (or groups), which may provide opportunities to work towards Type 3 evidence. We will be guided by TASO small *n* methodologies, and will draw upon collaborative approaches and expertise in evaluation methods provided by our membership to Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service. Such work will include the development of enhanced Theory of Change (ToC) models, and other associated information such as hypotheses and evidence mapping, to enable any appropriate small *n* evaluation. We are also interested in surfacing the attributes of activities and *how* they are delivered that effect outcomes, through process evaluation and ToC. Beyond this note, we have not made specific commitment to this as feasibility of these approaches needs to be considered in collaboration with our partners.

More detailed information on how we will be evaluating each activity is set out below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).
1. School and College Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. 	Process Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils at partner schools and colleges with target characteristics. (T1)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of mutual goals and expectations. • Collaboration, to design and agree the details, content and delivery processes/schedules of Activities 2 and 3, below. • Identification and uptake of opportunities to further develop and improve collaborative practice to achieve the objectives. • Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, in order to improve practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output analysis: the number of schools /colleges in a relationship. (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys and focus groups or interviews with partners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand the effectiveness of the relationship and whether agreed goals / expectations were met. (T1, T2) ○ Identify further opportunities. (T2) ○ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2) <p>Surveys include a baseline survey and thereafter surveys each academic year to measure changes and development of the partnerships. Comparative analysis of data over the surveys will determine how the activity has met the intended outcomes over time. (T2)</p> <p>Up to 5 semi-structured interviews or focus groups will be held every two years (from 2026-27) to explore key themes. (T1, T2)</p> <p>Development of 2-3 school/college partner case studies. (T1, T2)</p>
2. Subject-Linked Attainment Raising	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved predicted / mock assessment grades. • Improved creative skills. • Achievement of Arts Award certification. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis: Number and % of pupils attending activities with target characteristics (T1). • Output analysis: the number of activities delivered per school/college. (T1) • Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriately aligned to (a) School curriculum LOs; (b) Relevant Gatsby Benchmarks. (T1) • Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder experience and perceptions (students and staff). (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline and annual student survey exploring interim outcomes and perceptions of <i>Improved creative skills</i> outcome. (T2) • Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring perceptions of achievement of interim outcomes for students. (T2) • 2-3 student focus groups per annum from 2025-26, to explore key themes from surveys. (T2) • Data Analysis: analysis of predicted grades and/or mock assessments over time (annual). (T2) <i>TBC: Subject to availability of school data and timing, could include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Analysis of mock v. predicted exam results ○ Analysis of pre/post mock assessment results ○ Tracking participant results / predicted results across year groups. • Data Analysis: Assessment scores of creative projects (T2) • Data Analysis: Number and % of participants awarded the Arts Award Certificate. (T2)
3. Preparation for HE: Information,	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and awareness of HE. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p>

Advice and Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and awareness of job opportunities in the creative industries. Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process. Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans. Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection process. Improved motivation and engagement in learning. Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications to HE. Offers from HE providers. Enrolments in HE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis: Number and % of pupils attending activities with target characteristics. (T1) Output analysis: the number of activities delivered per school/college. (T1) Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriately aligned to Gatsby Benchmarks. (T1) Post-activity polls gathering stakeholder experience and perceptions (students and staff). (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring interim outcomes. (T2) Annual end-of-year Teacher/Staff Survey exploring perceptions of achievement of interim outcomes for students. (T2) (Y12-13 cohorts) Data Analysis: Number and % of participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying to HE Receiving offers from HE providers <p><i>At present, we do not have a mechanism for tracking student enrolments into HE. We will explore this (particularly associated costs) collaboratively with our SEER partners in 2024-25, with a view to establishing a tracking mechanism.</i></p>
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Intervention strategy 2 – Working in non-educational settings

Interventions designed to reach individuals and groups in settings outside of schools and colleges, for example, by working with community groups, leaving-care teams and through social media.

Objectives and targets: [PTA_2] [PTA_3] (see section 3 above for details)

Related risks to equality of opportunity for groups targeted by Intervention Strategy 2:	
Possible risks to equality of opportunity for the targeted demographic groups (in the EORR)	<i>Knowledge and skills, information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates, limited choice of course type and delivery mode.</i>
Risks to equality of opportunity identified as relevant to Futureworks' context which are addressed by this Intervention Strategy.	<i>Knowledge and skills, information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates.</i>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes
1. Building strategic relationships. Identification of, and engagement with, strategic partners (e.g. community groups, local authority services, employers) to reach target populations who are not in education.	0.1 FTE admin. Expenses (travel, materials, printing, etc.)	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. Identification of mutual goals and expectations. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration on the design, and delivery processes/ schedules of Activities 2 and 3, below. Access and channels of promotion to target groups regarding available activities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and uptake of opportunities to further develop and improve collaborative practice to achieve the objectives. • Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice.
2. Portfolio building programme. Practical activities, workshops and other activities focused on portfolio building to support entry to creative courses. Delivered via a programme of bi-monthly workshops, each lasting eight weeks, held at Futureworks, focused on developing applicant portfolios.	Learning materials. Additional tutor costs. 0.1 FTE admin. Marketing. Staff training. Travel.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge of how to develop and present a competitive portfolio as required for HE entry. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved candidate portfolios. • Offers from HE providers. • Enrolments in HE.
3. Online advice and preparation for HE: Information, Advice and Guidance. Provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) via: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted social media campaigns, focused on HE knowledge, awareness and aspirations (linked to career pathways). 2. One-to-one online sessions focused on personalised support for HE entry, including interview techniques, personal statements, UCAS and student finance. 	Content creation. Social media advertising. 0.2 FTE admin. 0.2 FTE social media. 60 x 1 hour sessions.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and awareness of HE. • Increased knowledge and awareness of job opportunities in the creative industries. • Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process. • Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans. • Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection process. • Improved self-perceptions about ability to successfully apply for HE and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications to HE. • Offers from HE providers. • Enrolments in HE.

Total cost of activities per year			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£27,000	£27,000	£27,000	£27,000

Evidence base and rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. We have noted in Intervention Strategy 1 evidence about the important role played by CEIAG in helping direct students towards appropriate and relevant higher education provision. Providing specialist IAG about progression into arts-based careers helps to counter

concerns that many economically disadvantaged and BAME students and their families may have about the precarity of arts careers (Broadhead, 2022). CEIAG and industry-linked IAG can help to improve perceptions of ‘possible selves’ for the future (Oyserman and Destin, 2010). In respect of IAG that focuses on HE application processes, we note evidence that suggests students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds may lack some of the forms of social capital that are implicitly expected in the admissions and selection processes (Hayton et al 2015). This Strategy also includes the provision of practical opportunities to develop portfolios. As noted, this aspect of the HE application process can often be more challenging for disadvantaged people who may lack the time, resources, or support required to complete a competitive portfolio of their work (Boliver and Powell 2021). See Intervention Strategy 1 above and Annex B for further information.

Evidence also highlights that creating online arts and creative IAG that includes a focus on careers in the arts helps to reduce student and broader family concerns about creative arts pathways and viable careers outcomes (Access HE, 2016).

Evidence in reports from Access HE, 2016, TASO, 2021 and UCL, 2019 support the activities proposed in this Strategy as specifically effective for students from the global majority, mature learners and care-experienced students, respectively. For care leavers, linking with strategic partners (their Local Authority) and providing one-to-one support is critical to success (Harrison, 2017).

Evaluation

We intend to evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards of evidence to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. As well as evaluating each individual activity, we will explore how each activity contributes towards achieving the desired outcomes and, where appropriate, the overall objective. We will start the strategy in the 2024-25 academic year, and we intend to disseminate relevant interim findings every year.

Again, we will also consider the TASO small *n* methodologies in our evaluation processes and explore whether the development of enhanced Theory of Change and other relevant underpinning information and analyses can be developed. The feasibility of this will be determined with our partners.

More detailed information on how we will be evaluating each activity is set out below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation
		Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).
1. Building strategic relationships	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. Identification of mutual goals and expectations. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration on the design, and delivery 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of people associated with identified organisations with target characteristics (T1). Output analysis: the number of relationships with relevant organisations (T1), <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys and focus groups or interviews with (selected) organisations to:

	<p>processes/ schedules of Activities 2 and 3, below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and channels of promotion to target groups regarding available activities. • Identification and uptake of opportunities to further develop and improve collaborative practice to achieve the objectives. • Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand the effectiveness of the relationship and whether agreed goals / expectations were met. (T1, T2) ○ Identify further opportunities. (T2) ○ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2) <p>Surveys include a baseline survey and thereafter surveys each academic year to measure changes and development of the partnerships. Comparative analysis of data over the surveys will determine how the activity has met the intended outcomes over time. (T2)</p> <p>2-5 semi-structured interviews or focus groups will be held every two years (from 2026-27) to explore key themes. (T1, T2)</p>
2. Portfolio building programme	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge of how to develop and present a competitive portfolio as required for HE entry. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved candidate portfolios. • Offers from HE providers. • Enrolments in HE. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis: Number and % of participants attending programme sessions with target characteristics (T1). • Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1) • Post-activity polls gathering participant experience and perceptions. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys and creative focus groups or interviews with participants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand the effectiveness of the sessions and whether increases in knowledge, confidence and sense of belonging have been met. (T1, T2) ○ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2) ○ Assessment on portfolio knowledge and/or quality (may include elements of pre/post design) (T2) • (TBC - If possible through tracking mechanisms) Data Analysis: Number and % of participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applying to HE ○ Receiving offers from HE providers • Development of 2-3 participant case studies (T1, T2).
3. Online advice and preparation for HE: Information, Advice and Guidance	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and awareness of HE. • Increased knowledge and awareness of job opportunities in the creative industries. • Increased knowledge of HE pathways and the HE application process. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis: Number of learners engaging with social media posts (T1) • Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils attending online one-to-one sessions with target characteristics (T1). • Thematic analysis of types of questions raised in one-to-ones to inform future support (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of financial support and student loans. Improved confidence and preparation for HE selection process. Improved self-perceptions about ability to successfully apply for HE and confidence. Improved sense of belonging in HE / pathways to HE. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications to HE. Offers from HE providers. Enrolments in HE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of target learners following calls to action (e.g. joining mailing lists) (T1) Data Analysis: Number of correct answers to social media polls regarding HE (e.g. Instagram) (T1, T2) Surveys with one-to-one session participants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the effectiveness of the sessions and whether increases in knowledge, confidence and belonging have been met. (T1, T2) Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and what works. (T1, T2) Development of 2-3 participant case studies (T1, T2).
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Intervention strategy 3 – Financial support

Interventions designed to reduce financial barriers to accessing higher education, and to support disadvantaged and underrepresented students whilst on course.

Objectives and targets: [PTA_1] [PTA_2] [PTA_3] [PTS_1] [PTS_2] [PTS_3] [PTS_4] (see section 3 above for details)

Related risks to equality of opportunity for groups targeted by Intervention Strategy 3:	
Possible risks to equality of opportunity for the targeted demographic groups (in the EORR)	<i>Knowledge and skills, information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates, limited choice of course type and delivery mode, insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, cost pressures, capacity issues, mental health.</i>
Risks to equality of opportunity identified as relevant to Futureworks' context which are addressed by this Intervention Strategy	<i>Information and guidance, perception of higher education, application rates, insufficient academic support, cost pressures, capacity issues, mental health.</i>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes
1. Fee waivers and Bursaries Provision of targeted fee waivers and bursaries to eligible students. Bursaries Minimum of £1,500 awarded to all year 1 students who meet the eligibility criteria described in section 8.1. Fee waivers Futureworks will honour legacy fee waivers under previous plan, for students approved under our previous Plan (to 2023-24 academic	Bursary and fee waiver awards (£). 0.1 FTE Admin. Materials/ printing.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security. Student's financial needs are supported. Students able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging). Job/ income pressure is decreased. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation and completion rates for target students. Increased attainment rates for target students.

year). These are full tuition fee waivers for target students. We will ensure effective and proactive/ upfront communication with students and promotion of opportunities to access support.		
2. Travel fund Provision of travel subsidies for travel to Futureworks open days and interviews. Cost of return travel reimbursed, up to £50.	Awards (£). 0.1 FTE Admin. Materials/ printing.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target students can attend on-campus open day and interview events. Reduced financial pressures/ anxiety. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased enrolments from target groups.
3. Disability Assessment Awards Provision of Disability Assessment Fee subsidies. Cost of assessments reimbursed, up to £1,000.	Awards (£). 0.1 FTE Admin. Materials/ printing.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to ability to obtain assessment and financial support to do so. Student's financial needs are supported. Assessments for disability are provided. Assessed students gain access to Disability Support Allowance (DSA) Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Students are personally and appropriately supported with study. Improved module / assessment grades. Improved continuation, completion and attainment rates for disabled students.
4. Hardship Funds Targeted Hardship Funds for underrepresented groups at £500 per application.	Awards (£). 0.1 FTE Admin. Materials/ printing.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security. Student's financial needs are supported. Students able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging). Job/ income pressure is decreased. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation and completion rates for target students. Increased attainment rates for target students.

Total cost of activities per year			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£124,000	£121,000	£142,000	£146,000

Evidence base and rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. Financial support has been shown to be an effective mechanism for supporting students' continuation, progression and attainment (Nursaw 2015; TASO 2023). Receiving a bursary can reduce a student's chance of discontinuing (Harrison and McCaig 2017). Similarly, Halliday-Wynes & Nguyen (2014) suggest that disadvantaged students often experience financial stress as they seek additional financial aid from family or friends. Our package of support is designed to mitigate or reduce this stress.

Harrison et al. (2018) point to a range of other positive impacts that students derive from the receipt of financial support. These include capacity-building related to the ability to focus on their studies, have a social life and build a social network, and in terms of developing self-esteem. Further information can be found in Annex B.

Evaluation

We intend to evaluate Activities 1 and 4 within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards of evidence to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. We will not evaluate the overall Strategy. We will start the strategy in the 2024-25 academic year, and we intend to disseminate relevant findings every two years. We will use the qualitative aspects of the OfS financial support toolkit, particularly the survey tool and the interview questions. Our limited cohort sizes prohibit use of the statistical analysis tool, however we will explore collaborative opportunities to use this part of the toolkit with our SEER members, through combining data.

More detailed information on how we will be evaluating each activity is set out below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).
1. Fee Waivers and Bursaries	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security. Student's financial needs are supported. Students able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging). Job/ income pressure is decreased. <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation and completion rates for target students. Increased attainment rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students receiving fee waivers and bursaries (T1), analysed by student characteristics. Output Analysis: Total spend on fee waivers and bursaries, including by student characteristics. (T1) Poll gathering bursary/ fee waiver holder's experience and perceptions (students and staff) of the process / allocation. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per relevant parts of the OfS <i>Evaluating the Impact of Financial Support</i> toolkit, every two years from 2024-25.
2. Travel Fund	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target students can attend on-campus open day and interview events. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of people claiming travel fund moneys and bursaries (T1), analysed by

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced financial pressures/ anxiety. <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased enrolments from target groups. 	<p>student characteristics (where possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output Analysis: Total spend on travel, including by student characteristics. (T1) Poll / short survey gathering travel fund recipient's experience and perceptions on the process / allocation. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: enrolments by travel fund recipients, by student characteristics.
3. Disability Assessment Awards	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to ability to obtain assessment and financial support to do so. Student's financial needs are supported. Assessments for disability are provided. Assessed students gain access to Disability Support Allowance (DSA) <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Students are personally and appropriately supported with study. Improved module / assessment grades. Improved continuation, completion and attainment rates for disabled students. 	<p>Process evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Disability Assessments provided. Number and % of students accessing DSA. <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey (drawing on, for example, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and/or creative focus groups with engaged students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the impact of access to support, academically and personally. Data Analysis: continuation, completion and attainment outcomes for disabled learners, against their peers.
4. Hardship Funds	<p>Intermediate outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing, linked to financial security. Student's financial needs are supported. Students able to participate in various academic and social facets of university life (positively impacting sense of belonging). Job/ income pressure is decreased. <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation and completion rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of students receiving hardship funds (T1), analysed by student characteristics. Output Analysis: Total spend on hardship funds, including by student characteristics. (T1) Poll gathering hardship fund holder's experience and perceptions (students and staff) of the process / allocation. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per relevant parts of the OfS <i>Evaluating the Impact of Financial</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attainment rates for target students. 	Support toolkit, every two years from 2024-25.
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Intervention strategy 4 – Broadening support through partnerships and working in communities

Interventions designed to expand Futureworks' reach, and develop a stronger student community, by building long-lasting relationships with third-sector organisations and other higher education providers.

Objectives and targets: [PTS_1] [PTS_2] [PTS_3] [PTS_4] (see section 3 above for details)

Related risks to equality of opportunity for groups targeted by Intervention Strategy 4:	
Possible risks to equality of opportunity for the targeted demographic groups (in the EORR)	<i>Insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, cost pressures, capacity issues, mental health.</i>
Risks to equality of opportunity identified as relevant to Futureworks' context which are addressed by this Intervention Strategy	<i>Insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, mental health.</i>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes
1. Third party collaboration Identification of, and developing work with, strategic third-party partners (e.g. organisations providing wellbeing, engagement, professional development services) to broaden our support for target students. Students (incl. target groups) will be consulted on the types of support / improvements required and will be involved in collaborative decision-making where possible.	Travel. Materials. 0.1 FTE admin.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of needs and relevant partners/services. Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. Improved and more wide-ranging, relevant support for target students. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student needs met through engagement with services. Better connections and signposting to third-party services. Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice. Increased continuation rates for target students. Increased completion and attainment rates for target students.
2. Building Student Communities Collaborating and building networks with students from other institutions.	Travel. Materials. 0.1 FTE admin.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of relevant and interested student communities. Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. Improved connections and engagement between students, particularly amongst diverse groups. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased student sense of belonging. Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased continuation rates for target students.
3. Celebrating creativity and inclusion In partnership with our students, we will work with community/ social/ creative arts groups to participate in events that help to promote social engagement and celebrate our creative arts specialism and diversity.	Travel. Materials. 0.1 FTE admin.	Intermediate outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of relevant groups. Improved connections and engagement as between students and with community, particularly amongst diverse groups. Participation and collaboration in a range of events and opportunities. Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased student sense of belonging. Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing. Increased continuation rates for target students.

Total cost of activities per year			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000

Evidence base and rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. Evidence highlights that there is a connect between successful learning and increased sense of belonging (Meehan and Howells, 2018). Students who have a clear understanding of the support available to them and how to access it are more likely to develop a sense of belonging, and therefore continue with their studies (Thomas, 2012). This underpins our work with support service providers and ensuring that services are available, accessible, effectively signposted and utilised.

Evidence also suggests that positive peer relationships are also a success factor that can increase a student's sense of belonging (Thomas, 2011) and academic engagement (Furrer et Al, 2015). To mitigate the challenges of smaller student cohorts and smaller numbers of students with diverse characteristics, we are broadening this concept to support interaction with students from other institutions to build a broader peer community. Similarly, engaging students in events or project work with peers and the broader community has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on sense of belonging (Batchelder, 2022). This underpins the inclusion of collaboration with community/social/creative arts groups in our Strategy. See Annex B for further information.

Evaluation

We intend to evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards of evidence to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. We will evaluate each individual activity, but will not evaluate the overall Strategy. We will start

the strategy in the 2024-25 academic year, and we intend to disseminate relevant interim findings every year.

More detailed information on how we will be evaluating each activity is set out below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).
1. Third-party collaboration	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of needs and relevant partners/services. • Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. • Improved and more wide-ranging, relevant support for target students. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student needs met through engagement with services. • Better connections and signposting to third-party services. • Deepening understanding and insights of the challenges, barriers and what works for target groups, to improve practice. • Increased continuation rates for target students. • Increased completion and attainment rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output analysis: the number of relationships with relevant organisations (T1) • Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1) • Data analysis: analysis of referrals / sign-posting (number and %) to third-party services (T1) • Data analysis: analysis of uptake (number and %) of third-party services by target groups (T1) • Where possible and appropriate (TBC with identified partners) post-activity polls gathering participant experience and perceptions. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys and focus groups/ interviews with participants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Understand the effectiveness of the engagements in meeting student needs. ◦ Draw out deeper understanding about challenges and further possible improvements to the student support services provided. (T2) • Data analysis: continuation, completion and attainment rates by target groups (T2) • <i>If possible</i>: Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between those who have engaged with third party organisations and those who have not. (T2 → T3) • Development of 2-3 participant case studies (T1, T2).
2. Building Student Communities	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of relevant and interested student communities. • Effective (targeted, positive, structural, sustainable) relationships and partnerships. • Improved connections and engagement between students, 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output analysis: the number of relationships with other student groups/ associations/ Unions (T1) • Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1) • Focus groups / roundtable gathering student reflections on experiences and perceptions about involvement in the community. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation</p>

	<p>particularly amongst diverse groups.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased student sense of belonging. Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing. Increased continuation rates for target students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey (drawing on, for example, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and/or creative focus groups with engaged students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the effectiveness of student communities in promoting increases in sense of belonging and emotional and mental wellbeing (T1, T2). Data analysis: continuation rates by target groups (T2). Development of a case study of practice and outcomes (T1, T2).
3. Celebrating creativity and inclusion	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of relevant groups. Improved connections and engagement as between students and with community, particularly amongst diverse groups. Participation and collaboration in a range of events and opportunities. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased student sense of belonging. Improved student emotional and mental wellbeing. Increased continuation rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output analysis: the number of relationships with community groups (T1) Output analysis: the number of activities delivered (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey (drawing on, for example, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and/or creative focus groups with engaged students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the effectiveness of extracurricular community participation in promoting increases in sense of belonging and emotional and mental wellbeing (T1, T2). Data analysis: continuation rates by target groups (T2).

Intervention strategy 5 – Provision of additional support for enrolled students

Interventions designed to provide targeted support, removing barriers to student success and progression.

Objectives and targets: [PTS_1] [PTS_2] [PTS_3] [PTS_4] [PTP_1] (see section 3 above for details)

Related risks to equality of opportunity for groups targeted by Intervention Strategy 5:	
Possible risks to equality of opportunity for the targeted demographic groups (in the EORR)	<i>Insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, cost pressures, capacity issues, mental health, progression from higher education.</i>
Risks to equality of opportunity identified as relevant to Futureworks' context which are addressed by this Intervention Strategy	<i>Insufficient academic support, insufficient personal support, cost pressures, capacity issues, mental health, progression from higher education.</i>

Activity	Inputs	Outcomes

<p>1. Programme of Academic Support Delivery of one-to-one and group sessions/ lectures/ tutorials focused on development of academic skills and mindset. Content is likely to broadly include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic skills development and practice (e.g. essay writing, referencing, note taking, time management) • Development of cognitive and metacognitive skills • Understanding and responding to assessment criteria and expectations • Locating, evaluating, synthesising and adapting to new forms of knowledge <p>Sessions will be embedded in, co- and extra-curricular. Students, subject specialists, and support staff will collaborate on provision.</p>	<p>Materials. 0.1 FTE admin. 0.5 FTE support staff.</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. • Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. • Improved module / assessment grades. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved continuation rates for target students. • Improved completion and attainment rates for target students.
<p>2. Disability support Provision of tailored support for disabled students, including additional and personalised support with practical tasks and assessment; setting up equipment and learning how to use complex technical resources, etc. Also, building on Activity 3, below, tailored careers and employability support considering disability in the workplace.</p> <p>Support can be embedded in, co- and/or extra-curricular. Students and specialist support staff will collaborate on effective provision.</p>	<p>Materials. 0.1 FTE admin. 0.5 FTE support staff.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>3. Career and Employability Development Delivery of one-to-one and group sessions/ lectures/ tutorials focused on the development and management of career and employability skills and capacities. Content is likely to broadly include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and Employability skills development and practice (e.g. CV writing, interview preparation, developing core competencies) • Professional communication, networking and relationship building skills • Opportunities to meet and network with employers and industry • Labour market information (LMI) • Understanding employer and industry standards, desired attributes and competencies <p>Sessions will be embedded in, co- and extra-curricular.</p>	<p>Materials. 0.1 FTE admin. 1.0 FTE support staff.</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills. • Increased level of professional networks and contacts. • Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies. • Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence. • Improved motivation and engagement in learning. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved attainment rates for target students. • Improved progression rates for target students.

Total cost of activities per year			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
£76,000	£76,000	£76,000	£76,000

Evidence base and rationale

We have conducted a literature review, which includes specific references to the range of materials OfS has identified in its guidance, plus a range of other research and best practice references. We note that levels of preparation for higher education can vary significantly between students. Disadvantaged students, and those who are not supported by family or friends with prior HE experience, are generally less aware of about the criteria for success and educational processes (the 'hidden curriculum', Sambell and McDowell, 1998). Students who are supported to 'know the ropes' (Whitty et al, 2015) are likely to do better than those who are not (Bathmaker et al, 2013). Our programme of academic support is designed to help students without this prior knowledge successfully negotiate the higher education study process.

Evidence also suggests that differences exist between A-levels and Year 1 at university in terms of student experience, practices, and understanding of academic writing conventions (Sally Baker, 2018). Differences are especially typical of 'locating, evaluating, synthesising and adapting to new forms of knowledge', and can affect retention and attainment. For target students, these issues are likely compounded by lower levels of preparation detailed above. Evidence highlights embedded models of teaching academic skills such as writing, where students, subject specialists, and academic skills specialists (e.g., learning/academic support staff) collaborate (Richard Bailey, 2018). Within these models, the value of paying particular attention to supporting target students is reinforced (Ibid.).

Students with disabilities remain less likely to be awarded a 1st or 2:1 degree classification than students without disabilities. We offer dedicated programme of support for students with disabilities, to help close the continuation and awarding gap for disabled students at Futureworks. Our support is personalised and tailored to respond both to academic needs and the specific requirements of each student's disability and related barriers. This is informed by research-informed evidence, for example students with mental health conditions are more likely to consider "dropping out" (Office for Students, 2020).

Disadvantaged and disabled students currently have less positive employment outcomes than more advantaged peers (OfS 2021). Students will vary in the extent to which they bring and can valorise employability capital. Our progression support aims to focus on the scaffolded enhancement of students' social and professional capital (Badoer et al., 2020). Additionally, access to industry, employers and professionals provides exposure and connections for target groups who are less likely to have existing professional networks (Thompson 2017; Clarke 2018). Our work with employers and industry bodies will support target students to develop key attributes, and the competencies required for progression into relevant and highly-skilled employment (Mebert et al 2020; Guo et al 2020).

For further information, see Annex B.

Evaluation

We intend to evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards of evidence to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes.

We will evaluate each individual activity, but not the Strategy overall. We will start the strategy in the 2024-25 academic year, and we intend to disseminate relevant interim findings every year.

By 2026-27, we will have also explored and considered the appropriateness of a comparison group (or groups), which may provide opportunity to work towards Type 3 evidence. We will be guided by TASO small *n* methodologies as well as drawing on collaborative approaches and expertise in evaluation methods provided by our membership to Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service. Such work may include the development of enhanced Theory of Change (ToC) models, and other associated information such as hypotheses and evidence mapping, to enable any considered appropriate small *n* evaluation. We are also interested in surfacing the attributes of activities and *how* they are delivered, that effect outcomes, through process evaluation and ToC. Beyond this note, we have not made specific commitment to this as feasibility of these approaches needs to be considered in collaboration with our partners.

More detailed information on how we will be evaluating each activity is set out below.

Activity	Outcomes	Method(s) of evaluation Standards of evidence denoted as (T1), (T2), (T3).
<p>1. Programme of Academic Support</p> <p>AND</p> <p>2. Disability Support</p> <p>Given consistent intended outcomes across these activities, they will be evaluated using the same methodology.</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved cognitive and metacognitive outcomes. Improved motivation and engagement in learning. Improved self-perceptions about academic abilities and confidence. Improved module/ assessment grades. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved continuation rates for target students. Improved completion and attainment rates for target students. 	<p>Process Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging and % of pupils with target characteristics. (T1) Output analysis: Number of sessions run. (T1) Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs self-sign up for extra-curricular activities, by student characteristics. (T1) Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions. (T2) <p>Impact Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of academic skills. (T2) 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) Data Analysis: module attainment and attainment (degree outcome) by target students. (T2) <i>If possible</i>: Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with (extra-curricular) academic support and those who have not. (T2 → T3)
<p>3. Career and Employability Development</p>	<p>Intermediate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and capacity relating to career and employability skills. 	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Analysis: Number and % of pupils engaging and % of pupils with target characteristics (T1).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased level of professional networks and contacts. Increased knowledge and understanding of the labour market, professional standards and competencies. Improved self-perceptions about career and employability capacities, readiness and confidence. Improved motivation and engagement in learning. <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved career management and development, employability and professional connections amongst target students. Improved attainment rates for target students. Improved progression rates for target students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output analysis: Number of sessions run (T1) Data analysis: Analysis of referrals vs self-sign up for extra-curricular activities, by student characteristics. (T1) Some post-activity polls gathering student experience and perceptions (T2). Annual end-of-year Staff Survey exploring whether content was appropriate and effective, and to explore challenges. (T1) <p>Impact Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline and annual student survey exploring perceptions and confidence in respect of career development and management / employability skills and professional networks. (T2) 2-3 student focus groups at minimum every two years from 2024-25, to explore key themes from polls and surveys. (T2) Data Analysis: continuation and completion rates by target groups. (T2) Data Analysis: attainment by target students. (T2) Data analysis: progression into employment and into highly skilled employment or post-graduate study pathways for target students. <i>If possible:</i> Comparative analysis of outcomes (continuation, completion, attainment) between students who have engaged with (extra-curricular) careers and employability support and those who have not. (T2 → T3)
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Summary of publication plan

The table below sets out when evaluation findings will be shared and the format that they will take:

Format of findings	When findings will be shared
<p>We will produce an annual summary progress and review report, which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide insights on the effectiveness and progress of relevant activities in this Strategy based on the achievement of intended outcomes. 2. Capture learning and insights that inform practice improvements and any appropriate changes and developments. <p>Highlights and themes from this report will be shared online, for example through our website / SEER website.</p>	<p>Progress 'highlights' will be shared annually.</p>

We will produce an 'Evaluation To Date' or an 'End of Project' Report (whichever is relevant) capturing all evaluation and findings, disseminated online via our website and the SEER website, and via channels mentioned below where appropriate.	Every 2 years, from 2026-27 <i>(Intervention Strategy 3 only)</i> 4 years on from Plan commencement (Autumn/Winter 2028) and/or at the conclusion of projects.
We will also contribute at conferences and through workshop and events hosted by networks such as SEER and Independent Higher Education (IHE).	At minimum every 2 years, starting from 2025-26.
We will contribute to other calls for evidence, such as through TASO.	As they arise, at minimum every 2 years.

5. Whole provider approach and alignment with other strategies

Widening access and participation is an institutional priority, which is embedded into Futureworks' mission, values, strategies and operations - reinforcing our whole provider approach. We recognise the importance of ensuring that students, whatever their background, are supported in accessing our programmes and experiencing successful outcomes. The Board of Directors and the management team are deeply committed to the aims set out in this Access and Participation Plan.

Widening participation values and goals encompasses a whole student lifecycle approach, from admission to progression. In addition to their contribution to the formulation of this Plan (see section 6), students also share in the embedding of widening participation more generally, through the student induction process, committee membership and regular consultation. We will continue to actively engage our students in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our widening access and participation interventions.

We recognise the principle of universal access to our courses, and the importance of our recruitment and selection processes in achieving this, avoiding any unnecessary entry requirements which may result in direct or indirect discrimination relating to sex, gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, social background, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or sexual orientation. This ethos is also embedded in our approach to learning, teaching and assessment. Additionally, our academic, personal and financial support measures are vital in helping students with differing educational, social and cultural backgrounds to achieve their full potential and to remove obstacles to success, including after graduation.

We are active in developing collaborative partnership measures, particularly with schools and colleges in the region, enhanced through our close relationship with GMHigher. Our Industry Advisory Group also plays an important role in advising us on the most effective methods of increasing the attractiveness of students from underrepresented groups, and developing their employability skills.

Staff across Futureworks (including academic, professional, technical and support staff) have a shared commitment to our organisational values, and understand how their role contributes to our widening participation goals. In formulating this plan, staff from across the organisation were invited to contribute their experience, ideas and suggestions.

Futureworks Board of Directors have been involved from the initial formulation of the Plan, and throughout the development process. The commitment of our Finance Director played an integral part in decision-making and priority-setting, making the most effective use of resources, and ensuring alignment with existing strategies. By adopting a pragmatic approach to access and participation planning we have ensured that this Plan is ambitious, realistic, robust, and is driven by a strong management direction. The Vice Principal continues to be responsible for managing access and participation at Futureworks, recognising its central importance.

We have ensured that this Access and Participation Plan complies with the Equality Act 2010 and is aligned with our Equality and Diversity Policy. In formulating and implementing this plan we recognise the distinct needs of individuals who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and those who do not. We also recognise the needs of individuals having an intersection of characteristics, and work to actively foster an inclusive community, cultivating good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, and its associated processes play an important part in achieving the aims and objectives of the Access and Participation Plan, ensuring that programme delivery contributes to success for all students, and that the risk of unconscious discrimination is recognised and minimised. For example, assignments are designed to be inclusive, reflecting a diverse socio-cultural-economic environment, as defined by both the Equality and Diversity Policy and embedded in our Access and Participation Plan. Practical assignments incorporate flexibility to ensure that students from all backgrounds are not disadvantaged by the requirements of the assignment. Wherever appropriate, assignments are designed to encourage students to draw on their own context - an example being film scripts and video productions, which may focus on the student's own personal experiences, while challenging them to channel their creativity, using the techniques, resources and support to help them realise their vision.

6. Student consultation

In the course of preparing this Plan we held a number of consultative forums (including presentations and focus groups) to which all staff, students and other stakeholders were invited. Our Student Partner representatives were actively involved, and we were particularly careful to encourage students from different backgrounds to be involved in these discussions.

A presentation was made to the Student Partner Forum, where the Student Partners were invited to produce and submit a separate student submission. The students expressed a preference that their input should take the form of a direct contribution to the development of the Futureworks Access and Participation Plan, and they chose not to provide a separate student submission.

During our consultations with staff and students we collaboratively reviewed Futureworks' access and participation data, identifying trends, and agreeing target groups. Discussions

followed in which possible intervention strategies and activities were considered, and our monitoring and evaluation priorities agreed.

Following these meetings, an online focus group was held, to which all students were invited. The students commented that the wording of the financial and mental health support information could be clearer and more student-friendly, and it was agreed that students will have opportunities to contribute to the production of this information in future. Students also commented favourably on the support provided for students experiencing mental health problems, and were reassured by the explicit references in this Plan, but noted that communication about the range of support services provided by Futureworks could be more frequent and more accessible. Students were very positive and enthusiastic about contributing to outreach work, and were keen to be involved in creating and developing materials and resources for these activities, as well as being directly involved in the activities themselves.

Further consultation with students took the form of an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of our financial support measures and how well we communicate the availability of support to our students. Respondents to the evaluation survey indicated that receiving financial support helps students to alleviate anxiety and allows a greater concentration on studies than would have been possible without the funding; this aligns with broader findings from across the sector and suggests that provision of financial support will be a useful measure in supporting our students to manage their mental health and wellbeing in the future. Feedback from the students in this independent evaluation also indicated that we can improve our communications relating to the availability of financial support, which is consistent with our own internal findings, as reported above.

Following completion of the first draft of this Plan, a second round of online focus groups were held, where students had the opportunity to comment and make suggestions. The final draft of this Plan was presented to the Academic Board for approval. As members of the Academic Board, Senior Student Partners (and senior staff) had a final opportunity to comment.

We will promote and encourage student engagement throughout the life of this Plan, including its delivery, monitoring and evaluation. However, we recognise the need to engage a more diverse student representation in these activities, and to be more proactive in achieving this. We will work closely with Student Partners and the wider student body in the generation and development of initiatives towards this aim, which may include additional promotion of the importance of student engagement during and after the induction process - fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity, which builds students' confidence and readiness to put themselves forward; generating awareness of the benefits of participation to them, as well as to the community; seeking ways of improving access through developing new activities or adapting existing initiatives. In setting these aims we have taken account of published research on strategies for broadening the diversity of students engaged in volunteering, governance and related activities.

Involvement in delivery of the Plan will be achieved through student and alumni participation in the student induction process, outreach activities, and other widening participation activities. This will include development activities such as ongoing training and support. Involvement in monitoring and evaluation of the Plan will be ensured through student membership of the Access and Participation Steering Group, and student representation on internal committees, contributions to the Futureworks Annual Conference, and through the provision of regular input and feedback via surveys, consultations and focus groups.

All students with responsibilities and/or undertaking activities relating to the Access and Participation Plan will undertake awareness and development programmes appropriate to

their roles. Materials provided for meetings are produced in a format that is accessible to students, with special provision made for students with disabilities. Student briefings are held before meetings where appropriate, to help their understanding of the issues, to help them frame their consultations with the wider student body, and to ensure that they can play a full and meaningful part in the subsequent meeting.

The Access and Participation Plan, and associated activities and reports, including the results of monitoring, student input and feedback, and ongoing developments, will be published on the Futureworks website and myFutureworks VLE, and disseminated through other channels, to ensure that all students are kept informed and have the opportunity to contribute.

7. Evaluation of the Plan

Working in partnership with the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, we will be engaged in an ongoing evaluation of our intervention strategies, and will continuously respond to the evaluation findings to improve and develop our practices.

7.1 Strategic context for evaluation

Evaluation and research are part of our whole provider approach to access and participation. Our academic team contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of targets, intervention strategies and activities in this Plan through contributing qualitatively and quantitatively to the evaluation process. Our data team will ensure that data capture is appropriate for the required monitoring and evaluation outputs, including designing new reports and processes to capture, collate and extract data for various evaluation and research questions. We also draw on the skills of staff responsible for the delivery of the activities in this Plan, and our student representatives, to effectively incorporate evaluation into our interventions.

In assessing our current context for evaluation, using the *OfS evaluation self-assessment tool*, we are 'emerging' across all areas. We have some foundations in place, but need to develop our practices, including embedding evaluation into activity design and delivery and ensuring feedback cycles into improving practice. Therefore, as we are continuing to build our cross-institution capacities for effective evaluation and the application of findings to improve practice, staff and student representatives will be supported with training in Theory of Change and evaluation methods, provided through our SEER membership.

Students play an important role in this process and we will work in partnership with our student representatives on the design and implementation of evaluation and research, particularly where this pertains to current students.

SEER provides us with the evaluation and research expertise we need to deliver our commitments in these areas. We will actively participate in this network, which provides us with opportunities to be part of collaborative research and evaluation projects as well as learning and sharing practice with other members and external stakeholders. SEER hosts an annual Symposium and regular workshops, roundtables and 'learning lunches' throughout the year, as well as providing us with opportunities to showcase our practice and insights. We will also engage with TASO and other relevant organisations in calls for evidence, conferences and events, and training.

7.2 Activity design

As detailed in section 4 of this Plan, evaluation is integral to the design of our interventions. We have built effective evaluation practice into our strategies by establishing a range of evaluation measures attached to the individual activities that contribute towards the overall objective of each strategy. We can therefore build up an understanding of which activities are effective and which are not. We have taken a Theory of Change approach to the development of our Intervention Strategies, identifying clear intended outcomes (intermediate and end) and a supporting evidence base that has informed our activity development and challenged assumptions. With the help of SEER, we will continue to review, develop and strengthen our Theories of Change (ToC), adding to our evidence base as our evaluation findings emerge and developing enhanced activity-level ToCs where required.

7.3 Evaluation design

We have collaborated with SEER, and drawn from OfS and TASO toolkits and guidance on effective evaluation approaches. We have considered how the outcomes of activities can be evaluated credibly, particularly given our context as a small and specialist provider. Employing mixed method approaches is particularly important, as we will need to rely on qualitative data to support our understanding, or fill gaps, in quantitative data. We will triangulate findings where possible and seek to deepen our insights through qualitative methods. Given the developmental stage of our evaluation practice, the majority of our evaluations are type 1 (narrative), and type 2 (empirical enquiry) of the OfS 'Standards of Evidence'. We have however noted that we will explore and consider where type 3 evaluation could be implemented in future.

Our evaluation approach has also considered the context and scale of the activities and, as we have proposed working with strategic partners (schools, colleges, community groups, specialist service providers) in three of our Intervention Strategies, we wish to note that some flexibility and development may be required as our collaborations take shape, allowing for input and advice from partners.

We have also considered our context as a Higher Education Provider focused on the creative industries and, where appropriate, will trial more creative evaluation instruments (including exploring innovative methods of conducting surveys, focus groups and interviews). This may help to mitigate the issue of survey fatigue, which is a significant issue for effective evaluation and is compounded in small cohorts, where the same students are more likely to be subjects of multiple evaluation and research projects. We will continue to be cognisant of this in the collection of feedback, and have aligned our evaluation and measures across our activities to enable us to minimise the number of collection points (where possible and appropriate).

Our evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been formulated based on the intended outcomes and objectives of our activities. Where appropriate and possible, we will consider and employ validated scales in our evaluation practices. We have also considered evaluation that spans process and impact, to provide comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of our activities. We will explore, with SEER, further research projects in relation to our activities and our ambition to better understand the experiences and challenges of targeted groups, and issues of equality of opportunity.

7.4 Implementing our evaluation plan

We will collaborate internally across the institution and with our strategic partners to deliver our evaluation plan. We will be guided by our school, college and community partners, and our students, to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

Our evaluation process will comply with all Futureworks policies, including the Ethical Practice Policy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. In collecting, storing and analysing data, Futureworks complies at all times with all legal requirements relating to data protection, and follows all ethical, safeguarding, legal and risk considerations. We meet all the conditions of registration set out in the condition of registration E2, and we will take all reasonable steps to comply with the provisions of our approved access and participation plan, as set out in condition A1 of the regulatory framework.

As noted above, we have become members of the Specialist Evidence, Evaluation and Research (SEER) service, with whom we will work in partnership to deliver our evaluation plan. A Data Sharing Agreement has also been established. SEER provides us with opportunities to collaborate on various evaluation and research items, including for example the evaluation of the impact of financial support, using the OfS toolkit.

The design of our evaluation has also been heavily informed by intended and projected standardised outcomes being adopted by SEER across its membership base, which introduces efficiencies and provides opportunities to increase the sample size and strengthen evaluation, helping to mitigate the issue of small datasets. SEER incorporates and draws on TASO guidance on best practices for evaluations with small cohorts (small n). Further, such collaborations may provide us with access to tools that would otherwise be unaffordable. For example, in respect of our access activity, we have noted the possibility of implementing tracking, which will be explored via SEER. As a member of a practice network, we are also able to participate in peer review of practice and evaluation, and share practice and findings.

As a smaller provider we are also well placed to respond with agility to interim findings and emerging data. We are able to be responsive in adapting our activities as new evidence arises, to help us achieve our objectives and targets, and continuously improve our practice.

7.5 Learning from and disseminating findings

We are committed to sharing our learning and findings internally, with our partners, within our close networks and with the broader sector, to develop stronger and a more comprehensive volume of evidence about what works and what can be improved. We are committed to helping to grow the evidence base relating to equality of opportunity in higher education, and we will submit evaluation outputs to OfS' repository of evidence as appropriate.

In section 4 we have set out our publishing plan, which includes publishing findings on interim and longer term outcomes through a range of channels. We will be creative in developing the communication format and methods, aimed at diverse audiences and for a variety of purposes. We will ensure that our findings are open access.

Our SEER membership and partnership with SEER in developing and delivering our evaluation plan provides us with access to academic experts in evaluation, including in the access and participation space and the broader teaching and learning arena. These individuals will be involved in evaluation design, delivery and analysis.

Futureworks is also a member of Independent Higher Education (IHE), AdvanceHE, NNECL and NAMSS, through which we can share and present findings. It is anticipated that we will actively contribute to conferences, network events and publications. Where appropriate we will draw on existing networks to collaborate and engage with similar organisations. We also look forward to sharing our findings and our developing thinking with other small specialist institutions and SEER members, and to collaboration on the development of effective practice in this community.

Internally, developing a community of practice (staff and students) focused on access and participation will help to facilitate improvements to sharing evaluation findings, and subsequent improvements to practice. Shared practice across the institution allows for review and feedback on evaluation findings and reports, and discussion regarding the improvements that could be made. More broadly, evaluation findings related to access and participation work will inform other agendas and practice, such as programme review and revalidation, communications and recruitment strategies and community engagement. We will publish the findings of our evaluation activities on our website as well as on our VLE.

7.6 Governance arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Vice Principal will have responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this Plan. Reporting to the Academic Board, our Access and Participation Steering Group will play a key role in the monitoring and reporting process. Membership of the Steering Group includes an independent chair, a member of the Board of Directors, members of staff, a representative from SEER, and two student representatives. The group will oversee the implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the Access and Participation Plan, advise on contemporary research, and make reports and recommendations to the Academic Board; including highlighting risk and recommending any necessary changes to the Access & Participation Plan (where appropriate). If the group find that progress towards objectives set out in the Plan is not being achieved, it may make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding any additional investment required.

Information about how we will evaluate our intervention strategies is included in section 4.

8. Provision of information to students

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

The Futureworks website provides accessible and detailed information about tuition fees, the availability of financial support, level of funding and criteria for eligibility, along with a financial support application form. 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 ensure that timely and accurate tuition fee information is published via UCAS, the Student Loans Company and WhatUni.

We provide applicants with comprehensive information about fees and financial support, and are proactive in contacting them, answering their questions and addressing their concerns. In ensuring the timely and accurate provision of information to prospective students, we have systems for identifying applications from individuals belonging to underrepresented groups.

This triggers a process where the individual concerned is provided with detailed information about the personalised support measures available to them.

We produce brochures and other printed literature explaining the support measures specifically aimed at individuals from underrepresented groups, addressing the questions likely to be raised by individuals in differing circumstances.

All applicants who receive an offer to study with us are sent, at the time an offer is given:

- Information about tuition fees and any other course costs (including fee increases).
- Terms and conditions of study.
- Information about financial support (including eligibility criteria).

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

We have consistently aimed to ensure that the information provided to students is clear and easy to understand. However, feedback from our current students has been that the wording of the financial support information should be clearer and more student-friendly, and we are actively addressing this.

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 and other stakeholders. This includes providing comprehensive information to teachers, advisers, parents and carers - 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 accurate and up to date.

8.1 Eligibility for financial support

To receive financial support under this plan an individual must be considered “eligible”. Eligible students are those identified in section 3 of this plan. Each financial support measure has additional eligibility criteria, which are detailed in the table below.

Financial Support Measure	Amount	Additional Eligibility Criteria	Year of Study	Allocation Process	Application Deadline
Open Day/Interview Travel Subsidy	Up to £50	> Attended an open day or interview > Home-funded	Pre-enrolment	All applications granted for students who fall under target groups: <i>PTA_1, 2 or 3</i>	14 days after event
Bursary	£1,500 minimum	> Fully enrolled as a student > Eligibility for Free School Meals confirmed with UCAS	Year 1	Students who fall under target groups: <i>PTS_1, 2, 3 or 4**</i>	Automatic award on enrolment
Hardship Grant	£500	> Fully enrolled as a student > Experiencing temporary hardship	Years 1, 2 & 3*	Limited fund, allocated on a first come, first served basis for students who fall under target groups: <i>PTS_1, 2, 3 or 4</i>	End of Semester 2

Disability Assessment Fee Subsidy	£100 to £1,000	> Fully enrolled as a student > Referral by Student Services	Years 1, 2 & 3	Limited fund, allocated on a first come, first served basis for students who fall under target group: <i>PTS_1, 2, 3 or 4</i>	No fixed deadline
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* Eligible students may apply for a Hardship Grant in each year of study.

** In addition to students who belong to one or more target groups (PTS_1 through PTS_4), care-experienced students are automatically eligible to receive a bursary irrespective of any other characteristics or criteria.

Bursaries will be awarded to eligible students following enrolment in their first year of study. Students can expect to receive the minimum amount of £1,500. The actual amount received may be greater than this, depending on the number of eligible students in any given intake.

Additional information about the financial support measures available as part of this Access and Participation Plan will appear on 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.

9. List of Appendices:

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Annex A:

Assessment of Performance Summary

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Assessment of performance review process

Futureworks invited staff and students from across the organisation to join the Access and Participation Team in undertaking our Assessment of Performance. The process was led and managed by the Vice Principal, who held preliminary meetings over six days, attended by academic, technical, administrative and support staff, as well as Student Partners and the wider student body. Subsequent meetings and consultations took place at each stage in the process.

The Access and Participation Team, working with staff and students, reviewed each student lifecycle stage and student characteristic (and their many intersections/disaggregations), and produced an initial set of findings, indicating potential priorities.

The primary data source for the analysis was the Office for Students (OfS) dataset, accessed through the *OfS Access and participation data dashboard*. To present the data in a form which did not suppress low numerical values, and to show intersections not available from the OfS dashboard, Futureworks created its own bespoke interface. This facilitated a more comprehensive analysis of the data.

Futureworks has a relatively small student population of just over 400 full-time undergraduates; because of this, the level of confidence chosen throughout the analysis was 75%, which was felt to be a valid basis for the risks and priorities identified, given this population size. Analyses of disaggregated groups and intersections of characteristics produced data with especially low confidence levels; nevertheless, the team did choose to identify a number of risks relating to specific combinations of characteristics where, as an institution, there was limited data (for example, women who identify as Asian, Black, Mixed, or other non-White ethnicity).

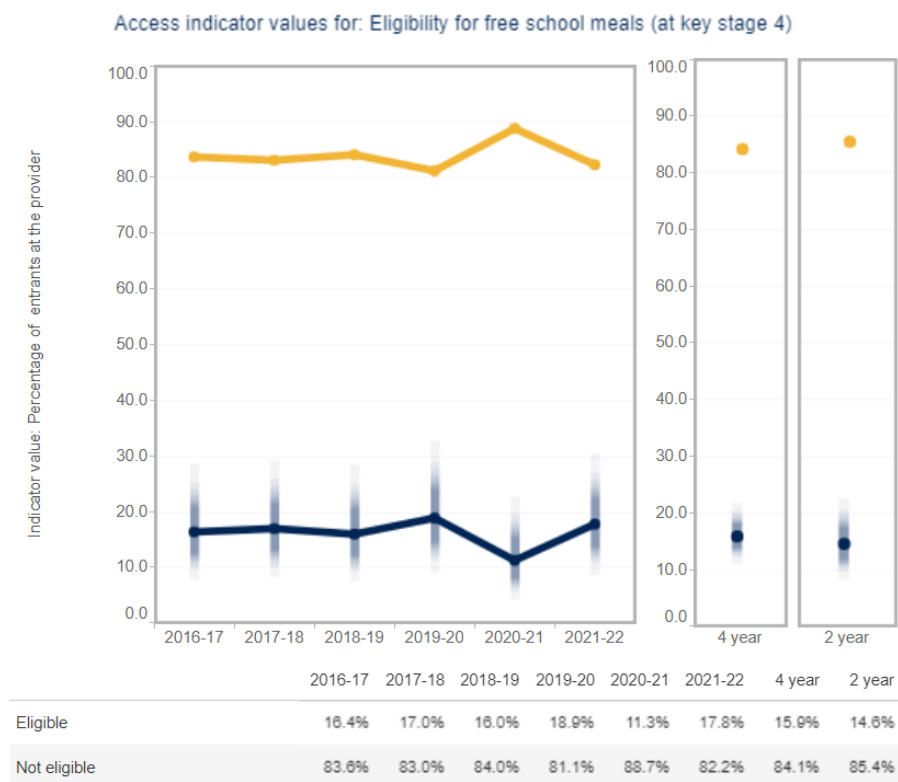
The team used the *OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR)* to identify the potential risks to equality of opportunity associated with each indication of risk. For each indication of risk identified in our assessment, the potential risks to equality of opportunity set out in the EORR were used to inform the intervention strategies.

Following the initial analysis, the team consulted with staff and students across the organisation; care was taken to include students from underrepresented groups in these discussions. Informed by the feedback received, the Access and Participation Team finalised the analysis and generated the Assessment of Performance Summary presented below.

Student Life Cycle Stage: Access

New entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4.

The chart below shows the percentage of new entrants at Futureworks who were eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 17.8% with a 75% confidence interval of 13.9% to 22.4%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The most recent UK government data shows that the percentage of UK pupils eligible for Free School Meals (January 2023) was 23.8%. This includes all state-funded primary, secondary and special schools, non-maintained special schools and state-funded alternative provision schools.

Source: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

The indication of risk is that new entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals (17.8%) are underrepresented at Futureworks when compared with the UK school population which are eligible for Free School Meals (23.8%).

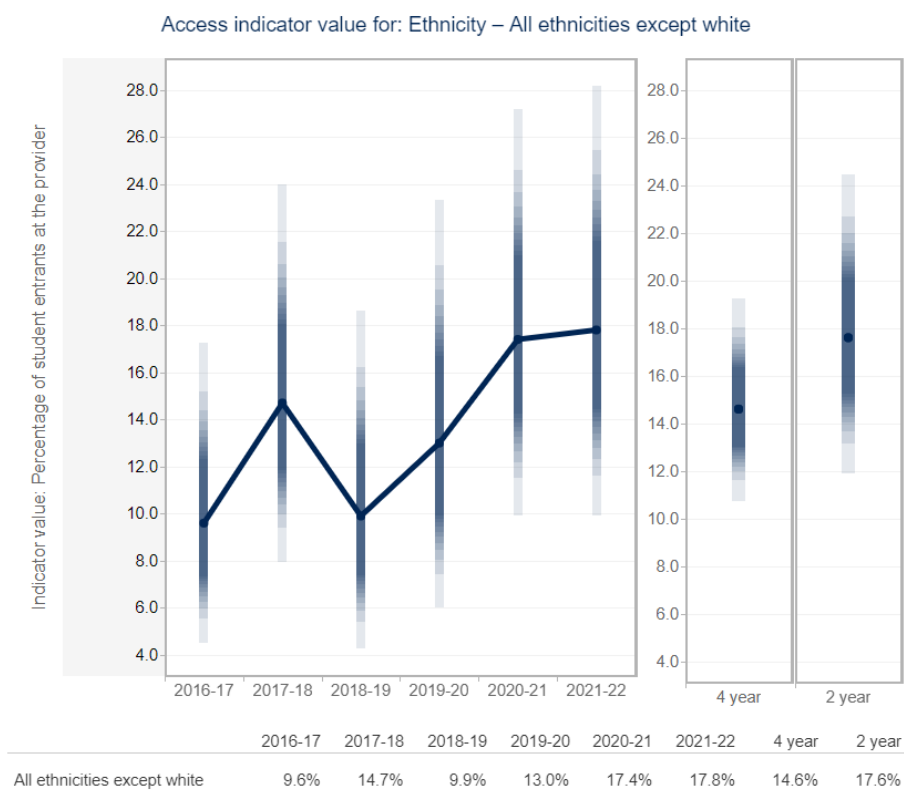
The EORR suggests that students who were eligible for Free School Meals are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (for Access).

Risk 1: Knowledge and skills, Risk 2: Information and guidance, Risk 3: Perception of higher education, Risk 4: Application rates, Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode.

It is our assessment that this risk identified in the EORR is also applicable to our context.

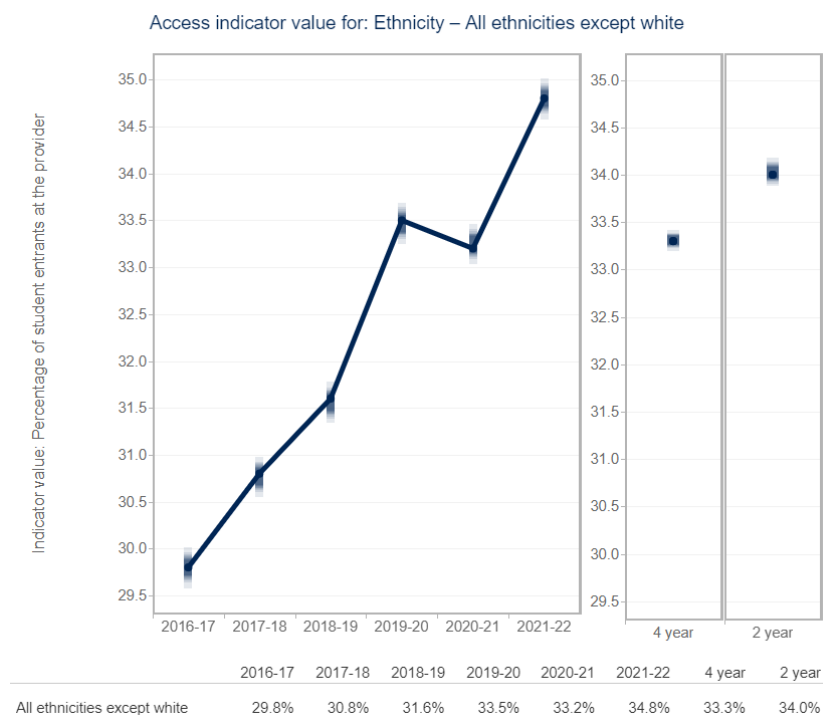
New entrants who declare their ethnicity as ABMO

The chart below shows the percentage of new entrants at Futureworks for all ethnicities except White. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 17.8% (27 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 14.5% to 21.6%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows that for all English Higher Education Providers 34.8% of new entrants have declared ethnicities other than White.



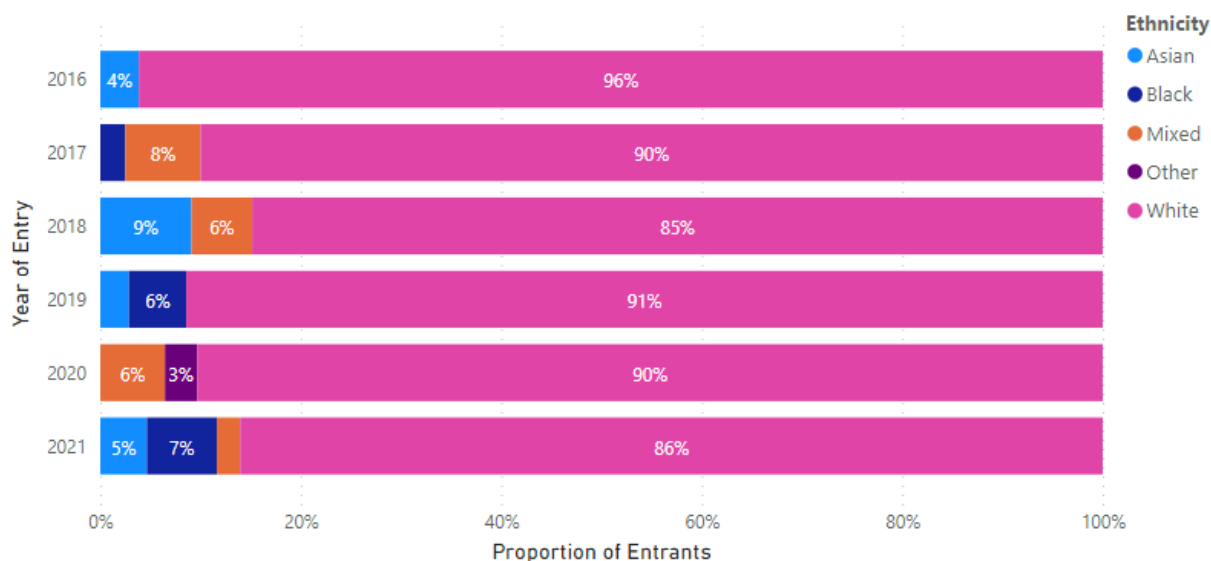
Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The indication of risk is that new entrants at Futureworks who declare their ethnicity as ABMO (17.8%) are underrepresented when compared with the English higher education sector average (34.8%).

The EORR suggests that students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (for Access). *Risk 1: Knowledge and skills, Risk 2: Information and guidance, Risk 3: Perception of higher education, Risk 4: Application rates.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

The chart below shows the ethnicity of all female new entrants to Futureworks. In the academic year 2021-22 14% (6 students) declared their ethnicity as non-White.



Source: OfS data (presented using internal tool)

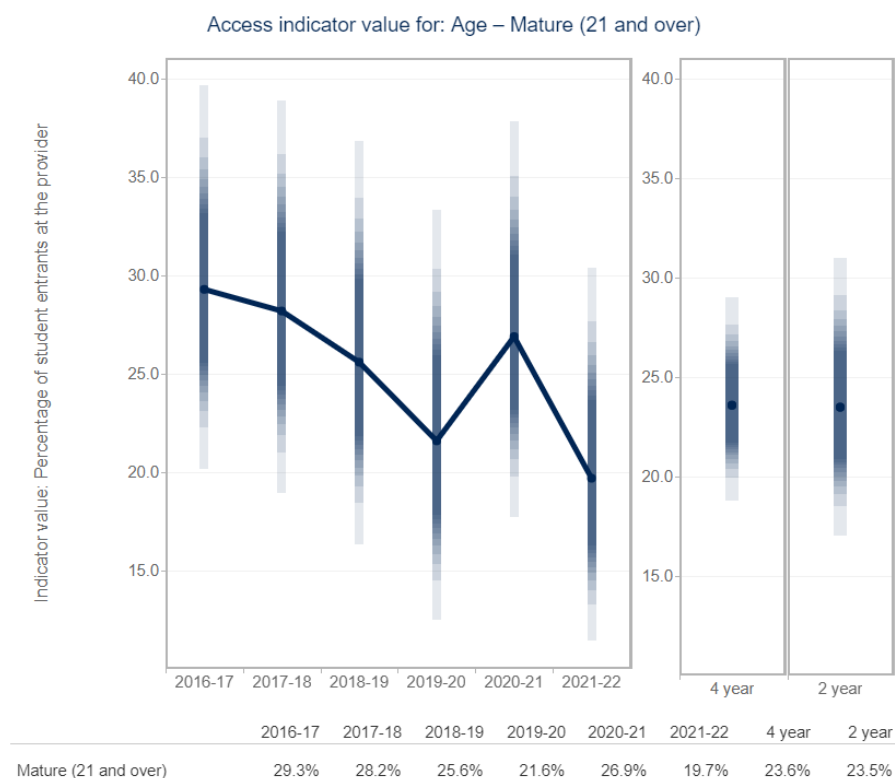
The indication of risk is that new entrants who identify as female and declare their ethnicity as ABMO are underrepresented at Futureworks (14%) when compared with the UK demographic (approximately 18%).

The EORR suggests that students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (for Access). *Risk 1: Knowledge and skills, Risk 2: Information and guidance, Risk 3: Perception of higher education, Risk 4: Application rates, Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

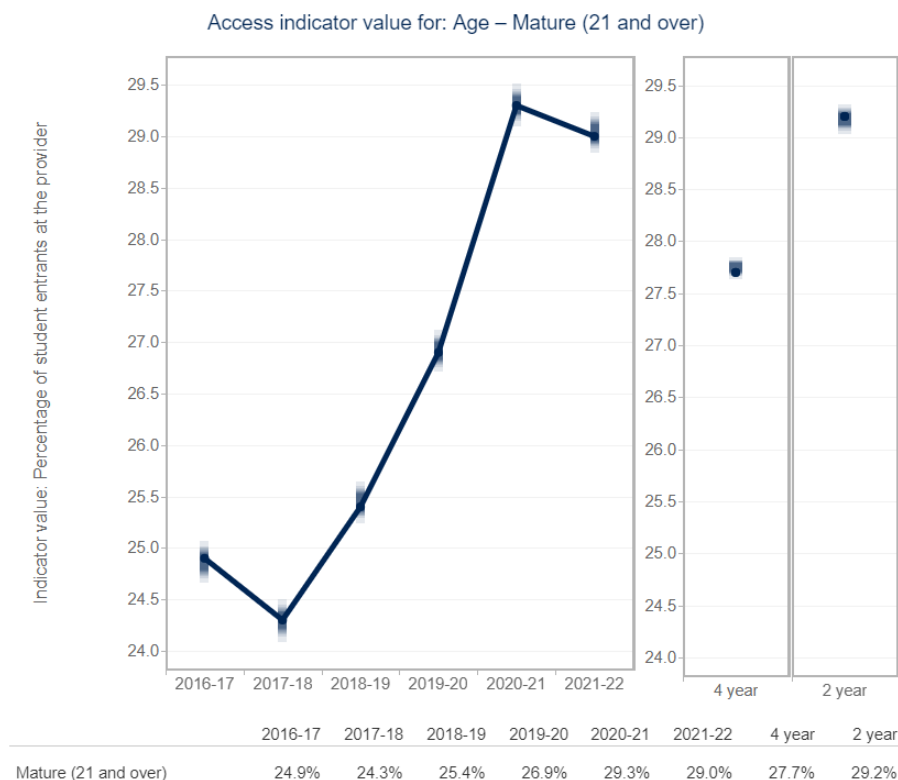
New entrants who are mature (over 21)

The chart below shows the percentage of new entrants at Futureworks aged 21 or over. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 19.7% (30 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 16.3% to 23.7%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows the percentage of new entrants who were 21 or over for all English Higher Education Providers. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 29.0%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The indication of risk is that new entrants at Futureworks who are 21 years old or over (19.7%) are underrepresented at **Futureworks** when compared with the **English higher education sector average (29.0%)**.

The EORR suggests that mature students are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (for Access). **Risk 2: Information and guidance, Risk 3: Perception of higher education, Risk 4: Application rates, Risk 5: Limited choice of course type and delivery mode.**

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

New entrants who are care-experienced

The 2022 UCAS report *Next Steps: What Is the Experience of Students From A Care Background In Education?* stated that the number of UK applicants sharing a care background has almost doubled since 2008 from 4,495 to 8,930 in 2022. This accounts for 1.6% of all UK applicants.

At Futureworks, the 4-year average from the academic years 2019-20 to 2022-23 shows that 0.5% of new entrants have declared that they are care experienced.

The indication of risk is that new entrants who are Care Experienced are underrepresented at Futureworks when compared with the English higher education sector average.

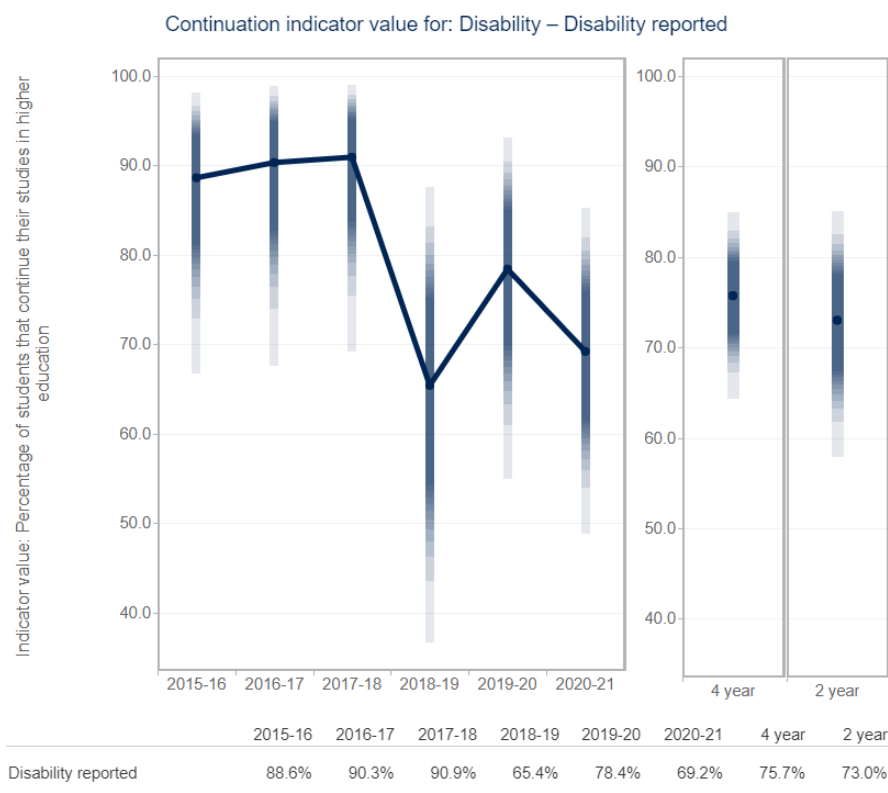
The EORR suggests that Care Experienced students are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (for Access). *Risk 1: Knowledge and skills, Risk 2: Information and guidance, Risk 3: Perception of higher education, Risk 4: Application rates.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

Student Life Cycle Stage: Continuation

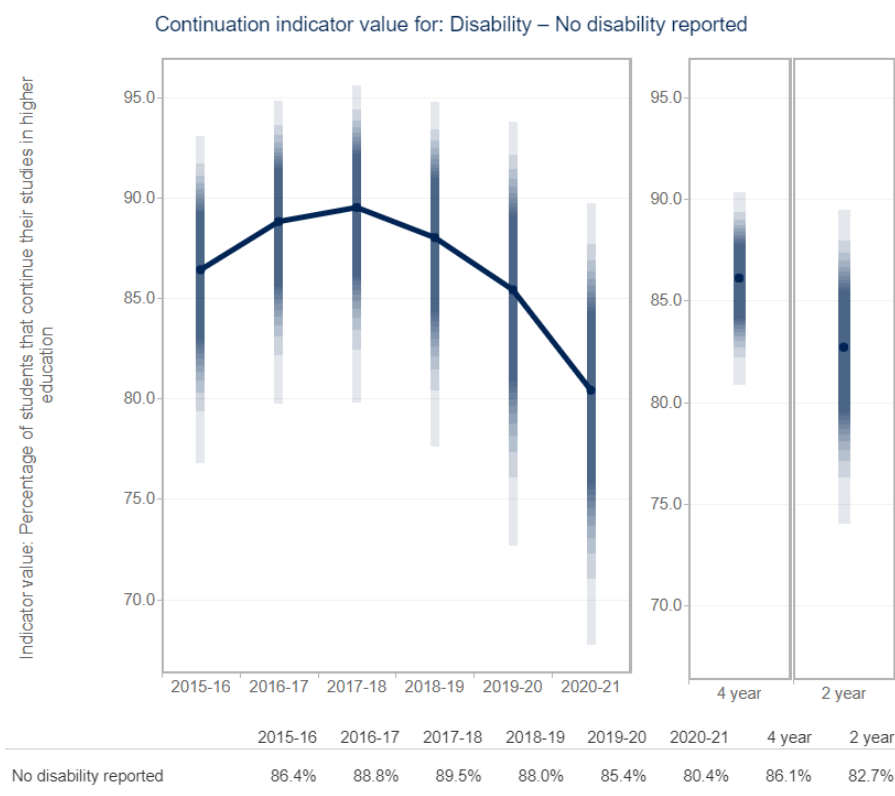
Students with a declared disability

The chart below shows the continuation percentage for Futureworks students who have reported a disability. In the academic year 2020-21 this was 69.2% (36 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 61.5% to 76.1%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows the continuation percentage for Futureworks students who have not reported a disability. In the academic year 2020-21 this was 80.4% (94 students) with a 75% confidence range of 75.7% to 84.3.



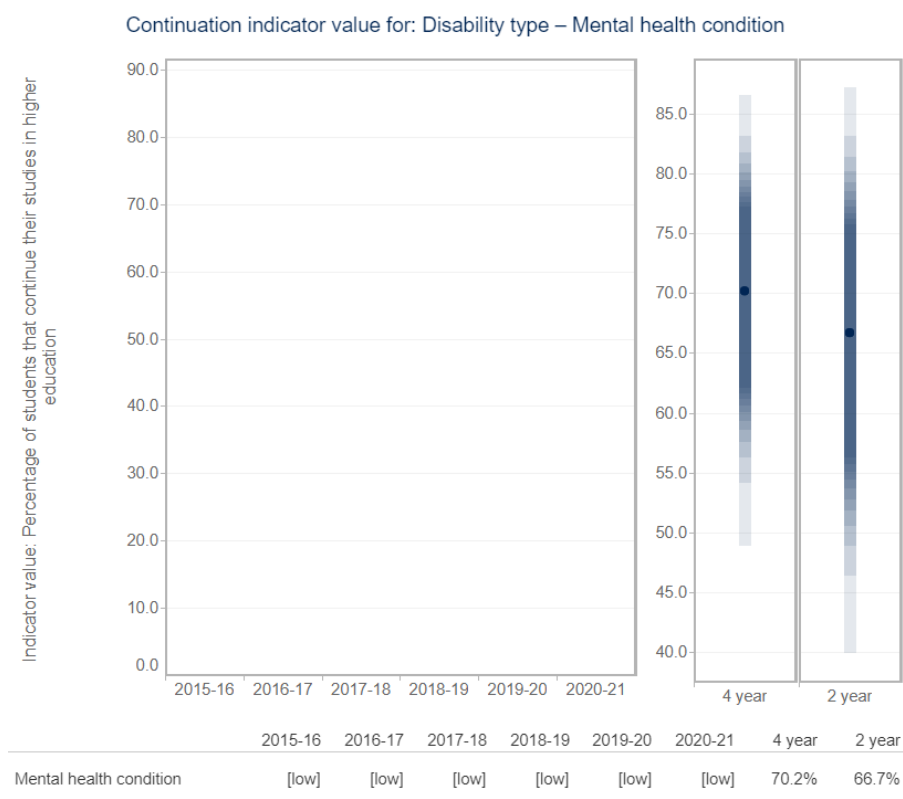
Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The indication of risk is that students with a declared disability (69.2%) are less likely to complete their first year of study than students with no declared disability (80.4%).

The EORR suggests that students with a declared disability are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course). *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus, Risk 10: Cost pressures, Risk 11: Capacity issues.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context, with the exception of Risk 9.

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks who have continued their studies in higher education who have reported a mental health condition. The 2-year average for this was 66.7% compared with 82.7% for students with no disability reported. The 75% confidence interval for this figure is 62.1% to 75.7%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

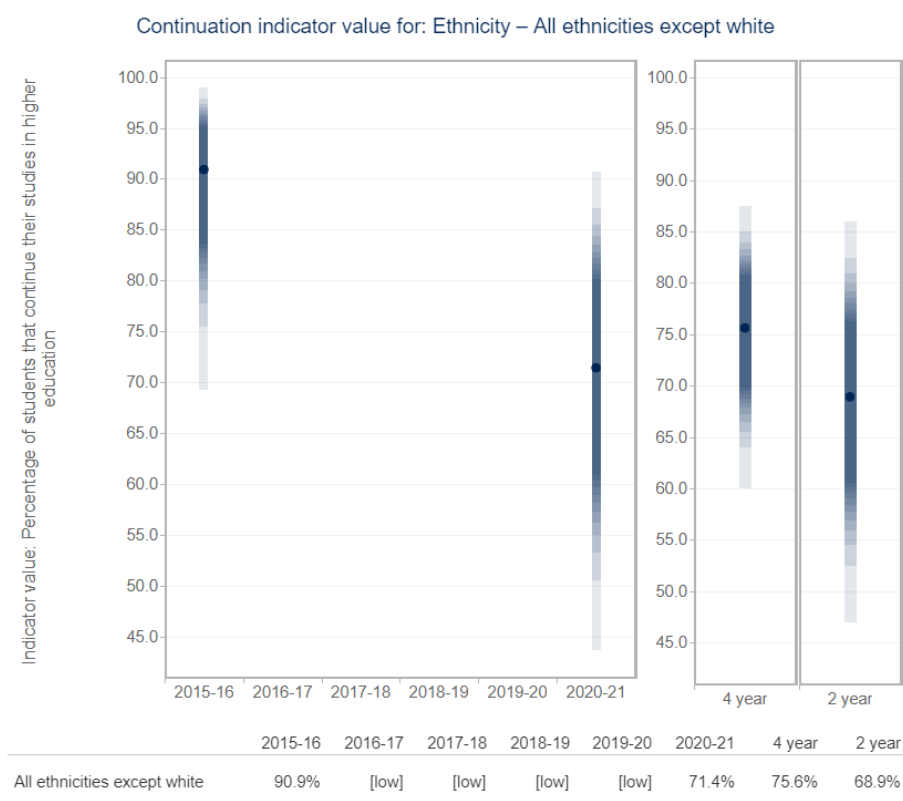
The indication of risk is that students with declared mental health issues (66.7%) are less likely to complete their first year of study than students who have not declared a mental health issue (80.4%).

The EORR suggests that students with a declared mental health issue are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course). *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

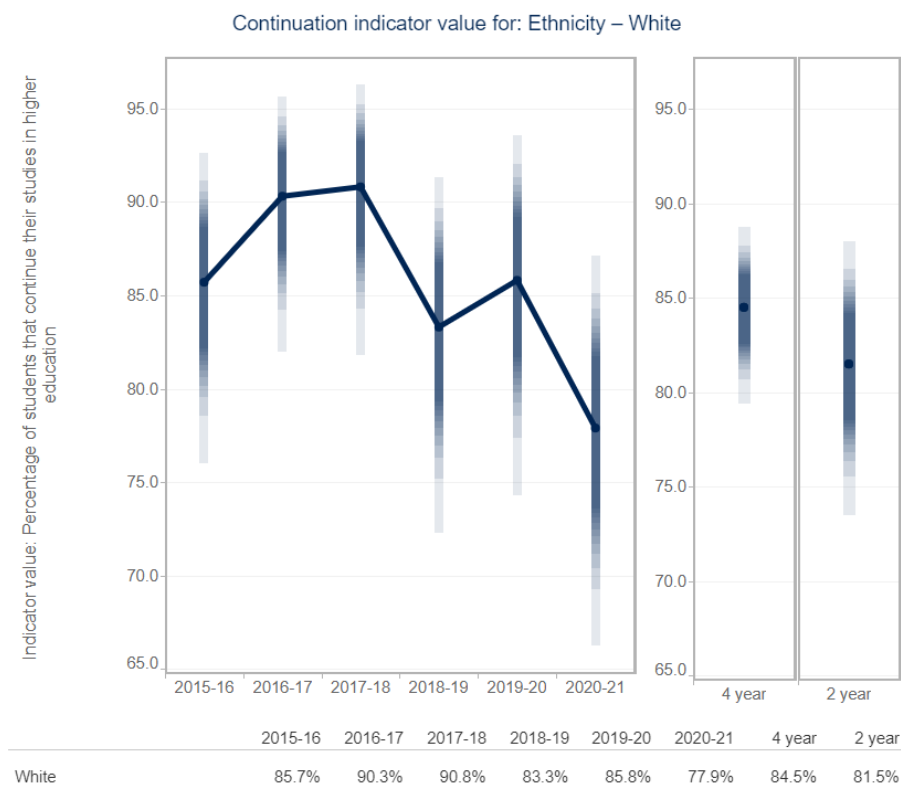
Students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks who have continued their studies in higher education for all declared ethnicities except White. In the academic year 2020-21 this was 71.4% (28 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 60.9% to 80.2%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks who have continued their studies in higher education who have declared their ethnicity as White. In the academic year 2020-21 this was 77.9% (110 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 73.6% to 81.8%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

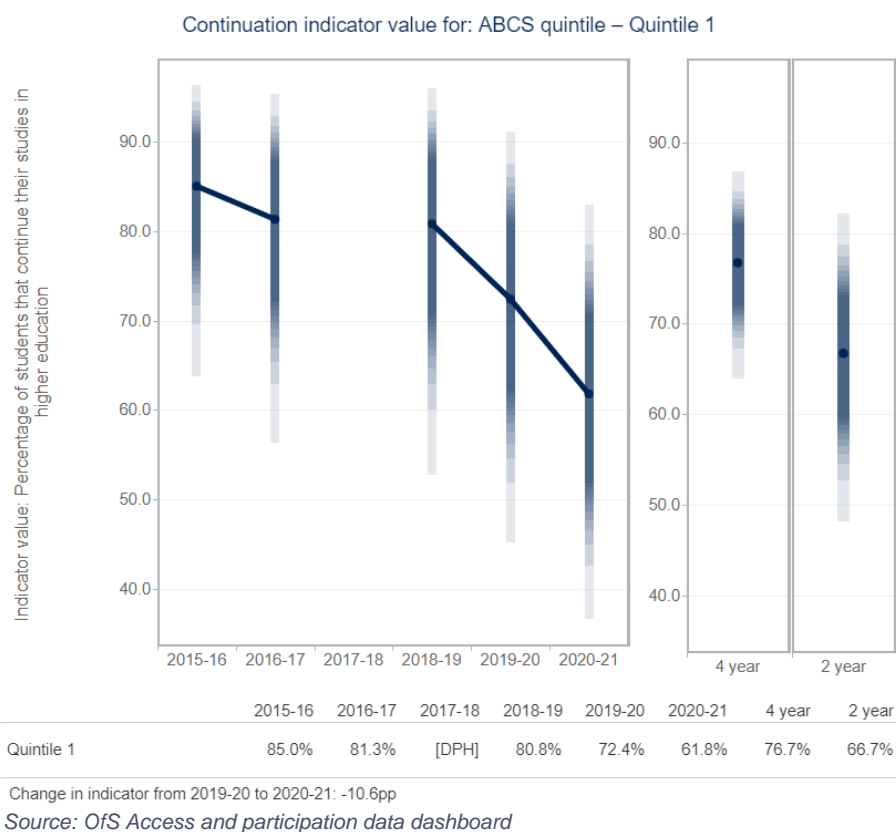
The indication of risk is that students who declare their ethnicity as ABMO (71.4%) are less likely to complete their first year of study than students who declare their ethnicity as White (77.9%).

The EORR suggests that students who declared their ethnicity as ABMO are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course). *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 8: Mental health.*

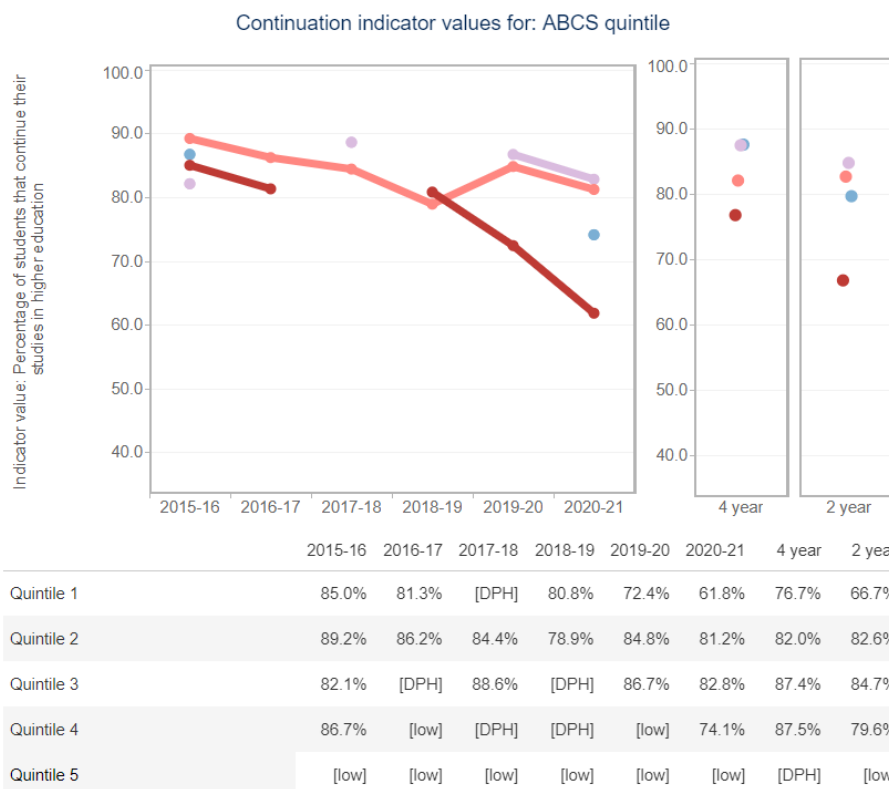
It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

Students from ABCS quintile 1

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks from ABCS quintile 1 who have continued their studies. In the academic year 2020-21 this was 61.8% (34 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 51.9% to 70.8%.



The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks from all ABCS quintiles who have continued their studies. In the academic year 2020-21 Q1 was 61.8% (34 students), Q2 was 81.2% (69 students), Q3 was 82.8% (29 students), Q4 (27 students) was 74.1%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The indication of risk is that students from ABCS quintile 1 (61.8%) are less likely to complete their first year of study than students from ABCS quintiles 2, 3 and 4.

The EORR suggests that students from the socioeconomic backgrounds of 'never worked' or 'long-term unemployed', 'Routine occupations' or 'Semi-routine occupations', 'Lower supervisory and technical occupations' are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course) **Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support.**

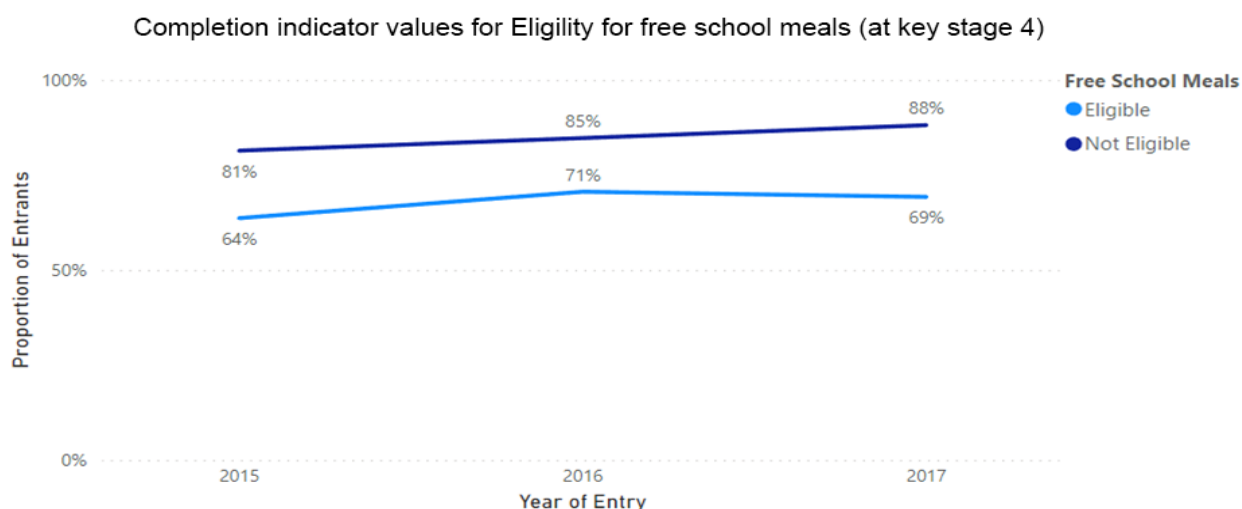
It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

Student Life Cycle Stage: Completion

Male students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals

The chart below shows the percentage of male students intersected with Free School Meals (FSM) who have completed their studies at Futureworks. For the year of entry 2017-2018, male students

who were eligible for free school meals at Key Stage 4 had a completion rate of 69% (9 students) compared with 88% (74 students) for male students who were not eligible.



Source: OfS data (presented using internal tool)

The indication of risk is that male students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals (69%) are less likely to complete their course of study than other students (88%).

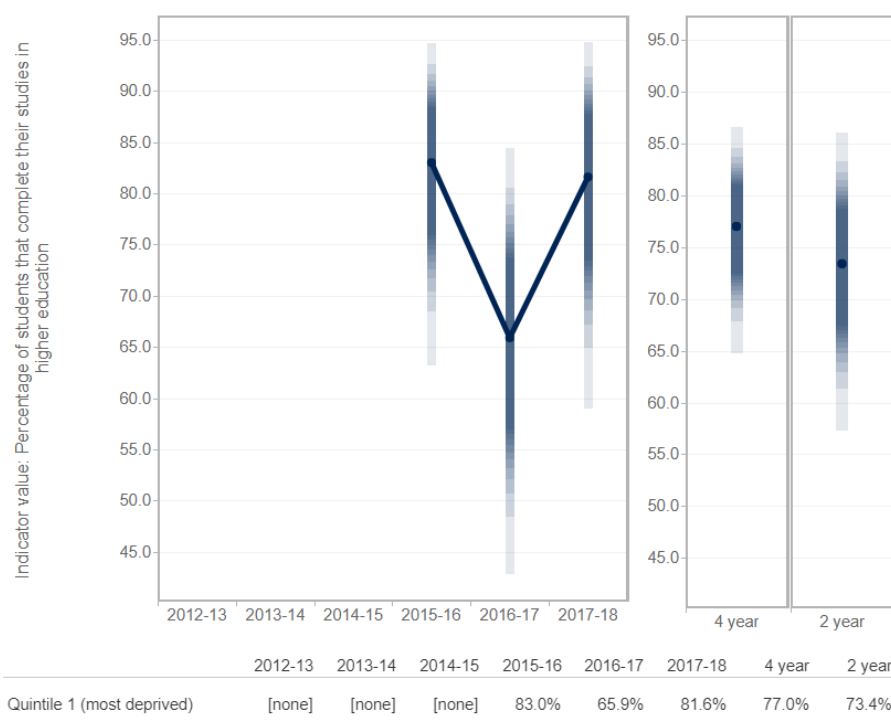
The EORR suggests that students who have previously been in receipt of Free School Meals are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course). *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus, Risk 10: Cost pressures, Risk 11: Capacity issues.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context, with the exception of Risk 9.

Students from IMD quintile 1

The chart below shows the percentage of students from IMD quintile 1 who have completed their studies at Futureworks. For the year of entry 2017-2018 this was 81.6% (38 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 73.4% to 87.8%.

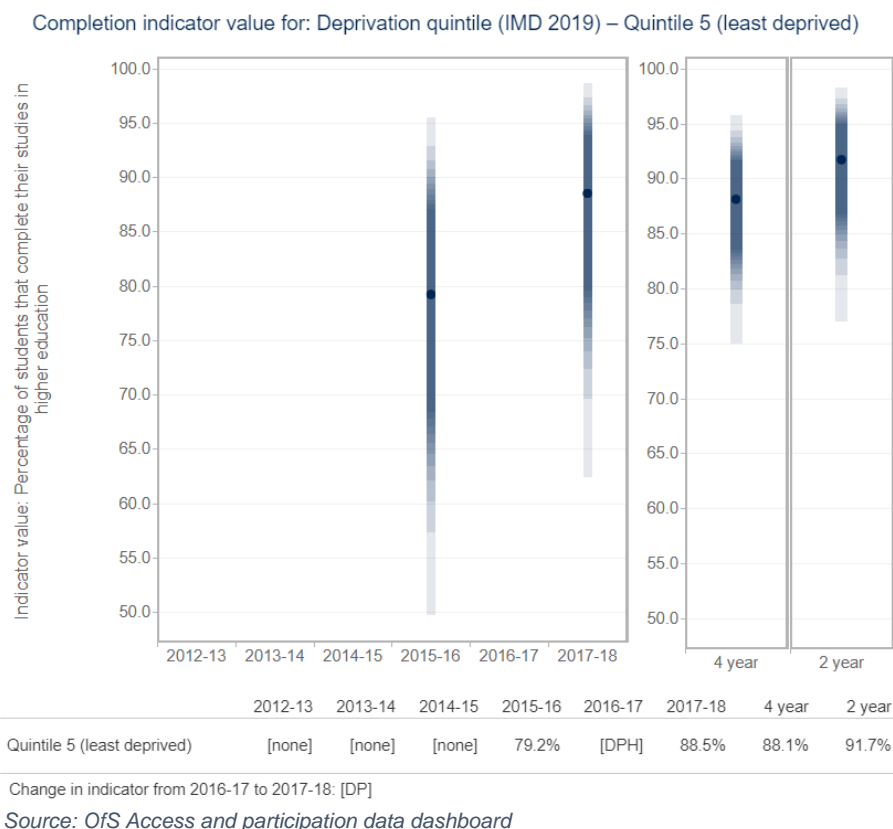
Completion indicator value for: Deprivation quintile (IMD 2019) – Quintile 1 (most deprived)



Change in indicator from 2016-17 to 2017-18: 15.7pp

Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows the percentage of students from IMD quintile 5 who have completed their studies at Futureworks. For the year of entry 2017-2018 this was 88.5% (26 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 79.5% to 93.9%.



The indication of risk is that students from IMD quintile 1 (81.6%) are less likely to complete their course than students from IMD quintile 5 (88.5%).

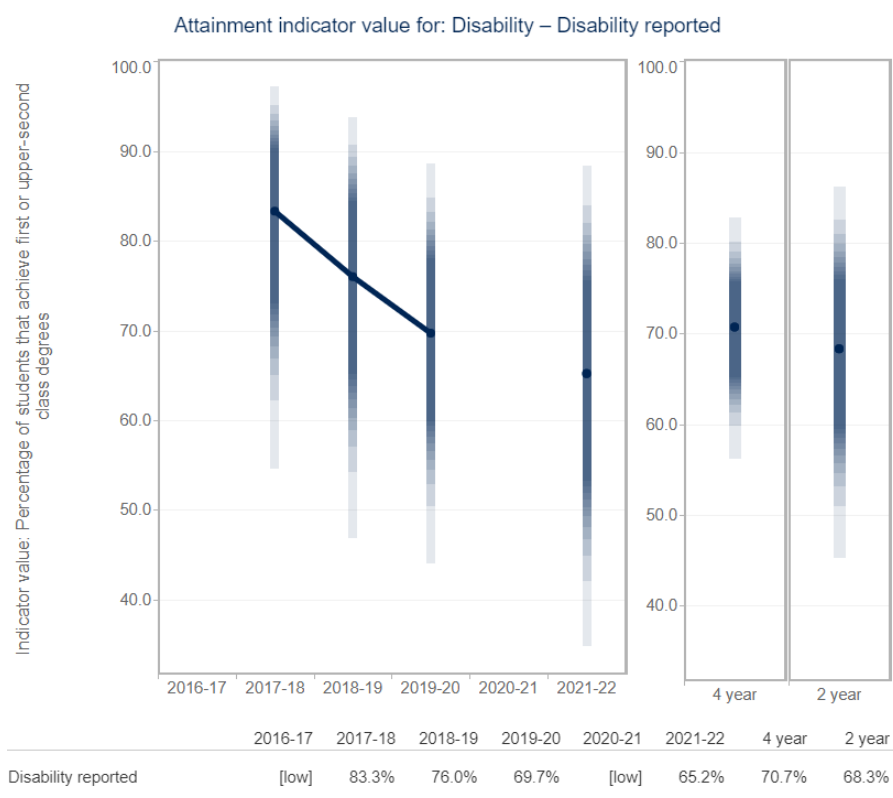
The EORR suggests that students from the socioeconomic backgrounds of 'never worked' or 'long-term unemployed', 'Routine occupations' or 'Semi-routine occupations', 'Lower supervisory and technical occupations' are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course) *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support.*

It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context.

Student Life Cycle Stage: Degree outcomes

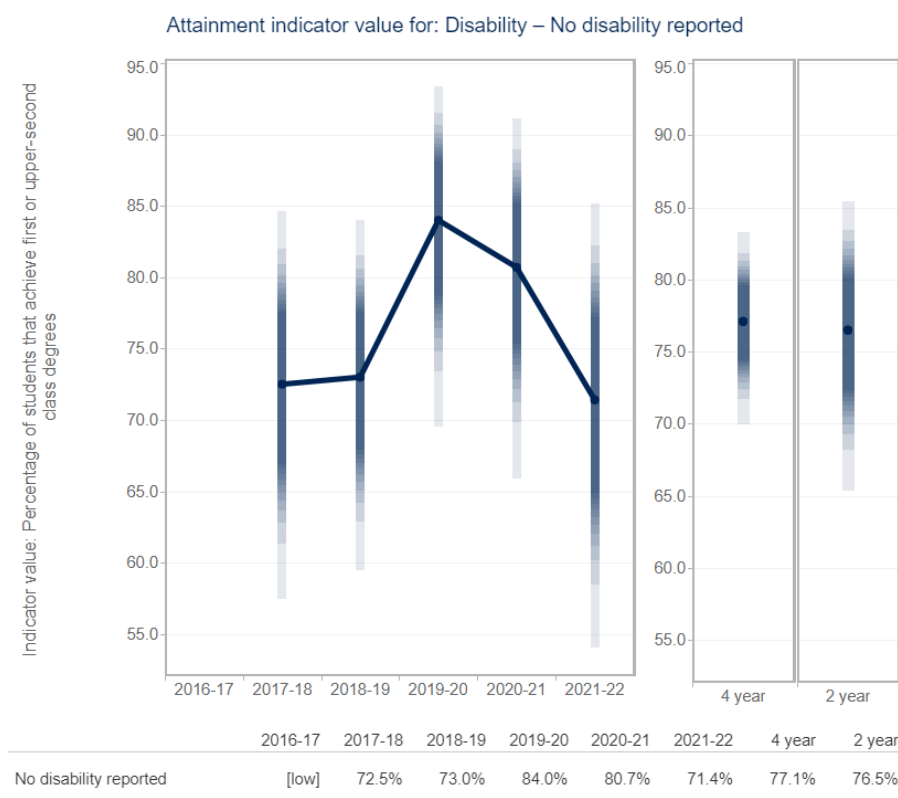
Students with a declared disability

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks with a declared disability who achieved first or upper-second class degrees. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 65.2% (15 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 44.1% to 75.6%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The chart below shows the percentage of students at Futureworks with no disability reported who achieved first or upper-second class degrees. In the academic year 2021-22 this was 71.4% (55 students) with a 75% confidence interval of 64.9% to 77.2%.



Source: OfS Access and participation data dashboard

The indication of risk is that students with a declared disability (65.2%) are less likely to achieve a first or upper-second class degree than students with no declared disability (71.4%).

The EORR suggests that students with a declared disability are likely to be affected by the following risks to equality of opportunity (On Course). *Risk 6: Insufficient academic support, Risk 7: Insufficient personal support, Risk 9: Ongoing impacts of coronavirus, Risk 10: Cost pressures, Risk 11: Capacity issues.*

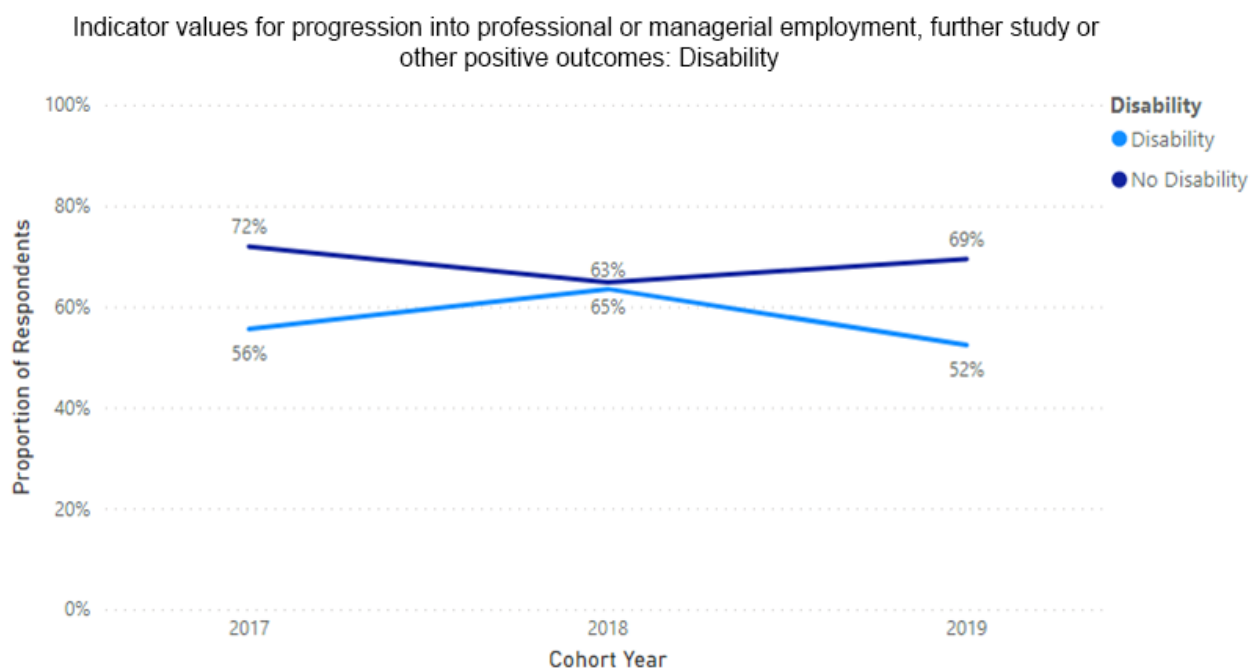
It is our assessment that these risks identified in the EORR are also applicable to our context, with the exception of Risk 9.

Student Life Cycle Stage: Progression

Students with a declared disability

The chart below shows the percentage of Futureworks “students who progressed into professional or managerial employment, further study or other positive outcomes” 16-months

after completion of their course. For those students who graduated in 2019 and declared a disability this was 52% (11 students) compared with 69% (36 students) for those who did not declare a disability.



Source: OfS data (presented using internal tool)

The indication of risk is that students with a declared disability (52%) are less likely to be engaged in managerial or professional employment, or further study, or other positive outcomes, 16-months after the completion of their course than students with no declared disability (69%).

The EORR suggests that students with a declared disability are likely to be affected by the following risk to equality of opportunity (Progression). *Risk 12: Progression to further study.*

It is our assessment that the risk identified in the EORR is also applicable to our context.

Annex B:

Evidence Base and Rationale for Intervention Strategies

Intervention Strategy 1 – Working with schools and colleges at Key Stages 3-5

Intervention Strategy 2 – Working in non-educational settings

These two interventions outline how we plan to develop and work in partnership with schools and colleges, as well as with community-based groups and organisations to deliver a range of activities to increase the take up of creative subjects and progression to tertiary education for target groups.

Strategy 1 aims to set out support for students in schools and colleges, including target students from backgrounds associated with lower participation in arts education.

Strategy 2 sets out how we will reach out beyond schools and colleges and to engage and support the lower-participation groups - based on e.g., ethnicity, age, or care experience - in the wider community, including mature learners.

Opportunities for young people to study art at school are diminishing (Broadhead, 2022)¹ and arts as a subject can be under-valued in schools (Tambling and Bacon, 2023)².

This follows policy and funding changes in education over the past decade. One impact of this has been a 23% decrease in the number of hours at school dedicated to art subjects, with proportionately fewer students taking A-levels in creative subjects and, most recently, a 50% reduction of the subsidy to universities teaching expensive subjects such as arts (UKADIA, The Head Trust & Guild HE, 2021)³.

¹ Broadhead, S. 2022. Access and Widening Participation in Arts Higher Education. Practice and Research. Palgrave Macmillan Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-97450-3>

² Tambling & Bacon. 2023. The Art in Schools: Foundations for the Future. Purposes, Principles, and Practice. A New Direction, on behalf of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/7739>

³ UKADIA, The Head Trust, Guild HE. 2021. Trends in Creative Arts Qualifications. <https://ukadia.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/HEAD-Trust-Arts-Quals-report-FINAL.pdf>

More broadly, in the education sector as a whole, the outcomes gap between disadvantaged young people and their more advantaged peers is clear across a range of measures and evidenced through a range of recent reports.

Disadvantaged students tend to have lower attainment outcomes than their peers:

- Only one third of disadvantaged students get GCSE grades required to progress onto HE (OFFA, 2018)⁴.
- Pupils with eligibility for free school meals (FSM) are less likely to achieve A*-C in English and Maths (43%) compared to advantaged pupils (71%) (DfE, 2017)⁵.
- Students on FSM for more than 80% of school attendance are on average 22 months behind more advantaged peers (EPI, 2020)⁶.
- There is a persistent attainment gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students (EPI, 2020)⁶.

Evidence highlights that lower attainment can limit future outcomes and prospects:

- Lower attainment rates for disadvantaged students are a key barrier to HE progression. When disadvantaged students achieve the same levels of attainment as advantaged peers, they are almost equally likely to progress (OFFA, 2018; Crawford, 2014)^{4,7}.
- Achievement at KS4 is a key predictor of HE participation (OfS, 2022)⁸.
- Students (white and ethnic minority ones alike) with fewer GCSEs are less likely to pursue HE (DfE, 2004)⁹.

⁴ OFFA, 2018. Office for Fair Access annual report and accounts 2017-18.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728202/2017-18_OFFA_annual_report_2307FINAL.PDF

⁵ DfE. 2017. Study of Early Education and Development (SEED): Study of Quality of Early Years Provision in England (Revised).
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761606/29523_Ofsted_Annual_Report_2017-18_041218.pdf

⁶ Education Policy Institute. 2020. Education in England: Annual Report 2020.
<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/>

⁷ Crawford, C. 2014. Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and degree class. London: IFS. Available at: <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/socio-economic-differences-university-outcomes-uk-drop-out-degree-completion-and>

⁸ Office for Students. 2022. English higher education 2022. The Office for Students annual review.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/ae2dd8d-1ee8-4383-84cc-1fc483684d0f/ofs-annual-review-2022.pdf>

⁹ Connor H, Tyers C, Modood T, Hillage J. 2004. Why the Difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates. Research Report RR552, Department for Education and Skills.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR552.pdf>

- Disadvantaged students are also likely to consider higher education later, which may limit their choices, especially in more selective subjects and at higher tariff providers (UCAS, 2021)¹⁰.
- The DfE (2004)⁹ report flags-up minority students' (particularly, Black Caribbean, Pakistanis) who have, on average, lower entry qualifications - with fewer of them taking the A-level route and instead coming to HE from FE with vocational qualifications (which appear to correlate with higher risk of drop-out).

In the context of arts education, students who experience some form of disadvantage (economic, or based on race, ethnicity, disability, or age) appear to be significantly less likely than their peers from more advantageous backgrounds (POLAR and IMD quintiles 4 and 5) to have access to such education at school, to hold more than one relevant A-level, BTEC, or practical qualification in arts, or indeed to hold any pre-university arts qualification. Furthermore, students (white and ethnic minority ones alike) with fewer GCSEs are less likely to pursue HE (DfE, 2004)¹¹.

In terms of race and ethnicity, and access and participation in arts education, specifically at Key Stages 3-4 (11-15 year olds), Mark, HW & D Fancourt (2021)¹² conclude that ethnic minority and white students have the same levels of engagement with arts through school curricula, where available, but outside of the school ethnic minority students are approximately 35% less likely to engage (e.g., visit museums, galleries, attend classes, workshops). Similar differences in engagement with the arts and arts education have been reported for adults vs. children, and for ethnic minority adults in particular.

This poses a risk to the levels of participation in our 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' (Intervention Strategy 1) and 'Portfolio building programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) by our target groups. We aim to mitigate that risk through careful selection and development of our *School and College Partnerships* (Intervention Strategy 1), to reach target groups of students at KS 3-5, and through *Building Strategic Relationships* with community groups, local authority services, and employers, to reach our target groups who are not in education (Intervention Strategy 2).

Intervention Strategies 1 and 2 rely on evidence informed 'change mechanisms' to tackle the broader (and specific to pre-university arts education) barriers to access and participation.

¹⁰ UCAS. 2021. WHERE NEXT? WHAT INFLUENCES THE CHOICES LEAVERS MAKE?
<https://www.ucas.com/file/435551/download?token=VUdIDVFh>

¹¹ Connor H, Tyers C, Modood T, Hillage J. 2004. Why the Difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates. Research Report RR552, Department for Education and Skills.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR552.pdf>

¹² Mak HW, Fancourt D (2021) Do socio-demographic factors predict children's engagement in arts and culture? Comparisons of in-school and out-of-school participation in the Taking Part Survey. PLOS ONE 16(2): e0246936. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246936>

The activities we have included should promote belief, motivation, and belonging to the notion of studying arts at university.

For in-education prospective students (at school/in college) (Intervention Strategy 1) we aim to achieve that by:

- Linking education and attainment with future careers, which increases pupil motivation and application (EEF, 2016)¹³.
- Aligning high aspirations, high expectations, and high achievement, which predicts future educational behaviour of students [and high aspirations improve school achievement] (Khattab, 2015)¹⁴.
- Increasing students' motivation for applying to university and their confidence in getting in (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2010)¹⁵.
- Helping to develop students' metacognitive and self-regulation skills through engagement in the arts ('School and College Partnerships' activity and 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' activity): arts education not only correlates positively with retaining academic content for longer (Rinne, 2011)¹⁶, but helps cultivate, often better than non-arts subjects, skills such as metacognition, self-regulation, problem solving, creativity, and others that are deemed important by employers (Kingston University, Future Skills Report, 2022)¹⁷. Developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in particular, can be equivalent to up to 7 months academic progress (EEF, 2021)¹⁸.

The 'Portfolio Building Programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) aims to give disadvantaged people access to (and experience of) arts study, thereby encouraging them to pursue a continuation of such studies at university.

72% of the creative workforce in the UK are highly qualified (hold a degree or an HE qualification at Level 4 or higher), and 46% of those are graduates from creative subjects

¹³ EEF. 2016. Careers education: International literature review.
https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/guidance/Careers_review.pdf?v=1684350662

¹⁴ Khattab, N. (2015), Students' aspirations, expectations and school achievement: what really matters?. Br Educ Res J, 41: 731-748. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3171>

¹⁵ Joseph Rowntree Foundation. 2010. Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour? <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poorer-children%E2%80%99s-educational-attainment-how-important-are-attitudes-and-behaviour>

¹⁶ Rinne, L.F. et al. 2011. Why Arts Integration Improves Long-Term Retention of Content. Mind Brain and Education 5(2):89 – 96. DOI:10.1111/j.1751-228X.2011.01114.x

¹⁷ Kingston University London. 2022. Future Skills: League Table.
<https://www.kingston.ac.uk/documents/user-upload/kingston-university-d2606ad3a3d-future-skills-report-2022-final.pdf>

¹⁸ Education Endowment Foundation. 2021. Metacognition and self-regulation.
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation>

(given those graduating from creative subjects nationally make up only 17%). Creative subject graduates earn £2,300 more each year working in the creative industries than working outside; for comparison, non-creative graduates working in the creative industries earn approximately £1,300 more each year than if they worked in non-creative industries. Thus, studying a creative subject (e.g., art) and working in a related industry, does “pay off” (PEC, 2020)¹⁹.

Exposure to arts education is not the only approach we take to stimulate transition to HE in our target groups. Both Intervention Strategies 1 and 2 include provision of arts-specific careers, education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) on how to progress into an arts-based career.

The CEIAG aims to counter concerns about the precarity of arts careers that many prospective arts students from economically disadvantaged or BAME backgrounds may have – both adults (Intervention Strategy 2) and pupils and their families/parents (Intervention Strategy 1) alike (Broadhead, 2022; Alberts and Atherton, 2016)^{20,21}.

TASO’s evidence toolkit (TASO, 2023)²² suggests that CEIAG can have a small positive effect on attitudes, aspirations and HE progression, which could be especially useful to first-generation prospective university students, who cannot be guided and advised in that area as effectively by their parents and families as can students who have family members with prior HE experience (Thomas and Quinn, 2007)²³. People from families without HE experiences are likely therefore to have to shoulder much more of the burden of decision making (Diamond et al, 2016)²⁴.

Further to this, possible-selves theory (Markus and Nurius, 1986)²⁵ suggests that people can only imagine the futures for which they have the conceptual material, which derives from their own experience of what they see around them. Structural factors influence young people’s

¹⁹ PEC. 2020. For love or money? Graduate motivations and the economic returns of creative higher education inside and outside the Creative Industries. <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/for-love-or-money>

²⁰ Broadhead, S. 2022. Access and Widening Participation in Arts Higher Education. Practice and Research. Palgrave Macmillan Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-97450-3>

²¹ Alberts, N. & G. Atherton. 2016. The more colours you add, the nicer the picture. Access HE. <https://www.accesshe.ac.uk/yYdlx0u7/The-more-colours-you-add-AccessHE-Creative-report.pdf>

²² TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. <https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/>

²³ Thomas, L. and J. Quinn. 2007. First Generation Entry Into Higher Education: An International Study. Society for Research into Higher Education.

²⁴ Diamond, Rebecca. 2016. "The Determinants and Welfare Implications of US Workers' Diverging Location Choices by Skill: 1980-2000." *American Economic Review*, 106 (3): 479-524.

²⁵ Markus, H. & Nurius, P. 1986. Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41(9), 954–969. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.41.9.954>

aspiration-achievement gap through influence on their perceptions on what is possible for 'people like them' in future (Oyserman and Destin, 2010)²⁶.

CEIAGs like the one we have planned in the activities 'Preparation for HE: Information, Advice, and Guidance' (Intervention Strategy 1) and 'Online Advice and Preparation for HE: information, Advice, and Guidance' (Intervention Strategy 2) have been demonstrated in an Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) to boost enrolment into HE of prospective students from families with no previous graduate experience (Frauke et al., 2018)²⁷.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may also lack some of the forms of social capital that are implicit in the admissions and selection processes (Hayton et al, 2015)²⁸.

Both of our Strategies provide access to relevant forms of capital in order to smooth the fit between people and the university course they wish to be considered for. The 'Portfolio Building Programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) and 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' programme (Intervention Strategy 1) include crucial practical opportunities to develop portfolio material. This aspect of the application process can often be more challenging for disadvantaged young people who may lack the time, resources, or support required to put together a competitive portfolio of their work (McManus 2006; McGuire 2015; Boliver and Powell, 2021)^{29,30,31}.

²⁶ Oyserman, D., & Destin, M. (2010). Identity-based motivation: Implications for intervention. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 38(7), 1001–1043. doi: 10.1177/0011000010374775. PMID: 21516204; PMCID: PMC3079278

²⁷ Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina & V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrollment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800>

²⁸ Hayton, A., Haste, P., and Jones, A. (2015) 'Promoting diversity in creative art education: The case of Fine Art at Goldsmiths, University of London'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36 (8), 1258–76. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.899891>

²⁹ McManus, I. C., & Furnham, A. 2006. Aesthetic Activities and Aesthetic Attitudes: Influences of Education, Background and Personality on Interest and Involvement in the Arts. *British Journal of Psychology*, 97, 555-587. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1348/000712606X101088>

³⁰ McGuire, S.Y. (2015). *Teach Students How to Learn: Strategies You Can Incorporate into Any Course to Improve Student Metacognition, Study Skills, and Motivation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus

³¹ Boliver, V. & M. Powell. 2020. Fair admission to universities in England: improving policy and practice. Nuffield Foundation. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/sass/research/briefings/fairadmissionreport.pdf>

The TASO (2021)³² and UCL (2019)³³ reports corroborate the theory-of-change for Intervention Strategy 2 as it relates to supporting our final two target groups - mature and care-experienced students. For care-leavers/care-experienced students specifically, the main determinants of successful entry into and success during higher education study appear to be KS4 attainment, managing the transition process, the student's resilience and determination, the provision of disability support, and the successful integration into the HE course (Neil Harrison, 2017)³⁴.

Intervention Strategy 3: Financial Support

The impact of financial support on decisions to progress into HE is generally seen as small. It tends to be seen more as a mechanism for supporting students' continuation and progression (Nursaw 2015; TASO, 2023)^{35, 22}.

Given the evidence that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to discontinue their studies than their wealthier peers (Vignoles and Powdthavee, 2009)³⁶, we have designed our financial support package so it identifies and targets specifically students with the greatest need, who would most benefit from the support.

Appropriate support allocation can help disadvantaged students continue in their studies at the same rate as their more advantaged peers, mitigating some forms of disadvantage (OfS, 2020)³⁷.

³² TASO. 2021. 'Supporting access and student success for mature learners. <https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/TASO-mature-students-literature-review-2021.pdf>

³³ Huari, H., K. Hollingworth & C. Cameron. 2019. Getting it Right for care experienced students in HE. UCL. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/widening-participation/about-us/research-and-evaluation/research-publications/getting-it-right-care-experienced-students>

³⁴ Harrison, N. 2017. Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experienced students into and through higher education. UWE. https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/nnecl/redactor2_assets/files/61/HERACLESFinalreport.pdf

³⁵ Nursaw Associates. 2015. What do we know about the impact of financial support on access and student success? OFFA. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/382381>

³⁶ Vignoles, A. & Powdthavee, N. 2009, The Socioeconomic Gap in University Dropouts. The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy, 9, issue 1, p. 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1935-1682.2051>

³⁷ OfS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf>

Means-based financial support is reported in the literature to consistently improve completion rates of disadvantaged students (Herbaut and Geven, 2019)³⁸. Murphy and Wyness (2014)³⁹ and Harrison and Waller (2017)⁴⁰ claim that bursaries have that effect on the continuation of disadvantaged students.

The impact of merit-based support like scholarships is less straightforward, with some research, e.g., Herbeut and Geven (2019)³⁶ suggesting it only rarely improves outcomes for disadvantaged students while other research, e.g., Moores and Burges (2023)⁴¹ claims that it does improve retention, particularly of students from households with low- to medium income.

Moores and Burges (2023)⁴¹ stress that if continuation is the goal, then scholarships should be means-based only, i.e., given to those who most need the financial support, rather than on the basis of academic merit. They point out also that students eligible for means-based support sometimes do not receive it because their household income has not been officially assessed (meaning they miss out also on a maintenance grant) and/or because they find it very difficult to navigate the loans/bursary system. Consequently, such students are more likely to drop out.

Such apparently not uncommon instances highlight the 'need for a consistent method to identify those groups of students who are most vulnerable to being under-represented in HE before provision of financial support can be effective' (Kaye, 2021)⁴².

Halliday-Wynes & Nguyen (2014)⁴³ suggest that disadvantaged students often experience financial stress as they seek additional financial aid from family or friends. Our package of support is designed to mitigate or reduce this stress.

³⁸ Herbaut, E. & K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802>

³⁹ Murphy, R. & G. Wyness. 2015. Testing Means-Tested Aid. CEP Discussion Paper No 1396, Centre for Economic Performance. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35438856.pdf>

⁴⁰ Harrison, N. & R. Waller. 2017. Success and Impact in Widening Participation Policy: What Works and How Do We Know? Higher Education Policy 30(2):141-160. DOI:10.1057/s41307-016-0020-x

⁴¹ Moores, E. & A P. Burgess. 2023. Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, Studies in Higher Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950>

⁴² Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, Educational Review, 73:6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954>

⁴³ Halliday-Wynes, S. & N. Nguyen. 2014. Does financial stress impact on young people in tertiary study? Research Report 68, Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth. https://www.ncver.edu.au/_data/assets/file/0031/16789/impact-of-financial-stress-2732.pdf

Harrison et al. (2018)⁴⁴ point to a range of positive impacts that students derive from the receipt of financial support, including capacity building around the ability to focus on their studies, having a social life and building a social network, and developing self-esteem.

Elsewhere, studies have suggested that financial support can reduce a student's need to take on term time part-time work (Hordósy et al., 2018)⁴⁵.

Financial support can also have positive affective impacts, increasing a recipient student's sense of belonging to/in their university (Thomas, 2012)⁴⁶ or even of 'mattering' to the institution (Clark and Hordósy, 2019)⁴⁷.

However, it is important to recognise that financial support on its own does not remove non-financial barriers to participation and success in higher education, and that other types of support for target groups of students would also be required (Kaye, 2021)⁴⁰. Our set of Strategies incorporate this into their design.

Intervention Strategy 4: Broadening support through partnerships and working in communities

This Strategy outlines how we will engage our students in a meaningful building of a community of learners and practitioners, both within Futureworks and across other providers' student bodies and groups and organisations in the wider community.

Our aim here is to enhance our students' sense of belonging – to the institution, their course of study, their peers, the staff – academic and professional, the subject and working in it, and their place as practitioners in wider society.

⁴⁴ Harrison, N., S. Davies, R. Harris & R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university

bursaries to students' wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586>

⁴⁵ Hordósy, R., T. Clark & D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the 'double deficit' of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. *Journal of Education and Work* 31(4):1-13. DOI:10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068

⁴⁶ Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf>

⁴⁷ Clark, T., & R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. *Sociological Research Online*, 24(3), 353–369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971>

Evidence increasingly suggests that affective factors have a strong impact on student success, whether this is in terms of continuation of study or academic outcomes.

A student's sense of belonging to/in their HE institution is correlated with enhanced retention (Thomas, 2012)⁴⁰, which as discussed in the context of some of the previous Strategies may have a greater effect on, and importance for, our particular target groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged students, ethnic minority students, mature students, and students with care experience).

Belonging, or “mattering”, is a complex construct that encompasses the learning environment and students' social and cognitive attributes (Kift, 2004)⁴⁸.

Meehan and Howells (2019)⁴⁹ connect successful learning with increased sense of belonging.

It is important in this context to note that underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups of students, e.g., commuter students and IMD Quintile 1 students in receipt of financial support might be least likely to feel they belong and most likely to drop out (Mi Young Ahn & Howard H. Davis, 2023)⁵⁰.

Thomas (2012)⁴⁶ suggests that students who have a clear understanding of the support available to them and how to access it, are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and therefore continue with their studies.

This underpins our work with support service providers and ensuring that services are effectively signposted, which form part of our whole-institution approach to providing student support, as recommended by Thomas (2020)⁵¹, because of its ramifications for belonging and linked to it, the outcomes for retention and attainment mentioned earlier.

Another important strand of evidence from the literature and research related to this Strategy suggests that positive peer relationships are also a success factor that can increase a

⁴⁸ Kift, S. 2004. Organising First Year Engagement Around Learning: Formal and Informal Curriculum Intervention. In Nulty, Duncan & Meyers, Noel (Eds.) 8th Pacific Rim First year in Higher Education Conference Proceedings. QUT, www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/, pp. 1-19.

⁴⁹ Meehan, C. & K. Howells. 2019. In search of the feeling of 'belonging' in higher education: undergraduate students transition into higher education, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43:10, 1376-1390, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1490702>

⁵⁰ Mi Young Ahn & Howard H. Davis (2023) Students' sense of belonging and their socio-economic status in higher education: a quantitative approach, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 28:1, 136-149, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1778664>

⁵¹ Thomas, L. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in England. *Student Success*, 11(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1455>

student's sense of belonging (Thomas, 2011)⁵² and academic engagement (Furrer et al., 2014)⁵³.

We will tackle this through the Strategy's 'Building Student Communities', which aims to increase our students' ability to interact and work with students from other institutions to build a broader peer community than would be possible in just our students' cohorts.

Engaging students in project work with peers or the broader community, which we plan to do via the 'Celebrating creativity and inclusion' activity in the Strategy, has also been linked to positive impacts on students' sense of belonging (Soria & Stebleton, 2012; Soria & Stebleton, 2013; Soria & Bultmann, 2014; Beckett et al., 2021; Batchelder, 2022)^{54,55,56,57,58}.

This kind of project-based approach has been shown to support authentic learning and to encourage collaboration (Kokotsaki et al., 2016)⁵⁹ and creativity, which should help our students build connections with their course of study, but also address bias and discrimination in group work – a notable facet of contemporary social and employment related environments and expectations (Issac et al., 2023)⁶⁰.

⁵² Thomas, L.. 2011. Do Pre-entry Interventions such as 'Aimhigher' Impact on Student Retention and Success? A Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 65: 230-250. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2010.00481.x>

⁵³ Furrer, C. J., E.A., Skinner & J.R., Pitzer. 2014. The Influence of Teacher and Peer Relationships on Students' Classroom Engagement and Everyday Motivational Resilience. *Teachers College Record*, 116(13), 101–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811411601319>

⁵⁴ Soria, K. & M. Stebleton. 2012. First-generation students' academic engagement and retention, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17:6, 673-685, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.666735>

⁵⁵ Soria, K.M. & M.I Stebleton. 2013. Major Decisions: Motivations for Selecting a Major, Satisfaction, and Belonging. *NACADA Journal*, 33 (2): 29–43. doi: <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-13-018>

⁵⁶ Soria, K. & M. Bultmann. 2014. Supporting Working-Class Students in Higher Education. *NACADA Journal*, 34 (2): 51–62. doi: <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-13-017>

⁵⁷ Beckett CD, Zadvinskis IM, Dean J, Iseler J, Powell JM & Buck-Maxwell B. 2021. An Integrative Review of Team Nursing and Delegation: Implications for Nurse Staffing during COVID-19. *Worldviews Evid Based Nurs.*, 18(4):251-260. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fwvn.12523>

⁵⁸ Batchelder, R. 2022. Fostering Students' Sense of Belonging and Inclusion Through Community Involvement. *School of Education and Leadership Student Capstone Projects*. 802. https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_cp/802

⁵⁹ Kokotsaki, D., Menzies, V. & Wiggins, A. 2016. Project-based learning: A review of the literature. *Improving Schools*, 19(3), 267–277. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480216659733>

⁶⁰ Isaac, S., Kotluk, N. & Tormey, R.2023. Educating Engineering Students to Address Bias and Discrimination Within Their Project Teams. *Sci Eng Ethics* 29, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-022-00426-w>

Intervention Strategy 5: Provision of additional support for enrolled students

This Strategy aims to improve, through personalisation and targeted deployment, the academic support we provide our students in ways that promote student success overall, focusing on vulnerable students, e.g., students with disability, and promote the development of employability skills and social capital.

Developing academic skills, e.g., academic writing, is important across the board of student categories in HE and appears to form part of transitioning into HE.

Academic writing in the arts and humanities subjects at university can be perceived and experienced by students as significantly different from A-levels, both in terms of practices and understanding of how to write 'academically' (Baker, 2018)⁶¹. The difference in experience and confidence tends to be especially typical of 'locating, evaluating, synthesising and adapting to new forms of knowledge', and can present significant challenges to students' overall university experience, as well as affecting retention and attainment (Glew et al., 2019)⁶².

A review of the approaches to developing academic skills like writing and referencing (Bailey, 2018)⁶³ highlights as most effective the embedded model of teaching academic writing, in which students, subject specialists, and academic writing specialists (e.g., learning, and academic support staff) collaborate from Year 1 at university, which is the approach we are taking via our 'Programme of Academic Support' activity.

Bailey (2018)⁵⁷ notes that embedding academic writing into subject curricula appears to be important, as does giving special attention to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and mature students, who might be at the highest risk of dropping out. This too will be part of our 'Programme of Academic Support' provision outlined in the Strategy.

Levels of preparation for higher education can vary significantly between students, particularly amongst disadvantaged students, and those who are not supported by family or friends with prior HE experiences. In some cases, this is described as a hidden curriculum (Sambell and McDowell, 1998)⁶⁴, with criteria for success obfuscated from those "not in the know".

⁶¹ Baker, S. 2018. Shifts in the treatment of knowledge in academic reading and writing: Adding complexity to students' transitions between A-levels and university in the UK. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 17(4), 388–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022217722433>

⁶² Glew, P.J., L. M. Ramjan, M. Salas, K. Raper, H. Creed & Y. Salamonson. 2019. Relationships between academic literacy support, student retention and academic performance, *Nurse Education in Practice*, Volume 39, Pages 61-66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.07.011>.

⁶³ Bailey, R. 2018. Student writing and academic literacy development at university. *Journal of Learning and Student Experience*, Vol.1:Article 7. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301021821.pdf>

⁶⁴ Sambell, K. & L., McDowell. 1998. The construction of the hidden curriculum: messages and meanings in the assessment of student learning. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 23(4), 391-402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0260293980230406>

Students who are coached or supported to “know the ropes” (Whitty et al., 2015)⁶⁵ are likely to do better in their studies than those who do not know “the rules of the game”, usually students from disadvantaged or lower socio-cultural backgrounds (Bathmaker et al., 2013)⁶⁶.

Our ‘Programme of Academic Support’ activity is designed to help students without this prior knowledge of the hidden curriculum to successfully negotiate the higher education study process.

Our academic support gives students the knowledge they need to understand assessment criteria and expectations, and to respond effectively to them (Joughin, 2010)⁶⁷.

We deem this to be, and act as, a form of levelling the field, which we hope will enable supported students to demonstrate their potential through assessment.

Social capital has been shown to affect self-efficacy, and hence student success (Brouwer et al., 2016)⁶⁸. Peer capital at university, developed through peer-support and peer-learning, may have the strongest effect, according to Brouwer et al. (2016)⁶⁸, which is why student collaboration and peer-support will be at the centre of each of the activities in the Strategy, including our programme for ‘Career and Employability Development’.

As part of our approach, we will explore embedding peer- and self-assessment into our curricula, considering the potential they have to further aid the enculturation of students into the “ways of the university” (Concina, 2022)⁶⁹, and in particular into how we do academic work at Futureworks.

An added facet of our Strategy for enhancing and personalising the support we provide our students is the way we will support students with disabilities (the activity ‘Disability Support’ in the Strategy). The number of disabled students entering HE has continued to increase, but students with disabilities are still less likely to be awarded a 1st or 2:1 degree classification at

⁶⁵ Whitty, G., Hayton, A. & Tang, S. 2015. Who you know, what you know and knowing the ropes: a review of evidence about access to higher education institutions in England. *Rev Educ*, 3: 27-67. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3038>

⁶⁶ Bathmaker, A.-M., N. Ingram & R. Waller. 2013. Higher education, social class and the mobilisation of capitals: recognising and playing the game, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34:5-6, 723-743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2013.816041>

⁶⁷ Joughin, G. 2010. The hidden curriculum revisited: a critical review of research into the influence of summative assessment on learning, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35:3, 335-345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930903221493>

⁶⁸ Brouwer, J., E. Jansen, A. Flache & A. Hofman. 2016. The impact of social capital on self-efficacy and study success among first-year university students. *Learning and Individual Differences*, Vol 52, pp. 109-118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2016.09.016>.

⁶⁹ Concina, E. 2022. The Relationship between Self- and Peer Assessment in Higher Education: A Systematic Review. *Trends High. Educ.*, 1, 41-55. <https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu1010004>

the end of their studies than students without disabilities (OfS, 2021)⁷⁰. Students with a disability, as well as those with mental health conditions, are also more likely to consider dropping out (OfS, 2020)⁷¹. Receipt of disability-specific and universally available support however does increase continuation (Newman et al., 2019)⁷².

Factors that may affect continuation and attainment of disability students vis-à-vis receipt of support include (Safer et al., 2020)⁷³:

- provision of support as early as in the first semester/term of study has a positive effect on the continuation of students with disability,
- hearing impaired students, regardless of provision of interpretative support, as well as students with ASD, tend to have lower attainment; STEM-subject students with disabilities have lower attainment and continuation rates (although, that seems to apply generally to STEM students, so may not be related to disability),
- ethnic minority students with disabilities may be less likely to do as well (and/or take up available support) as their white comparator group, meaning culturally responsive support and teaching may be necessary,
- male students with disabilities are also less likely to take up support and may need more encouragement to do so.

Our dedicated programme of support for students with disabilities aims to help close this awarding gap at Futureworks. Alongside other established forms of support (e.g., making ‘reasonable adjustments’) for students with disabilities, we will also provide in-lesson and drop-in academic support, which will be tailored to both individual students’ academic needs and the specific requirements of their disability, as part of a portfolio of recommendations in Williams et al. (2019)⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Office for Students. 2021. Annual report and accounts 2021-22. Pp.43-44.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1c5f4fef-0c93-45fd-ae21-51c8e9a04fd1/ofs-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-22.pdf>

⁷¹ Office for Students. 2020. English higher education 2020: The Office for Students annual review: Supporting all students to succeed. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/annual-review-2020/supporting-all-students-to-succeed/>

⁷² Newman, L. A., J.W. Madaus, A.R. Lalor & H.S. Javitz. 2019. Support Receipt: Effect on Postsecondary Success of Students With Learning Disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 42(1), 6–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143418811288>

⁷³ Safer, A., L. Farmer & B. Song. 2020. Quantifying Difficulties of University Students with Disabilities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, v33, n1, pp. 5-21.
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273641.pdf>

⁷⁴ Williams, M., E. Pollard & H. Takala. 2019. Review of Support for Disabled Students in Higher Education in England: Report to the Office for Students. the Institute for Employment Studies and Researching Equity, Access and Participation. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/a8152716-870b-47f2-8045-fc30e8e599e5/review-of-support-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-in-england.pdf>

Just as students may differ in the amount of cultural and social capital they have when they start university, so some students will vary in the extent to which they bring and can valorise employability capital. Disadvantaged students currently have less positive employment outcomes than more advantaged peers (OfS, 2021)⁷⁰. There is evidence that students from disadvantaged backgrounds may have a more naive or idealised view of the labour market or assume that their degree is sufficient (Burke et al., 2020; Bathmaker, 2021)^{75,76}.

McCafferty (2022)⁷⁷ suggests that disadvantaged students often perceive the labour market as meritocratic, whilst more advantaged students see it as a game. The former students may also lack the 'hot' networks and contacts of their peers.

In the broader context of employability and our aim to enhance the development of related skills in all of our students, analysis of graduate destinations (Percy and Emms, 2020)⁷⁸ identifies the following key features of university experience that positively associate with higher career satisfaction and higher earning potential of UK graduates: focus on the development of transferrable skills; the curricular relevance to the graduate job; the relevance of the degree, degree classification (grade), and the qualification for the graduate job; relevant work experience during the degree; whether the graduate job was obtained through the university. The most important factor for career satisfaction was whether graduates were confident they could function/perform effectively across a range of transferrable skills.

Cohort-tailored, needs-based support with the development of employability skills is recommended by graduates reflecting on their experience of employability skills development at university (Scott and Willson, 2021)⁷⁹.

Our 'Career and Employability Development' activity will aim to identify needs and tailor support across the dimensions referenced above and, for target student groups in particular, we will provide more intensive support and guidance to help them navigate labour market challenges with a more realistic approach and more realistic knowledge and expectations.

⁷⁵ Burke, C., Scurry, T. & Blenkinsopp, J. 2020. Navigating the graduate labour market: the impact of social class on student understandings of graduate careers and the graduate labour market. *Studies in Higher Education*, 45(8), 1711-1722. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1702014>

⁷⁶ Bathmaker, A-M. 2021. Constructing a graduate career future: Working with Bourdieu to understand transitions from university to employment for students from working-class backgrounds in England. *Eur J Educ.*, 56: 78– 92. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12436>

⁷⁷ McCafferty, H. 2022. An unjust balance: a systematic review of the employability perceptions of UK undergraduates from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 27:4, 570-593. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2022.2110774>

⁷⁸ Percy, C. & K. Emms. 2020. Drivers of early career success for UK undergraduates: an analysis of graduate destinations surveys. Edge Foundation. https://www.edge.co.uk/sites/default/files/documents/edge_hesa_analysis_report_web-1.pdf

⁷⁹ Scott, F. J. & D. Willison. 2021. Students' reflections on an employability skills provision, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45:8, pp. 1118-1133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1928025>

Annex B:

Evidence Base and Rationale for Intervention Strategies

Intervention Strategy 1 – Working with schools and colleges at Key Stages 3-5

Intervention Strategy 2 – Working in non-educational settings

These two interventions outline how we plan to develop and work in partnership with schools and colleges, as well as with community-based groups and organisations to deliver a range of activities to increase the take up of creative subjects and progression to tertiary education for target groups.

Strategy 1 aims to set out support for students in schools and colleges, including target students from backgrounds associated with lower participation in arts education.

Strategy 2 sets out how we will reach out beyond schools and colleges and to engage and support the lower-participation groups - based on e.g., ethnicity, age, or care experience - in the wider community, including mature learners.

Opportunities for young people to study art at school are diminishing (Broadhead, 2022)¹ and arts as a subject can be under-valued in schools (Tambling and Bacon, 2023)².

This follows policy and funding changes in education over the past decade. One impact of this has been a 23% decrease in the number of hours at school dedicated to art subjects, with proportionately fewer students taking A-levels in creative subjects and, most recently, a 50% reduction of the subsidy to universities teaching expensive subjects such as arts (UKADIA, The Head Trust & Guild HE, 2021)³.

¹ Broadhead, S. 2022. Access and Widening Participation in Arts Higher Education. Practice and Research. Palgrave Macmillan Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-97450-3>

² Tambling & Bacon. 2023. The Art in Schools: Foundations for the Future. Purposes, Principles, and Practice. A New Direction, on behalf of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/7739>

³ UKADIA, The Head Trust, Guild HE. 2021. Trends in Creative Arts Qualifications. <https://ukadia.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/HEAD-Trust-Arts-Quals-report-FINAL.pdf>

More broadly, in the education sector as a whole, the outcomes gap between disadvantaged young people and their more advantaged peers is clear across a range of measures and evidenced through a range of recent reports.

Disadvantaged students tend to have lower attainment outcomes than their peers:

- Only one third of disadvantaged students get GCSE grades required to progress onto HE (OFFA, 2018)⁴.
- Pupils with eligibility for free school meals (FSM) are less likely to achieve A*-C in English and Maths (43%) compared to advantaged pupils (71%) (DfE, 2017)⁵.
- Students on FSM for more than 80% of school attendance are on average 22 months behind more advantaged peers (EPI, 2020)⁶.
- There is a persistent attainment gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students (EPI, 2020)⁶.

Evidence highlights that lower attainment can limit future outcomes and prospects:

- Lower attainment rates for disadvantaged students are a key barrier to HE progression. When disadvantaged students achieve the same levels of attainment as advantaged peers, they are almost equally likely to progress (OFFA, 2018; Crawford, 2014)^{4,7}.
- Achievement at KS4 is a key predictor of HE participation (OfS, 2022)⁸.
- Students (white and ethnic minority ones alike) with fewer GCSEs are less likely to pursue HE (DfE, 2004)⁹.

⁴ OFFA, 2018. Office for Fair Access annual report and accounts 2017-18.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728202/2017-18_OFFA_annual_report_2307FINAL.PDF

⁵ DfE. 2017. Study of Early Education and Development (SEED): Study of Quality of Early Years Provision in England (Revised).
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761606/29523_Ofsted_Annual_Report_2017-18_041218.pdf

⁶ Education Policy Institute. 2020. Education in England: Annual Report 2020.
<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/>

⁷ Crawford, C. 2014. Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and degree class. London: IFS. Available at: <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/socio-economic-differences-university-outcomes-uk-drop-out-degree-completion-and>

⁸ Office for Students. 2022. English higher education 2022. The Office for Students annual review.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/ae2dd8d-1ee8-4383-84cc-1fc483684d0f/ofs-annual-review-2022.pdf>

⁹ Connor H, Tyers C, Modood T, Hillage J. 2004. Why the Difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates. Research Report RR552, Department for Education and Skills.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR552.pdf>

- Disadvantaged students are also likely to consider higher education later, which may limit their choices, especially in more selective subjects and at higher tariff providers (UCAS, 2021)¹⁰.
- The DfE (2004)⁹ report flags-up minority students' (particularly, Black Caribbean, Pakistanis) who have, on average, lower entry qualifications - with fewer of them taking the A-level route and instead coming to HE from FE with vocational qualifications (which appear to correlate with higher risk of drop-out).

In the context of arts education, students who experience some form of disadvantage (economic, or based on race, ethnicity, disability, or age) appear to be significantly less likely than their peers from more advantageous backgrounds (POLAR and IMD quintiles 4 and 5) to have access to such education at school, to hold more than one relevant A-level, BTEC, or practical qualification in arts, or indeed to hold any pre-university arts qualification. Furthermore, students (white and ethnic minority ones alike) with fewer GCSEs are less likely to pursue HE (DfE, 2004)¹¹.

In terms of race and ethnicity, and access and participation in arts education, specifically at Key Stages 3-4 (11-15 year olds), Mark, HW & D Fancourt (2021)¹² conclude that ethnic minority and white students have the same levels of engagement with arts through school curricula, where available, but outside of the school ethnic minority students are approximately 35% less likely to engage (e.g., visit museums, galleries, attend classes, workshops). Similar differences in engagement with the arts and arts education have been reported for adults vs. children, and for ethnic minority adults in particular.

This poses a risk to the levels of participation in our 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' (Intervention Strategy 1) and 'Portfolio building programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) by our target groups. We aim to mitigate that risk through careful selection and development of our *School and College Partnerships* (Intervention Strategy 1), to reach target groups of students at KS 3-5, and through *Building Strategic Relationships* with community groups, local authority services, and employers, to reach our target groups who are not in education (Intervention Strategy 2).

Intervention Strategies 1 and 2 rely on evidence informed 'change mechanisms' to tackle the broader (and specific to pre-university arts education) barriers to access and participation.

¹⁰ UCAS. 2021. WHERE NEXT? WHAT INFLUENCES THE CHOICES LEAVERS MAKE?
<https://www.ucas.com/file/435551/download?token=VUdIDVFh>

¹¹ Connor H, Tyers C, Modood T, Hillage J. 2004. Why the Difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates. Research Report RR552, Department for Education and Skills.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR552.pdf>

¹² Mak HW, Fancourt D (2021) Do socio-demographic factors predict children's engagement in arts and culture? Comparisons of in-school and out-of-school participation in the Taking Part Survey. PLOS ONE 16(2): e0246936. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246936>

The activities we have included should promote belief, motivation, and belonging to the notion of studying arts at university.

For in-education prospective students (at school/in college) (Intervention Strategy 1) we aim to achieve that by:

- Linking education and attainment with future careers, which increases pupil motivation and application (EEF, 2016)¹³.
- Aligning high aspirations, high expectations, and high achievement, which predicts future educational behaviour of students [and high aspirations improve school achievement] (Khattab, 2015)¹⁴.
- Increasing students' motivation for applying to university and their confidence in getting in (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2010)¹⁵.
- Helping to develop students' metacognitive and self-regulation skills through engagement in the arts ('School and College Partnerships' activity and 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' activity): arts education not only correlates positively with retaining academic content for longer (Rinne, 2011)¹⁶, but helps cultivate, often better than non-arts subjects, skills such as metacognition, self-regulation, problem solving, creativity, and others that are deemed important by employers (Kingston University, Future Skills Report, 2022)¹⁷. Developing metacognitive and self-regulation skills in particular, can be equivalent to up to 7 months academic progress (EEF, 2021)¹⁸.

The 'Portfolio Building Programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) aims to give disadvantaged people access to (and experience of) arts study, thereby encouraging them to pursue a continuation of such studies at university.

72% of the creative workforce in the UK are highly qualified (hold a degree or an HE qualification at Level 4 or higher), and 46% of those are graduates from creative subjects

¹³ EEF. 2016. Careers education: International literature review.
https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/documents/guidance/Careers_review.pdf?v=1684350662

¹⁴ Khattab, N. (2015), Students' aspirations, expectations and school achievement: what really matters?. Br Educ Res J, 41: 731-748. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3171>

¹⁵ Joseph Rowntree Foundation. 2010. Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour? <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poorer-children%E2%80%99s-educational-attainment-how-important-are-attitudes-and-behaviour>

¹⁶ Rinne, L.F. et al. 2011. Why Arts Integration Improves Long-Term Retention of Content. Mind Brain and Education 5(2):89 – 96. DOI:10.1111/j.1751-228X.2011.01114.x

¹⁷ Kingston University London. 2022. Future Skills: League Table.
<https://www.kingston.ac.uk/documents/user-upload/kingston-university-d2606ad3a3d-future-skills-report-2022-final.pdf>

¹⁸ Education Endowment Foundation. 2021. Metacognition and self-regulation.
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation>

(given those graduating from creative subjects nationally make up only 17%). Creative subject graduates earn £2,300 more each year working in the creative industries than working outside; for comparison, non-creative graduates working in the creative industries earn approximately £1,300 more each year than if they worked in non-creative industries. Thus, studying a creative subject (e.g., art) and working in a related industry, does “pay off” (PEC, 2020)¹⁹.

Exposure to arts education is not the only approach we take to stimulate transition to HE in our target groups. Both Intervention Strategies 1 and 2 include provision of arts-specific careers, education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) on how to progress into an arts-based career.

The CEIAG aims to counter concerns about the precarity of arts careers that many prospective arts students from economically disadvantaged or BAME backgrounds may have – both adults (Intervention Strategy 2) and pupils and their families/parents (Intervention Strategy 1) alike (Broadhead, 2022; Alberts and Atherton, 2016)^{20,21}.

TASO’s evidence toolkit (TASO, 2023)²² suggests that CEIAG can have a small positive effect on attitudes, aspirations and HE progression, which could be especially useful to first-generation prospective university students, who cannot be guided and advised in that area as effectively by their parents and families as can students who have family members with prior HE experience (Thomas and Quinn, 2007)²³. People from families without HE experiences are likely therefore to have to shoulder much more of the burden of decision making (Diamond et al, 2016)²⁴.

Further to this, possible-selves theory (Markus and Nurius, 1986)²⁵ suggests that people can only imagine the futures for which they have the conceptual material, which derives from their own experience of what they see around them. Structural factors influence young people’s

¹⁹ PEC. 2020. For love or money? Graduate motivations and the economic returns of creative higher education inside and outside the Creative Industries. <https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/for-love-or-money>

²⁰ Broadhead, S. 2022. Access and Widening Participation in Arts Higher Education. Practice and Research. Palgrave Macmillan Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-97450-3>

²¹ Alberts, N. & G. Atherton. 2016. The more colours you add, the nicer the picture. Access HE. <https://www.accesshe.ac.uk/yYdlx0u7/The-more-colours-you-add-AccessHE-Creative-report.pdf>

²² TASO. 2023. Evidence Toolkit. <https://taso.org.uk/evidence/toolkit/>

²³ Thomas, L. and J. Quinn. 2007. First Generation Entry Into Higher Education: An International Study. Society for Research into Higher Education.

²⁴ Diamond, Rebecca. 2016. "The Determinants and Welfare Implications of US Workers' Diverging Location Choices by Skill: 1980-2000." *American Economic Review*, 106 (3): 479-524.

²⁵ Markus, H. & Nurius, P. 1986. Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41(9), 954–969. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.41.9.954>

aspiration-achievement gap through influence on their perceptions on what is possible for 'people like them' in future (Oyserman and Destin, 2010)²⁶.

CEIAGs like the one we have planned in the activities 'Preparation for HE: Information, Advice, and Guidance' (Intervention Strategy 1) and 'Online Advice and Preparation for HE: information, Advice, and Guidance' (Intervention Strategy 2) have been demonstrated in an Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) to boost enrolment into HE of prospective students from families with no previous graduate experience (Frauke et al., 2018)²⁷.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may also lack some of the forms of social capital that are implicit in the admissions and selection processes (Hayton et al, 2015)²⁸.

Both of our Strategies provide access to relevant forms of capital in order to smooth the fit between people and the university course they wish to be considered for. The 'Portfolio Building Programme' (Intervention Strategy 2) and 'Subject Linked Attainment Raising' programme (Intervention Strategy 1) include crucial practical opportunities to develop portfolio material. This aspect of the application process can often be more challenging for disadvantaged young people who may lack the time, resources, or support required to put together a competitive portfolio of their work (McManus 2006; McGuire 2015; Boliver and Powell, 2021)^{29,30,31}.

²⁶ Oyserman, D., & Destin, M. (2010). Identity-based motivation: Implications for intervention. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 38(7), 1001–1043. doi: 10.1177/0011000010374775. PMID: 21516204; PMCID: PMC3079278

²⁷ Frauke P., C. Spiess, C. Katharina & V. Zambre. 2018. Informing Students about College: An Efficient Way to Decrease the Socio-Economic Gap in Enrollment: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment. DIW Berlin Discussion Paper No. 1770, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3287800> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287800>

²⁸ Hayton, A., Haste, P., and Jones, A. (2015) 'Promoting diversity in creative art education: The case of Fine Art at Goldsmiths, University of London'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36 (8), 1258–76. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.899891>

²⁹ McManus, I. C., & Furnham, A. 2006. Aesthetic Activities and Aesthetic Attitudes: Influences of Education, Background and Personality on Interest and Involvement in the Arts. *British Journal of Psychology*, 97, 555-587. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1348/000712606X101088>

³⁰ McGuire, S.Y. (2015). *Teach Students How to Learn: Strategies You Can Incorporate into Any Course to Improve Student Metacognition, Study Skills, and Motivation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus

³¹ Boliver, V. & M. Powell. 2020. Fair admission to universities in England: improving policy and practice. Nuffield Foundation. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/sass/research/briefings/fairadmissionreport.pdf>

The TASO (2021)³² and UCL (2019)³³ reports corroborate the theory-of-change for Intervention Strategy 2 as it relates to supporting our final two target groups - mature and care-experienced students. For care-leavers/care-experienced students specifically, the main determinants of successful entry into and success during higher education study appear to be KS4 attainment, managing the transition process, the student's resilience and determination, the provision of disability support, and the successful integration into the HE course (Neil Harrison, 2017)³⁴.

Intervention Strategy 3: Financial Support

The impact of financial support on decisions to progress into HE is generally seen as small. It tends to be seen more as a mechanism for supporting students' continuation and progression (Nursaw 2015; TASO, 2023)^{35, 22}.

Given the evidence that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to discontinue their studies than their wealthier peers (Vignoles and Powdthavee, 2009)³⁶, we have designed our financial support package so it identifies and targets specifically students with the greatest need, who would most benefit from the support.

Appropriate support allocation can help disadvantaged students continue in their studies at the same rate as their more advantaged peers, mitigating some forms of disadvantage (OfS, 2020)³⁷.

³² TASO. 2021. 'Supporting access and student success for mature learners. <https://s33320.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/TASO-mature-students-literature-review-2021.pdf>

³³ Huari, H., K. Hollingworth & C. Cameron. 2019. Getting it Right for care experienced students in HE. UCL. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/widening-participation/about-us/research-and-evaluation/research-publications/getting-it-right-care-experienced-students>

³⁴ Harrison, N. 2017. Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experienced students into and through higher education. UWE. https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/nnecl/redactor2_assets/files/61/HERACLESFinalreport.pdf

³⁵ Nursaw Associates. 2015. What do we know about the impact of financial support on access and student success? OFFA. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/382381>

³⁶ Vignoles, A. & Powdthavee, N. 2009, The Socioeconomic Gap in University Dropouts. The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy, 9, issue 1, p. 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1935-1682.2051>

³⁷ OfS. 2020. Understanding the impact of the financial support evaluation toolkit: Analysis and findings. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/474c9580-e99a-4d24-a490-3474e85ae199/financial-support-evaluation-report-2016-17-2017-18.pdf>

Means-based financial support is reported in the literature to consistently improve completion rates of disadvantaged students (Herbaut and Geven, 2019)³⁸. Murphy and Wyness (2014)³⁹ and Harrison and Waller (2017)⁴⁰ claim that bursaries have that effect on the continuation of disadvantaged students.

The impact of merit-based support like scholarships is less straightforward, with some research, e.g., Herbeut and Geven (2019)³⁶ suggesting it only rarely improves outcomes for disadvantaged students while other research, e.g., Moores and Burges (2023)⁴¹ claims that it does improve retention, particularly of students from households with low- to medium income.

Moores and Burges (2023)⁴¹ stress that if continuation is the goal, then scholarships should be means-based only, i.e., given to those who most need the financial support, rather than on the basis of academic merit. They point out also that students eligible for means-based support sometimes do not receive it because their household income has not been officially assessed (meaning they miss out also on a maintenance grant) and/or because they find it very difficult to navigate the loans/bursary system. Consequently, such students are more likely to drop out.

Such apparently not uncommon instances highlight the 'need for a consistent method to identify those groups of students who are most vulnerable to being under-represented in HE before provision of financial support can be effective' (Kaye, 2021)⁴².

Halliday-Wynes & Nguyen (2014)⁴³ suggest that disadvantaged students often experience financial stress as they seek additional financial aid from family or friends. Our package of support is designed to mitigate or reduce this stress.

³⁸ Herbaut, E. & K. M. Geven. 2019. What Works to Reduce Inequalities in Higher Education? A Systematic Review of the (Quasi)Experimental Literature on Outreach and Financial Aid Policy Research Working Papers. <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-8802>

³⁹ Murphy, R. & G. Wyness. 2015. Testing Means-Tested Aid. CEP Discussion Paper No 1396, Centre for Economic Performance. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/35438856.pdf>

⁴⁰ Harrison, N. & R. Waller. 2017. Success and Impact in Widening Participation Policy: What Works and How Do We Know? Higher Education Policy 30(2):141-160. DOI:10.1057/s41307-016-0020-x

⁴¹ Moores, E. & A P. Burgess. 2023. Financial support differentially aids retention of students from households with lower incomes: a UK case study, Studies in Higher Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2022.2125950>

⁴² Kaye, N. 2021. Evaluating the role of bursaries in widening participation in higher education: a review of the literature and evidence, Educational Review, 73:6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1787954>

⁴³ Halliday-Wynes, S. & N. Nguyen. 2014. Does financial stress impact on young people in tertiary study? Research Report 68, Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth. https://www.ncver.edu.au/_data/assets/file/0031/16789/impact-of-financial-stress-2732.pdf

Harrison et al. (2018)⁴⁴ point to a range of positive impacts that students derive from the receipt of financial support, including capacity building around the ability to focus on their studies, having a social life and building a social network, and developing self-esteem.

Elsewhere, studies have suggested that financial support can reduce a student's need to take on term time part-time work (Hordósy et al., 2018)⁴⁵.

Financial support can also have positive affective impacts, increasing a recipient student's sense of belonging to/in their university (Thomas, 2012)⁴⁶ or even of 'mattering' to the institution (Clark and Hordósy, 2019)⁴⁷.

However, it is important to recognise that financial support on its own does not remove non-financial barriers to participation and success in higher education, and that other types of support for target groups of students would also be required (Kaye, 2021)⁴⁰. Our set of Strategies incorporate this into their design.

Intervention Strategy 4: Broadening support through partnerships and working in communities

This Strategy outlines how we will engage our students in a meaningful building of a community of learners and practitioners, both within Futureworks and across other providers' student bodies and groups and organisations in the wider community.

Our aim here is to enhance our students' sense of belonging – to the institution, their course of study, their peers, the staff – academic and professional, the subject and working in it, and their place as practitioners in wider society.

⁴⁴ Harrison, N., S. Davies, R. Harris & R. Waller. 2018. Access, participation and capabilities: theorising the contribution of university

bursaries to students' wellbeing, flourishing and success. Cambridge Journal of Education. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2017.1401586>

⁴⁵ Hordósy, R., T. Clark & D. Vickers. 2018. Lower income students and the 'double deficit' of part-time work: Undergraduate experiences of finance, studying, and employability. Journal of Education and Work 31(4):1-13. DOI:10.1080/13639080.2018.1498068

⁴⁶ Thomas, L. 2012. Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of change: a summary of findings and recommendations from the What Works? Student Retention & Success programme Summary Report. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-Summary-report.pdf>

⁴⁷ Clark, T., & R. Hordósy, 2019. Social Identification, Widening Participation and Higher Education: Experiencing Similarity and Difference in an English Red Brick University. Sociological Research Online, 24(3), 353–369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811971>

Evidence increasingly suggests that affective factors have a strong impact on student success, whether this is in terms of continuation of study or academic outcomes.

A student's sense of belonging to/in their HE institution is correlated with enhanced retention (Thomas, 2012)⁴⁰, which as discussed in the context of some of the previous Strategies may have a greater effect on, and importance for, our particular target groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged students, ethnic minority students, mature students, and students with care experience).

Belonging, or “mattering”, is a complex construct that encompasses the learning environment and students' social and cognitive attributes (Kift, 2004)⁴⁸.

Meehan and Howells (2019)⁴⁹ connect successful learning with increased sense of belonging.

It is important in this context to note that underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups of students, e.g., commuter students and IMD Quintile 1 students in receipt of financial support might be least likely to feel they belong and most likely to drop out (Mi Young Ahn & Howard H. Davis, 2023)⁵⁰.

Thomas (2012)⁴⁶ suggests that students who have a clear understanding of the support available to them and how to access it, are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and therefore continue with their studies.

This underpins our work with support service providers and ensuring that services are effectively signposted, which form part of our whole-institution approach to providing student support, as recommended by Thomas (2020)⁵¹, because of its ramifications for belonging and linked to it, the outcomes for retention and attainment mentioned earlier.

Another important strand of evidence from the literature and research related to this Strategy suggests that positive peer relationships are also a success factor that can increase a

⁴⁸ Kift, S. 2004. Organising First Year Engagement Around Learning: Formal and Informal Curriculum Intervention. In Nulty, Duncan & Meyers, Noel (Eds.) 8th Pacific Rim First year in Higher Education Conference Proceedings. QUT, www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/, pp. 1-19.

⁴⁹ Meehan, C. & K. Howells. 2019. In search of the feeling of 'belonging' in higher education: undergraduate students transition into higher education, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43:10, 1376-1390, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1490702>

⁵⁰ Mi Young Ahn & Howard H. Davis (2023) Students' sense of belonging and their socio-economic status in higher education: a quantitative approach, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 28:1, 136-149, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1778664>

⁵¹ Thomas, L. 2020. Excellent Outcomes for All Students: A Whole System Approach to Widening Participation and Student Success in England. *Student Success*, 11(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1455>

student's sense of belonging (Thomas, 2011)⁵² and academic engagement (Furrer et al., 2014)⁵³.

We will tackle this through the Strategy's 'Building Student Communities', which aims to increase our students' ability to interact and work with students from other institutions to build a broader peer community than would be possible in just our students' cohorts.

Engaging students in project work with peers or the broader community, which we plan to do via the 'Celebrating creativity and inclusion' activity in the Strategy, has also been linked to positive impacts on students' sense of belonging (Soria & Stebleton, 2012; Soria & Stebleton, 2013; Soria & Bultmann, 2014; Beckett et al., 2021; Batchelder, 2022)^{54,55,56,57,58}.

This kind of project-based approach has been shown to support authentic learning and to encourage collaboration (Kokotsaki et al., 2016)⁵⁹ and creativity, which should help our students build connections with their course of study, but also address bias and discrimination in group work – a notable facet of contemporary social and employment related environments and expectations (Issac et al., 2023)⁶⁰.

⁵² Thomas, L.. 2011. Do Pre-entry Interventions such as 'Aimhigher' Impact on Student Retention and Success? A Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 65: 230-250. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2010.00481.x>

⁵³ Furrer, C. J., E.A., Skinner & J.R., Pitzer. 2014. The Influence of Teacher and Peer Relationships on Students' Classroom Engagement and Everyday Motivational Resilience. *Teachers College Record*, 116(13), 101–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811411601319>

⁵⁴ Soria, K. & M. Stebleton. 2012. First-generation students' academic engagement and retention, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17:6, 673-685, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.666735>

⁵⁵ Soria, K.M. & M.I Stebleton. 2013. Major Decisions: Motivations for Selecting a Major, Satisfaction, and Belonging. *NACADA Journal*, 33 (2): 29–43. doi: <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-13-018>

⁵⁶ Soria, K. & M. Bultmann. 2014. Supporting Working-Class Students in Higher Education. *NACADA Journal*, 34 (2): 51–62. doi: <https://doi.org/10.12930/NACADA-13-017>

⁵⁷ Beckett CD, Zadvinskis IM, Dean J, Iseler J, Powell JM & Buck-Maxwell B. 2021. An Integrative Review of Team Nursing and Delegation: Implications for Nurse Staffing during COVID-19. *Worldviews Evid Based Nurs.*, 18(4):251-260. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fwbn.12523>

⁵⁸ Batchelder, R. 2022. Fostering Students' Sense of Belonging and Inclusion Through Community Involvement. *School of Education and Leadership Student Capstone Projects*. 802. https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_cp/802

⁵⁹ Kokotsaki, D., Menzies, V. & Wiggins, A. 2016. Project-based learning: A review of the literature. *Improving Schools*, 19(3), 267–277. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480216659733>

⁶⁰ Isaac, S., Kotluk, N. & Tormey, R.2023. Educating Engineering Students to Address Bias and Discrimination Within Their Project Teams. *Sci Eng Ethics* 29, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-022-00426-w>

Intervention Strategy 5: Provision of additional support for enrolled students

This Strategy aims to improve, through personalisation and targeted deployment, the academic support we provide our students in ways that promote student success overall, focusing on vulnerable students, e.g., students with disability, and promote the development of employability skills and social capital.

Developing academic skills, e.g., academic writing, is important across the board of student categories in HE and appears to form part of transitioning into HE.

Academic writing in the arts and humanities subjects at university can be perceived and experienced by students as significantly different from A-levels, both in terms of practices and understanding of how to write 'academically' (Baker, 2018)⁶¹. The difference in experience and confidence tends to be especially typical of 'locating, evaluating, synthesising and adapting to new forms of knowledge', and can present significant challenges to students' overall university experience, as well as affecting retention and attainment (Glew et al., 2019)⁶².

A review of the approaches to developing academic skills like writing and referencing (Bailey, 2018)⁶³ highlights as most effective the embedded model of teaching academic writing, in which students, subject specialists, and academic writing specialists (e.g., learning, and academic support staff) collaborate from Year 1 at university, which is the approach we are taking via our 'Programme of Academic Support' activity.

Bailey (2018)⁵⁷ notes that embedding academic writing into subject curricula appears to be important, as does giving special attention to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and mature students, who might be at the highest risk of dropping out. This too will be part of our 'Programme of Academic Support' provision outlined in the Strategy.

Levels of preparation for higher education can vary significantly between students, particularly amongst disadvantaged students, and those who are not supported by family or friends with prior HE experiences. In some cases, this is described as a hidden curriculum (Sambell and McDowell, 1998)⁶⁴, with criteria for success obfuscated from those "not in the know".

⁶¹ Baker, S. 2018. Shifts in the treatment of knowledge in academic reading and writing: Adding complexity to students' transitions between A-levels and university in the UK. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 17(4), 388–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022217722433>

⁶² Glew, P.J., L. M. Ramjan, M. Salas, K. Raper, H. Creed & Y. Salamonson. 2019. Relationships between academic literacy support, student retention and academic performance, *Nurse Education in Practice*, Volume 39, Pages 61-66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.07.011>.

⁶³ Bailey, R. 2018. Student writing and academic literacy development at university. *Journal of Learning and Student Experience*, Vol.1:Article 7. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/301021821.pdf>

⁶⁴ Sambell, K. & L., McDowell. 1998. The construction of the hidden curriculum: messages and meanings in the assessment of student learning. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 23(4), 391-402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0260293980230406>

Students who are coached or supported to “know the ropes” (Whitty et al., 2015)⁶⁵ are likely to do better in their studies than those who do not know “the rules of the game”, usually students from disadvantaged or lower socio-cultural backgrounds (Bathmaker et al., 2013)⁶⁶.

Our ‘Programme of Academic Support’ activity is designed to help students without this prior knowledge of the hidden curriculum to successfully negotiate the higher education study process.

Our academic support gives students the knowledge they need to understand assessment criteria and expectations, and to respond effectively to them (Joughin, 2010)⁶⁷.

We deem this to be, and act as, a form of levelling the field, which we hope will enable supported students to demonstrate their potential through assessment.

Social capital has been shown to affect self-efficacy, and hence student success (Brouwer et al., 2016)⁶⁸. Peer capital at university, developed through peer-support and peer-learning, may have the strongest effect, according to Brouwer et al. (2016)⁶⁸, which is why student collaboration and peer-support will be at the centre of each of the activities in the Strategy, including our programme for ‘Career and Employability Development’.

As part of our approach, we will explore embedding peer- and self-assessment into our curricula, considering the potential they have to further aid the enculturation of students into the “ways of the university” (Concina, 2022)⁶⁹, and in particular into how we do academic work at Futureworks.

An added facet of our Strategy for enhancing and personalising the support we provide our students is the way we will support students with disabilities (the activity ‘Disability Support’ in the Strategy). The number of disabled students entering HE has continued to increase, but students with disabilities are still less likely to be awarded a 1st or 2:1 degree classification at

⁶⁵ Whitty, G., Hayton, A. & Tang, S. 2015. Who you know, what you know and knowing the ropes: a review of evidence about access to higher education institutions in England. *Rev Educ*, 3: 27-67. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3038>

⁶⁶ Bathmaker, A.-M., N. Ingram & R. Waller. 2013. Higher education, social class and the mobilisation of capitals: recognising and playing the game, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34:5-6, 723-743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2013.816041>

⁶⁷ Joughin, G. 2010. The hidden curriculum revisited: a critical review of research into the influence of summative assessment on learning, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35:3, 335-345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930903221493>

⁶⁸ Brouwer, J., E. Jansen, A. Flache & A. Hofman. 2016. The impact of social capital on self-efficacy and study success among first-year university students. *Learning and Individual Differences*, Vol 52, pp. 109-118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2016.09.016>.

⁶⁹ Concina, E. 2022. The Relationship between Self- and Peer Assessment in Higher Education: A Systematic Review. *Trends High. Educ.*, 1, 41-55. <https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu1010004>

the end of their studies than students without disabilities (OfS, 2021)⁷⁰. Students with a disability, as well as those with mental health conditions, are also more likely to consider dropping out (OfS, 2020)⁷¹. Receipt of disability-specific and universally available support however does increase continuation (Newman et al., 2019)⁷².

Factors that may affect continuation and attainment of disability students vis-à-vis receipt of support include (Safer et al., 2020)⁷³:

- provision of support as early as in the first semester/term of study has a positive effect on the continuation of students with disability,
- hearing impaired students, regardless of provision of interpretative support, as well as students with ASD, tend to have lower attainment; STEM-subject students with disabilities have lower attainment and continuation rates (although, that seems to apply generally to STEM students, so may not be related to disability),
- ethnic minority students with disabilities may be less likely to do as well (and/or take up available support) as their white comparator group, meaning culturally responsive support and teaching may be necessary,
- male students with disabilities are also less likely to take up support and may need more encouragement to do so.

Our dedicated programme of support for students with disabilities aims to help close this awarding gap at Futureworks. Alongside other established forms of support (e.g., making ‘reasonable adjustments’) for students with disabilities, we will also provide in-lesson and drop-in academic support, which will be tailored to both individual students’ academic needs and the specific requirements of their disability, as part of a portfolio of recommendations in Williams et al. (2019)⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Office for Students. 2021. Annual report and accounts 2021-22. Pp.43-44.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1c5f4fef-0c93-45fd-ae21-51c8e9a04fd1/ofs-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-22.pdf>

⁷¹ Office for Students. 2020. English higher education 2020: The Office for Students annual review: Supporting all students to succeed. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/annual-review-2020/supporting-all-students-to-succeed/>

⁷² Newman, L. A., J.W. Madaus, A.R. Lalor & H.S. Javitz. 2019. Support Receipt: Effect on Postsecondary Success of Students With Learning Disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 42(1), 6–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143418811288>

⁷³ Safer, A., L. Farmer & B. Song. 2020. Quantifying Difficulties of University Students with Disabilities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, v33, n1, pp. 5-21.
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273641.pdf>

⁷⁴ Williams, M., E. Pollard & H. Takala. 2019. Review of Support for Disabled Students in Higher Education in England: Report to the Office for Students. the Institute for Employment Studies and Researching Equity, Access and Participation. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/a8152716-870b-47f2-8045-fc30e8e599e5/review-of-support-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-in-england.pdf>

Just as students may differ in the amount of cultural and social capital they have when they start university, so some students will vary in the extent to which they bring and can valorise employability capital. Disadvantaged students currently have less positive employment outcomes than more advantaged peers (OfS, 2021)⁷⁰. There is evidence that students from disadvantaged backgrounds may have a more naive or idealised view of the labour market or assume that their degree is sufficient (Burke et al., 2020; Bathmaker, 2021)^{75,76}.

McCafferty (2022)⁷⁷ suggests that disadvantaged students often perceive the labour market as meritocratic, whilst more advantaged students see it as a game. The former students may also lack the 'hot' networks and contacts of their peers.

In the broader context of employability and our aim to enhance the development of related skills in all of our students, analysis of graduate destinations (Percy and Emms, 2020)⁷⁸ identifies the following key features of university experience that positively associate with higher career satisfaction and higher earning potential of UK graduates: focus on the development of transferrable skills; the curricular relevance to the graduate job; the relevance of the degree, degree classification (grade), and the qualification for the graduate job; relevant work experience during the degree; whether the graduate job was obtained through the university. The most important factor for career satisfaction was whether graduates were confident they could function/perform effectively across a range of transferrable skills.

Cohort-tailored, needs-based support with the development of employability skills is recommended by graduates reflecting on their experience of employability skills development at university (Scott and Willson, 2021)⁷⁹.

Our 'Career and Employability Development' activity will aim to identify needs and tailor support across the dimensions referenced above and, for target student groups in particular, we will provide more intensive support and guidance to help them navigate labour market challenges with a more realistic approach and more realistic knowledge and expectations.

⁷⁵ Burke, C., Scurry, T. & Blenkinsopp, J. 2020. Navigating the graduate labour market: the impact of social class on student understandings of graduate careers and the graduate labour market. *Studies in Higher Education*, 45(8), 1711-1722. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1702014>

⁷⁶ Bathmaker, A-M. 2021. Constructing a graduate career future: Working with Bourdieu to understand transitions from university to employment for students from working-class backgrounds in England. *Eur J Educ.*, 56: 78– 92. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12436>

⁷⁷ McCafferty, H. 2022. An unjust balance: a systematic review of the employability perceptions of UK undergraduates from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 27:4, 570-593. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2022.2110774>

⁷⁸ Percy, C. & K. Emms. 2020. Drivers of early career success for UK undergraduates: an analysis of graduate destinations surveys. Edge Foundation. https://www.edge.co.uk/sites/default/files/documents/edge_hesa_analysis_report_web-1.pdf

⁷⁹ Scott, F. J. & D. Willison. 2021. Students' reflections on an employability skills provision, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45:8, pp. 1118-1133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1928025>

Fees, investments and targets

2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Futureworks Training Limited

Provider UKPRN: 10022087

Summary of 2024-25 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

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

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	N/A	N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	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	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2024-25 entrants

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

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2024-25

Sub-contractual part-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	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	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Fees, investments and targets

2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Futureworks Training Limited

Provider UKPRN: 10022087

Investment summary

A provider is expected to submit information about its forecasted investment to achieve the objectives of its access and participation plan in respect of the following areas: access, financial support and research and evaluation. Note that this does not necessarily represent the total amount spent by a provider in these areas. Table 6b provides a summary of the forecasted investment, across the four academic years covered by the plan, and Table 6d gives a more detailed breakdown.

Notes about the data:

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.

Yellow shading indicates data that was calculated rather than input directly by the provider.

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

"Total access investment funded from HFI" refers to income from charging fees above the basic fee limit.

"Total access investment from other funding (as specified)" refers to other funding, including OFS funding (but excluding Uni Connect), other public funding and funding from other sources such as philanthropic giving and private sector sources and/or partners.

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£93,000	£79,000	£69,000	£69,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£124,000	£121,000	£142,000	£146,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£35,000	£28,000	£20,000	£20,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£31,000	£24,000	£22,000	£22,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£27,000	£27,000	£27,000	£27,000
Access activity investment	Total access investment (£)	£93,000	£79,000	£69,000	£69,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment (as % of HFI)</i>	6.7%	5.2%	4.3%	4.2%
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment funded from HFI (£)</i>	£93,000	£79,000	£69,000	£69,000
Access activity investment	<i>Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)</i>	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£57,000	£88,000	£107,000	£110,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£37,000	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£30,000	£33,000	£35,000	£36,000
Financial support investment	Total financial support investment (£)	£124,000	£121,000	£142,000	£146,000
Financial support investment	<i>Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)</i>	8.9%	7.9%	8.8%	8.9%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000
Research and evaluation investment	<i>Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)</i>	2.2%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%

Fees, investments and targets

2024-25 to 2027-28

Provider name: Futureworks Training Limited

Provider UKPRN: 10022087

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative ?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
Increase the proportion of new entrants who were eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage 4.	PTA_1	Access	Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)	Eligible		The proportion of new entrants into Futureworks who were eligible for Free School Meals at KS4 is lower than the proportion of the UK school population which are eligible for Free School Meals (18% vs 24%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	18%	19%	20%	22%	24%
Increase the proportion of new entrants who declare their ethnicity as ABMO.	PTA_2	Access	Ethnicity	Other (please specify in description)		The proportion of new entrants into Futureworks who declare their ethnicity as Asian, Black, Mixed or Other is lower than the HE sector average (18% vs 35%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	18%	22%	26%	31%	35%
Increase the proportion of mature entrants.	PTA_3	Access	Age	Mature (over 21)		The proportion of new entrants into Futureworks who are 21 years old or over is lower than the HE sector average (20% vs 29%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2021-22	Percentage	20%	21%	23%	26%	29%
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative ?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2024-25 milestone	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone
Increase the proportion of Futureworks students with a declared disability who complete their first year of study.	PTS_1	Continuation	Reported disability	Other (please specify in description)	No disability reported	The proportion of Futureworks students with any declared disability who complete their first year of study is lower than the proportion of Futureworks students who do not declare a disability and complete their first year of study (69% vs 80%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2020-21	Percentage	69%	73%	76%	78%	80%
Increase the proportion of Futureworks students who declare their Ethnicity as ABMO that complete their first year of study.	PTS_2	Continuation	Ethnicity	Other (please specify in description)	White	The proportion of Futureworks students who declare their ethnicity as Asian, Black, Mixed or Other who complete their first year of study is lower than the proportion of Futureworks students who declare their ethnicity as White and complete their first year of study (71% vs 78%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2020-21	Percentage	71%	73%	74%	76%	78%
Increase the proportion of Futureworks students who are male and were eligible for Free School Meals at KS4 that complete their course of study.	PTS_3	Completion	Intersection of characteristics	Other (please specify in description)	Other (please specify in description)	The proportion of Futureworks students who are male and were eligible for FSM at KS4 who complete their course of study is lower than the proportion of Futureworks students who are male and were not eligible for FSM at KS4 who complete their course of study (69% vs 88%). This is a five year target.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	Percentage	69%	70%	75%	82%	88%

