



2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by Solent University, Southampton against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

Solent University, Southampton's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Solent University is committed to delivering the Government's targets to support underrepresented groups in higher education. As we attract a high proportion of students from disadvantaged groups, our ambition is to ensure we provide an inclusive and successful learner journey at every stage from access to graduate outcomes.

Our strategy has been to improve institutional processes, enhance the knowledge and skills of all staff and better support our students. What this means is that our work to facilitate social mobility and justice involves a whole institution, whole student life cycle approach to eliminate barriers to entry and success rather than focusing on initiatives that problematise our students. Using a growing evidence base, our strategy has been developed in collaboration with our student community which has focused this year on:

- We are committed to evaluating our 'access' targets by monitoring engagement in our outreach activities by groups of students with WP characteristics and tracking this through to applications. We work closely with partner schools to obtain direct feedback immediately after programmes have been delivered and we evaluate impact.
- In relation to our ambitions and goals for student 'success', we continue to monitor and review the impact of actions and interventions by taking a programmed approach to data informed impact analyses, which provides early indications of achievement.
- In 2019-20 we worked more closely than ever with the Students' Union and we involved students in developing and evaluating our initiatives. The University's Student Board, a senior committee that is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and comprises University staff, Students' Union sabbatical officers and student representatives, met regularly throughout the year. We devised specific staff development programmes and we evaluated learning outcomes and changes in practice resulting from the delivery of these initiatives.
- We utilised what we had learnt from the Office for Students funded Beating the Attainment Gap (BTAG) project and applied the principles in an inclusive manner, evaluating the impact of the interventions we employed, including outcomes for students with WP characteristics.
- Solent Futures, the University's careers service, monitored our targets for 'progression', and the impact of initiatives, by following the career paths of students, graduates and alumni. We considered data across groups of students with WP characteristics, as well as comparing the impact of our activities on these underrepresented groups. We used data from the Employability Self-Evaluation test to evaluate the distance travelled by students so we could understand the impact of different activities and use the results to plan future initiatives and support.
- The financial support we gave to students in 2019-20 will continue to be assessed annually using the Sheffield bursary evaluation model. We will continue to use this method of evaluation to gauge the effect of our financial support on student outcomes. We will also research student views on the financial support provided, building on activity that we started in 2017-18.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by Solent University, Southampton of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of Solent University, Southampton’s 2019-20 [access and participation plan](#).

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in [Annex B](#).

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants from state schools, compared to a three-year average	Other (please give details in Description column)	96.5	96.8	96.9	Percentage	2019-20	97	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhood, compared to three-year average	Other (please give details in Description column)	13.4	13.6	13.7	Percentage	2019-20	18.1	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Student success)	Non-continuation following year of entry for young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants, compared to three-year average	Other (please give details in Description column)	10.8	9.9	9.6	Percentage	2019-20	8.9	Expected progress
T16a_04 (Student success)	An alternative view of non-continuation for first degree entrants	2013-14	71.4	73.2	73.7	Percentage	2019-20	71.8	Limited progress
T16a_05 (Student success)	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (Foundation Degree)	2013-14	96.7	97.1	97.2	Percentage	2019-20	94.4	No progress
T16a_06 (Student success)	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (HND/C)	2013-14	91.3	93	93.5	Percentage	2019-20	94.9	Expected progress

T16a_07 (Student success)	Increase continuation rates for BME students to more closely match that of White students	2014-15	85.4	86.3	86.6	Percentage	2019-20	89	Expected progress
T16a_08 (Student success)	Stretch targets for progression is based on students that graduate with 'Good Honours' (First class honours and Upper second class honours)	2013-14	59.9	63	64	Percentage	2019-20	80.2	Expected progress
T16a_09 (Student success)	Increase attainment rates for BME students to move closely match that of the University average	2014-15	48.3	52	53	Percentage	2019-20	66	Expected progress
T16a_10 (Success)	Leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses	2013-14	90.2	91.2	91.7	Percentage	2019-20	93.8	Expected progress
T16a_11 (Progression)	Reduce the gap between males and females securing PM level roles to 2%	2017-18	12% gap	6% gap	2% gap	Percentage	2019-20	11	Limited progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	Vulnerable children and young people (including children in care and young carers) and/or those who support them (via the Southern Universities Network)	2015-16	N/A	4 activities per year with at least 3 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 3 universities participating in each	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	4	Limited progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Termly meetings of Working Groups relating to: BME, Disability, Vulnerable Children and Young People, and Mature and part-time students	2014-15	N/A	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	2	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Activities for black and minority ethnic students (via Southern Universities Network)	2015-16	NA	Research Project	TBC following the research project	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	1	Expected progress
T16b_04 (Access)	Activities for potential mature and part-time students (via Southern Universities Network)	2015-16	N/A	4 activities per year with at least 2 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 2 universities participating in each	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	2	Limited progress
T16b_05 (Access)	Increase student enrolments from BME students (Q1) by 20%	2013-14	110	140	150	Headcount	2019-20	110	No progress
T16b_06 (Access)	Increase students enrolments from White Working Class Males (Q1) by 50% over a 4 year period	2013-14	100	130	140	Headcount	2019-20	199	Expected progress
T16b_07 (Access)	Development of new partnerships in conjunction with the Southampton Education Forum (SEF). This will focus on new admissions agreements being signed with Southampton Solent University.	2016-17	6	15	20	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	28	Expected progress
T16b_08 (Student success)	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (First Degree)	2013-14	85.9	87.5	88	Percentage	2018-19	91	Expected progress
T16b_09 (Access)	Long Term Outreach (Primary Schools)	2015-16	100	250	300	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	1164	Expected progress

T16b_10 (Access)	Attainment in Schools	2016-17	NA	Increase Attainment 8 by 1.0 grade for 50 pupils within 2 secondary schools	Increase Attainment 8 by 1.0 grade for 75 pupils within 3secondary schools	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20	0	Limited progress
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3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£805,419.00	£1,340,000.00	66%
Financial Support	£2,260,040.00	£3,233,000.00	43%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected Solent University, Southampton has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16a_04	We will continue to implement planned interventions through our Student Achievement team plus any courses with poor retention/progression will be targeted as part of our Solent Course Enhancement Programme. We will closely monitor this activity to ensure that it is continuing to have such a positive impact.
T16a_05	As with the previous target, we will continue to implement planned interventions through our Student Achievement team plus any courses with poor retention/progression will be targeted as part of our Solent Course Enhancement Programme. We will continue to monitor these cohorts very closely to assess the full impact of the pandemic on employer sponsored courses.
T16a_11	The 2020/25 APP focusses on inter-sectional targets for BAME female students and female students from LPNs. Alongside our planned initiatives, as a university we have shifted our focus from a student deficit model to a cultural shift across the entire university as part of our work on the Race Equality Charter. It is anticipated that this will make any initiatives more impactful over time.

T16b_01	Solent University will concentrate on building future partnerships with Virtual Schools (VS) and local authorities, including strengthening our relationship with Southampton VS, Portsmouth VS and Hampshire VS and facilitating new relationships with Sutton VS, Croydon VS and Achieve for Children VS with a view to building towards our 2020-22 activity (including Foster Carer CPD, Professional CPD, Virtual Campus Visits and Contextual offers for care leavers).
T16b_04	Our 2020-2025 APP has a focus on secondary, post-16 and community activity with no specific targets surrounding mature learner activity, that said we still recognise the importance of these interventions and we will continue to facilitate activities with mature learners. This includes community activities, specific online events for this group and continued support for the LifePilot platform.
T16b_05	<p>In relation to our 2020-25 APP, we plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver more events that are specific for the BAME community including parent/carer events and BAME prospective student events. • Organise more attainment raising activities via schools for BAME learners (working with Training Providers based in BAME communities). • Further develop our partnership with Unity 101 • Create resources that are specific for BAME learners, including podcasts and videos • Target BAME learners for high intensity WP activities including mentoring, work experience and residentials • Increase the use of BAME role models and student ambassadors when delivering WP activities • Increase communication with BAME community groups/leaders <p>In addition, we will be setting up a working group to address the issue of recruitment of students from a BAME background, including consideration of enhanced bursary packages</p>
T16b_10	During 2020-21 we will be as supportive as possible to the schools/colleges/communities that we work with and be proactive in our response to the pandemic (including the cancellation of exams and school closures). Key things we have developed include live and on demand workshops/assemblies, virtual events (with specific WP group content), the contextual offer scheme and resources that are focussed around mental health (with a particular focus on examination year groups). We also planning to start our attainment raising activities earlier for current year 9 and 10 learners including maths catch up activities to prevent gaps increasing for disadvantaged learners.

5. Confirmation

Solent University, Southampton confirms that:

Student engagement	
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?	
Yes	
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?	
Yes	
Verification and sign off	
Solent University, Southampton has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.	
Yes	
Accountable officer sign off	
Name	Karen Stanton
Position	Vice-Chancellor

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

Solent University, Southampton's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16a_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>We are pleased that Solent continues to be below-benchmark for continuation based on HESA data. The data we used as a baseline for this target was not an effective way to measure success. So, whilst we did not meet the target using this baseline, it is clear that Solent is serving its students well. Based on UK domiciled full-time undergraduate entrants who did not leave within 50 days of commencement and who were still enrolled in the following year, in 2018/19 we recorded 9.4% against a benchmark of 10.8% for all ages. For younger students, Solent had 8.9% no longer in HE the following year compared to 9.5% benchmark and for mature students 11.1% against a benchmark of 15.3%. Overall, in 2018/19 non-continuation increased by 0.1% for entrants of all ages however it continues to be below benchmark. The percentage increased for young entrants in 18/19 (by 0.4%) but decreased for mature entrants in 18/19 (by 1.7%). In both age groups non-continuation was below benchmark. Solent has consistently been below benchmark for non-continuation over the last 5 years, this is clear evidence that our initiatives in this area are having a sustained impact.</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>Given the track record of successfully improving our overall retention rates over the last 5 years, no additional actions have been taken in addition to the initiatives outlined in the plan.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_05
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>We have worked hard to support students as outlined in our plan through a programme of interventions. This target was negatively impacted by the pandemic as it relates to Foundation Degrees that are primarily linked to cadetship and apprenticeship programmes, both of which rely on employer sponsorship and on-the-job training. For example, cadets were unable to go to sea for their sea phase and were made redundant by their sponsoring companies. We are pleased that 203 out of 215 students were able to progress. To have met the target, 6 more students would have needed to have been able to remain on their programme.</p>
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>Most students studying on our Foundation degree courses are undertaking either apprenticeships or cadetships. Many of these students have lost their employer sponsors, which impacts on their ability to continue with their studies. We also introduced measures such as our 'No detriment' policy to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the transition to online learning as well as the Transformation Academy to ensure that online teaching gave an equitable experience for students.</p>

Target reference number: T16a_11
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
The baseline for this target was the last DLHE Survey (2018). This indicated that we had a gender gap of 12%. Graduate outcomes for the cohort who graduated in 2019-20 will not be available until the release of 2021 Graduate Outcomes Survey later this year. However, data from the first survey in 2020 which surveyed 2018 leavers, indicated that we had only reduced our gender gap by 1%.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The impact of the initiatives from the 2019/20 APP will not be known until the release of the 2021 Graduate Outcomes Survey.

Target reference number: T16b_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>We have exceeded the target in terms of the number of events that we organised, however, collaborative opportunities have been limited during the pandemic, so we have not met the target in terms of collaborating with 3 other universities for each event. The following has been delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x CPD WP Professionals (GRT Focus) – 51 beneficiaries (SUN working groups research identified a regional need to upskill WP and Outreach practitioners surrounding outreach for GRT communities). • 2 x CPD events for Foster Carer - 255 beneficiaries, with University of Winchester (1 x event) and the University of Southampton (1 x event) • 1 x Careers event for Looked after Children, with the University of Winchester. • 1 x CPD event for Designated Teachers, with NNECL partners.
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>In addition, Solent University facilitated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x Campus Visits for Looked After Children – 12 participant engagements. • 2 x Transition Campus Visits for Disabled Learners – 23 attendees. • 1 x Campus Visits for Young Carers – 35 attendees. • 3 x CPD events for Designated Teachers/Foster Carers – 69 beneficiaries.

Target reference number: T16b_04
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
We have no doubt that we would have met this target had it not been for the pandemic, however collaborative opportunities have been limited during the pandemic with many

events being cancelled. We did organise 2 events focussed around mature learners that were attended by at least 2 SUN partners.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

SUN partners also provide access to LifePilot for potential mature learners and will be part of a collaborative programme utilising an online chat platform for mature students (under development). Solent has separately delivered activities to mature learners including attending 5 events that focussed around mature learners/those from military backgrounds.

Target reference number: T16b_05

How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?

Despite the efforts outlined below, we are extremely concerned that have not met this target and consequently we are setting up a working group to address this issue.

We have delivered the following specific activities:

- 1 x Off Campus Activity (Somalian Community) – 30 learners.
- 1 x Campus Visit (Somalian Community) – 33 Learners.

This is in addition to activities with partner schools/colleges where 26% of known participants were from BME communities – please note that in Southampton, an area of focus, 22% of the population are known to be non-white British.

We have also built relationships with key community stake holders, including BAME community leaders, faith groups, training providers and local authority contacts (where we have developed a better understanding of working with this community and made plans to deliver activities what address local needs and support access to HE – when physically possible).

When looking to work with BME learners in London, our Post 16 team have been supported in targeting and building new relationships with sixth forms/colleges with higher proportions of BME students. We have also worked with local authorities and virtual schools (Sutton, Croydon and Achieve for Children) with relationships build with a view to working with a variety of WP learners including those from BME communities.

Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?

During the pandemic and in preparation for our 2020-2025 APP activity we have focussed on building positive relationships with the local BAME community (including the Asian Community).

Firstly we have built relationships with key community stake holders, including BAME community leaders (via our Civic Charter and links to Black History Month), faith groups (visiting local Mosques), training providers (based in the St Marys area where a high BAME population resides) and local authority contacts (where we have developed a better understanding of working with this community). Through this relationship building we have made plans to deliver activities that address local needs and support access to HE (which we plan to deliver when physically possible). During the pandemic we have promoted our online resources to these communities.

We have also formalised a partnership with Unity 101 Radio (Ethnic Focussed Station), where we have regular slots promoting access to HE.

Target reference number: T16b_10
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
<p>As the DfE have not released any performance measures we are unable to assess our progress against this target. We were very pleased that we were able to deliver attainment raising activities to benefit this age group, in spite of school closures at the times of year that we usually work with these learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 activities took place (over 50 contact hours) with 1881 participant engagements (Of postcodes collected - Polar 4: Q1 57%, Q2 15%, IMD: 73% live in areas of deprivation).
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
<p>We delivered 79 WP activities (over 250 contact hours) with 11,590 secondary participant engagements (Of postcodes collected - Polar 4: Q1 52%, Q2 16%, IMD: 71% live in areas of deprivation). Although this was slightly less than planned, in the face of the pandemic, we believe that this is a considerable achievement. When writing our contextual admissions policy (which we have introduced earlier than planned) we also considered how we could support those who attend low performing secondary schools and are therefore more likely to achieve lower GCSE results, this became a key criteria for those who are eligible for a lower offer.</p>

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

Solent University, Southampton's commentary on any of the targets listed in [Section 2](#).

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	Please note that we feel that the original target was not effective and request that the OfS considers performance against HESA benchmark and records this as an achieved target in our Impact Report.
T16a_05	Please note our request to record this as an achieved target on our Impact Report as the factors concerned were outside our control.
T16a_06	
T16a_07	
T16a_08	
T16a_09	
T16a_10	
T16a_11	
T16b_01	Please note our request to record this as an achieved target on our Impact Report given that the pandemic prevented us from achieving the collaboration aspect of this target.
T16b_02	SUN working groups have met during the academic year. In addition, the following activities have taken place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x CPD WP Professionals (BAME Focus) – 32 beneficiaries (via SUN WP working groups). • 1 x CPD WP Professionals (Mixed Focus) – 91 beneficiaries (via SUN WP working groups and Uni Connect Partnership)

T16b_03	<p>Via the SUN working groups, a CPD session for WP professionals has taken place (BAME Focus) with 32 beneficiaries. Separately Solent has delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Off Campus Activity (Somalian Community) – 30 learners. • 1 x Campus Visit (Somalian Community) – 33 Learners. <p>In preparation for our 2020-2025 APP activity, we have focussed on building positive relationships with the local BAME community (including the Asian Community). This includes formalising a partnership with Unity 101 Radio (Ethnic Focussed Station), where we delivered 6 monthly radio shows and we have regular slots promoting access to HE. In addition, we have built relationships with key community stake holders, including BAME community leaders, faith groups, training providers and local authority contacts (where we have developed a better understanding of working with this community).</p>
T16b_04	
T16b_05	
T16b_06	
T16b_07	<p>Solent are active members of the Southampton Education Forum (a partnership including 2 universities, 3 colleges and 12 secondary schools). Through the partnership this has enabled us to facilitate 10 formal working relationships. Beyond Southampton we have also engaged with other schools, colleges and sixth forms including Havant (2 formal partnerships in an area targeted based deprivation) and Portsmouth (where we are working via careers forums). Through these relationships during 2019-20 (a year impacted by the pandemic) 92 secondary/post 16 activities took place with (over 296 contact hours) with 11871 participant engagements (Of postcodes collected -Polar 4: Q1 51% and Q2 16%, IMD: 56% high deprivation neighbourhoods).</p> <p>We have formal admissions/partnership agreements with 16 post-16 providers (which we now updating in line with our new strategy, 2020-25 APP and new contextual admissions process). The Widening Participation Team have worked further with post-16 learners and have supported our post-16 team to target WP learners in areas including South London, Gosport, the Isle of Wight, Dorset and Hampshire.</p>
T16b_08	
T16b_09	<p>Despite the pandemic during 2019-20 our activities for primary learners included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 activities took place (over 25 contact hours) with 1164 participant engagements. • Hosting a CPD event for 400 primary school teachers/support staff (Southampton Cooperative Learning Trust) focusing on pedagogy and subject specialisms.
T16b_10	<p>Please note our request to delete this target from our Impact Report as the DfE have not released the required information.</p>