

# ACCESS AGREEMENT 2016-2017

## CONTEXT

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Southampton Solent University has a history of supporting access to advanced education, which stretches back to its foundation as a private School of Art in 1856. We have consistently performed better than the UK sector averages for the three key performance measures: attracting students from low participation neighbourhoods, NS-SEC social classes 4-7 and state schools.

Our mission today continues to reflect our commitment:

*“We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellent university education that enables learners from all backgrounds to become enterprising citizens and responsible leaders, while also promoting economic and social prosperity for the communities we serve”.*

This Access Agreement focuses on maintaining our tradition, reputation and achievement in widening access and participation for students from non-traditional backgrounds, whilst concentrating our efforts on enabling those students to achieve their professional and academic goals – thus focusing on the full student lifecycle.

## FEES, STUDENT NUMBERS AND FEE INCOME

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Our 2015 Access Agreement set out a clear strategic direction, balancing fee income against targeted investment on student support for progression and retention. In 2016 we are continuing to build upon this strategy, maintaining our commitment to access and participation and our commitment to support students who are the most financially disadvantaged and/or vulnerable. Our focus continues to be placed upon bursaries; despite the withdrawal of the National Scholarship Programme and on extending financial support across the full student lifecycle to aid student success and retention.

The conditions for which bursaries were awarded to students who entered the University prior to 2016 will remain as stated in the Access Agreement relevant at the time of entry. The University will maintain all agreed expenditure on bursaries and scholarships relating to students who entered in these years.

From September 2016 the University will charge the following fee levels for all new Home and EU full-time students:

- All levels of undergraduate degree courses £9,000 per year
- All levels of sub-degree courses up to a maximum of £7,650 per year
- All Erasmus, Study Year Abroad and Sandwich years £1,350 per year
- Part-time courses – a maximum charge of £6,750 (£6,750 charge would be for 100 credits, the maximum permitted in one year for part-time study).

The figures for fees may be subject to annual increases in line with inflation or changes due to government policy. We also reserve the right to apply annual increases within the cap set by the Government. Sandwich Year and Year Abroad fees may be subject to change following Government legislation and will be amended accordingly.

Our package of financial support for new entrants from 2016-17 is designed to help the retention of students at the University and to encourage applications from under-represented groups. Applicants who are full time students will also be expected to have applied for means tested student support from Student Finance England and given consent to share information in order that their declared household income level may be verified.

In consultation with our Students' Union and in line with our own internal research, we will continue to offer bursaries aimed at providing financial assistance to students faced with additional course costs. In addition, we will set aside monies to provide support to students facing hardship and to ensure that those in difficult financial situation are given advice, support and, where relevant, additional financial help.

We will continue to offer a cash award scheme for Foundation Year students, targeted at new students from low participation neighbourhoods in Southampton and the local region. It is estimated that this will involve the allocation of cash awards and fee waivers to the value of approximately £1 million.

In recognition of the difficulty faced by students who received a National Scholarship Programme award for the first year of study only, we will continue to offer a bursary to the value of £500 in both the second and third year of study for all full-time students who previously satisfied the eligibility criteria for the award of the maintenance element of the National Scholarship programme. This bursary will also be offered to NSP recipients who progress from the Foundation Year to their second, third and fourth years of study as long as they satisfy the eligibility criteria as part of the application for the Foundation Year award.

For clarity, our financial support package will include:

- Foundation Year: fee waiver and £1,000 bursary (60 to be awarded to eligible students)
- Full-time Degree: £500 bursary in each year of study (offered to all eligible students)
- Care Leavers: £1,500 bursary in each year of study (offered to all care leavers)

For clarity, our eligible requirements for the support package are:

- Students will need to have a declared household income of £25,000 or less
- Be enrolled on a full time course, paying full variable or new regime fees
- Have a fee status of Home or EU

## ACCESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS MEASURES

### CURRENT PERFORMANCE

Southampton Solent University's record in the higher education of students from non-traditional backgrounds speaks for itself. Currently, 96.3% of our full-time first degree students come from state schools, 14.3% low participation neighbourhoods, 36.8% NS-SEC social classes 4-7 for Young People, 22% of our students are non-white in origin and 28% are over the age of 21 on entry to the University. We have also been awarded the Buttle UK quality mark for our work with care leavers.

#### Widening Participation Indicators

##### Young students who attend a school or a college in the state section (POLAR3 definition)

	No. of Students	Solent %	Location Adjusted Benchmark %
FT First Degree	2270	96.3	95.3
FTUG	2370	96.3	95.2
Other FTUG	100	94.8	95.1

##### Young students who come from categories 4-7 of the new National Statistics age adjusted socio-economic classification (NS\_SEC) (POLAR3 definition)

	No. of Students	Solent %	Location Adjusted Benchmark %
FT First Degree	2270	36.8	38.0
FTUG	2370	36.7	38.2
Other FTUG	100	..	..

##### Young students who come from a low participation neighbourhood (as denoted by its postcode - POLAR2 definition)

	No. of Students	Solent %	Location Adjusted Benchmark %
FT First Degree	2270	14.3	12.2
FTUG	2370	14.0	12.4
Other FTUG	100	8.2	11.1

##### Mature students who have no previous HE qualification and come from a low participation neighbourhood (as denoted by its postcode - POLAR2 definition)

	No. of Students	Solent %	Location Adjusted Benchmark %
FT First Degree	580	14.9	13.4
FTUG	670	13.5	13.3
Other FTUG	90	4.4	9.3

Source: HESA

The majority of our students are male, however we recognise that nationally female students are typically the majority (although they remain a minority in certain subject areas, such as maritime).

This varies across our faculties and programme areas (as can be seen in the breakdown by university and faculty in appendix A and B).

Our students cover a broad age range, but the majority are under 21 (71%) with those over 21 being maintained at consistent levels year on year. This reflects a national trend in applicants to full-time undergraduate programmes, although there are some differences by faculty. As an example, our Maritime and Technology Faculty attracts a broader age range with 55% being under 21 and 45% over 21. White students are the largest single ethnic group on campus but we have seen an incremental growth in Black and Asian students. There are few ethnic differences between faculties.

About eleven per cent of students consider themselves disabled and the rate of students in receipt of DSA is in line with our subject mix and entry qualifications.

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## PROGRESSION AND RETENTION

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Southampton Solent University has been developing our approach to progression and retention analysis, but there continues to be more work required. In the last year, we have introduced a number of initiatives to refocus efforts in this area as well as deepened some of our current activities to form part of our core offering. This includes:

Centrally lead initiatives:

- *The creation of the "Student Achievement" team* – this is a newly formed team as part of our Academic Services and focuses on supporting student progression and retention across the university. We have also increase our resource here from three dedicated Retention Officers through to six.
- *Attendance monitoring* – although this is still in its early stages, this provides a mechanism to intervene at key times should attendance fall below threshold. Attendance in this circumstance helps to provide an early warning for non-continuation and is linked directly through to our Faculty/School performance plans
- *On-Track* – is a proactive means of dealing with complex 'vulnerable student' cases where engagement is potentially or actually under threat. On-Track seeks to identify and monitor the most vulnerable students; pre-empt problems before they become insurmountable and prevent students falling through the net by working closely with colleagues across the University Student Support Network and ensuring they are accessing relevant support. This service has increased in use by 78% since 2012/13
- *Employability and Enterprise* – is a service available to all students which focuses on linking our students to their future career, providing opportunities to gain additional work experience and further supports their aspirations to take leading roles in their respective fields.
  - 'Campus Jobs scheme' – an efficient means of providing work opportunities to supplement income, develop their CV and build a network of contacts
  - 'Graduate Associate scheme' – the Solent Graduate Associate Programme recruited over fifty graduates to work in one year roles across the university. These associates gain a graduate level job and relevant training
- *Mentoring and support for disadvantaged students* – engaging local employers as business mentors and network contacts to improve social capital and networking skills
- *Postgraduate progression support* – specialist 'open days' for existing undergraduate students to raise awareness of options for postgraduate study have commenced
- *Data* – use of longitudinal data on employability outcomes for students from disadvantaged groups to inform our progression programme.

Faculty/School lead initiatives:

- *The continuation of Academic Mentoring/Personal Level Tutor* – as part of our engagement monitoring system we will continue the academic support offering in each of the Faculties/Schools to improve student participation and identify at the earliest opportunity students who are at risk of becoming disengaged. These teams take a pro-active approach to ensuring student participation through timely information, better scheduling and prompt action to address inclusion issues
- *Skills Development* – the introduction of a six week “Core Skills” unit on foundation programmes to support transition to Level 4
- *Communications* – planned contact with students via email over the summer to support student resits.

In order to provide guidance for Faculties/Schools in analysing data (and deciding on necessary action arising), benchmarks for progression (based on those studying level 4) have been categorised into the three areas: (1) First Degree, (2) Foundation Degree and (3) HND/C. Each areas focuses on ‘student eligible to progress’ from levels 4 to 5 (details in appendix C). In 2013/14, the target for progression was:

- First Degree: 85% progression
- Foundation Degree: 95% progression
- HND/C: 90% progression

*First Degree* – students eligible to progress have seen a small decline (by 2.8%) from 2012/13 to 2013/14, but the new initiatives that commenced in 2015 will seek to remedy this drop in subsequent years.

*Foundation Degree* – we’ve seen a marginal increase here (by 0.7%), but we will continue to focus on increasing this further in subsequent years.

*HND/C* – the progression rate here has been increasing consistently and we’ll be looking to increase this further.

In addition, there has been a small increase in ‘non-completion’ across the university (up by 0.3%). The percentage of students who have interrupted their studies, failed or withdrew remains relatively consistent. Progression at levels 4 and 5 remained constant in most areas.

## OUR APPROACH TO THE STUDENT LIFECYCLE

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### WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH

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Our widening participation and outreach mission is to provide educational opportunity to those in society who are currently under-represented in higher education and who are consequently excluded from the improved life chances that higher education brings. As per the university mission, “we are dedicated to the pursuit of excellent university education that enables learners from all backgrounds to become enterprising citizens and responsible leaders, while also promoting economic and social prosperity for the communities we serve”. We will take a full student lifecycle approach, through which we aim to delivery high quality outreach that raises aspirations and attainment.

## Aims

- Enhance the aspiration and achievement of young people in local schools and colleges
- Increase our recruitment of students from low participation neighbourhoods
- Continue to increase the number of applications and entrants to higher education from our partner schools and colleges
- Deepen and broaden our relationships with partner schools and colleges through the sharing of resource, teaching and curriculum
- Work collaboratively with local authorities, schools and colleges to improve access to HE for care leavers and students with disabilities
- Be an active player in the Southern University Network (SUN)
- Continue to develop wider measures for widening participation and outreach for the purpose of assessing success, but also to ensure appropriate investment.

As part of our lifecycle approach our outreach activities will be linked with the appropriate university services, such as admissions, student support, sports or employability services.

Typical annual expenditure on core widening participation outreach activities is predicted to be as follows:

<b>Widening Participation Activity (projected 16/17)</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Total Expenditure (£)</b>	<b>OFFA Countable Expenditure (£)</b>
Outreach	£1,414,418	£1,064,950

Source: 2016/17 Access Agreement

## Primary Schools

*Learning journey project* – Southampton Solent believes that higher education should be a choice that's open to all, and that each child should have an understanding of what university life can offer. The learning journey project aims to help Key Stage 2 pupils build this understanding through fun and interactive activities. The project delivers two types of activity. 'Get Set' activities bring our enthusiastic student ambassadors into a school to work with their learners and talk about the university experience, while 'Discover and Do' activities give learners a chance to visit Southampton Solent University and take part in fun introductory activities in the sorts of subjects they'll study at university. This project is also available at key stage 3.

*Solent Showcase* – Solent Showcase Gallery is situated in the heart of Southampton's city centre and forms part of the new cultural quarter. With an annual cycle of around 7 different exhibitions, all of which offer a range of free, creative and bespoke education workshops, school visits, talks and community events. Through its liaison with schools and colleges alone since December 2012 has engaged over 1000 visitors over a third of which have been primary students.

*Southampton Junior University* – in partnership with University of Southampton and the Southampton Education Forum we deliver the Southampton Junior University. The current project element delivered by Southampton Solent provides undergraduate mentors to school pupils in Year 10 and aims to raise both aspirations and attainment. A second strand (delivered by University of Southampton) looks at providing enrichment for gifted Year 9 pupils. This year a brief year 11 motivational day was added to the programme and partners are currently exploring with local colleges providing mentoring support to those learners previously engaged and intend to pilot this over the next academic year.

## **Secondary Schools**

*STEM in a box* – Southampton Solent University’s new ‘STEM in a box’ challenge invites schools to participate in fun and exciting activities, focused on developing knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering and maths. This event takes place as part of national STEM week.

*Progression days* – Our Key Stage 3-4 progression days offer guidance that will help students to make informed choices about their future undergraduate courses. Students also get the chance to interact with real undergraduates, learn about UCAS and experience what a university is really like.

*Southampton Education Forum* – we work closely with our partners in schools and colleges in the city to ensure that resources are deployed effectively to those at greatest disadvantage. We are board members of the Southampton Education Forum which consists of all secondary Head teachers and College Principals in the city.

## **College and Sixth Form**

Students moving onto higher education following A Level, BTEC or other Level 3 study can benefit from additional support throughout the transition. Getting comfortable with a new style of learning, living independently for the first time and settling into a new city are just some of the challenges that students at this stage face. In addition to the standard university interactions with these cohorts as applicants, the follow outreach is made available:

*Progression days* – Our Key Stage 5 progression days offer guidance that helps students to make informed choices about their future undergraduate courses. Students also get the chance to interact with real undergraduates, learn about UCAS, and experience what a university is really like.

*Subject taster days* – The taster course programme provides year 12 and 13 students with a taste of their chosen academic subject. They experience the different teaching methods used by university academics and the opportunity to spend a day on our campus and get hands on with their subject.

*Residential summer school* – Our four-day residential summer school provides year 12s with an exciting, sustained and intensive experience of university life in the late summer term. Students engage with our lecturers and current students, and will be given the opportunity to focus on a particular subject area.

*Go higher workshops* – the aim of these sessions is to make progression from college to higher education a lot simpler, and to discuss issues and concerns students may have prior to making a formal university application. The programme is targeted at students in years 12 and 13, the individual workshops focus on a range of information, advice and guidance topics, and are delivered in schools and on campus.

*Transition support* – as we recognise the growing number of students coming from BTEC or other level 3 backgrounds we are currently piloting a number of new initiatives to support this area focused on applicants coming from these backgrounds. In addition, the University’s new Teaching and Learning Institute is charged with developing alternative pedagogies for these students.

*Subject Specific Development Opportunities* – these include projects which provide more target cohorts of students with a more intensive or personalised interaction with a subject area. Including our Solent Sound project, which builds students’ skills in creative industry subjects such as music, media and writing, with expert support from the Southampton Solent lecturers and students – and hands-on experience with the University’s state-of-the-art professional production equipment.

Other projects include:

- Show Us Your shorts, a short film competition
- High Stakes Quiz, an opportunity to take part in and get behind the scenes of a TV quiz show
- Coaching Conference, a conference style learning day focusing on learners interested in coaching.

### **Engaging with Influencers**

*Parents and Carers* – supporting a child through higher education can be overwhelming - particularly if they are the first member of the family to attend university. To help parents and carers through this process, Southampton Solent University's partnerships team have designed a range of informative talks and workshops. There are also opportunities for parents and carers to visit the University at our general open days. Going forward through our collaborative work and beyond we want to explore launching parent ambassadors.

*Teachers and Advisors* – Teachers play an important role in advising students about higher education. Southampton Solent University offer bespoke events that aim to give teachers a better understanding of the higher education sector, and help them to offer this support to their students in a more effective way. Working closely with UCAS, other universities and our own network of local businesses and educators, we provide both digestible sessions and full conferences on a range of higher education and career related topics. We can also provide resources and activity plans that will help them to carry out higher education focused sessions.

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## COLLABORATIVE OUTREACH

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*Promoting internal collaboration* – the development of the activities as set out in our OFFA agreement has led to increased internal collaboration within the university, ensuring a more strategic approach to issues around access, student success and progression. As such, the university plans to further embed its approach to widening participation through the already established Access and Widening Participation Working Group, which brings together all key stakeholders across the university. This group will not only seek to collaborate but will also be used as an advocacy group to provide advice to senior managers across the university.

*National Collaborative Outreach Networks* – in 2014/15 Southampton Solent University and the Universities of Winchester, Southampton, Portsmouth, Bournemouth and Arts University Bournemouth set up the Southern Universities Network (SUN) as part of HEFCE's National Collaborative Outreach Networks initiative. This partnership built on and extended previous collaborations, including the Hampshire Universities WP Group, which in turn was a continuation of Aimhigher Hampshire and Isle of Wight. All six partners have committed to continuation of the SUN in 2016/17. As well as providing outreach opportunities for all state schools in the geographical region of Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, the partnership will work together to:

- Exchange good practice and effective approaches to widening participation
- Develop collaborative time-bound outreach projects to address specific widening participation issues, each led by one of the partners.
- Develop and extend collective projects which support the progression of students with disabilities. The activities relating to students with disabilities and/or those who support them: four events per year with at least three SUN universities participating in each one. Creation of



an overview of support available for disabled students, hosted on the SUN website, and training students across the partner universities who could attend events aimed at disabled students, who would have a more in-depth knowledge of the support available.”

- Develop and promote wider understanding of the issues facing vulnerable children and young people including the collaborative development of resources and interactions for specific groups in partnership with local authorities and voluntary sector agencies. The activities relating to vulnerable children/young people and/or those who support them: four events per year with at least three SUN universities participating in each one.
- Annual staff development conference for staff and students: one annual staff development conference for staff engaged in outreach and widening participation, and Students’ Union Officers.
- Activities for black and minority ethnic students: four events per year with at least three SUN universities participating in each one.
- Activities for mature or part-time learners: we will explore running an annual collaborative event targeted for potential mature and part-time students
- Promote and support the progression of students from minority ethnic communities. We will work with community groups to support and develop events and projects, with each university sharing its networks and maximising opportunities for collaborative delivery.

*Other consortiums* – as a further commitment to collaborative work, we will continue membership and engagement in networks such as FACE (Forum for Access and Continuing Education) and HELOA (Higher Education Liaison Officer Association). These organisations support the professionalism and development of staff, including their development as researchers as well as practitioners. They also allow us to collaborate in relation to evaluation, data and impact, and contribute to national agenda developments.

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## SPECIALIST SUPPORT

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*Care Leavers* – the University holds the Buttle UK Quality Mark for supporting care leavers in progressing to higher education. This required that processes are in place to support care leavers in choosing to progress to higher education. The Quality Mark will be phased out by 2016-17, but we will embed the good practice that has been developed. We will also be working closely with the National Care Leavers network, led by the University of Winchester as part of the HEFCE funding for National Collaborative Networks.

*Mature Learners* – at Southampton Solent University, mature students (those aged 21 or over at the start of their course) make up 29% of our student population. Mature students may be concerned about coping with the demands of a university course, managing workload commitments, assignment expectations, taking examinations, accessing support and making new friends. Mature student ambassadors who are fully trained will support both on- and off-campus events offering your students the opportunity to talk to the Ambassadors regarding support, social activities and lots more. As well as specialist provision in outreach to Access course learners and mature student progression days during national adult learner’s week we also offer the Gateway Programme, designed to help mature students settle into Solent University life prior to arrival of other undergraduate students.

*Students with Disabilities* – we aim to remove barriers to learning and enable students to enjoy the full use of all facilities at Southampton Solent University. Access Solent is a targeted advice and support service, working to support disabled students so they can achieve their academic potential. The service supports students with learning needs, accessibility and accommodation issues and

accessing funding. We are concerned about the impact on this cohort that the removal of the DSA will have. The university is exploring where it is able to bridge this gap, and in particular has noted a need to develop and deliver a computer and consumables loan library. We are preparing to meet any additional demands and are already trialling options that may enhance the support available, such as lecture capture.

*BME* – a particular focus currently is around differential attainment and outcomes for certain BME groups. Moving forward this is an area for focus and further research resulting from an institutional research project supported by the university student equality forum. This has already attracted national attention and will continue to do so.

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## SOLENT SPORTS

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Over the past three years the University's Sport and Recreation Service, 'Solent Sport' has been building substantial outreach activity. Solent Sport is responsible for the City Council's Sports Development Unit, the Southampton PE and School Sport Partnership and hosts both of the School Games Organisers for the city; all of these areas of work are unique within the university sector. This variety of engagement brings together Southampton schools, local authorities, National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), sports associations, community clubs and leisure providers, as well as skilled range of coaches and volunteers (student and external) providing young people (5-16 years) with high quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activities.

*Coach education programme* – this provides the sport specific training opportunities for students. In 2014/15 we exceeded 1,300 signups across 120 short courses and this is an area we are aiming to maintain and grow.

*Schools partnerships* – we currently engage with over 80% of the schools in the city, across Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. 28 of these schools have signed service level agreements with Solent Sport and we will continue to build on these partnerships.

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## STUDENT AMBASSADORS

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The Southampton Student Ambassador scheme employs approximately 120 students, a large proportion of whom are from WP backgrounds themselves, this is a paid role. Many of the University's outreach activities, as outlined in this Agreement, involve using current, undergraduate or postgraduate student ambassadors as positive role models to raise the educational and career aspirations of learners from primary through to post-16. By recruiting across all faculties, courses, ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds, we ensure the Ambassadors reflect the diverse population of the University, as well as the pupils we work with in schools and colleges.

An intense training programme for Ambassadors exists, which is re-visited on an annual basis, with additional continuous professional development and specialist role training opportunities available to them all throughout the year. The scheme also allows the (DBS checked) Ambassadors to get involved in a range of challenging and rewarding projects, all of which help them develop transferable skills, gain valuable extra-curricular experience and enhance their CV; supporting their future careers. Opportunities include open days, school talks and workshops, Higher Education fairs, one-to-one support, careers fairs, residential events, subject specific academic taster sessions, administrative support, student panels, on campus events, study skills sessions, project work and research.

## PROGRESSION, RETENTION AND EMPLOYMENT

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Our approach to progression will focus on individuals and groups most 'at risk' of withdrawal, both in terms of day-to-day performance (assessment, attendance, logging onto key systems, performance/achievement) and in terms of general categories of students who are known to be 'high risk' (mature learners, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, students with particular entry profiles, particular ethnic groups). This enables us to not only establish 'exception reports' which focus our attention on particular student groups, but also to target activities to support particular students, as well as providing some level of support for students as a whole. Our activity is closely focused on level 4 progression (our main challenge) and on a core constituency of students (beginning with the group in receipt of Student Finance England maintenance grants).

Typical expected annual expenditure on core student success and progression activities is as follows:

<b>Widening Participation Activity (projected 16/17)</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Total Expenditure (£)</b>	<b>OFFA- countable Expenditure (£)</b>
Student Success	£3,778,193	£955,430
Progression	£1,634,229	£1,138,684
Financial Support	£2,945,000	£2,945,000

Source: 2016/17 Access Agreement

*Student Achievement* – our Student Achievement team will lead on developments in progression and retention. This is a new approach for the University and brings together resources from across our current Faculties and will see the university move from three Retention Officers to six.

*Progression Analysis* - we will use and analyse our data to target those groups who are most 'at risk' of withdrawal, both in terms of day-to-day performance (assessment, attendance, logging onto key systems, performance/achievement) and in terms of general categories of students who are known to be 'high risk' (mature learners, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, students with particular entry profiles, particular ethnic groups). This enables us to focus our attention on particular student groups, but also to target any interventions to support particular students. Our activity is closely focused on level 4 progression but will grow to include all levels of progression.

*Student Support Services* – we will continue to offer a wide range of student support services for the purpose of retention and progression, but also personal health and well-being of an individual student. Support will be provided through multiple channels as we recognise the need to offer support not only in person, but online and by distance.

*Employability* – we recognise the importance of addressing social capital deficits in terms of student success and have introduced a range of activities to help those from disadvantaged backgrounds in taking their next step after study. These measures include:

- Campus Jobs scheme: an efficient means of providing work opportunities to supplement income, develop their CV and build a network of contacts;
- Graduate Associate Scheme: the Solent Graduate Associate Programme recruited over forty 2015 graduates to work in one year roles across the university. These associates gain a graduate level job and relevant training;
- Mentoring and support for disadvantaged students: engaging local employers as business mentors and network contacts to improve social capital and networking skills.

- Postgraduate ‘open days’ for existing undergraduate students to raise awareness of options for further study.
- Use of longitudinal data on employability outcomes for students from disadvantaged groups to inform our progression programme.

## **TARGETS AND MONITORING**

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Southampton Solent University will set targets and milestones with a primary focus on progression and retention, but will also link those targets to any preliminary work pre-commencement as part of our outreach package. We will approach this in two ways:

*Setting of Key Performance Indicators* – used both centrally and within our respective Schools to monitor and measure progression, retention and achievement (as well as on wider aspects, such as student satisfaction). We see our challenge here as being to achieve benchmarks for access and participation, whilst moving further towards national benchmarks for retention and success for those areas in which we currently fall just below target. This would see the University’s ‘clean’ progression moving towards 90% and student achievement (measured through the number of undergraduates who achieve first or upper-second class awards) to move above 60%. Both of these would be considered ‘stretch targets’ in the coming years. We recognise that this will take time, but over the course of the first three years of development, we would aim to see steady progress – in the nature of 1-2% annual improvement – in these benchmark figures.

*Development of our evaluation methods* – use the tools made available to the university more effectively, including the use of HEAT, the University Data Group and the newly formed CRM to set a benchmark for outreach performance and set ‘stretch targets’ for future growth and development. Although table 7b will highlight those targets set against key activities, we ultimately need a more comprehensive mechanism to monitor and evaluate our work, while growing our targeted outcomes.

*National Collaborative Outreach Networks* – the targets and monitoring mechanisms will be different for each institution in the network as they review their own internal capability. For Southampton Solent University, we intend to track each individual participant who initially engages in an outreach activity, but extend this to track their student journey if they commence their studies with us. This will start to build a five year study in student performance that can be used to evaluate outreach activities, as well as track progression and success.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

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*Equality policy within the University* – in seeking to close the gap between collecting data, analysis and action the Student Equality Forum (SEF) completes an annual report including data analysis and progress on priorities that are reviewed annually. The SEF is currently working on the following six priorities and further additional actions:

- Priority 1: Student engagement - Monitor and review the University 2013 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Scheme in order to broaden engagement and ensure there is sufficient student input
- Priority 2: Staff Development – a creative approach using existing online training; 'talking heads' videos on the Portal; case studies; raising the EDI profile at existing events (Solent Exchange, T&L

conference, and other (e.g. induction for associate and new lecturers); and work with the Equality Research Cluster to consider a follow on event to the successful 'who do you want to be' conference

- Priority 3: Communication - agree and promote simple EDI messages for students and staff, rationalising information and support available on the Portal and Web, and strengthening communication in the Faculties (e.g. attending management and other meetings and providing a regular EDI update at Faculty Boards)
- Priority 4: Curriculum – continue work of a Task and Finish Group focussed on developing a more inclusive curriculum
- Priority 5: Employability – continue a focus on Mentoring+ and develop other objective(s) agreed with Employability and Enterprise
- Priority 6: SEF annual report - review the report including how we respond to what the data is telling us (e.g. differential attainment); and how do we report on groups other than those in relation to the key characteristics e.g. WP (low participation neighbourhood students), or international students.

The following further additional actions are planned to strengthen work on these priorities and address attainment and employability gaps, including:

- Stronger School representation on the Student Equality Forum (SEF)
- Closer liaison between the SEF and the Access and WP Working Group (AWPWG)
- A university curriculum audit investigating how inclusivity and diversity are addressed in course provision with the outcomes (findings and recommendations) taken forward by the Inclusive Curriculum Task and Finish Group (see Priority 4 above)
- In relation to the BME attainment gap, a review of the literature and a more detailed analysis of the BME data (for example, identify which BME groups are under-attaining, which courses they are on, and other variables involved)
- A new case recording and management system that will link directly to the student record system and improve the equality data available for monitoring purposes; for example, in terms of reporting on other equality strands, multiple identities, and the use of support services by disadvantaged groups
- Initiatives to improve declaration of all protected characteristics at the point of admission and enrolment.

We will assess progress on these actions to inform the implementation of our Access Agreements.

This agreement has been approved by the Chair of the University's Student Equality Forum as being fully aligned with the objectives of the University Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Scheme.

### **Compliance with responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010**

The purpose of the 2016-17 Access Agreement is to support and encourage progression to higher education from groups currently under-represented. The main target groups identified as under-represented in higher education are state school students, students from low participation neighbourhoods, and students from National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) Groups 4-7. Students with disabilities are also under-represented in higher education as well as care leavers, BME groups and mature students. The Access Agreement also supports a fair access approach to admissions that seeks to ensure that all applications are assessed fairly to identify whether they are appropriately qualified to succeed in the relevant academic programme. No aspect of this Access Agreement is likely to have an adverse effect on any member of the nine key groups defined as having protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

All the activities in the outreach programmes, projects and interventions described in the Access Agreement are open to everyone in the target cohorts of under-represented groups. Selection is based on this alone, and applicants are judged against clear criteria that are discussed and agreed with participating schools and delivery partners. All activities are advertised widely to targeted schools and colleges to ensure maximum take-up.

The 2016/17 Access Agreement promotes equality by supporting Southampton Solent's vision: 'To be an inclusive university which is a catalyst for social justice, social mobility and economic prosperity- providing access to top class university education for all those qualified and able to benefit'.

## **PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

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The University is committed to ensuring that all promotional materials, and information made available on University or other sites (for example, through UNISTATS and the Key Information Set) make clear how we are continuing to invest appropriately in access, whilst focusing additional activity on student success.

Once this Access Agreement is approved, we will include both the specifics of our fee structure and the investments made by the University, both in recruitment materials and activities, and in communications with all our stakeholders, including current and prospective students.

## **CONSULTING WITH STUDENTS**

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The Southampton Solent University Student Union is committed to supporting widening participation and works closely with university staff on a number of projects. Student representatives are members of the University 'Access & Widening Participation Working Group' and as such are involved in the internal approval and amendment process. As WP champions, the Student Union will be directly involved in outreach and other work that contributes to our access performance.

In addition, the University will continue its programme of personal communication with our partner schools and colleges about the changes in general, in line with BIS communications; this will ensure that students are not deterred from coming to University because of concern over the perceived impact of changes in the funding mechanism for higher education.

## Appendix A: Statistical Information

### Solent Enrolment Statistics (FTE)

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	4,619	40%	4,412	39%	3,899	40%
Male	6,853	60%	6,809	61%	5,804	60%

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Age Bands</b>						
21 or under	8,168	71%	8,068	72%	6,920	71%
22 to 24	2,210	19%	2,100	19%	1,791	18%
25 to 39	780	7%	732	7%	689	7%
40 and over	313	3%	321	3%	303	3%

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Asian	551	5%	372	4%	505	5%
Black African	735	6%	713	7%	776	8%
Black Caribbean	88	1%	39	0%	79	1%
Chinese	276	2%	55	1%	64	1%
Not Known	430	4%	380	4%	391	4%
Refused	328	3%	10	0%	110	1%
White	150	1%	86	1%	169	2%

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Level</b>						
First Degree	9,806	85%	9,497	85%	8,768	90%
Other Degree	1,328	12%	1,505	13%	732	8%
Postgraduate	337	3%	220	2%	203	2%

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Disability</b>						
Disability (Disabled Student Allowance unknown)	0	0%	191	2%	131	1%
Disability (No DSA)	625	5%	557	5%	485	5%
Disability (In receipt of DSA)	701	6%	561	5%	456	5%
No Disability	10,076	88%	9,831	88%	8,600	89%
Not Known	70	1%	82	1%	31	0%

	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Student Status</b>						
EU	829	7%	824	7%	960	10%
Home	9,760	85%	9,700	86%	8,183	84%
Overseas	883	8%	697	6%	559	6%

Faculty	12/13		13/14		14/15	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	4,301	37%	4,112	37%	3,853	40%
Maritime and Technology	3,121	27%	3,143	28%	2,325	24%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	4,051	35%	3,967	35%	3,525	36%

Source: HESA (provided by the Research and Information Unit)

## Appendix B: Statistical Information by Faculty

### Statistical Enrolment Breakdown by Faculty

Faculty	Gender	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	Female	2,560	58%	2,413	57%	2,218	56%
	Male	1,865	42%	1,804	43%	1,729	44%
Maritime and Technology	Female	411	12%	386	12%	364	13%
	Male	2,897	88%	2,796	88%	2,548	87%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	Female	2,200	47%	2,140	46%	1,756	43%
	Male	2,516	53%	2,500	54%	2,329	57%

Faculty	Age Bands	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	21 or under	3,554	80%	3,380	80%	3,136	79%
	22 to 24	708	16%	678	16%	622	16%
	25 to 39	110	2%	107	3%	137	3%
	40 and over	53	1%	52	1%	52	1%
Maritime and Technology	21 or under	1,803	55%	1,783	56%	1,593	55%
	22 to 24	915	28%	867	27%	742	25%
	25 to 39	467	14%	416	13%	465	16%
	40 and over	123	4%	116	4%	112	4%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	21 or under	2,883	61%	2,947	64%	2,633	64%
	22 to 24	870	18%	746	16%	684	17%
	25 to 39	564	12%	522	11%	411	10%
	40 and over	399	8%	425	9%	357	9%

Faculty	Ethnicity	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	Asian	94	2%	104	2%	103	3%
	Black African	167	4%	206	5%	225	6%
	Black Caribbean	30	1%	30	1%	31	1%
	Chinese	37	1%	27	1%	17	0%
	Not Known	191	4%	180	4%	165	4%
	Refused	99	2%	103	2%	22	1%



	White	25	1%	31	1%	43	1%
Maritime and Technology	Asian	3,782	85%	3,536	84%	3,341	85%
	Black African	274	8%	221	7%	218	7%
	Black Caribbean	201	6%	199	6%	201	7%
	Chinese	23	1%	12	0%	14	0%
	Not Known	132	4%	84	3%	39	1%
	Refused	82	2%	77	2%	82	3%
	White	129	4%	99	3%	67	2%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	Asian	50	2%	58	2%	55	2%
	Black African	2,417	73%	2,432	76%	2,236	77%
	Black Caribbean	254	5%	245	5%	250	6%
	Chinese	418	9%	419	9%	412	10%
	Not Known	41	1%	26	1%	41	1%
	Refused	142	3%	93	2%	23	1%
	White	170	4%	179	4%	165	4%

Faculty	Level	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	First Degree	4,246	96%	4,069	96%	3,896	99%
	Other Degree	64	1%	78	2%	0	0%
	Postgraduate	115	3%	70	2%	51	1%
Maritime and Technology	First Degree	2,095	63%	2,012	63%	1,827	63%
	Other Degree	1,085	33%	1,075	34%	976	34%
	Postgraduate	128	4%	95	3%	109	4%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	First Degree	3,654	77%	3,629	78%	3,255	80%
	Other Degree	609	13%	678	15%	581	14%
	Postgraduate	453	10%	333	7%	249	6%

Faculty	Disability	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	Disability (DSA unknown)	1	0%	76	2%	45	1%
	Disability (No DSA)	312	7%	251	6%	251	6%
	Disability (In receipt of DSA)	278	6%	255	6%	228	6%
	No Disability	3,782	85%	3,564	85%	3,400	86%
	Not Known	52	1%	71	2%	23	1%
Maritime and Technology	Disability (DSA unknown)	1	0%	48	2%	57	2%
	Disability (No DSA)	202	6%	159	5%	104	4%
	Disability (In receipt of DSA)	135	4%	131	4%	107	4%
	No Disability	2,955	89%	2,842	89%	2,568	88%
	Not Known	15	0%	2	0%	76	3%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	Disability (DSA unknown)	0	0%	76	2%	68	2%

	Disability (No DSA)	253	5%	200	4%	169	4%
	Disability (In receipt of DSA)	215	5%	179	4%	136	3%
	No Disability	4,201	89%	4,135	89%	3,642	89%
	Not Known	47	1%	50	1%	70	2%

Faculty	Student Status	12/13		13/14		14/15	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Creative Arts Industries	EU	274	6%	275	7%	272	7%
	Home	4,000	90%	3,793	90%	3,559	90%
	Overseas	151	3%	149	4%	116	3%
Maritime and Technology	EU	291	9%	270	8%	361	12%
	Home	2,535	77%	2,517	79%	2,224	77%
	Overseas	482	15%	395	12%	316	11%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	EU	377	8%	378	8%	409	10%
	Home	4,006	85%	4,032	87%	3,472	85%
	Overseas	333	7%	230	5%	203	5%

Source: HESA (provided by the Research and Information Unit)

## Appendix C: Level 4 to Level 5 Progression

### Statistical Breakdown by Faculty

Faculty	CSE Level	2011			2012			2013		
		Students	Eligible to Progress	%	Students	Eligible to Progress	%	Students	Eligible to Progress	%
Creative Arts Industries	First Degree	1477	1370	92.8%	1,270	1,156	91%	1,259	1,131	89.8%
Maritime and Technology	First Degree	620	495	79.8%	567	476	84%	521	402	77.2%
	Foundation Degree	340	296	87.1%	298	286	96%	277	266	96%
	HND/C	385	293	76.1%	328	293	89.3%	324	298	92%
Business, Sport and Enterprise	First Degree	1,258	1,094	87%	1,088	962	88.4%	1,094	935	85.5%
	Foundation Degree	25	23	92%	55	53	96.4%	57	57	100%
	HND/C	59	50	84.7%	73	65	89%	44	38	86.4%

## Statistical Breakdown by University

Faculty	CSE Level	2011			2012			2013		
		Students	Eligible to Progress	%	Students	Eligible to Progress	%	Students	Eligible to Progress	%
University	First Degree	3355	2959	88.2%	2,925	2,594	88.7%	2,874	2,468	85.9%
	Foundation Degree	365	319	87.4%	353	339	96%	334	323	96.7%
	HND/C	444	343	77.3%	401	358	89.3%	368	336	91.3%

Source: Academic Services.

Note: The data presented for the last 3 academic years, refers to the Undergraduate Degree types of 'First Degree', 'HNC/D' and 'Foundation Degrees' for all modes of study. Only students who were 'Active' and studying the level as if for the first time (Standard and Repeat Level) when the Assessment Board took place have been included. The data focuses on the eligibility to progress from Level 4 to Level 5, regardless of student's entry point to the course, and includes the student's best attempt at the level. All Faculty's data has been included.

## Appendix D: Good Honours Awards

	First class honours	Upper second class honours	Lower second class honours	Third class honours / Pass	Total	% Good Honours
2011-12	380	1,225	905	220	<b>2,730</b>	58.8%
2012-13	435	1,140	815	185	<b>2,575</b>	61.2%
2013-14	470	1,330	880	325	<b>3,005</b>	59.9%

Source: HESA (Research and Information Unit)

**Table 7 - Targets and milestones**

Institution name: Southampton Solent University

Institution UKPRN: 10006022

**Table 7a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
T16a_01	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants from state schools, compared to a three-year average	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	96.5	96.5	96.6	96.7	96.8	96.9	To maintain the high level of young full-time first degree entrants from state schools over the 5 year period through continued engagement with local schools and colleges. The baseline year is based on the 2011-14 average.
T16a_02	HESA T1b - NS-SEC classes 4-7 (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	Young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants from social classes 4, 5, 6 & 7, compared to a three-year average	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	35.7	36	36.5	37	37.5	38	To increase the number of young full-time first degree entrants from social classes 4, 5, 6 & 7 over the 5 year period through continued engagement with target groups. The baseline year is based on the 2011-14 average.
T16a_03	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhood, compared to three-year average	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	13.4	13.4	13.4	13.5	13.6	13.7	To maintain or increase the baseline level of young full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods over the 5 year period through continued engagement with target groups. The baseline year is based on the 2011-14 average.
T16a_04	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Non-continuation following year of entry for young (under 21) full-time, first degree entrants, compared to three-year average	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	10.8	10.8	10.5	10.2	9.9	9.6	To reduce the baseline level of non-continuation following year of entry for young full-time first degree entrants over the 5 year period through continuous review and enhancement of the student experience. The baseline year is based on the 2011-14 average.

**Notes**

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around outreach and student success work (including collaborative work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access, student success and progression. These should be measurable outcomes-based targets and should focus on the number of beneficiaries reached by a particular activity/programme or the number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

**Table 7b** - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
T16b_01	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Stretch targets for new outreach work conducted in conjunction with the Southern University Network (SUN) aimed at vulnerable children and young people.	Yes	Other (please give details in Description column)	25	35	45	55	65	75	The focus is on increasing the number of individuals who access the support offered through the Southern University Network (SUN). We will also build into this process qualitative measures for success here in future to connect those activities with defined success factors.
T16b_02	Operational targets	Stretch targets for progression is based on students that graduate with 'Good Honours' (First class honours and Upper second class honours)	No	2013-14	59.9	60	61	62	63	64	The focus is on increasing the level of award achieved by our graduates and making incremental (but stretch) steps each year. This is closely connected to our level 4 to 5 progression.
T16b_03	Operational targets	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (First Degree)	No	2013-14	85.9	86	87	88	89	90	The focus is on increasing the percentage of students progressing from level 4 to level 5, and in using progression analysis to support this increase
T16b_04	Operational targets	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (Foundation Degree)	No	2013-14	96.7	96.8	96.9	97	97.1	97.2	The focus is on increasing the percentage of students progressing from level 4 to level 5, and in using progression analysis to support this increase
T16b_05	Operational targets	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (HND/C)	No	2013-14	91.3	92	92.5	93	93.5	94	The focus is on increasing the percentage of students progressing from level 4 to level 5, and in using progression analysis to support this increase

**Optional commentary on milestones.**

This box is character-limited to 1000 characters; however, we are happy for you to upload additional 'supporting information' as a separate Word/pdf document.