

### ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2019-20

#### **Assessment of current performance**

Solent University is committed to delivering the Government's targets to support underrepresented groups in higher education. We are well placed to continue to improve our metrics regarding improving attainment in schools. We attract a high proportion of students from disadvantaged groups, supporting them during their transition from secondary education to higher education. We provide support and flexible learning/assessment approaches to help all our students realise their full potential, achieve success during their studies and progress into good employment or further study. Our strategy, which underpins our initiatives to support students from disadvantaged groups, has been developed in collaboration with our student community.

Widening participation (WP) is at the core of what we do and we are proud of our commitment to diversity and inclusivity. Solent University's vision is to 'enable learners from all backgrounds to become enterprising citizens and responsible leaders, while also promoting economic and social prosperity for the communities it serves.'

The University is aware of its legal duty in relation to delivering equality, diversity and inclusion for the University community. This includes ensuring that decisions are evidence-based; transparent; made collaboratively involving all relevant internal and external stakeholders; and made in a fair way so they do not negatively impact on a particular group. This effort is currently carried out informally, however, the University is aware that a more formal approach to equality impact assessment could strengthen this work and will consider introducing this going forward. The University will address this through its Equality, Diversity and Wellbeing Committee and its Student Board.

Evidence of the University's current approach to impact assessment includes the construction of a new learning and teaching building that has won awards for its accessibility. The process of construction was evidence-based; collaborative, involving the University's disability team and estates department; and transparent, with decisions and ongoing process shared with students and staff.

Equality and Diversity is integral to the University's approach to designing and delivering its Access and Participation Plan. The University is committed to considering and responding to data where attainment gaps have been identified and acted upon in evidence-based and collaborative ways that will reduce and remove these gaps.

An assessment has been undertaken to determine our achievements to date in improving access and participation for students from the following disadvantaged groups

- students from areas of low participation in higher education (POLAR3, Quintile 1);
- low household income and/or low socioeconomic status backgrounds;
- students of particular ethnicities;
- mature students;
- disabled students;
- care leavers.

Solent University recognises the need for transparent data and to evaluate all activities and interventions that are delivered to meet its ambitious outcomes for the Access and Participation

Plan. We have benchmarked local equality data with national data and have identified the areas where we are performing well and where improvements need to be made. Data sources used were from UCAS, HESA and the Equality Challenge Unit.

## **Summary of achievements**

### ACCESS

- For 2016-17 entrants, the University ranked 26th out of 107 institutions for the proportion of entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN). In relation to students from LPN Solent's percentage share of 16.1% exceeded the location adjusted benchmark of 13.4% and was significantly better than the English average of 11.4%.
- In 2016-17 Solent ranked 28th for the proportion of entrants from a state school compared with 107 universities in England (97.3%, significantly above the sector average for England of 90.0%).
- We have developed courses that are more attractive to mature applicants and continue to do so. The UCAS latest in-cycle data release covering applicants for 2018-19 as at the 24th March deadline showed a 14% increase in mature applicants to Solent (England domiciled).
- The University continues to play a key part in achieving the collaborative targets of the Southern Universities Network.

### SUCCESS

- The attainment gap between UK domiciled BME and White students has fallen in each of the past three years: 21.6% in 2016-17 compared with 23.8% in 2015-16 and 25.5% in 2014-15.
- Disability: 71.2% of students with a disability achieved a 1st or a 2:1 in 2016-17 compared with 72.0% non-disabled students, a gap of 0.8 percentage points. The gap in 2015-16 was 2.3 percentage points and in 2014-15 there was a gap of 5.2 percentage points, suggesting a positive trend.
- Improvement in non-continuation rate for mature students from 11.3% to 8.6% against a benchmark of 14.7%.
- The University's non-continuation of young entrants improved by 0.6 percentage points, from 9.2% (2014-15 entrants) to 8.6% (2015-16 entrants).

### PROGRESSION

- Solent's progression rate was the 42nd highest in the sector in 2017, with 95.2% of graduates in employment or further study within six months of graduating (HESA Employment Performance Indicator, 2017, UK full time first degree leavers).
- The University's unemployment rate halved in 2017 to 4.6%, better than the sector average (DLHE, 2017).
- A recent study undertaken by the Economist used longitudinal earnings data to show Solent was the 12th best university for boosting graduate earnings (The Economist, 2017).
- Solent University is committed to supporting enterprising students from all backgrounds as evidenced by University graduates being involved in 151 graduate start-ups in 2017. This was the 8th highest rate in the sector (HE-BCI, 2018).

## **Critical institutional reflection**

### **ACCESS**

Solent University routinely monitors its recruitment of underrepresented groups, analysing applications, acceptances/enrolments and associated statistics. Analysis includes offer and continuation rates, both during and upon completion of each application cycle. Data releases from national statistical bodies, including HESA and UCAS, are regularly analysed to allow the University to benchmark itself against regional and national trends.

Where centrally released statistics do not allow the analysis of intersectionality, as is the case for white working-class males (WWCM), the University uses its internal student data and strives to find comparative sector level data.

### **Students of particular ethnicities (BME)**

Operating within a challenging sector environment, Solent University experienced a significant decrease in applications in 2016-17 and 2017-18, with June deadline applications from UK domiciled applicants, as monitored by UCAS, decreasing by 12.6% and 14.2% respectively. In both years, analysis showed an above-average decrease in applications from black and Asian students, at -22.4% and -19.6% respectively.

This meant that, despite a significant improvement in conversion rates, up from 15.8% in 2016-17 to 18.3% in 2017-18 for black applicants and from 14.3% to 16.7% for Asian applicants (UCAS June deadline statistics), fewer black and Asian applicants were placed compared with the previous year. Both student groups contributed a smaller share of new UK enrolments that year.

UCAS' latest in-cycle data release covering applicants for 2018-19 as at 24th March deadline showed that the number of black applicants to Solent (England domiciled) had stabilised, with a decline of just 3.6% on 2017-18. This compared favourably with a sector average decline of 4.9% for England domiciled black applicants. The number of England domiciled Asian applicants to Solent increased by 5.8%, compared with a 1.5% increase at sector level.

Unsurprisingly, given the ethnic diversity of the region, London has consistently contributed around half of Solent's black new entrants. As a result, recruitment of black students to Solent is inextricably linked to the University's recruitment success from the London region. Recognising this challenge, Solent University has recruited a number of regional recruitment officers to ensure that the London region is more intensively covered, whilst at the same time identifying recruitment opportunities further afield in cities with diverse populations, including those in the north of England and the Midlands. Further detail on this is provided below.

Through research provided by our marketing agency, SMRS, the numbers of disadvantaged students who are willing to travel further and study at Solent University come mainly from Quintiles 4 and 5 (Q4 and Q5). This is the case for BME and WWCM students and indicates a need to re-design the information and advice we offer and our messaging for those students from Q1, Q2 and Q3 living in regions more than 100 miles from the campus.

### **Students living in areas of low participation in higher education, with a focus on white working-class males (WWCM)**

Solent University defines white working-class males as being from POLAR3 (Quintile 1).

The University continued to recruit high proportions of entrants from widening participation backgrounds. As reported in the latest set of HESA UK PIs (2016-17), 97.3% of Solent University's UK domiciled young full-time first degree entrants came from state schools or colleges, 2.3

percentage points above the University's location adjusted benchmark of 95.0% and significantly above sector average for England of 90.0%.

In relation to students from low participation neighbourhoods, Solent's percentage share of 16.1% exceeded the location adjusted benchmark of 13.4% and was significantly better than the English average of 11.4%. In the six years to 2016-17 the English sector trend for LPN increased by just 1.2 percentage points, compared with Solent's increase of 4.6 percentage points.

The University ranked 26th in 2016-17 for the proportion of entrants from LPN and 28th for the proportion of entrants from a state school, when compared with the 107 universities in England.

A recent report by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) in April 2018 presented the results of an exercise that involved the calculation of an institution's Gini index, whereby a coefficient of 0 represented complete equality, whilst a coefficient of 1 represented perfect inequality. Based on 2016-17 UCAS POLAR3 data, Solent ranked 31st out of 130+ institutions, with a Gini index below 0.125 compared with a sector average of 0.18. This further demonstrates Solent University's continued success in recruiting students from low participation neighbourhoods.

Solent University continues to recruit more male than female students, with men accounting for 57.5% of UK domiciled full-time first degree new entrants in 2016-17 (HESA), compared with a sector average of 43.5%. This, combined with Solent's track record in attracting students from low participation neighbourhoods, places Solent in a strong position with regard to supporting access to HE for WWCM.

At sector level, the latest applicant statistics (UCAS 24th March deadline) showed a decrease by 3.7% in the number of England domiciled 18-year old male applicants from Q1, compared with a 1.9% decline for all males. At Solent, statistics showed that the drop was more pronounced, with a decline by 10.3% for applicants from this group.

It is important to note that the University has found that a substantial proportion of the WWCM it recruits are based locally, suggesting that students from low participation neighbourhoods are more likely to choose a university closer to home compared with their less disadvantaged counterparts. This raises concerns regarding accessibility, choice and opportunity for disadvantaged students. Further research into the challenges and barriers disadvantaged students face in terms of widening opportunity and access to the best course for them will be a focus of our 2019-20 access and participation work, along with stepping up the University's activity to meet the targets for raising participation rates we have set for ourselves.

### **Care leavers**

Applications from care leavers have dropped over the last 3 years (22% from 2016 to 2017) and this is an area that Solent University is seeking to address. We need to look at our local competitors to see if this is a common trend and if not, explore what more can be done to attract students from this group. We have bursaries for care leavers and we will investigate whether we have advertised these widely enough.

### **Mature students**

The proportion of mature (21+ years old) UK domiciled full-time first degree new entrants to Solent University has declined in recent years, in line with overall sector trend. In 2016-17 (HESA) those aged 21 and above accounted for 18.9% of new entrants to Solent (as specified above), compared with 20.2% in 2012-13.

One step towards the reversal of this trend has been the introduction of a number of new courses in the health subject area that are more likely to attract mature learners. As a result of these changes, the most recent UCAS applicant data showed a 28.1% uplift in England domiciled applicants aged 25 or above.

We will now focus on improving access for those aged 21-24.

### **Disabled students**

Over recent years, Solent University has seen an increase in the percentage of new entrants with a declared disability, up from 14.8% in 2014-15 to 15.3% in 2016-17 (HESA UK full-time first degree entrants). The University welcomes this trend and seeks to improve access for this group of students further.

While the percentage share of full-time first degree students in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) improved by 1.4 percentage points in 2016-17 to reach 6.6% (HESA UK PIs), this remained below the University's benchmark of 7.8%. The University will continue to work with its disabled students to improve the proportion applying for DSA.

### **SUCCESS**

The University tracks, monitors and reports on data annually and on an 'as-needs' basis to inform actions to address inequality; specifically, differences in continuation and attainment. This includes granular data such as intersectionality and involves benchmarking the data against the national data analysis provided by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU).

Solent's non-continuation rate for all full-time first degree entrants is 8.6% (2015-16 entrants) compared with our benchmark of 10.9% and sector average for England of 7.5%. There have been improvements in non-continuation for both young and mature students: 0.6 percentage points for young entrants, from 9.2% in 2014-15 to 8.6% in 2015-16; 2.7 percentage points for mature entrants, from 11.3% to 8.6%.

In addition, equality data in relation to age provides evidence that mature students aged 21 or over were 3.1% less likely to continue or qualify when compared with students aged under 21. Details of actions responding to the data are provided below.

The BME attainment gap has reduced in each of the past three years: for example, by 1.9 percentage points from 25.7% to 23.8% between 2014-15 and 2015-16 and by 2.2 percentage points from 23.8% to 21.6% between 2015-16 and 2016-16

Despite this reduction the gap currently stands at 21.6% and is above benchmark. The national BME attainment gap of 15.3% as indicated by the ECU in 2015-16. The University is taking action to address this (see below).

The University has responded to two differences in continuation and attainment; that is, in relation to mature students aged 21 and above and students from BME ethnic backgrounds. The University has also determined that an inclusive response is appropriate, delivering interventions that have an impact on all students. We will monitor the effectiveness of this approach and keep it under review.

The University undertook a survey of mature students and has put in place a programme of support for continuation of studies. This was based on the gap between young and mature students' non-continuation rates for 2014-15 entrants. Although Solent has made progress in recent years, the non-continuation rate for mature students still requires attention.

The following interventions are inclusive, encompassing all the identified characteristics

- Increase the number of honours degrees achieved
- Improve the achievement of Level 6 students
- improve the retention and achievement of repeat level students
- Improve the retention and achievement of students who suspend during their course
- Improve quality of IAG provided following mid-year and end of year results.

## PROGRESSION

Solent University is very aware of the importance of ensuring equality of graduate outcomes for all students regardless of their background. The University has seen some major improvements in the overall employability of graduates in the last year. This included having 95.2% of graduates in employment or further study in 2017, which was the 42nd highest rate in the sector, and an improvement of 70 places from the previous year. In addition, in the 2017 survey for DLHE (2016 leavers), unemployment halved to 4.6%. These improvements benefit all graduates including those from a widening participation background. A recent study from the Economist (12/08/2017) that investigated longitudinal earnings data placed Solent University in 12th place for boosting graduate earnings.

However, despite these positive moves, Solent University recognises that more needs to be done to improve rates of professional or managerial (PM) employment, especially amongst key WP groups. The University's careers service (Solent Futures) and its Strategic Development Policy and Information Unit work closely to monitor key groups and there is clear evidence of under-performance that needs to be addressed. In some cases, the sample is small and so data has been amalgamated across the last three DLHE surveys to help identify key areas of concern.

<b>WP Characteristic (3 year data)</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>POLAR3 Q1</b>	56.5%	60.7%	52.2%
<b>Ethnicity - Black</b>	53.9%	62.7%	45.9%
<b>Ethnicity - Asian</b>	60.8%	72.0%	48.9%

*(UK domiciled full-time, undergraduates with a first degree who graduated in 2014, 2015 and 2016: proportion in professional or managerial roles)*

Data indicates that female students have worse PM outcomes than their male peers across a number of key WP areas. In 2017, only 39.8% of BME females secured a PM level role compared with a university average of 61.3%.

Using the data in the table, it would be easy to look at the overall figure and assume that all BME students under achieve in gaining PM level roles, however, in reality the gender employment gap needs to be addressed to have a real impact on the metrics. This is true across the University where the overall PM level employment rate is 61.3%, however, this breaks down to 67.2% of male students in PM roles compared with 54.6% of female students (2017 DLHE).

Disabled students have more positive employability outcomes, although there is still a discrepancy between the genders with 62.9% of female students with a specific learning disability gaining a PM level job compared with 69.7% of males in PM level roles who have the same category of disability (three-year average, DLHE 2015-2017). Mature graduates perform well compared with the wider university with 62.4% in PM level jobs. Unfortunately, DLHE data does not exist for key groups such as care-leavers, carers and students estranged from their families so alternative methods need to be adopted to track their graduate outcomes (DLHE 2017).

Existing interventions have been effective in helping to address inequalities in employability. The University's professional mentoring scheme, which has been running for several years has had a

proven impact on the PM level outcomes of participants, with 69.6% of participants in PM level roles. This scheme has been open to all students across the University but is targeted at BME and disabled students. This year the scheme benefitted 149 mentees (up 19% on the previous year), 27% came from a BME background (19% of the University's cohort are BME), 52% were female (41% of University's cohort are female) and 14% declared as having a disability (13% of the University's cohort declare a disability). Coinciding with International Women's Day, on 8th March 2018, the University hosted a conference aimed at final year female graduates entitled 'Fearless Females'. This was aimed at empowering female students and encouraging them to aspire to higher level jobs. Qualitative feedback was very positive and an impact survey is planned to track the participants' graduate outcomes.

The findings described have informed our strategy for continuous improvement in widening access and supporting underrepresented groups throughout their journey with the University.

Student involvement has been and will continue to be a key part of our strategy. This ensures we have a good understanding of the challenges and barriers disadvantaged students face pre-university, during university and post-university. The challenges and barriers differ between the groups which presents the University with the difficult task of how to provide the right kind of support to the individual groups.

In building our strategy, we have had weekly meetings with a group of champions from our key professional services, academic schools, the Students' Union and student representatives. This group is led by the Head of Student Experience and overseen by our Pro Vice-Chancellor, Students and Teaching. Some of the students who were involved were representative of certain disadvantaged groups listed above. The group developed a 'mind map' to capture Solent University's key priorities and frame the development of its Access and Participation Plan (see Appendix 1 within Section 4 of the registration file).

Monitoring arrangements include regular meetings of the group of champions with the Pro Vice-Chancellor; at each meeting there will be a standing agenda item to review the institution's action plan and monitor progress on each target. At these meetings stakeholders will reflect on progress and whether any adjustments are required in order to meet the strategic aims. The Pro Vice-Chancellor takes responsibility for reporting regularly to governors.

Our strategy has the full support of the Vice-Chancellor's Group and the Board of Governors, it has been fully discussed at the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee and has full buy-in from the University community. As part of our training strategy we are implementing a cross-institutional awareness campaign.

## **Ambition and Strategy**

Having identified areas for improvement, the University plans to use the whole student life cycle approach in its strategy for access, success and progression. Our access activities build aspiration amongst underrepresented groups and as such naturally encompass a wider population than the students who choose to come to Solent University.

Evaluation of our targets at regular review meetings (six per year) allows us to assess our progress towards meeting our ambitions and goals, and to make any necessary adjustments to our interventions, led by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students and Teaching). We will keep an action plan

(as described above), which will be shared online to allow colleagues to log progress and reflections and to identify at an early stage how activities and interventions appear to be working.

We will evaluate 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. At the end of the academic/delivery year we compare our impact measures against those from the previous year to assess the effectiveness of the programme and to inform future developments or changes.

In relation to our ambitions and goals for student 'success' we will monitor and review the impact of actions and interventions by taking a programmed approach to data informed impact analyses, which will provide early indications of our achievement. We will work more closely than ever with the Students' Union and we will involve greater numbers of students in developing and evaluating our initiatives. The University has formed a Student Board, a senior committee that comprises University staff, Students' Union sabbatical officers and student representatives. We are devising specific staff development programmes and we will evaluate learning outcomes and changes in practice resulting from the delivery of these initiatives. We will utilise what we have learnt from the Office for Students funded Beating the Attainment Gap (BTAG) project and apply the principles in an inclusive manner, evaluating the impact of the interventions we employ, including outcomes for students with WP characteristics.

To ensure we are evaluating our targets for 'progression' Solent Futures will monitor the impact of initiatives by following the career paths of students, graduates and alumni. We will ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. This will be corroborated by data from the new Graduate Outcomes Survey. We will continue to monitor data across groups of students with WP characteristics, as well as comparing the impact of our activities on these underrepresented groups. We will consider data from our Employability Self-Evaluation (ESE) test that our students undertake and evaluate the distance travelled by students with certain characteristics so that we can understand the impact of different activities and use the results in planning future initiatives and support.

The financial support we give to students in 2019-20 will 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.

## ACCESS

### **Students of particular ethnicities (BME)**

The data indicates a need to target access and outreach activity across the UK regions for all year groups (6-13), focusing on areas and feeder institutions with a high proportion of BME students.

Recognising this recruitment challenge, Solent University has recruited two regional recruitment officers (newly developed roles) to ensure that regions where there are high percentages of BME students, particularly the London region, are covered more intensively.

### Outcomes

Solent University is committed to reversing the trend seen over recent cycles by setting a realistic, stretching but achievable strategy for widening participation by BME students both locally and across the UK. Our overarching target is:



- To increase enrolments from black and Asian students so they become 20% of our student population by 2024.

The operational outcomes which will inform our approach for our 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan are to:

- Increase the number of outreach activities in targeted further education institutions across the UK by a minimum of two colleges per UK region in the first year. There will be a particular focus on London, where there is a high proportion of BME students in attendance. Data indicates local areas include Itchen and Gosport.
- Increase the number of BME students who engage in our access outreach activity and to include their participation on HEAT tracker database to enable monitoring of long term outcomes.
- Increase the number of BME students who progress from enquiry to engage in further activity at Solent University such as an open day or subject specific taster day.
- Improve the level of data capture so that we have better data on ethnicity, enabling us to provide targets for the above activities in the future.
- Increase the number of BME students engaged in pre-16 outreach activity and who are tracked and monitored year-on-year.

### **White working-class males (WWCM)**

Solent University is committed to raising participation rates of WWCM by setting the following stretching but achievable targets:

- A 5% increase in applications from 18-year old WWCM who reside in Q1 areas across the UK by 2024.

#### **Outcomes**

To increase outreach activity in targeted regions across the UK where there is a high proportion of white British males in Q1 and Q2 areas. We will achieve this by:

- Targeting a minimum of two further education institutions that have high proportion of WWCM in each geographical area where we currently focus (Midlands, North, East of England, London, South East and South West).

### **Care Leavers**

As the lower conversion rate for Care Leavers is of concern we have set ourselves an ambitious, stretching target to increase conversion of our applicants to acceptances by 15% over 5 years. The University is currently working closely with the local authorities who have responsibility for Care Leavers to gain improved access and opportunities for interventions. The University is also working to improve its data on Care Leavers and Looked After Children (LAC) so that reliable data is available to inform our strategy moving forwards.

#### **Outcomes**

- To increase the number of Care Leavers in post-16 education who participate in outreach activity both locally and nationally, so they account for 5% of total engagements.
- Promotion of bursaries for Care Leavers in all communications and media.

### **Mature students**

Solent University has experienced a decline in enrolments of mature students (aged 21-24) and in response to this, we have set a target to:

- Increase applications by 10% from students aged 21+ over the next five years, focusing on access to higher education students who can progress to relevant and appropriate degree pathways on completion of their access programme.

### **Collaboration and Partnership activity**

Solent University, in partnership with the Universities of Winchester, Southampton and Portsmouth, Bournemouth University and Arts University Bournemouth set up the Southern Universities Network (SUN) in 2014-15.

The following statement is based on the premise that the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) will continue to run in 2019-20.

To ensure that under-represented groups are supported in a collaborative way, all six partners have committed to the SUN partnership activities alongside the NCOP in 2019-20 and will work together to:

- Develop a collaborative project which provides mental health support for prospective students. This will involve all the SUN universities, focusing on links to higher education and developing mental health resilience for the transition to higher education.
- Develop a collaborative project targeted for Roma and Gypsy Travellers to encourage progression to higher education, including exploring the development of materials to increase understanding of HE in these communities.
- Develop a collaborative project to provide support for military families to encourage progression to higher education.
- Continue to collaborate and share best practice regarding support for care leavers and young carers.
- Continue to embed best practice in staff development, through sharing opportunities for networking and involvement of specialists in the field of widening participation. Staff involved in this work will continue to participate in an annual staff development conference and we will seek to involve student ambassadors and Students' Union officers in this activity.
- Seek to work with local authorities and community groups in relation to mature students in order to access these students and provide them with information about higher education opportunities.
- Explore how we can develop a qualitative research project on barriers to higher education participation for black and minority ethnic communities in our region. This will also research how they gain information on higher education opportunities. We will carry out this work in 2018-19 with a view to informing activities to support these groups in 2019-20.
- Share good practice in evaluation, both in terms of each partner's activity and in collaborative projects.
- Explore the use of HEAT and/or other tracking services to evaluate the impact of collaborative activity.

### **SUCCESS**

We will continue to analyse the impact of the current interventions, interrogating the results and developing further interventions as necessary to ensure a credible and evidence-informed approach to addressing inequality. This is summarised as follows:

We will continue to:

- Review the data;
- Involve all relevant stakeholders including students;

- Visit and collaborate with other universities and identify best practice;
- Identify income streams that could enable the University to expedite and/or enhance actions to reduce inequality;
- Monitor and review the impact of actions.

We will continue to analyse the data including breaking it down by:

- Different ethnic groups: for example, the widest attainment gap in 2016-17 was 34.8 percentage points for Black students compared with 21.6 percentage points average for BME students.
- Different subject groups: for example, for 25 subject groups in 2016-17 the BME attainment gap ranged from +66.7 to -0.4 percentage points.
- Intersectionality: for example, within every age group, BME qualifiers were less likely to gain a 1st or 2:1 with White qualifiers; and in all instances except one, female BME qualifiers were more likely to gain a 1st or 2:1 than male BME qualifiers.

In response we will also:

- Continue to implement the articulated action plan of making interventions in the assessment criteria and analysing the impact on the attainment gap.
- Continue with an inclusive approach to interventions so they have an impact on all students (as stated above). Whilst this inclusive approach is expected to deliver a similar positive impact on attainment and continuation for other disadvantaged groups (for example, white working-class males), it will be kept under review.
- Halve the BME attainment gap over five years (baseline 21.6 percentage points 2016/17).
- Halve the gender (male-female) attainment gap in five years (baseline 10.2 percentage points in 2016-17).
- Reduce the differences between BME and White and between mature and younger students' continuation to zero in five years.
- Undertake more research into providing better support for care leavers, working closely with Local Authorities.

## PROGRESSION

Using the data available to guide the application of appropriate interventions, the University will be much more focussed on the targeting of activity. In the past, interventions have been open to all, but aimed at specific WP groups. Often the groups that could benefit most are those who are the most difficult to engage and so fewer students and graduates from WP backgrounds have participated than was hoped. Moving forward, Solent Futures will be more overt in targeting initiatives and the focus will be on:

### **Female students/graduates**

- Graduate Outcome Survey 2020: reduce the gap between males and females securing PM level roles to within 2 percentage points. The gap is currently 12.6 percentage points (baseline 54.6% females in PM roles and 67.2% males in PM roles in 2017)

### **Female BME students/graduates**

- Graduate Outcome Survey 2020: reduce the gap between BME females in PM level roles, compared to overall PM level metric for the University by at least 10 percentage points. The gap is currently 21.5 percentage points (baseline 39.8% BME females in PM roles against 61.3% for the University in 2017).

## Care leavers/estranged students

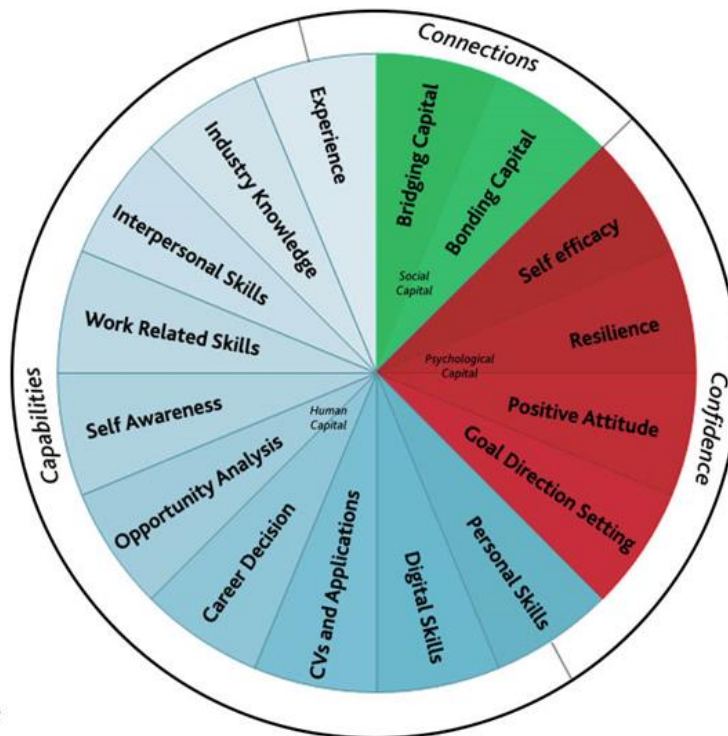
- Active involvement of 50% of care leavers/estranged students in a new package of paid work placements and support in finding a graduate level job

## Students/graduates with Autism Spectrum Disorder

- All ASD students to be aware of training and careers support available
- Ten ASD students to be placed in relevant placements.

Data shows that 71% of students at Solent University are the first in their family to come to university. A focus on improving the graduate outcomes of all female graduates will therefore impact on female students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3, Q1). Our ambition will be to ensure that all graduates will achieve high level graduate outcomes regardless of their gender or social background.

The University is uniquely able to gain valuable insight to help drive initiatives through the Employability Self-Evaluation test (ESE test). The ESE test can assess a student's strengths and weaknesses around three key areas of human capital, social capital and psychological capital.



Richard Sant and Rosy Jones  
Employability and Enterprise  
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Based on their ESE profile, different interventions can be introduced to help students build on their strengths and minimise their weaknesses. The ESE test was introduced in 2013 and over 4,000 students have now taken a survey. The ESE test is currently being developed for ESE 2.0 and as part of this process an investigation will be undertaken to see what valuable information can be mined from the data gathered. Until this point, there has not been an analysis of the results by WP characteristics to see if there are any common factors that might help the University to identify new interventions.

Solent Futures works with courses with lower levels of PM roles/further study in the DLHE survey. As part of this process, the protected characteristics of students on each course are broken down and analysed. Based on the data, different initiatives are introduced to support the students. Moving

forward, Solent Futures will continue to focus on DLHE-critical courses but will also introduce a similar approach for any courses that have a high proportion of the key WP groups identified. One of the most successful initiatives for DLHE-critical courses has been the introduction of a Solent Futures representative to encourage peer engagement. We believe this approach will result in greater engagement with targeted groups.

Solent Futures also plans to build on current collaborations with key partners both internally and externally. The University's Student Services are a key partner in identifying and reaching out to both disabled students and care leavers/estranged students. Links have already been established through Access Solent (the University's access & disability service) with Southampton City Council to build closer ties with local care leavers and a meeting is planned with Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council to discuss sharing best practice across the sector. The University's ambition is to offer careers support to care leavers throughout their student journey, supporting them to find part-time work, offering a guaranteed paid work placement and providing a nominated careers adviser to help with finding graduate level employment.

Solent Futures is also working with Southampton City College on a SUN funded project called 'People like us'. The project will involve Solent University students from NCOP backgrounds mentoring City College students and training them as mentors to go out to local schools to raise the ambitions of Years 9 & 10 pupils. Whilst not specifically a 'progression' initiative, research shows that mentors gain as much from mentoring as mentees and this will build the confidence of both and hopefully raise their aspirations.

### **Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)**

Solent University is a member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) membership service which assists Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in England to target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activity.

Working collaboratively ensures that we can critically reflect on our approach to outreach data management which in turn helps us to continuously improve the way we monitor, evaluate and build evidence of impact. HEIs that subscribe to HEAT have developed a student data tracking system and a set of reports which allow annual tracking of outreach participants longitudinally from Key Stage 2 data through to entry to HE, postgraduate study and employment. Using these reports Solent University can assess the relationship between outreach programmes, disadvantage, attainment and patterns of progression into HE.

HEAT membership allows the sharing of costs for this type of outreach participant level monitoring and evaluation and for collaborative evidence-based evaluation. The membership works together in the research and development of effective, fit-for-purpose evaluation practice to inform outreach planning and assess impact. HEAT research aims to provide evidence that engagement in outreach activity has a positive impact on outreach participant outcomes. It will assist us in assessing whether our work is:

- Reaching and engaging disadvantaged and/or under-represented students;
- Delivering a progressive and complementary set of outreach activities to a range of year groups;
- Contributing to increased attainment at Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Key Stage 5 (KS5);
- Increasing the HE entrant and success rates of disadvantaged students.

Our latest HEAT HESA track report tells us that 76% of our total cohort had engaged with us before post-16 education. This is in line with our ambition to engage students and their schools and colleges earlier and supports our aim to contribute to raised attainment. The report allows us to see the

contribution to the WP sector that Solent makes in helping WP students gain access to both our own institution and to the HE sector as a whole. Data shows that 33% of our POLAR3 Q1&2 outreach participants had progressed to higher education. This is better than the national expected rate of 25%. We also know that, of our outreach participants who have already completed degrees at their chosen universities, 76% achieved a 1st or 2:1. This compares with a national average of 66%.

Sector research tells us that achieving good results at KS4 is a key determinant in progression to Higher Education and our programme of outreach addresses and responds to the challenges posed in helping to improve the academic attainment of our target schools and their disadvantaged students. Our last HEAT KS4 track report showed that 68% of our outreach participants in our target schools achieved 5A\*-C GCSE, including English and maths, compared with an average of 48% for our target schools.

## **Access, student success and progression measures**

### **ACCESS**

#### **Access and outreach programme delivery**

The University will extend its current access and outreach activities to include post-16 learners as well as continuously improving the substantial work with pre-16 learners to improve performance in key areas for disadvantaged groups. This will involve observing best practice by our partners, engaging with student focus groups and working with teachers in schools and colleges to re-design activities and tool kits as required, especially those for the post-16 year groups. The priority will be on activities that deliver the best impact.

#### **Pre-16 'Step into Success' Outreach Programme (focus on BME and WWCM from Q1 in the local region)**

Solent's access and widening participation team will continue to deliver a range of outreach activities as part of our 'Step into Success' programme for Years 6-11. This represents the University's continued commitment to delivering high quality, long term outreach to raise the aspirations and attainment of young people across the entire learner journey. There is a focus on critical educational touch points where transition, careers and attainment support are required most.

In terms of raising and contributing to Attainment 8, we will work with two schools to focus activities around increasing 1.0 grade in GCSE English and Maths for 50 pupils. We will work particularly with Year 10 and 11 and offer a broad range of activities to include Why GCSE's Matter, Exam Prep and Revision with Study Skills and GCSE Get Ready.

At the beginning of each academic year the Access and Widening Participation (AWP) team meet with the partner schools to discuss and plan the activities for the year within our Step into Success Programme. A proposed planner detailing the activities and delivery dates is completed in collaboration with the partner schools. The planned activities are discussed with Solent's NCOP SUN Project Leader to ensure that the activities planned are complementary and provide more interventions to raise the attainment in schools. (See Appendix 2 within Section 4 of the registration file).

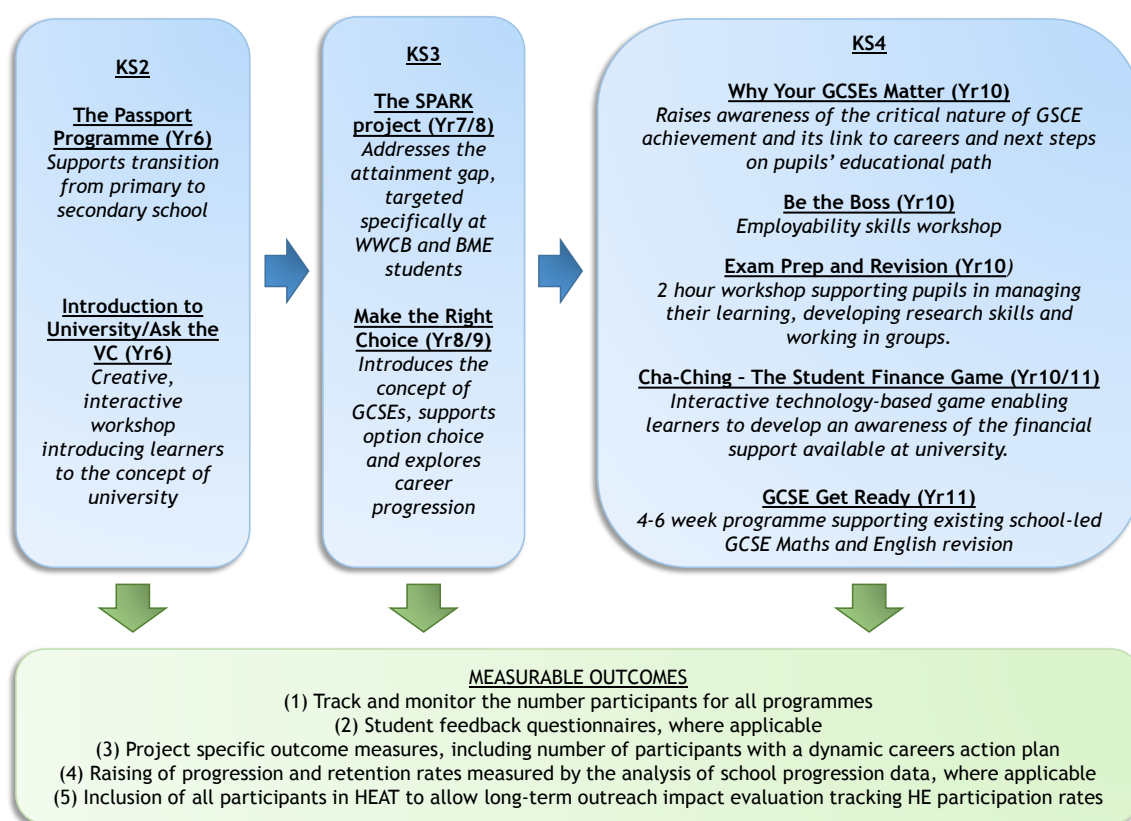
All activities delivered within the Step into Success programme are evaluated for impact by collecting direct feedback after delivery. The feedback form comprises of four statements that are focused on Feelings (Confidence), Post GCSE options, higher education and aspiration (aspiration to consider higher education as an option). The feedback information is uploaded to a spreadsheet within a week of the activity and monthly meetings are set up to monitor progress to targets analyse the

impact. These findings are reported quarterly to the APP Working Group and reflections reported back to the AWP team.

This gives us measurable outcomes and analysis of impact of our activities within the Step into Success programme. We have tailored feedback forms for primary and secondary cohorts and we also ask for teacher feedback. (See Appendices 3a-c within Section 4 of the registration file).

Collected feedback is uploaded into a spreadsheet by indicating year group and school within a week of delivery. Feedback is analysed to determine if any immediate improvements are needed. At the end of the academic/ delivery year we compare our impact measures against the previous year to see the effectiveness of the programme and to develop future activities.

The analysis of the impact of these activities is shared with Solent's NCOP SUN Project Leader so that best practice can be shared within the region and even wider through NCOP conferences and CPD.



Overview of Solent University's 'Step into Success' programme for years 6-11

## SPARK Project - Year 7 and 8

The overall outcome of the SPARK programme is to support the identified secondary school's efforts in increasing the English attainment of participating pupils by 1.0 grade at attainment 8 in line with the KS3 National Curriculum learning outcomes for English as seen below.

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language

- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The secondary outcomes of the programme to increase parental engagement and empowerment can be measured as being successful if at the end of the programme parents have:

- A positive impact on attainment levels of children.
- Increased confidence to share, exchange and receive information about their child.
- More confidence to be able to support their child in learning activities and homework tasks
- The knowledge to see school in a positive light and consider post 16 education progression as a viable choice for their child

### **Post 16 Prep – Year 10 and 11**

In terms of raising and contributing to Attainment 8, we will work with two schools to focus activities around increasing 1.0 grade in GCSE English and Maths for 50 pupils. We will work particularly with Year 10 and 11 and offer a broad range of activities to include Why GCSE's Matter, Exam Prep and Revision with Study Skills and GCSE Get Ready.

#### **Why your GCSEs Matter – Year 10**

A 20 minute assembly that explains what GCSEs are, highlights the importance of obtaining good GCSE results and progression pathways beyond GCSE exams.

The outcomes for this activity are for pupils to understand

- Why GCSEs are important
- The importance of qualifications linked to post 16 options/ pathways
- Why they may want to consider university as an option
- How much they know.

#### **Be the Boss (Careers and Employability) - Year 10**

A two hour workshop for KS3 and KS4 pupils to familiarise themselves with employability skills, importance of a 'good CV' and personal skills action planning.

The outcomes for this activity are for pupils to:

- Know the difference between skills, qualities and qualifications
- Be familiar with the main skills valued by employers and why
- Have identified what skills and qualities they already possess.

#### **Exam Prep and Revision – Year 10**

A two hour workshop to support learners in managing their learning, developing research skills and working and presenting in groups.

The outcomes for this activity are pupils to:

- Identify successful studying habits



- Identify their learning style
- Understand that good time management is essential for successful revision
- Increase their Attainment 8 grade by 1.0.

### **Cha-Ching – The Student Finance Game – Year 10 and 11**

An interactive technology based game which enables learners to develop an awareness of the financial support available at university and understand and explore budgeting techniques to support the day to day costs of being a university student.

The outcomes for this activity are pupils to:

- Develop awareness of the financial support available to students at university
- Understanding the day to day costs of being a university student
- Exploring techniques to support successful budget management
- Gain knowledge of various financial decisions that may arise whilst studying at university.

### **GCSE Get Ready – Year 11**

A 4-6 week programme supporting existing school led GCSE Maths and English revision. Pupils initially take part in the highly-interactive, multisensory learning experience, Exam Busters, which shows them how to prepare for exams by equipping them with a range of very effective learning tools and exam preparation skills.

Each of the following 3-5 sessions lasts 1 hour and is facilitated by a subject related Solent Academic and student ambassadors.

The overall outcomes for the programme are that all pupils will:

- Be equipped with a range of learning to learn and memory tools and techniques
- Be introduced to the concept of the regular review process and given tools to follow through with this
- Be shown how to relax when preparing for exams
- Be encouraged to create an effective learning environment
- Increase their Attainment 8 grade by 1.0.

### **Post-16 and Mature Students (focus on BME, WWCM, Care Leavers and Mature Students (aged 21-24) both locally to Southampton and in targeted regions across the UK)**

The analysis of our data has highlighted the need to expand our outreach work to include Years 12 and 13. Solent's focus will be on improving participation rates through enhanced targeting and more intensive access outreach delivery.

Undertaking desk research and using student focus groups to identify and understand the challenges and barriers disadvantaged students face will be important elements of this plan. Solent will contribute to breaking down some of the barriers that prevent all students having a wide-ranging choice of HE options and the ability to make well-informed, relevant choices about their next steps, regardless of their individual circumstances.

Recognising that entry criteria can be a barrier to particular applicants, Solent University will continue to operate a fair, contextual admissions process to ensure that students in the target groups are not disadvantaged.

The approach will involve a new communications campaign 'My Next Steps?'. All of Solent's outreach promotional materials will feature this messaging along with our University-wide statement of 'Start your Story with us'.

The 'Next Steps' programme of activities will have two strands covering outreach activity both locally and regionally:

### **Local Provision**

#### **General information, advice and guidance (IAG) for Years 12 and 13 in three local colleges**

Solent's 'Next Steps' programme equips students with the skills and confidence needed for a successful start in the next stage of their education. It includes workshops and activities focused on HE information such as apprenticeships, the benefits of HE, UCAS application process, personal statements, preparing for university open days, student finance and subject tasters. The measurable outcomes will be:

- The number of participants who engage and are included on the HEAT Database;
- The number of participants who attend a further activity at Solent University;
- The number of participants who progress to the application stage of HE.

#### **Transition Programme for Year 13 (applicants from local colleges)**

The transition from FE to HE can be as daunting as it is exciting. The 'Next Steps' programme will give Year 13 applicants to Solent University the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the University campus, explore some key skills needed for university success, speak to undergraduates about areas they found difficult and hear some top tips for coping with the university learning environment. The measurable outcomes for this programme will be:

- To track the number of participants on the HEAT database;
- The number of students who enrol at Solent University;
- The retention, attainment and progression of these students once enrolled at Solent.

### **Regional Provision**

There will be an enhanced focus on developing access and outreach activity in regions across the UK where there are a high percentage of our target groups.

Our assessment is that disadvantaged students are less likely to consider travelling to a university further afield even if provision is better suited to their individual career aspirations. The reasons include poor information from HE providers about how financial and pastoral support and lack of advice about how attending a university with provision better suited to their needs may be of greater benefit to their individual success.

Solent University will:

- Allocate a portion of each Regional Student Recruitment Officer's (RSRO) role to actively target institutions with high proportions of students with multiple characteristics of disadvantage (in particular Black, Asian, WWCMs and Care Leavers) and collaborate with colleagues to support student transition to the best fit HE provider regardless of where the institution is located.
- RSROs will identify and target colleges that provide 'Access to HE' courses that are progression routes to Solent University in their regions to reach more mature students.
- Each RSRO will develop a programme of activity for targeted institutions in collaboration with the institution to include tailored IAG sessions. The activities will promote going to 'the best university for you', what pastoral care is available and what employability and careers support

is offered. They will address the financial barriers and will support effective education and career decision-making.

- Attend a new careers and IAG event in London entitled 'Whatuni' which is a platform providing a more holistic approach to delivering well-rounded information and advice for young people who are making decisions about their post-18 education or training.

The measurable outcomes will be:

- All participants will be tracked and monitored for positive student outcomes including participation data upload to HEAT, to evaluate the impact on target underrepresented groups using multiple indicators
- Progression to further engagement with Solent University, such as attending an open or subject specific taster day, an application to Solent University or another HE provider.

Solent University will introduce a new information and advice point at open days for all students who are unsure of their next steps. The purpose will be to provide a welcome point for students who find attending an open day daunting and need a triage service to get the direction they and their parents need to benefit fully from the day.

## SUCCESS

As indicated, local equality data tells us that while the University's BME attainment gap is reducing it requires addressing. The University's response has been inclusive; that is, to develop interventions that affect all students. A summary of actions taken in 2016-17 and 2017-18 is given below:

- Clarify the data regarding the BME attainment gap;
- Clarify leadership and establish a working group of relevant stakeholders;
- Visit other universities and undertake desk research to identify best practice;
- Successfully bid to HEFCE for funding to acquire resources that could expedite action regarding activities to reduce the BME attainment gap;
- Collaborate with universities that have made changes resulting in a large impact on reducing the BME attainment gap;
- Develop and implement an action plan; in this instance, involving making two interventions in curriculum assessment criteria;
- Monitor the impact; the first relevant data not likely until the latter part of 2017-18.

A significant part of the University's approach to reducing the attainment gap is the HEFCE funded project led by the University of Derby with Solent and the University of West London as partners. Derby has been successful in halving its attainment gap. Having completed a pilot in 2016-17 with seven module leaders, the current phase of this two-year project has 38 module leaders implementing two inclusive, assessment-focused classroom interventions. The outcomes of impact assessments will be available in Autumn 2018 and will inform our next steps. Units participating in the project have 10 or more BME students.

There is now a focus on sustainability and there is work with the Solent Learning and Teaching Institute (SLTI) to embed the interventions across the University. Already, the second intervention 'Fit to Submit' checklist has been made available as standard on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for all units. The first aim in terms of longevity is to embed the interventions in 100 units across the University.

There have been several staff development activities to support the embedding of the project. A Principal Lecturer from another university who has a national profile and expertise in relation to BME disadvantage was established as a critical friend to the project. Two workshops have been delivered

to challenge staff and senior managers in terms of how we approach the attainment gap. There have also been two workshops for staff and managers about unconscious bias. Workshops about the project have been delivered as part of the SLTI professional development programme, the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCLT).

Continuous improvement will be achieved through ongoing benchmarking, sharing good practice and adopting and adapting to the needs of the students through student discussion forums and working closely with the Solent Students' Union. The University will also identify and develop further initiatives.

A more inclusive (rather than targeted) approach has been implemented for the following: improving the retention of mature students by implementing a programme of support, including a mature student induction event, addressing the issues identified in the local mature student survey 2016-17. The programme includes:

Improved networking and communications

- Networking and taster event prior to the start of term;
- New society set up within Solent Students' Union for mature students;
- Bulletin-style support messages at key/transition points throughout the year.

Increasing the number of honours degrees achieved

- Increase the percentage of students passing trailing units;
- Provide additional support to students on the cusp (+/- 2%) of achieving a higher classification.

Improving the achievement of Level 6 students

- Provide IAG for students on the border of achieving a higher degree classification;
- Provide IAG about students' academic position;
- Schedule meetings following mid-year results with level 6 students who have resits;
- Deliver presentations to level 6 classes about support available including one-to-one meetings.

Improving the retention and achievement of students repeating a level of their studies

- Implement a programme of support with varied activities designed to meet the specific needs of this group and individual reasons for repeating a level;
- Offer individual IAG to inform re-enrolment decisions;
- Offer a 'Welcome Back' seminar to highlight expectations and support available.

Improve the retention and achievement of students who suspend studies during their course

- Identify and implement strategies to encourage students to return to university;
- Implement a programme of support for students returning after a period of suspended study;
- Improve the quality of IAG provided following mid-year and end-of-year results.

Inclusive learning and teaching is part of Solent's ethos. Reinforcing the need for a more anticipatory approach to ensure that teaching is inclusive, we will review and strengthen the information provided to academic staff on the make-up of their student cohorts (gender, age, ethnicity, disability, etc.), including information on adjustments to learning required for individual students. Solent Learning and Teaching Institute will design and deliver workshops on inclusive teaching, working closely with Access Solent. We will move to embed these workshops into our staff induction processes.

Based on data from Access Solent and other parts of the University we will make lecture capture compulsory where there is an identified need. We will also move to making lecture capture the

default position across all courses. This requires transformational culture shift and has strategic support.

## PROGRESSION

Based on the above data and on our ambitions to improve the graduate outcomes for key groups, Solent University will focus on the following interventions in 2019-20:

**Female students/graduates:** a campaign across the University to raise the aspirations of female students through:

- Greater representation of women as guest speakers, in communications and as case-studies including female alumni;
- Continuing to host events similar to 'Fearless Females' to empower female students and graduates with a follow-up female network to encourage aspiration;
- Working with schools and the Student Achievement team to identify, target and support potential 'high achieving' females, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds;
- Developing staff training on the gender progression gap in the University to encourage support from course teams.

### Target

- Graduate Outcome Survey 2020: reduce the gap between males and females securing professional and managerial level jobs to within 2%, the gap is currently 12.6% (baseline 54.6% females in PM roles and 67.2% males in PM roles in 2017).

### Female BME students

- Launch a professional mentoring scheme aimed specifically at BME females in 2018-19 and build on this approach in 2019-20 (dependent on the outcomes);
- Develop links with local employers who have a diversity agenda, e.g. Carnival UK and B&Q, to develop work placements and internships aimed at BME females;
- Prioritise BME females for Solent University internship and placement schemes.

### Target

- Graduate Outcome Survey 2020: reduce the gap between BME females in PM level roles, compared to overall PM level metric for the university by at least 10%, the gap is currently 21.5%(currently 39.8% for BME females against 61.3% (2017).

### Care leavers/estranged students

- Launch a new package to care leavers/estranged students in 2018-19 with support from Solent Futures at every step of their career journey, including part-time work, a guaranteed paid work placement and support with finding a PM level role (to be piloted in 2018-19 in collaboration with Access Solent).

### Outcome

- Active involvement of 50% of care leavers and estranged students (to date there have been difficulties in encouraging participation from care leavers in particular).

### Students/graduates with ASD

- Work in collaboration with Autism Hampshire to support students/graduates with ASD and help them into graduate level employment;
- Develop work placements for ASD students with employers.

## Outcomes

- All ASD students to be aware of training and careers support available.
- Ten ASD students to be placed in relevant placements.

## Investment

### Student Numbers and Fee Income

The University estimates a student body in 2019-20 of 7,341 Home full time undergraduate students, as per our Resource Plan (table 3a).

Our Access and Participation expenditure summary, as a proportion of fee income above the basic fee is provided below:

<b>Access and Participation expenditure summary</b>	
<b>Higher fee income (HFI)</b>	£22,345,300
<b>Access expenditure (as % HFI)</b>	3.6%
<b>Student success expenditure (as % HFI)</b>	4.6%
<b>Progression expenditure (as % HFI)</b>	2.9%
<b>Expenditure on financial support (as % HFI)</b>	10.1%
<b>Total Expenditure (as % HFI)</b>	<b>21.2%</b>

*(Based on tables 7 of the Access and Participation Resource Plan 2019-20)*

### Financial Support

The conditions for which bursaries were awarded to students who entered the University prior to September 2019 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.

The package of financial support for new entrants from 2019-20 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 the Solent Students' Union and in line with internal research, we will continue to offer bursaries aimed at providing financial assistance to students faced with additional course costs. In addition, we will continue to 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.

The University will continue to offer a cash award scheme for Foundation Year and Year 1 entrants, targeting those who will be based in our primary focus area initially (as stated in the next section) and for those others from low participation neighbourhoods in Southampton and the local region. It is estimated that this will involve the allocation of cash awards to the value of approximately £2.3m (including payments to pre 2018-19 entry students).

In recognition of student achievement and to support retention, the University will be offering a bursary to the value of £500 in both the second and third year of study for all full-time students who previously received a bursary in their first year of study. This bursary will also be offered to recipients who progress from the Foundation Year to their second, third and fourth years of study so long as they satisfy the eligibility criteria as part of the application for the Foundation Year award.

The University has ring-fenced funds to support students experiencing financial hardship. Our financial support package in 2019-20 will include:

- Foundation Year: £500 bursary (up to 160 to be awarded to eligible students);
- Full-time Degree Year 1 entrants: £500 bursary in year one (up to 1,079 to be awarded to eligible students);
- Full-time Degree Year 2+: £500 bursary in each year of study (for all full-time students who previously received a bursary in their first year);
- Care Leavers: £1,500 bursary in each year of study (offered to all care leavers);
- Hardship fund: £600,000 will be allocated for financial hardship.

The University is introducing a new initiative from 2019-20, moving to a system of paying bursaries via an Aspire card rather than cash. As expenditure is limited to certain categories related to educational requirements it will be possible to restrict and also identify the types of spend, which will be analysed and evaluated from July 2020.

Priority of allocation will be based on our primary focus groups and then followed by others from low participation backgrounds. Eligible requirements for the support package are:

- A declared household income of £25,000 or less;
- Enrolment on a full-time course, paying full variable or new regime fees;
- Fee status of UK (to be eligible for bursaries).

Solent's total annual expenditure on access, student success and progression activities is as follows:

<b>Access, Student Success and Progression Expenditure Forecast</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Expenditure (£)</b>
<b>1. Access</b>	£805,419
<b>2. Student Success</b>	£1,026,635
<b>3. Progression</b>	£645,473
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,477,527</b>

*(Based on tables 5a of the Access and Participation Resource Plan 2019-20)*

### **Training Strategy**

Solent University is committed to developing its people. A cross-institutional approach is being taken to training in relation to the Access and Participation Plan, including

- Developing tools for use in Post-16 workshops and talks in colleges;
- Training in evaluation and monitoring techniques;
- Organising and managing student focus groups;
- Identifying data needs and utilising data effectively;
- Cross-institutional awareness training about the Office for Students and specifically requirements of Access and Participation Plans;

- Course teams will be trained to recognise what their typical classroom demographic is, in order to deliver inclusive teaching;
- A cross-institutional understanding of attainment gaps and how learning, teaching and support can be provided to reduce the gaps;
- Course development to move to a default position of inclusive and anticipatory design; this will be informed by extending our staff development programme to provide online tools;
- Explore a programme of 'Spiral Induction' to ease the transition of students into university and through their first year of study;
- Include reference to supporting the access and participation strategy in staff job specifications and in performance and development reviews, as appropriate.

## **Provision of information to students**

Solent University's Access and Participation Plan has been written in consultation with student representatives. Development, implementation and evaluation of the Plan involves the University's deliberative committees, all of which include student representation.

The University has convened a Student Board, starting in 2018-19, whose membership will include students who represent disadvantaged groups. The remit of the Board will allow it to monitor implementation of the 2019-20 Access and Participation Plan, to evaluate progress and to contribute to the development of future plans.

Awareness of the Plan will be disseminated through the University's course committee structure, where students play a major role.

The University will employ a variety of communications channels to disseminate information about the Plan, including web pages, intranet, social media, apps, verbal messaging and printed materials. Communications to enquirers and applicants will include a link to the website information.

Advice will be provided at UCAS fairs/HE Fairs and in assemblies, talks and workshops in schools regarding fees, funding and bursaries.

Solent University is developing games designed to include calculating the costs of being at university. Financial support will continue to be detailed on the website and provided in prospectuses and handouts at events. It will be clear to prospective and current students what their fees are for the duration of their course, as well as the financial support that is available to them.

All interventions described in the Access and Participation Plan will have awareness campaigns communicated digitally and/or using printed materials and available at relevant times and touchpoints.



\* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

Fees will be increased in line with those allowed by government

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		£7,800
HNC / HND		£7,800
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		£1,385
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,385
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,935
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		£5,850
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

**Table 8a** - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	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)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	State school	<b>HESA T1a</b> - 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	96.8	96.9	96.9	97	97	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	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	<b>HESA T1a</b> - 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	13.6	13.7	13.7	13.8	13.9	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_03	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>HESA T3a</b> - 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	9.9	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5	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.
T16a_04	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>HESA T5</b> - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	An alternative view of non-continuation for first degree entrants	No	2013-14	71.4	73.2	73.7	74.2	74.7	75.2	To continue to raise the projected outcomes for degree study year on year. The baseline year is based on the 2013/14 HESA Table 5.
T16a_05	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (Foundation Degree)	No	2013-14	96.7	97.1	97.2	97.3	97.4	97.5	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
T16a_06	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (HND/C)	No	2013-14	91.3	93	93.5	94	94	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
T16a_07	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Increase continuation rates for BME students to more closely match that of White students	No	2014-15	85.4	86.3	86.6	86.9	87	87.2	The focus is on increasing the rate of continuation through targeted interventions, especially within our School of Business and Law
T16a_08	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	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	63	64	65	66	67	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.
T16a_09	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Increase attainment rates for BME students to move closely match that of the University average	No	2014-15	48.3	52	53	54	55	56	The focus is on increasing the level of award achieved by our BME graduates and making incremental (but stretch) steps each year. This is closely connected to our level 4 to 5 progression.
T16a_10	Success	Other (please give details in Description column)	<b>Other statistic</b> - Other (please give details in the next column)	Leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses	No	2013-14	90.2	91.2	91.7	92.2	92.7	93.2	To continue to raise the employment outcomes for leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses. The baseline year is based on the 2013/14 HESA Table E1a.
T16a_11	Progression	Gender	<b>Other statistic</b> - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Reduce the gap between males and females securing PM level roles to 2%	No	2017-18	12% gap	6% gap	2% gap	1% gap	0 gap	0 gap	The gap is currently 12% - baseline 55% females in PM roles and 67% males in PM roles in 2017 (DLHE)

Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (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)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Vulnerable children and young people (including children in care and young carers) and/or those who support them (via the Southern Universities Network)	Yes	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	4 activities per year with at least 3 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 3 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 3 universities participating in each	Share good practice across the network and develop a project on participation in the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities
T16b_02	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Termly meetings of Working Groups relating to: BME, Disability, Vulnerable Children and Young People, and Mature and part-time students	Yes	2014-15	N/A	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups	Sharing of good practice emanating from these working groups
T16b_03	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Activities for black and minority ethnic students (via Southern Universities Network)	Yes	2015-16	NA	Research Project	TBC following the research project	TBC following the research project	TBC following the research project	TBC following the research project	We plan to shift our focus from delivery of activities to a research project in 2018-19, which will be used to inform the development of future work and targets in this area,
T16b_04	Access	Multiple	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Activities for potential mature and part-time students (via Southern Universities Network)	Yes	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	4 activities per year with at least 2 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 2 universities participating in each	4 activities per year with at least 2 universities participating in each	The focus is on increasing the number of individuals who access the activities organised by the Southern Universities Network.
T16b_05	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Increase student enrolments from BME students (Q1) by 20%	No	2013-14	110	140	150	160	165	165	The focus is on increasing the number of enrolments from BME students in quintile 1 by 20%, and then with incremental growth. The numbers of applications from BME and Q1 has fallen in 2018 so the number of students is levelled out.
T16b_06	Access	White economically disadvantaged males	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Increase students enrolments from White Working Class Males (Q1) by 50% over a 4 year period	No	2013-14	100	130	140	150	160	160	The focus is on increasing the number of enrolments from WWCM students in quintile 1 by 50% by 2020/2. The numbers of applications from WWCM has decreased in 2018, so the number of students is levelled out.
T16b_07	Access	State school	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	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.	Yes	2016-17	6	15	20	25	27	30	The focus is on developing new pathways for students to enter into the University. This will be facilitated through the development of new admissions agreements with partner schools and colleges. From 2018 onwards this will be further afield and will focus in areas where there are a high number of disadvantaged students.
T16b_08	Student success	Other (please give details in Description column)	Operational targets	Stretch targets for progression from Level 4 to 5 across our enrolments (First Degree)	No	2013-14	85.9	87.5	88	88.5	89		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_09	Access	Other (please give details in Description column)	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Long Term Outreach (Primary Schools)	Yes	2015-16	100	250	300	350	380	400	The focus is on increasing the number of participants working with the University at Primary School level, and then tracking individual learners on their pathway to higher education.
T16b_10	Access	State school	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Attainment in Schools	No	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	Increase Attainment 8 by 1.0 grade for 100 pupils within 3secondary schools	Increase Attainment 8 by 1.0 grade for 75 pupils within 3secondary schools	Increase Attainment 8 by 1.0 grade for 100 pupils within 3secondary schools	The focus is on improving attainment in schools by providing Year 10 and Year 11 pupils a range of activities to improve their exam techniques and be ready for their GCSEs. Although this isn't a collaborative project - we work closely with our SUN partners to make sure that the activities we deliver in schools complements the SUN activities