

# The University of Surrey Access and Participation Plan

2020-21 to 2024-25

The University of Surrey is a research-intensive University which is committed to offering education of the highest quality. Rated Gold in the 2017 TEF, we have invested significantly in providing an inclusive education to students from diverse backgrounds, recognising both that this enriches our academic community and our educational provision and that universities have a responsibility to support social mobility through widening participation. We have one of the highest student employability records in the sector, with 93% of our students in employment after six months of graduation (HESA 2016). We take a whole institution approach to widening participation, supporting students from under-represented groups in their access to, success within, and progression from the University. The present plan outlines our strategic commitment to widening participation and the measures that we will take to achieve our targets.

## 1 Assessment of performance

We have undertaken a rigorous assessment of our performance across the student life cycle, using a range of datasets including: the Office for Students (OfS) performance dashboard; the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Key Performance Indicators; institutional data; and data related to the local context. This has enabled us to identify and understand differences in access, non-continuation, success and progression between groups of students defined by individual demographic criteria or intersections of criteria.

Unless otherwise stated, the figures below reference the publicly available OfS dataset and analyses have focused on full-time UK-domiciled undergraduate students. An internal audit has been completed.

### 1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socio-economic status

#### Access

- 1.1.1 As a high tariff institution, we fully endorse the OfS's goal to eliminate the sector-wide gap between the most and least represented groups. Using the OfS definition of POLAR4 Lower Participation Neighbourhoods (LPNs), we have assessed our performance by comparing the most-represented and least-represented groups (Quintiles 5 and 1 respectively) in terms of their access to the University.
- 1.1.2 The proportion of students entering the University of Surrey from the least represented groups was 7.4% in 2017/18; this rate has remained broadly flat over the last 5 years. This is below the average for the sector, where 12% of the least-represented groups entered Higher Education in 2017/18; this was a small increase of 1 percentage point (pp) over the previous preceding five years. Although Surrey's rate is below the sector average, this LPN HESA KPI is broadly in line with our benchmark (i.e. the rate for institutions similar to us). In terms of the ratio of most to least represented students, this has increased slightly from 4.4:1 in 2013/14 to 5:1 in 2017/18, whilst the sector has seen a slight decline from 2.8 to 2.5 over the same time period. Despite being in line with our bench mark, there is clearly scope for us to contribute to further narrowing the gap in access for these students, and we set out our objectives for this in the targets section.
- 1.1.3 Overall the proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 has remained broadly flat and consistently below the sector. In 2013-14 the proportion of students entering Surrey from this group was 7.5pp, which has risen slightly to 8.8pp in 2017-18. Meanwhile the sector performance has also seen a slight increase, but from a higher starting point of 19pp in 2013-14 to 21pp in 2017-18. As our gap is higher than the sector gap, we have added IMD quintile 1 to our targeting criteria for our Access work
- 1.1.4 We do not have institutional data on entry rates for students on Free School Meals (FSM). However, in the county of Surrey there is a 32.4pp gap in the rates at which FSM students and non-FSM students achieve 9-5 in English and Maths GCSEs. This is one of the highest gaps in the UK.<sup>1</sup> We will therefore provide particular support to FSM students through our pre-16 work.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/appg-social-mobility-closing-the-regional-attainment-gap/>

## Success: Non-Continuation & attainment

1.1.5 In addition to supporting the OfS's aim of eliminating the gap in access between these groups, the University of Surrey is committed to reducing, and eventually eliminating, the gap in their continuation. The gap between

the most and least-represented groups here in 2016/17 was 3pp, notably below the sector gap of 5pp. However our gap increased by 4pp between 2012-13 and 2016-17, markedly above the sectoral increase of only 0.8 pp across this period. If this current trend was to continue we would then be outside the sector norm. As with the access gap, we will incorporate elimination of this gap into our **targets** for the future.

1.1.6 In terms of attainment (i.e. achievement of a 'good' degree), we have seen a significant decrease of 9pp in the gap between these groups, from 5pp in 2013-14 to -4pp in 2017-18. Thus Surrey's students from the least-represented groups are now more likely than their peers to achieve a good degree. By contrast the sector gap has remained roughly flat across this period, with a 10pp gap reducing to 9.5pp.

1.1.7 Further analysis of attainment gaps at Surrey has drawn on institutional data using our Business Intelligence tool. This revealed that White British students from low socio-economic groups showed no differential performance in terms of whether or not they obtained a good degree compared to the average good degree attainment. This performance is particularly encouraging given that students who do not have A Levels are less likely to achieve a good degree, and these students are disproportionately likely to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

## Progression to highly skilled employment or further study

1.1.8 We have been successful in eliminating the gap in the rates at which our most and least-represented student groups progress to employment or further study: this reduced from 2pp in 2012/13 to -11pp in 2016/17. This striking reversal of the gap contrasts with the overall sector gap of 6pp. Given the performance in this area, we will not be including a target for this gap in the current Access and Participation Plan. We will, however, monitor these data closely. Given that least-represented students are now showing a considerable advantage relative to other students, our plan does not include a target for this gap. We will, however, monitor these data closely.

## 1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

### Access

1.2.1 In 2017/18 34.6% of students entering Surrey were from an ethnic minority group, compared to 31.2% across the sector. This has increased steadily over the last 5 years, from 28.2% in 2013/14. This increase of 6.4pp exceeds the sector increase of 5.1pp over the same interval, and largely reflects an increase in the proportion of Asian students studying here.

1.2.2 The table below compares the percentages of University of Surrey [UoS] students who are of different ethnicities with those in (a) the population of all 18-year olds and (b) the whole University sector. Negative scores indicate that the percentage at UoS is higher than in the comparison group. Thus Surrey has a higher proportion of students from most ethnic minorities compared to both the rest of the sector and the total 18-year-old population.

Ethnicity	% of UoS students	Population vs UoS Students	Population vs Sector	Sector Gap vs UoS
Mixed	5.2%	-2.1%	-1.6%	-0.5%
Other	2.7%	-1.7%	-0.6%	-1.1%
White	66.6%	17.4%	11.2%	6.2%
Black	5.5%	-1.9%	-2.7%	-0.8%
Asian	20.0%	-11.7%	-6.3%	-5.4%

1.2.3 The under-representation of white students compared to the 18-year-old population may reflect the declining access to HE of white students from the lowest socio-economic status backgrounds. We are not currently able to disaggregate these findings by socio-economic status or FSM, but we are exploring ways in which to investigate and monitor this pattern. This may include collecting additional information at enrolment.

1.2.4 We have explored the intersection between LPN and ethnicity. The OfS dataset shows that whilst there has been an increase in the proportion of BME students studying at Surrey, this increase has disproportionately benefitted those students in the intersection between BME and the higher POLAR4 quintiles (3, 4 and 5). The total increase between 2013-14 and 2017-18 for this group was 6.4pp, whilst BME students from quintiles 1 and 2 have only increased by 1.6pp over the same period. At the same time, White students from quintiles 1 and 2 have seen a decrease of 2.8pp from 15.5% in 2013-14 to 12.7% in 2017-18, whilst the sector has kept the proportion virtually flat and at a higher rate, from 21.2% in 2013-14 to 20.8% in 2017-18. This illustrates the importance of prioritising all students from LPN quintile 1 in accessing higher education.

#### **Success: Non-continuation and Attainment**

1.2.5 The gap in attainment between white students and those of all other ethnicities has dropped slightly from 13pp in 2013/14 to 11pp in 2017/18. This is similar to, but slightly better than, the sector trend, where the gaps are higher than at Surrey and have declined by a little less (from 14.8pp in 2013/14 to 13.2pp in 2017/18).

1.2.6 At Surrey the gap in continuation between white and black students in 2016-17 was 3pp. It has increased very slightly, by 1pp, compared to the 2pp gap five years ago. Both the current overall gap and the slight increase are better than those seen at sector level, where the gap has increased by 1.7pp (from 4.6pp to 6.3pp) over the same 5-year period.

1.2.7 The OfS dataset shows that Surrey's attainment gap (good degrees) between white and black students was 17pp in 2017/18. This is markedly less than the sector gap of 23.1pp; however whilst the sector gap has shown a small decrease of 1.5pp over the last five years, the gap here at Surrey has increased by 3pp. Given the national focus on this metric and our concern at its worsening here, we have made a substantial reduction in the gap in attainment between black and white students one of our key **targets**.

1.2.8 Further analysis of our internal data confirms the findings from the OfS dataset. As shown below, whilst we have indeed reduced the gap in attainment between white students and all BME students combined, the pattern varies between different ethnic groups. Thus whilst the last three years has seen a progressive year- on-year reduction in the gaps between white students and those of (a) Asian and (b) all other ethnicities, there has been a steady increase in the gap between white and black students; in 17/18 this was 5pp higher than in 15/16.

<b>Gaps in attainment of good degrees disaggregated by ethnicity</b>			
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
<b>Gap: White vs Black</b>	15.2	13.8	16.2
<b>Gap: White vs Asian</b>	14.7	12.0	9.3
<b>Gap: White vs All Other Ethnicities</b>	13.1	11.0	9.7

1.2.9 Further interrogation of internal data on differential continuation/withdrawal using our Business Intelligence tool indicated that BME students without A' Levels showed differences in non-continuation which were particularly pronounced for some ethnic groups. These and similar analyses will inform our targeting of support at student groups who are at elevated risk of non-continuation.

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Entry Qualification</b>	<b>Continuation (n) %</b>	<b>Withdrawn (n) %</b>
<b>White</b>	A Level	89.0 (886)	7.7 (77)
<b>Black</b>		83.8 (62)	12.2 (9)
<b>Asian</b>		88.4 (268)	5.0 (15)
<b>White</b>	BTEC	68.9 (146)	21.7 (46)
<b>Black</b>		56.2 (41)	31.5 (23)
<b>Asian</b>		59.1 (65)	22.7(25)

#### **Progression to highly skilled employment or further study**

- 1.2.10 The gap in progression between white students and those of all other ethnicities has increased here, from 5pp in 2012/13 to 8pp in 2016/17. Over the same period the sector has seen a reduction from 6.5pp to 3.9pp. Our gap is both larger than that for the sector and increasing rather than decreasing.
- 1.2.11 We have disaggregated these findings by ethnic group to more fully understand the drivers for this differential performance. Our gap in progression between White and Black students is 6pp compared to the sector, which is 4.8pp. The sector has seen a decrease in the gap of 3.1pp over the past 5 years.
- 1.2.12 Our gap in progression between White and Asian students has increased 3.7pp over the past 5 years, whilst this is not statistically significant, it is larger than the sector gap in progression which has decreased 3.1pp over the past 5 years. Our gap is 11pp compared to the sector which is 3.8pp.

Our progression gaps with other ethnic groups were broadly in line with the sector average. As a result, we will focus our progression targets on closing the gap for Black and Asian students.

### 1.3 Mature students

#### Access

- 1.3.1 The proportion of mature students (aged 21 or over) entering Surrey has decreased from 20% in 2013/14 to 12% in 2017/18. This contrasts with an increase at sector level, where the proportion has risen from 24.7% to 27.8%. Most of our programmes are full-time, which may be less practicable for mature learners because of factors such as family and employment commitments.
- 1.3.2 We are currently exploring the possibility of alternative modes of delivery, including degree apprenticeships and distance learning, which may attract more mature learners; pending the introduction of such changes in our provision we are not yet in a position to set a target relating to the recruitment of mature students.
- 1.3.3 In 2019/20 we will run a series of focus groups and workshops to better understand our data, our local context and our knowledge of the mature learner experience. Through this work we will develop a clear strategy to develop our support for mature learners that will account for our local and institutional context. The strategy will include development of existing and new routes enabling mature learners to access the university. As noted above this may well include degree apprenticeships, and we have recently achieved registration as an apprenticeship provider. We collaborate with local FE colleges through the Higher Education Outreach Network (HEON), our National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). We will then use these partnerships to explore how we can engage more effectively with mature learners to build on the existing FE provision and enhance the pipeline into university for mature learners.
- 1.3.4 We understand that a university environment isn't the right choice for every learner. To enable more learners to receive a quality university degree in an alternate environment from traditional universities, we have a longstanding partnership with Farnborough College of Technology (FCoT). The University of Surrey validates degree awards on behalf of FCoT's HE institution, University Centre Farnborough. Study options include two year accelerated, foundation, and top-up degrees, which can also be accessed as part-time and evening study.

#### Success: Non-continuation and attainment

- 1.3.5 The gap in continuation rates between our mature students and the rest of the student body has increased from 4pp in 2012/13 to 6pp in 2016/17. This nevertheless remains below the sector gap of 7.4pp in 2016/17 and we have therefore not included it as a target.
- 1.3.6 The attainment gap at Surrey for this group relative to the rest of the student body has decreased markedly from 14pp in 2013/14 to 3pp in 2017/18. This compares favourably to the sector gap of approximately 10.3pp, which remained broadly flat across the same time period which is why we have chosen not to include this as a target.

## Progression to highly skilled employment or further study

- 1.3.7 Analysis of the OfS data shows that mature students are significantly more likely to go on to highly skilled employment or further study within 6 months, than the rest of the population at Surrey. In 2012/13 the gap was -11pp reaching -16pp in 2016/17, which is significantly different to the sector at -7.3pp in 2012/13 reaching -3.4pp in 2016/17.

## 1.4 Disabled students

### Access Success: Non-continuation and attainment

- 1.4.1 Overall, the proportion of students entering Surrey with a disclosed disability increased from 8.8% in 2013/14 to 11.5% in 2017/18. In absolute terms this is a little lower than the sector, where the proportion increased from 11.8% to 14.6% over the same time period, but the overall increase was very similar (c. 2.7 pp in both cases). The main driver for the increase at Surrey is an increase in students with mental health issues, which has increased from 0.9% of students in 2013/14 to 2.6% in 2017/18, broadly similar to the increase in the national trend.
- 1.4.2 We have seen sustained improvement in the gap in non-continuation rates between disabled students and the rest of our student population. In 2012/13 the gap was 6pp; in 2016/17 it had been eliminated. This progress compares favourably with the sector, where the gap was smaller than here in 2012/13 at 1.5pp but has shown little change; in 2016/17 it was 1pp. Given the progress made here we will not include any targets relating to the non-continuation of disabled students, though we will continue to monitor it.
- 1.4.3 The gap in attainment between students with and without a disability has remained small across the last five years, at 1pp in 2013/14 and 2pp in 2017/18. The current gap is below that for the sector as a whole, where it was 3.4pp in 2013/14 and 2.8pp in 2017/18.

## Progression to highly skilled employment or further study

- 1.4.4 There is currently no gap in progression between our students with and without a disability; the gap at sector level is 1.8pp. Both here and across the sector there has been a slight increase compared to five years ago (1pp at Surrey, 0.7 pp for the sector)

## 1.5 Care leavers

### Access

- 1.5.1 We collect data on the number of care leavers who enrol at Surrey; currently there are 56 studying on undergraduate programmes. However, the numbers are too small for meaningful statistical analysis.
- 1.5.2 According to Department for Education data from 2016/17, 870 children were in local authority care across Surrey.<sup>2</sup> We recognise the need to support and engage care leavers in learning about and accessing higher education, and they will continue to be a key target group for us to engage with.

### Success and Progression to highly skilled employment or further study

- 1.5.3 In using our Business Intelligence tool to investigate differential performance, we found that only 0.46% of students in the 2015/16 dataset used for this research were care leavers. This cohort is too small for statistical analysis of non-continuation, attainment, or progression into employment/further study. However we recognise the importance of providing individualised support for this potentially vulnerable group across the student lifecycle, to enhance their prospects of succeeding and progressing to rewarding careers.
- 1.5.4 We commit to providing equal rights and equity to care leavers coming into the university to ensure they are as likely to succeed as other undergraduate students. We know that care leavers are more likely to discontinue their studies and suffer from mental health and financial difficulties. Whilst the numbers are too small for meaningful statistical analysis, we will carry out a beginning and end of year questionnaire and follow up

interviews with students to understand their experiences and how we can improve the support we provide. Through these interviews we will seek to understand whether the interventions we have put in place increase students' sense of belonging and their mental health and wellbeing and how we can change our practice to support them better. In the longer term, we will look at whether there is a greater retention and success and progression rate for care leaver students' year on year. We will sign the Care Leavers Covenant in 2019/20

and, through this process, will seek specialist advice on how to develop our offer for Care Leavers,

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/looked-after-children-lac>

## 1.6 Other groups who experience barriers to higher education

- 1.6.1 Some other groups of students known to experience barriers to entering, succeeding at, and progressing from University are not represented in available key datasets. In 2017/18 we therefore began collecting additional data at registration on carers, estranged students, Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) students, and students from military families. This will inform our continuing support for these groups.
- 1.6.2 Young carers often experience disruption to their education and barriers to accessing University because of the practical and emotional demands of their caring responsibilities. According to the 2011 census, there are over 6000 young people providing unpaid care in Surrey.<sup>3</sup> These figures include only those who have disclosed that they provide care; in reality the figure is likely much higher than this and indeed a local charity (Surrey Young Carers) estimates that there are over 13000. We believe it is important to develop support for this group of students to access higher education, and we are working with local charities and community groups to do so effectively.
- 1.6.3 Young people from GRT communities face challenges in accessing higher education. Their school attainment is often lower, there is limited understanding of the needs of GRT communities, and they often lack information about further and higher education. According to the 2011 census, 13000 (or 0.2%) of Surrey's population were from white gypsy or traveller communities; this is double the average for England (0.1%).<sup>4</sup> Although the population is nevertheless small, we will continue to engage with these young people through targeted outreach projects with schools in our local community to help them access higher education.

## 2.0 Strategic aims and objectives

2.1.1 The University is committed to providing a diverse and inclusive culture which enables all students, staff and visitors to flourish regardless of their race, religious belief, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, or social background. Sections 2 and 3 outline the strategic approach and mechanisms we have put in place to deliver on this commitment.

### 2.2 Target groups

2.2.1 Over the period of this plan (2020/21 to 2024/25) we will undertake a programme of transformational work to support under-represented and disadvantaged groups in accessing University, succeeding with their studies, and progressing to fulfilling careers in highly skilled employment or to further study.

2.2.2 In determining our targets we have considered these in light of the national key performance measures as set out by the OfS as will be demonstrated from the data provided.

2.2.3 In developing support services which address the needs of our whole student body, we will identify groups who experience particular barriers so that we can design and target interventions to be optimally effective in enabling them to thrive. We will work with students from defined target groups (see paras 3.1.26 - 3.1.30) across the student lifecycle, providing support which is appropriate and consistent at each stage and where appropriate prioritising some groups for specific forms of support at particular stages.

2.2.4 In striving to create an environment which enables all our students to flourish, we will embed the principles and actions which support widening participation and equality of opportunity into all our institutional strategies and practices which we will review annually in light of the progress we are making.

### Access

2.2.5 Our Widening Participation & Outreach (WP&O) Department has longstanding relationships with local non-selective state schools and colleges, working predominantly with students in Key Stages 2-5 and also with mature learners to provide forms of support aimed at reducing unnecessary barriers to higher education. We focus particularly on students in the following categories:

- From POLAR4 Quintile 1 and 2
- From IMD Quintile 1 and 2
- From low income families (eligible for Free School Meals in last six years)
- Care Leavers and students who are care experienced
- Young carers
- Classified as having a disability
- Estranged from their families
- Forced Migrants
- From households where parent/carers are in non-professional occupations (NS-SEC 4-8)
- Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds that are under-represented in HE including GRTSB communities
- From military families
- White males from disadvantaged backgrounds

2.2.6 Following our analysis of institutional data, and taking our local context into account, we will prioritise the following groups for our **sustained engagement** programmes and other **highly targeted** work:

- Students from POLAR4 Quintile 1
- Students from low income families (eligible for Free School Meals in the last six years)
- Care Leavers and students who are care experienced
- Young carers

<sup>4</sup> Ethnic group full classification dataset; <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/census-people-characteristics-ethnicity-and-religion>

## Success and Progression

2.2.7 The demonstrable impact of our work addressing the barriers experienced by some groups of students has reinforced the importance of maintaining and enhancing this support. We will extend and strengthen our approaches to supporting groups whom our analyses have found to be currently at a disadvantage in progressing from one year to the next and/or achieving levels of academic success and employment outcomes. We will undertake focused work to understand the underlying issues and inform the targeting of actions to reduce identified gaps in outcome to targeted groups relative to other students as follows:

- **BME/Black students:** Although we have made progress in reducing gaps in non-continuation and attainment between BME and White students, they still exist and are particularly pronounced for Black students. Relatedly, Black and Asian students are at a disadvantage, relative to White students, in terms of their progression into graduate-level employment.
- **Students from POLAR4 Q1:** Although these students achieve good academic outcomes if they complete their programmes, they are at elevated risk of non-continuation. This will therefore be a focus in our development of targeted support for these students.

2.2.8 Other groups of students experiencing specific barriers to success and progression which we intend to target include disabled students, care leavers, students who are estranged from their families, and refugees. Although in the cases where these groups are too small for formal data analysis, for example refugees and care leavers, we will, with their input, develop individualised support for them.

2.2.9 Students from under-represented groups who have entered the University through one of our WP&O Access initiatives (e.g. the *In2Surrey* Compact Scheme [see para 3.1.31]; or Year 12 Summer Schools), receive ongoing support across their time here. Thus we proactively signpost them to relevant guidance and services, and encourage and support them to become engaged and confident members of the academic community by, for example, taking on Student Ambassador roles.

## 2.3 Aims and objectives

2.3.1 The analysis and assessment of our performance data, as summarised in Section 1: Assessment of Performance, has underpinned the following objectives:

- To reduce the ratio of the most represented groups (Q5) to the least represented groups (Q1) 5:1 to 3:1 by 2024/25.
- To increase the participation for students from IMD quintile 1 from 8.8% to 14% by 2024/25.
- To eliminate the gap in non-continuation between students from low participation neighbourhood [Q1] vs all other students, which currently sits at 3pp, by 2024/25.
- To reduce the gap in attainment of good degrees between black students vs white students, from the current 17pp to 6pp by 2024/25.
- To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment between black students relative to white students, from the current 6pp to 1pp by 2024/25.
- To reduce the gap in progression to highly skilled employment between Asian students relative to white students, from the current 11pp to 1pp by 2024/25.

# 3 Strategic measures

## 3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

3.1.1 The University of Surrey takes a whole institution approach to access and participation. Thus our commitment to an inclusive and diverse student body is foregrounded in our overall **Corporate Strategy**<sup>5</sup> which states that the University strives to ensure that: ‘talented students from all backgrounds are able to benefit from the education that we offer; the academic experience of all our staff and students is enriched by the diversity of our community; and that our education will enhance social mobility by supporting our students to enter professional careers’.

- 3.1.2 The aims of the **Corporate Strategy** are reflected and amplified in a number of relevant supporting strategies (in particular the **Education Strategy**, the **Student Experience Strategy** and the **Equality & Diversity Strategy**).
- 3.1.3 Each strategy sets out specific commitments and actions, and an overall Access and Participation (A&P) governance system has been designed to ensure that they are monitored and reviewed. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the Access and Participation Plan [APP], with progress being reported on a scheduled basis to the **University Learning & Teaching Committee [ULTC]**, **Senate**, the **Executive Board [EB]** and to **Council**.
- 3.1.4 Development and monitoring of the APP, informed by quantitative and qualitative data and by our **Logic Model** evaluation framework (see section 3.3 and Table 1), is undertaken by a specially constituted **Student Access, Progression and Achievement [SAPA] working group** which comprises leads from key professional and academic teams including WP&O, the Library and Learning Support Services, Student Services, Business Intelligence, Department of Higher Education, Faculties; the Students Union (USSU) is also represented on this group.
- 3.1.5 SAPA meets on a bi-monthly basis and reports to ULTC on activities, milestones, benchmarks, KPIs, and targets at least once per semester. It has an overarching remit to support and enhance the retention, success and progression of our whole student body, and achieves this through a focus on the factors and interventions affecting outcomes both overall and for particular student subgroups. This approach is designed to achieve a coordinated and systematic approach to the delivery and evaluation of agreed actions across all departments.
- 3.1.6 Consideration and ultimately recommendation to EB of the proposed APP is undertaken by a high-level **Access and Participation Governance Panel [APGP]** which is chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic and comprises several other senior members of EB or designated senior staff from Planning, Finance, Student Services, and one of the Faculties. The President of the Students' Union is a member.
- 3.1.7 From the academic year 2022/23 we are forming three distinctive expert groups aligned with the three aspects of the APP i.e. Access Group, Success Group, and Progression Group. These expert groups will actively work on initiatives for the betterment of their respective agendas for our students. They will also be responsible for designing, disseminating and delivering initiatives to meet Surrey's Access, Success and Progression targets. These three groups will report to the UEC as well as the APGP.
- 3.1.8 Examples showing how we are committed to supporting the aims as set out in the **Corporate Strategy** include, amongst others, investment in enhanced resources to support students' emotional and physical wellbeing, and increasing opportunities for those from under-represented groups to participate in our Professional Training Year (PTY) scheme, which develops students' experience and employability through a structured and supported year working in a real-world setting during their academic programme, by identifying and addressing key barriers for under-represented student groups. Other examples are provided below.
- 3.1.9 Our **Education Strategy**, developed and launched in 2017/18, incorporates inclusivity as one of its core strategic aims. This is articulated as '*supporting students from all backgrounds with high academic potential to join our programmes, sustaining the diversity which enriches our education*' and '*creating the conditions for all our students to realise their academic potential*'. To achieve this, we are in the process of reviewing our approach to curriculum design to ensure that all programmes are accessible and student-centred, codeveloped with students, reflect diverse perspectives, and responsive to varied learning preferences and approaches. This work and the outcomes will be monitored by ULTC.
- 3.1.10 Many of the initiatives outlined in the present Access and Participation Plan are directly linked to the aims and actions of the Education Strategy. These include, among others: the Curriculum Design Review (CDR); the launch of new Foundation Year programmes in all Faculties; the expansion and enhancement of learning support services; improving the accessibility of learning spaces; major investment in the provision

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/sites/default/files/corporate-strategy-2017-2022.pdf>

of 'captured (i.e. video) content'<sup>6</sup> to complement classroom-based teaching; and launching a new Maths & Stats Hub to provide face-to-face numeracy support. The impact of some of these initiatives is discussed in more detail below.

- 3.1.11 Several of the teams centrally involved in delivery of the Education Strategy have, or are developing, their own sub-strategies. Of particular relevance here, the Careers & Employability strategy is being developed with a key focus on increasing the participation of under-represented and disadvantaged students in our Professional Training Year programme. This has involved identifying and addressing the most significant social, psychological or financial barriers; one consequent action has been the provision of PTY bursaries targeted towards male BME students and those with disabilities. This approach is currently being evaluated, with measures including the proportions of students from these and other currently disadvantaged subgroups who undertake work experience and progress to further study or graduate-level jobs.
- 3.1.12 There are important interfaces with the University's overarching approach to Equality & Diversity [E&D]. Based in Human Resource Department, the **People, Culture and Inclusion [PCI]** team strives to foster an inclusive and engaging culture across the University, in which all staff, students and visitors feel respected and valued, and are enabled to achieve their aspirations. Our E&D strategy, which is currently being updated, adopts a whole provider approach of embedding equality, diversity and inclusivity within all University strategies, policies and practices.
- 3.1.13 All of our interventions are informed by evidence and evaluated within the Logic Model evaluation framework detailed in Section 3.3 and Table 1. In brief, this is based on a theory of change in which behavioural changes/outcomes are underpinned by knowledge and attitudes. Thus action plans are formulated on the basis of analyses of the likely contributors to differential outcomes between specified groups, which may include differences in pre-existing knowledge and attitudes (and these in turn may reflect other social or practical factors). These analyses give rise to hypotheses about barriers to access, success or progression, and actions are designed accordingly. The impact of the actions is then evaluated by assessing both presumed interim outcomes (e.g. aspects of knowledge or attitude) and also specific behaviours (e.g. participation in specific activities) and ultimately outcomes (e.g. continuation, degree classifications, and employment destinations).
- 3.1.14 The specific evaluative methods and analyses used vary between different types of intervention, as exemplified in the following sections which focus sequentially on Access, Success and Progression.

## 3.2 Access: Strategic Project and Measures

- 3.2.1 The following paragraphs (3.2.2 -3.2.41) highlights some key strategic projects and associated measures concerned with **Access**; our full portfolio of actions can be found at <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/schools-colleges>
- 3.2.2 Our portfolio of Access work has grown over recent years. In 2017/18 we supported approximately 3700 primary school students, 15000 secondary school students, 1300 parent/carers, and 300 mature learners. 399 students attended our residential summer schools and 219 students enrolled at the University through our *In2Surrey* contextualised admissions scheme (described in Para 3.2.26).
- 3.2.3 In 2019/20 our Access work evolved in response to the pandemic. We adapted our strategic priorities and programmes to align to the new needs of our local schools, colleges and community as well as our institutional Access targets and we continue to actively work in partnership to understand the impact of lockdown on schools and the learners we support.
- 3.2.4 As a result, the University's Access work has developed into four key strands. Each of these strands is detailed in paragraphs 3.2.7 to 3.2.10.
- Surrey Stars
  - Surrey Scholars
  - Your Future
  - Kings College, Guildford Partnership

3.2.5 When lockdown began we were quick to embrace online outreach, launching a programme of virtual and remote outreach provision in May 2020. Through our evaluation and anecdotal feedback, we saw the value of online outreach to complement face to face activity to maximise impact and increase and improve engagement with learners from a wider geographical reach.

3.2.6 In line with the enhanced virtual delivery, we have and continue to develop Surrey's web resources for the benefit of learners, supporters, teachers and community groups: <https://outreach.surrey.ac.uk/>. The website, developed in 2021/22, includes an IMD and POLAR4 postcode checker tool and has a virtual learning environment which learners involved in our outreach activity can log into and access virtual content as stand-alone virtual programmes or as part of a hybrid activity, such as the Year 10 'Realise your Potential' Programme.

3.2.7 **Surrey Stars.** A sustained attainment raising programme of targeted initiative for key students, accompanied by an embedded Aspirations Curriculum for all. The programme was co-created with headteachers and senior leadership team members responsible for disadvantage, from 12 key partner schools identified as having a higher than average number of student eligible for free school meals and/or a wider than average GCSE attainment gap.

- Surrey Stars offers a programme of targeted attainment raising activity for Year 5 to Year 11 students eligible for free school meals, looked after children, disabled learners and learners from a GRTSB community; alongside an embedded 'Aspirations Curriculum',
- The Aspirations Curriculum is a progression-based programme of Information, Advice and Guidance [IAG] whereby content and outcomes develop across Key Stages to provide students with timely and impartial IAG to inform choices about their future. The curriculum enriches and complements existing school frameworks to promote positive outcomes for the whole school.
- Targeted activity follows one of four themes, Attainment & Mentoring, Aspirations, Cultural Capital, and Stretch & Challenge, all of which were identified by headteachers as gaps in current provision, with literacy a key focus. A key stage 3 reading interventions activity showed a 22 month increase in reading age from a nine month long pilot activity.
- The WPO Team meet termly with SLT from eight of the schools who co-created the programme to discuss activity, identify challenges the schools are facing and look for opportunities to fill gaps.
- We are exploring formalising these partnerships part of which would include the creation of a data sharing agreement with each school. This would allow us to more effectively monitor, evaluate and review activity in the Surrey Stars programme, allowing immediate access to data that could indicate changes in knowledge, attitude and behaviours and also provide schools a more in-depth understanding of their student cohorts to further develop their own support and provision.

3.2.8 **Surrey Scholars.** A progressive programme of extra-curricular activity for learners in Year 10 to Year 13 from areas of low participation (POLAR4 quintile 1), areas of multiple deprivation (IMD Quintile 1), mature learners, and students who meet Surrey Stars criteria.

- The hybrid programme of on-campus and virtual activity, encompasses attainment support, university IAG, aspirations and, career information and transition support. The programme aims to ensure students have the information, knowledge and have achieved the necessary grades at level 2 and 3, to make confident and informed decisions about their future pathway and seeks to establish a sense of belonging through long term engagement with the University.
- The programme, which students apply to, includes the Year 10 'Realise your Potential' Programme, Year 11 Revision Masterclasses, Year 12 Taster Days and Summer Schools and our Year 13

AIM4University mentoring. As part of our online activity they are also invited to termly webinars and sessions to provide consistent positive engagement. Students are encouraged to continue through

the programme through to the point of entry, whether that is to the University of Surrey, other HEI or an alternative pathway.

- We are exploring opportunities to partner with multi-academy trusts such as Ark Academies, to promote Surrey Scholars to their under-represented learners, further enhancing their own progression programmes. The Surrey Scholars initiative will continue to support learners to engage with and access the University. It will be responsive to the University's access gaps and new target criteria identified by OfS.

**3.2.9 Your Future.** A sustained programme of outreach initiatives run for discreet groups within the local community in collaboration with voluntary and public sector partners. Programmes of activity are for learners and their supporters and aim to share tailored impartial information and advice, and provide opportunities for networking.

- Your Future offers a programme of activity for learners, and supporters of learners, who are:
  - Care experienced
  - Forced Migrants
  - From a Gypsy Roma, Traveller, Showperson and Boater (GRTSB) community
  - Young carers
  - Mature or adult learners
- As part of this work we have formed a three year partnership with the Race Equality and Minority Achievement (REMA) team in Surrey County Council to support the transition and progression of young people from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Showperson and Boater communities into and through secondary school.
- This programme launched in 2021/22 with a Year 6 sustained engagement programme involving learners, their supporters, their current primary school and future secondary school. It will continue to develop through the latter years of this plan as the students progress into secondary school. This will include a key stage 3 pathways programme and GRTSB training for secondary school staff delivered by REMA.

**3.2.10 Kings College, Guildford Partnership.** As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting and working with our local community, the University of Surrey employs and manages a full-time Aspirations Lead within Kings College, Guildford.

- As a dedicated WPO member of staff situated within the school, the Aspirations Lead delivers an embedded Finding Our Futures aspirations curriculum and works with learners and their supporters to identify and support target students' participation with access activities, in school, at the University of Surrey and with other universities.
- They also provide 1-1 support for students and supporters to understand progression pathways in school and via parents evening.
- This partnership work will continue to expand and adapt to the schools changing needs and increasing students numbers. The well established partnership with senior leadership and embedded curriculum that is a core part of the school timetable, will allow us to further develop our attainment work within the school. This is crucial to support the educational development of students to reduce the impact of the pandemic. We will also utilise these relationships to pilot new activity to support learners and their supporters to raise aspirations and increase expectations. We await new guidance on mature learners to further develop our work with supporters.
- This also offers us an opportunity to trial and pilot activity, enabling us to make them as effective and efficient for teachers as possible, before extending them to other partner schools who do not have an embedded University of Surrey staff member.

**3.2.11** To better understand our **local attainment gap** to inform the Surrey Stars programme and to facilitate a group of county and community leaders to work together to close the gap, in 2021, we worked with Alterline

to produce a piece of research titled Achieving High Attainment for all Surrey's Children<sup>2</sup>. The research has been shared with headteachers, education organisations and charities and community leaders and we are working with Surrey County Council to further explore and implement the recommendations.

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3.2.12 School targeting is aligned with Access targets and priority groups, with those in the 'priority' category being defined by the following data concerning each school's level of disadvantage relative to the national average:

- Free School Meal (FSM) rate greater than the national average of 13.2%
- Disadvantaged students achieving grades A\*-C (including Maths and English) at a rate below the national average of 36.5%
- Low Participation Neighbourhood (POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2) above UK average of 25.6% • Additional schools where there is a gap of >25% in GCSE attainment between disadvantaged students

and their peers will be given a 'targeted offer' of sustained engagement to support attainment.

3.2.13 Success at GCSE is a key predictor of a young person's likelihood of accessing Higher Education. Disadvantaged students with levels of GCSE attainment equivalent to their advantaged peers are just as likely to enter Higher Education<sup>7</sup>. However, the county of Surrey has a 32.4% gap between the GCSE attainments of students receiving FSM vs those who do not. We are therefore absolutely committed to delivering activities which focus on helping schools enhance core academic and subject skills (and hence GCSE attainment) for students between Years 5 and 11 as described below.

3.2.14 **Campus Invasion, Year 5:** This is a short story competition which aids the development of key literacy skills, and is based on exploration of the University campus; families are also invited. We target the schools which are feeders to our priority secondary schools, and in 2019/20 will further ensure that we give priority to those schools with a high number of students on FSM. In 2017/18, 132 students took part; the proportion stating a desire to go to University increased by 15% from before to after the event.

3.2.15 **Year 10 'Realise Your Potential' Programme:** This activity is delivered over 6 months and focuses on supporting students who are capable of attaining five GCSEs at grades 4-9 but are at risk of underachieving. It aims to increase their confidence, motivation and attainment and to enhance families' understanding and confidence in encouraging their children through Key Stage 4.

- Post-event evaluation found 86% of students to report an improvement in confidence and 80% to report increased motivation to work harder at school. 78% felt their families had become more positively involved with their education, and 93% of parents/carers said they would actively encourage their child to consider University.
- Focus groups with parent/carers highlighted their desire to better understand how they can be more involved in their children's educational journey so we have developed a 'future pathways mapping' exercise for parents/carers in this year's programme, and will evaluate this with reference to their knowledge and attitudinal outcomes.
- For 2019/20, we will alter the targeting criteria to prioritise students from LPN 1 and our additional priority groups as defined in Section 2.

3.2.16 **Residential Summer Schools, Year 12:** Our Year 12 Summer Schools continue to be successful in supporting students from under-represented groups, in particular students from POLAR4 LPN1, to access and transition to Higher Education, including in some cases to the University of Surrey. Of the 362 students who attended the 2017/18 Summer Schools, 133 (37%) have applied to the University of Surrey; of these, 23 (17%) are from POLAR4 LPN1. The 2018 Summer Schools will prioritise students from POLAR4 LPN1 as well as other under-represented groups. In January 2019, 100 participants in the 17/18 summer schools

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<sup>2</sup> The research findings can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3uyINmL>.

responded to a survey concerning attitudinal changes since their attendance and to identify areas for programme development. This revealed that:

- 85% felt a greater sense of self-confidence, 87% felt more confident in making decisions about their future, and 75% of students felt more confident to make the transition into University.
- Areas where respondents suggested a greater focus included study habits, exam preparation, the differences in study level between Y13 and HE, subject-level information, course options and entry requirements, the UCAS application process, and preparing personal statements. We have accordingly expanded and refocused our IAG sessions to address these issues and will evaluate the effect on knowledge and attitudinal outcomes.

3.2.17 We want to ensure that finance is not a barrier for students who wish to attend an applicant day or Guildford School of Acting [GSA] audition. In 2017/18 we piloted an **Applicant Day Travel Bursary** [ADTB] scheme for students who met widening participation criteria, building on the GSA Audition Bursary which waives the fee for students from under-represented groups. The ADTB is available to UK- domiciled students from state schools or colleges and who are from one of the following categories:

- POLAR4 and/or IMD quintile 1 or 2
- In local authority care or a care leaver
- Estranged from family
- Young carer
- From a GRTSB community
- Household income of less than £15,000

Although only 14 students took up the offer in the pilot year, 12 were on FSM. We intend to evaluate the impact of this scheme more fully at the end of this academic year.

3.2.18 Parents/carers play an important role in making decisions about their children's education. WP&O has a visible presence in schools at 'options' events and parents' evenings, and delivers talks for parents / carers about University life and University finance. We build support for parents and carers into all our pre-16 sustained engagement events as a matter of essential practice.

3.2.19 **Family Futures** is a sustained engagement programme focused on Year 9 students and their parents/carers, offering information about University through in-school sessions, regular contact with a University student, and opportunities to attend bespoke academic lectures at the University. The scheme was piloted in 2018/19, with 36 students and 34 parents/carers from seven schools. Following the event there was an increase from 79% to 89% in the percentage of parents/carers expressing confidence in their ability to support their child to progress to University.

3.2.20 We have drawn on national widening access research, relating it to our local context, to identify the groups of students listed below who face additional significant barriers to accessing HE. We will continue to support these students through specific and targeted activity across the student lifecycle.

3.2.21 **Mature Learners:** We currently offer a number of evening events to support mature learners in considering HE, delivered through local colleges. We now plan to develop our IAG offer further and to expand the ways in which we access mature learners, in particular through community work. In light of our assessment of performance, this will be a key element for development, along with providing more flexible ways of learning for mature learners who study at Surrey, which is discussed in Section 1.

3.2.22 **Care Leavers:** Students in local authority care and those who are care leavers remain a focus of our access and participation work, with institutional commitments including a named contact for care leavers, the option of all year round accommodation, pre-entry support, and specific financial support. We will be signing the Care Leavers Covenant and are currently developing the details of our pledge and will aim to be part of this Covenant from the next academic year 2019/20.

3.2.23 **Refugee and Asylum Seekers:** We will continue to deliver our successful "Your Futures" programme in collaboration with Surrey County Council's Race Equality and Minority Achievement team (REMA) and the *Surrey Virtual School for Looked After Children*. This is a series of workshops for young people and their foster parents which encourages a 'learning together' mind-set. It is supported by student ambassadors who

speak a range of languages; participants emphasised the importance of this, and there was an increase from 20% to 100% in ratings of their knowledge about the support available at University for them to access.

**3.2.24 Young Carers:** In 2017/18, we delivered our second Young Carers' Summer School. 40 Young Carers took part who were in years 9, 10, and 11 from 14 schools across Hampshire, Berkshire and Surrey. Qualitative feedback highlighted its importance as an opportunity to make friends. 95% of participants said that they knew more about their choices for the future; however, as we also found that many had not made decisions on their post-16 pathways we will now include additional sessions on post-16 options and build in a trip to a college campus.

We are currently exploring the possibility of developing an accredited qualification for young carers in collaboration with local stakeholders. This programme will assist young carers in realising and utilising their skillset as well as giving them a formal qualification that could help them progress to further education and/or employment.

**3.2.25 Students with Disabilities:** A significant barrier to Higher Education for disabled students is concern about how their disability-related needs will be met and how inclusive and welcoming the environment will be. Many also have concerns about whether the support provided will be sufficient. The University of Surrey provides information and guidance to address the concerns of prospective disabled students in various ways including:

- Disability and Neurodiversity Service staff attendance at Open Days and Applicant days.
- Dissemination of information at targeted events such as the 'Preparation for Adulthood Conference for Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' annual event in Surrey.
- Early induction programmes are delivered for students with autistic spectrum conditions. Students are invited to attend a structured programme of events to enable them to settle in before Fresher's week and to move into their University accommodation two days early. Feedback this year has indicated that the programme increased students' confidence to get involved in extracurricular activities and social/peer networks, and increased their sense of belonging. This success has led to plans for an additional induction event open to other new disabled students, for launch in 2020/21. The Students Union is highly supportive of this expansion of activity.

**3.2.26 In2Surrey** is a contextualised admissions scheme which identifies and supports applicants from under-represented groups who have the potential to succeed at University. Whilst the scheme does not guarantee a place at the University, it gives consideration to eligible students whose circumstances may make it difficult for them to achieve the standard offer for the programme of interest to them.

**3.2.27** Students who successfully enrol onto the *In2Surrey Scheme* can benefit from:

- an alternative offer equivalent to one grade lower (dependent on qualification and subject)
- access to an E-Mentor (a current undergraduate)
- a *In2Surrey* Scholarship for their first year of study
- invitation to special events, and support for transition to University

**3.2.28** In 2018/19 a total of 231 students enrolled via In2Surrey, an increase of 43% relative to the 107 who enrolled the previous year. Of this cohort 45% students were BME, 38% were from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 or 2, 38% were eligible for FSM, and 21% had a declared disability.

**3.2.29** Of the students who enrolled in 2017/18, 85% successfully progressed to Year 2 (FHEQ Level5); this is slightly above the institutional average of 84%.

**3.2.30** We track success and progression outcomes for In2Surrey cohorts. Although the numbers so far are too small to analyse in detail, initial findings suggest that outcomes are generally positive, with 82% of In2Surrey students who graduated in 2017/18 gaining a good degree.

**3.2.31** As part of this commitment to widening participation, for 2022 entry, we launched contextualised offers to run in conjunction with In2Surrey. Applicants are not required to provide any additional information to the University, and we use the following fields from UCAS:

- POLAR4 quintile 1
- IMD quintile 1
- Disability or long-term health condition

- Care experience

Criteria for contextualised offers will be reviewed for 2024 entry to align with new data available through UCAS and new APP targets.

- 3.2.32 The University is the lead institution for the OFS-funded **Uni Connect Programme** partnership, **HEON** to improve access to higher education. HEON is a partnership of eleven local institutions which was initially set up to work with students in Years 9 to 13 in eleven wards across Surrey (7 wards) and East Hampshire (4 wards) where HE participation is low overall and lower than would be expected given GCSE attainment rates. The Uni Connect programme has since expanded to include strategic outreach, which works to identify and fill local gaps in outreach provision. In April 2022 Uni Connect Programme partnerships were also tasked with supporting the DFE's strategic aims.
- 3.2.33 As the lead institution the University of Surrey hosts the HEON Central team, embedded within our Student Experience department. This supports close communication across teams, and ensures that the HEON programme complements the University's own established outreach programme. To further encourage this complementarity, HEON and the University's WPO team regularly collaborate on the delivery of events. HEON target students are identified by postcode data from POLAR3 that indicates they live in a ward with lower progression rates than expected given GCSE attainment. There are just under 4000 target students throughout the HEON area, in many different year groups and schools. HEON prioritises sustained and progressive programmes of work with these students but also works with whole year groups/other groups of students where there are a notable proportion of target students within them. To date, HEON has delivered 547 activities to over 7,700 HEON 'target' students and over 31,485 students in total.
- 3.2.34 The University is also committed to work with HEON and HEON partners as we collectively and collaboratively develop our programmes to raise attainment in local schools during the 2022 - 2023 academic year. This will include engaging with schools and other stakeholders to inform the plans, identifying areas of expertise within partner institutions and working together to develop collaborative delivery and targeting of programmes to maximise local impact. These programmes will be prepared to commence in the 2023-24 academic year, and attainment-raising activities will be piloted during the 22-23 year.
- 3.2.35 Just prior to the 2016/17 academic year the University initiated a significant partnership with **Kings College, Guildford**, a non-selective academy situated a mile from our main campus. The Polar4 HE participation rate of the area is only 17.8%, and 92% of the pupils are from one or more under-represented group. The school is a member of a local multi-academy trust, the **Guildford Educational Partnership** [GEP], and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic now represents the University on the GEP Board.
- 3.2.36 To support increased student attainment and aspirations to further study, the University appointed a WP&O Coordinator to work within the school. The Coordinator has now been in post for over 2 years and through the partnership has developed an embedded programme of support called *Finding our Futures*. This is underpinned by an 'aspirations curriculum' designed to coexist with and build on the school's curriculum, and to support academic and personal development.
- 3.2.37 93% of students and 50% of parents/carers have engaged with *Finding our Futures*. The 2017/18 end of year survey found that 57% of students feel more positive about their futures and 59% have begun to consider different future pathways. We are continuing to develop the aspirations curriculum, in partnership with the school, to further focus our work on supporting students to raise their GCSE attainment. For example, we now begin our engagement prior to Year 7 by providing students with a book and journal for the summer. This provides a focused project for the students and encourages the development of key literacy and oracy skills.
- 3.2.38 An OFSTED inspection in December 2016 had placed Kings College, Guildford into special measures (Grade 4). Over the intervening period the University has remained committed to delivering practical support, and in July 2018 – just 19 months later - the school received a 'good' (Grade 2) rating by OFSTED. It is one of a very small number of schools to go from Grade 4 to 2 in one attempt and OFSTED praised our partnership, stating that *'close partnership work with the University of Surrey enables pupils to be well informed about future career paths. This motivates them to strive for the educational standards they will need to achieve in order to access appropriate further or higher education.'*
- 3.2.39 It is important to us that our partnership is an equal one in which both of our students and staff, and our shared local community, benefit from sharing expertise. This approach has been successful, and we are

delighted to have received the **2019 NEON Widening Participation Partnership Award**; the school also received the **2019 NEON School or College Widening Participation Award**.

- 3.2.40 The University has worked closely with **Guildford Education Partnership**, advised and supported by the Department for Education, to develop a business case for a new **specialist Maths School** for talented A' Level students: the **Surrey Maths School**. This will focus in particular on providing excellent and stretching teaching to students from under-represented groups or from schools where maths support is limited, and will be allocated government funding to undertake extensive outreach activity across the region. This will be complementary to the schools and colleges outreach work undertaken by the University's WP&O team, and will entail very close liaison and co-ordination to maximise the benefits. Both will work with the local Mathematics Hubs and Advanced Mathematics Support Programme, and their combined activities will be designed and evaluated utilising our Logic Model methodology.
- 3.2.41 We are delighted that the submission was approved, and that we have progressed to the 'pre-opening' phase; although this does not guarantee that the school will open, it puts it on a strong path to doing so.

### 3.3 Success: Strategic Projects and Measures

- 3.3.1 Students are at the heart of our University and we will deliver an excellent student experience for all students regardless of background. Surrey is renowned for enabling our students to realise their potential. Significant work is underway to further improve the student experience at the University. Driven by several strategic workstreams and programmes, described in the following paragraphs, the University is working in partnership with students to build a strong Surrey community, fostering pride and championing diversity, inclusivity, and togetherness. We are listening to, working with and supporting our students to help them succeed, identifying and improving support services and the necessary infrastructure for a truly joined up experience. The University is using technology intelligently to provide a tailored, inclusive student experience which is data driven and student led. This student-centred approach will empower our students to take ownership of their Surrey journey, promote a feeling of belonging, provide excellent customer service and create the conditions to enable them to achieve lifelong success.
- 3.3.2 **Seamless Student Journey:** The SSJ workstream aims to create a seamless experience for all our students from pre-arrival to post-graduation. Having conducted a detailed review of the student journey in 2021 including consultation with professional and academic staff and students, we have identified gaps and opportunities for improvement in the support we provide to students, including our postgraduate researchers. Our approach has identified targeted initiatives and communications for specific under-represented student groups to widen participation and inclusivity across the journey. As part of this work, we have already begun to refine our case-coordinating approach to student support and have developed and implemented the necessary infrastructure to ensure access to support is consistent, flexible and connected. The Seamless Student Journey workstream will be supported through the co-creation of processes, timelines, and structures, embedding the University's staff-student partnership manifesto and will complement the services delivered through the Students' Union.
- 3.3.3 **Learning Analytics (MySurrey Engagement)** In September 2022, we will launch a University-wide learning analytics platform called MySurrey Engagement. MySurrey Engagement will use data such as VLE log-ins, e-book and journal downloads, attendance and access to captured content to provide students and staff with an individual engagement score. This real-time data will be available via a visual data dashboard which can be accessed and used by students to understand their own learning behaviours, compare themselves to the average of their cohort and to empower students to make informed decisions to improve their own engagement and in turn their retention, attainment and outcome. The platform will also be used by personal tutors and the newly formed Student Success Team, to proactively work to improve retention and success for students across the University. Initially we will draw together, and share, real-time data that provides early warnings both helping students to help themselves, and also ensuring targeted support is offered. As trends in success and risk become clearer, we will be better placed to use predictive analytics to inform support and interventions.
- 3.3.4 **Student Success Team (SST):** The Student Success Team provide quality pastoral support for all students at the University of Surrey, particularly focusing on under-represented students, international students and

students with multiple or complex enquiries. The team work to bridge the gap between local and central support and across services, providing students with a holistic approach that is proactive and promotes resilience, without a sense of stigma. SST also work with other services to provide a tailored activity programme for different student groups to enhance a sense of belonging and community within the university. The Student Success Team will work with the learning analytics platform, MySurrey Engagement, to identify and reach out to students at risk of low and non-engagement and their personal tutors, to improve the student experience, student satisfaction and student attainment.

- 3.3.5 **Personal Tutor Training:** The role PTs play can be hugely valuable to a student's university experience, be it academic, personal or professional. We aim to achieve a holistic approach to personal tutoring that is consistent, impactful, inclusive and sustainable. The compulsory training ensures tutors have accurate knowledge and are comfortable and confident to proactively support students and effectively refer to university support services. In addition to this compulsory training, Senior Personal Tutors and the Student Success Team are launching an annual training session to raise awareness and understanding of students from underrepresented groups and the barriers some student groups might face. This training aims to further enhance the support Senior Personal Tutors and able to offer to their personal tutors and in turn better support our under-represented students.
- 3.3.6 **MySurrey Hive** is a central space, located on Stag Hill campus, where students can access immediate support and advice on student-life related queries including accommodation, employability and careers, money, visas and more. The MySurrey Hive team assist with all non-academic queries, acting as a first point of contact and escalating enquiries to the relevant specialist support team. Students can reach out via phone, email or by visiting the front desk. The MySurrey Hive aims to bring students together and to build a feeling of community and togetherness, and the University hosts board games and movie nights for students in the evenings. It also hosts information events and group sessions delivered by specialist support services across the university.
- 3.3.7 To enhance these workstreams and complement the targeted initiatives outlined in this document, the University intends to develop a new Student Success Group within the academic governance structures, to focus on the development and promotion of practice for the enhancement of attainment and continuation. Attention will be given to inclusive education practice throughout the student learning experience, with specific focus on three key areas:
1. Teaching practice, assessment and feedback that supports diverse student groups
  2. Staff and student skills development for effective work, study, communication and resilience in diverse group settings
  3. Student social and wellbeing support within subject disciplines to enhance student motivation and a sense of belonging, identity and care.
- 3.3.8 This group will utilise university gap data to inform, develop and implement projects which will improve student outcomes and work to develop an inclusive curriculum and teaching environment that enables and empowers all students to succeed. Where relevant, initiatives under the above areas will be mapped onto the student journey. This will consider both the general study path experienced by all students, as well as the additional challenges experienced by targeted groups of students. A broad range of student characteristics will be used to define the target groups, thus reflecting the diversity of the student population. This will consider a spectrum of underrepresented groups within HE<sup>3</sup>, as well as international student needs, personality dimensions and motivational drivers.
- 3.3.9 In a similar way, relevant initiatives will be mapped onto staff recruitment, induction and development activities (across all categories of staff), to help ensure a workforce that is well-informed about, and sensitive to, the needs of a diverse student population. SSG will bring together practitioners of inclusive education, creating critical mass for project-focussed delivery. This would include relevant colleagues with EDI responsibilities

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<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/our-approach-to-accessand-participation/>

and / or teaching focussed roles from across the University. Dedicated research studentships will also be sought for high impact, research-informed activity development.

- 3.3.10 Building on the strategic measures put in place to support students from under-represented groups to access HE, and in line with our Education Strategy, we have developed multi-layered interventions to create an environment and provide specific forms of support which will enable these students to succeed academically and progress to graduate-level employment or further study. Some of the support mechanisms and initiatives are wide-ranging in their application, whilst others are targeted on specific groups. The following paragraphs describe some of the key actions and measures that will support our achievement of our key access and participation targets.
- 3.3.11 The University has for several years focused on reducing gaps in **non-continuation and attainment** between white and black students through both University-wide and targeted initiatives. We maintain this commitment in the present Access and Participation Plan, aiming to eliminate the gap by 2030/31. This will require detailed work to understand the underpinning and multifactorial reasons for the gap, including analysis of quantitative data at whole institution and departmental levels and also consideration of qualitative information. An internal survey completed by over 2000 students, and recent focus groups with first year Afro-Caribbean students, have identified a range of issues including a lack of diversity in the curriculum, feelings of isolation and a lack of access to 'relatable' people (staff and peers) both on campus and in the local community (Guildford being a predominantly white area).
- 3.3.12 In recent years we have invested an increasing amount of focused effort and resource into addressing attainment gaps. This has been driven by the establishment of the Student Access, Progression and Attainment [SAPA] working group which develops the Access and Participation Plan; it makes recommendations on new initiatives and evaluates those already in place to ULTC, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and working in close communication with a widely distributed range of teams, departments, and services. Some of the key actions currently in place, and planned developments within the period of this APP, are summarised below following a brief description of ongoing enhancements to curricula and assessment practices and to delivery modes which are designed in part to reduce inequalities in students' academic experience and attainment.
- 3.3.13 The University has recently launched a **CDR**, led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic, as a key element in implementing many of the objectives of the Education Strategy, and in particular to enhance the inclusivity of our educational provision. Currently in progress and due to complete by the start of 19/20 academic year, it will set out principles relating to content, structure, pedagogy, and assessment, ensuring that curricula incorporate and respond to diverse perspectives and student backgrounds.
- 3.3.14 The CDR is drawing on sectoral good practice, in part through our participation in the AdvanceHE project *Towards Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum*. As part of this project a workshop, held in May this year for all Directors of Learning and Teaching, explored educational practices designed to advance equality and enhance belonging for students from different demographic, ethnic, and national backgrounds. The outcome of this workshop will underpin work being undertaken as part of the CDR.
- 3.3.15 The CDR includes a work stream focused on developing and evaluating the inclusivity and fairness of different assessment methods. This work stream will continue over the course of at least the next academic year and will work in liaison with the Student Assessment and Progression Board (SPAB) to review and make recommendations to departments on the ways in which different approaches may contribute to or attenuate attainment gaps in their disciplines.
- 3.3.16 In partnership with the Universities of Southampton and Kingston, we were awarded HEFCE Catalyst funding through the *Addressing Barriers to Student Success* programme. We have developed and implemented an inclusive 'assessment brief' template, designed to demystify expectations and to support students in tackling unfamiliar assessments. We have also developed a model for analysing how different assessment designs influence attainment gaps. Through this project, we have also implemented a staff training programme focused on inclusive assessment practices, and we have run workshops for incoming students, focusing on

how to get the most out of assessment feedback to inform future learning. This good practice will be embedded throughout the University to help improve feedback to students.

- 3.3.17 This work to make feedback more transparent, inclusive, and participatory led to the award, in 2016, of HEFCE Catalyst funding to work in partnership with students to develop an e-portfolio that supports them to synthesise and act on assessment feedback: this has now been launched as the *Feedback Engagement and Tracking at Surrey* (FEATS) system. When students log into their e-portfolio with FEATS, they see a dashboard containing analytics which represent their engagement with feedback. It enables students to deconstruct feedback, and enter key strengths and areas for development identified by the marker, categorised by academic skill. Experimental evaluation found that students who used FEATS regularly, compared with a control group who did not use it, showed significant gains in their understanding of feedback and how to use it effectively. Further evaluation will allow us to see if this system helps students, particularly from under-represented groups to better engage with their academic studies and progress and succeed. Further evaluation will be undertaken in the academic year 2020/21.
- 3.3.18 We have an ongoing cross-University interdisciplinary team dedicated to **understanding our ethnicity awarding gaps**. This group, made up of professional services and academic colleagues with commitments to addressing APP targets, meet monthly to share data and findings in relation to understanding our awarding gaps.
- 3.3.19 With support from statistical experts in multi-level analyses, we are currently undertaking quantitative longitudinal analyses on our awarding gaps, with data at individual-, modular-, departmental- and institutional level. These analyses have shown the extent of our ethnicity awarding gaps for the university and across departments, outlined ethnic groups at highest risk, indicated the level of ethnic variance explained by other sociodemographic factors and examined factors that interact to help us understand intersectionality and where the greatest gaps exist.
- 3.3.20 In particular, new demographic and academic performance data analysis for Surrey graduates during the period 2017-2021 shows that there is a persistent, significant awarding gap between students from White backgrounds and Black, Asian and minority ethnic students, with Black, Asian and minority ethnic students receiving lower awards on average. This gap, however, decreases with academic progression to higher FHEQ levels offering insights on how carefully designed university programmes can address the problem.
- 3.3.21 This analysis will be shared with faculty and departmental education committees to build local commitment and understanding of ethnic inequalities in awarding and develop targeted proactive support. Once our Learning Analytics system is launched, the wealth of routine individual, group, programme and institutional data available will greatly build our understanding.
- 3.3.22 In addition to our quantitative data, we run student focus groups, in collaboration with the Students' Union and specialist education researchers, to develop more detailed understanding of the barriers and facilitators for certain student populations. These analyses are enabling us to target our APP activities around specific groups and develop initiatives that have a greatest impact, while ensuring that we are building an inclusive environment and educational provision that dismantles disadvantage at a structural level.
- 3.3.23 Members of this team feed into university committees for the APP, Education and our Race Equality Charter work ensuring that these committees have access to up-to-date awarding gap and understanding.
- 3.3.24 We recently submitted our **Race Equality Charter (REC)** bronze application after an extensive selfassessment period. We have identified our key areas for focus and improvement as closing student ethnicity awarding gaps, improving staff diversity and reducing experiences of racism. We have developed a comprehensive action plans that we hope will make a considerable impact on these challenges, including a strong focus on inclusive education, a new diversity recruitment campaign and an array of training and policy improvements to build our community's understanding of anti-racism.
- 3.3.25 To close our awarding gaps, as well as the targeted APP initiatives, we are working hard on our institutionwide approach to inclusive education. Inclusive education has been a focus of our pedagogical development and it is emphasised as strategic priority within our new *Strategy Refresh*. We have many action points within our REC dedicated to the improved provision of our inclusive education, which are crucial to the reduction in

awarding gaps and providing equitable opportunities for all our students. Since 2019, our PVC Academic has run two series of roadshows across the University to engage with our academic community on, 1) our awarding gaps and APP with the Head of Student Experience, and 2) our institutional *Race Equality action plan* with Academic Lead EDI, presenting relevant actions to stakeholders to close awarding gaps and address race equality more broadly. These events were well attended and aimed to improve institutional understanding/investment in this priority work.

3.3.26 The **Education Strategy** includes an aim to develop distance and blended learning in ways which further enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of our provision. Blended learning encourages the integration of in-class and out-of-class activities through purposeful use of technologies. These developments have the potential to be especially beneficial to some groups of students who, depending on their circumstance, may need greater flexibility in their approaches to learning, such as students with disabilities, young carers, and mature learners.

3.3.27 To support the realisation of the above, initiatives currently in development include a partnership with FutureLearn to develop online modules in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Health and Social Care; Module design workshops have been developed by the Department of Technology Enhanced Learning for academic teams leading on the development of a planned new suite of Degree Apprenticeships.

3.3.28 Some examples of other actions and developments put in place to help students succeed in higher education at Surrey and progress to highly skilled employment or further education over the last two years, many with direct SAPA oversight and/or monitoring, are outlined below.

- **Enhanced accessibility to support and services:** During 17/18 we invested substantially in the creation of (a) digital information 'hubs', accessible via any computer or mobile device, providing user-friendly and engaging information about a range of services and support [*MySurrey Portal*]; and (b) a new 'one-stop-shop' [*MySurrey Hive*] where students are able to get instant face-to-face support and advice on academic and non-academic issues in a friendly and responsive environment with a functional and social ambience. We anticipate significant positive contributions to students' sense of belonging, and to continuation and attainment. The impacts will be measured through specific questions in our new internal student "*Shape Your Surrey*" survey (now in its second year) as well as through qualitative observations and indirectly through progress towards our overall outcome targets.

- **Improved access to sport:** Students from under-represented groups often experience barriers or a lack of confidence in participating in competitive sport; extensive research, including an internal project led by the Surrey Business School on the effect sport has on student's progression, demonstrates that those students who do take part in sport benefit psychologically, socially, and educationally. The Surrey Sports Park now offers "Play Sport", a scheme designed to increase the inclusivity of our excellent sports facilities, in which student can participate in various sports without having to join a team. Its impact on increasing participation by students from BME and other disadvantaged or under-represented groups will be evaluated by the Surrey Sports Park and the data provided to SAPA to review the impact on this success and progression of these students.

- **Student Life (SL) Mentoring:** SL mentors, themselves students who receive training and supervision from Student Services, support all first year and Postgraduate taught students living in University accommodation. As a team they provide students with information, advice and guidance on multiple matters through weekly visits in Semester 1 and fortnightly visits in Semester 2; they run an information campaign that is intelligence-led, drawing on enquiries received over previous academic cycles to provide information on topics of particular importance to our students.

During the 17/18 academic year the team comprised 57 mentors operating across the University's three residential sites. Between them, they reached 4000 students and played a key role in signposting students to appropriate support services for support. We evaluate the impact of the scheme annually through both mentor and mentee surveys and make changes following evaluation. For example, we have expanded the service to be open to all students, taking into account that some students with specific needs may not be able to live in University accommodation.

- **New Maths and Statistics Hub:** This new academic support resource will launch fully in the 19/20 academic year with two full-time staff members. Based in the Library & Learning Support Services, it will be open to all students but is expected to particularly support the performance of under-represented and

disadvantaged groups including BME students and those entering with BTECs rather than A Levels. It is designed in part to help reduce the gaps in continuation and attainment between Black and White students, and utilisation of the service will be evaluated in terms of both the profile of users and changes in outcomes between different student subgroups.

- **Bursaries to support participation in international mobility by WP students:** Following the Universities UK International (UUKi) report on the Outward Student Mobility of widening participation students, WP&O collaborated with the University's Global Engagement team to put in place a bursary scheme to enable WP students to participate in an overseas summer school. 32 students received an award for 2018/19; of these 84% were BME and 25% were from POLAR4 LPN 1 or 2. Respondents to a survey after the 17/18 programme all reported that the bursary had been important in their decision to take up the summer school. We are continuing the scheme and are evaluating the longer term impact of the scheme to assess whether it will be beneficial to expand in future years.
- **Access to Sport Fund:** There is a large amount of evidence that demonstrates the benefits of sport on improving student wellbeing and sense of belonging. Team Surrey at the University of Surrey's Surrey Sports Park recognise that the cost of taking part in sport is often a major barrier to participation particularly for disadvantaged and under-presented students. To address this the Sport and Activity Access fund has been created to support students who wouldn't otherwise be able to participate in their chosen sport or activity due to cost. The £250 grant is available to under-represented students to contribute towards the cost of membership, clothing or equipment, to enable participation during their undergraduate degree.
- **Access to Learning Fund:** launched in response to the pandemic, the Access to Learning Fund is a scheme which offers awards up to the value of £250 to Home students who meet Widening Participation criteria. The Widening Participation Access to Learning Fund is specifically for any equipment and materials students may need to aid their studies. Since its launch in May 2020 the scheme has received 195 applications from under-represented students, and has awarded over £31,800 to enable students to further access and engage in their learning while at Surrey.
- **Laptop Loan Scheme:** The laptop loan scheme provides a long-term laptop for students from underrepresented groups to ensure they are able to access their studies. Since its launch during the pandemic. Of the 52 students to have received a laptop through the scheme in 2020/21, 23% were Black, 25% Asian and 29% had a disability and 15% were from an area with a high Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD quintile 1).
- Peer-to-peer learning is a valuable aspect of developing as a successful learner at university. Academic Skills and Development offer a number of formal peer-to-peer support opportunities that students can participate in. **Peer Assisted Writing Scheme (PAWS)** is a scheme for Undergraduate students to support the development of academic writing skills through a sustained assignment-writing and review activity. Students are matched with a trained Student Mentor. PALS was introduced in February 2020, building on the success of the Peer Assisted Writing Scheme (PAWS). **Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS)** aims to address the University's awarding gap for Black and Asian students. Alongside its sustained focus on assignment writing, PALS also includes preparing for, and succeeding in, exams.

3.3.29 The University of Surrey's **Disability and Neurodiversity Service** offers advice, support and guidance to prospective and current disabled students. In addition to ensuring that their needs are met through the provision of reasonable adjustments, the team takes a proactive approach to providing tailored support for disabled students to fulfil their academic potential. For example:

- Weekly workshops to help students navigate their way through the various demands of Higher Education, to develop coping strategies and form friendships: one workshop is for students with autistic spectrum conditions and one is for students with mental health issues.
- A recent review of the Departmental Disability Coordinator (DDC) roles resulted in recommendations to strengthen and to make institutionally consistent the role, with a universal set of terms of reference. DDCs provide a critical point of contact and localised knowledge within all academic schools and departments for the Disability and Neurodiversity Service to work with. The roles contribute significantly to ensuring that our disabled students are fully and appropriately supported and to ensuring our academic staff are increasing well-informed on disability-related matters.

- Planned collaborative workshops to develop students' study skills will be facilitated by Disability and Neurodiversity Service and the Academic Skills and Development team.
- In addition to the above, the Disability and Neurodiversity Service provides a range of staff development workshops and training events in relation to disability, disability legislation, and inclusive teaching practices.

3.3.30 We are also investing in development of the physical accessibility of the campus, and have established a Disability and Access Strategy Group [DASG] to take oversight of this. For example:

- We launched a partnership with *AccessAble* in October 2017, providing students, staff, and visitors to our campus with accessibility guides and an accessibility app. Surrey now has the second highest usage rates of all universities, with nearly 35000 total access guide views and nearly 14000 individual users. This project is under continuous review, and an evaluation of impact is being undertaken with student users.
- The University is intending to spend £1m to address recommendations made by an external company, Ridge and Partners, who were commissioned to carry out an audit of the Estate during the summer of 2018. This identified recurring themes across the University and high risk areas. Priorities will be based on statutory compliance and safety in the first instance.

3.3.31 **Appointment of a specialist Student Support Advisor (Widening Participation):** This post was established in January 2018. Based in Student Services, its remit is to develop our understanding of the factors influencing non-progression by students from particular under-represented groups (including Mature Learners, BME students, Care Leavers, Carers and Disabled students), and to improve the effectiveness with which students in these groups are directed to appropriate support services. The post holder reviews differential performance data and monitors withdrawal trends. Where they identify students who appear at risk of non-continuation or withdrawal, they contact them to facilitate appropriate support or intervention at as early a stage as possible. At the end of this academic year, the role will review the number of students they have supported, including analysing the demographic of students who have accessed support and the type of query that they had, in order to identify whether there are specific areas of support that require additional signposting or investment.

3.3.32 **The Centre for Wellbeing (CWB)** offers a range of services and advice for mental, emotional and psychological issues, to ensure that students feel well and supported throughout their time at the University and recognises the challenges faced by many students of colour and those from diverse minority backgrounds.

3.3.33 The CWB team provide specific support in matters of racial discrimination, harassment, overt racism or microaggressions which can be a painful experience for many, leading to mistrust, isolation and a negative impact on mental health and academic progression, and work closely alongside the Student Union and Student Success Team to ensure that barriers to inclusion are challenged, influencing positive change and outcomes in all aspects of life on campus and where students are working on placement.

3.3.34 The CWB have appointed an EDI lead with responsibility for matters of racial harassment and racial discrimination. They are also undertaking a program of broadening the diversity in staff recruitment to ensure that members of the counselling team are at hand to provide a safe haven for students to express issues they face without the anxiety of rejection or dismissal.

### 3.4 Progression: Strategic Projects and Measures

3.4.1 As our assessment of performance has identified, not all of our students experience equal opportunities in accessing graduate level employment. In particular, we have identified gaps in progression for black and Asian students compared to their white peers. Our Employability Strategy aims to ensure that all of our graduates are effectively supported in accessing employment and has introduced a number of specifically targeted initiatives to address the current progression gaps.

3.4.2 **Employability Headstart** is a workstream of activity which aims to build of our longstanding employability success by widening opportunities for work experience through internships, increasing employment of

graduates in roles at the University, create tailored employer engagement opportunities, embedding employability in the curriculum to instil a life-long learning ethos and career resilience.

3.4.3 The following initiatives are part of the Employability Head start workstream.

- **Summer Internships.** The Employability and Careers Team will develop an offer of short term placement opportunities for final year undergraduate students and graduates from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as international students.
- **Surrey Graduate Futures Programme.** For 2022/23 Surrey has launched the Graduate Future programme. The scheme, which aims to create a pipeline of talented individuals who choose to make Surrey 'the place' to start and grow a career. The purpose of the programme is to contribute to graduates' career progression and employability, support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion projects at the University and, nurture and develop future leadership potential.
- The Programme provides a 12 month internship at the University as well as a structured internal development programme.
- **Employability Award** Now in its third year, the Employability Award supports students to develop employability and professional skills through a self-directed series of activities, cultivation of an evidence portfolio and final assessment. At the end of 2021, 110 students had completed the award and 517 were engaged with the programme compared to 71 completers the previous year.

3.4.4 In addition, to the Employability Head start workstream, we have also partnered with several companies to enhance our employability provision for students where we see progression gaps. The following paragraphs highlight some of the key projects.

- **Upreach: Rise:** In 2020/21 the Careers and Employability Team partnered with Upreach to deliver a comprehensive career support programme offering 38 first and second year students 1:1 careers advice, mentoring, industry insights and access to internships and graduate opportunities. The programme of support is targeted at Black and Asian students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Career Mentoring:** In October 2018 we launched a scheme to connect Black and Minority Ethnic students with an industry mentor, to help with their career progression. It is designed to widen the aspirations and expectations of students with the help of their mentor as a role model; it lasts for one academic year with the expectation that mentor and mentee will meet face-to-face at least once a month. Training is given to both students and mentors. In 2018/19, there are 16 mentoring pairs; we are committed to expanding this scheme in 2019-20, using our alumni network to source a larger number and wider variety of mentors. In 2021 the programme has been extended to care leavers and estranged students. Evaluation of the 2020 programme shows 100% of students felt more confident in communicating their skills and experience.
- **Mentoring Circles:** Launched with TMC Pathways in March 2021, this five month mentoring project gives final year students and postgraduates from disadvantaged backgrounds access to two professional mentors to explore career interests and whilst improving sector knowledge and providing networking opportunities.
- A **mock assessment centre** was set up following feedback from BME students to prepare them for blue chip company recruitment procedures. They had reported this to be one of the key challenges they encountered when applying for their professional training year placement, and is one which is reflected in the graduate recruitment cycle. An assessment centre simulation in 18/19 for 40 BME students will include group exercises, presentations, interviews, and candidate feedback.
- **BME mentoring:** In October 2018 we launched a scheme to connect BME students with an industry mentor, to help with their career progression. It is designed to widen the aspirations and expectations of students with the help of their mentor as a role model; it lasts for one academic year with the expectation that mentor and mentee will meet face-to-face at least once a month. Training is given to both students and mentors. In 2018/19, there are 16 mentoring pairs; we are committed to expanding this scheme in 2019-20, using our alumni network to source a larger number and wider variety of mentors. We have developed an online survey to assess the impact of the scheme, which will be circulated on completion and will feed into the development of the programme.

3.4.5 In order to ensure under-represented students are able to access these initiatives and opportunities, the University has specialist members of staff in place and funding support.

3.4.6 **Specialist Careers Adviser (Diversity):** This role is dedicated to working on initiatives and programmes for students from under-represented backgrounds. All our Careers Advisers provide 1-1 advice and guidance to students, and work closely with academic tutors to embed tailored career development workshops in curricula. This specialist adviser will provide initiatives for students from under-represented groups, addressing specific barriers they face in the competitive recruitment processes.

3.4.7 **Specific named contact for Care Leavers:** Students who are Care leaver now have a specific named contact in the Careers Service, whose role is to source care leaver specific opportunities, which are advertised in weekly communications with students

□□□□ **A bursary scheme** to support the participation of black students and those with disabilities in the Professional Training Year [PTY] programme: This was introduced following an internal analysis of PTY data which found that financial cost is a significant barrier contributing to the observed gaps. In 2018 we awarded 25 bursaries of up to £4000, targeting male BME students and disabled students. We conducted a pre-PTY survey with these students and will repeat it when they return.

□□□□ Following the establishment of the **PTY bursary**, the rates of BME student participation increased from 24% in 17/18 to 29% in 18/19; for male BME students the rate increased from 21% to 25%. The Bursary scheme will continue to support students from LPN 1 areas, BME students, and disabled students and from 2020/21 onwards we will prioritise BME students who are black or Asian.

3.4.10 Although our data does not show gaps in progression to further study or graduate employment between students with and without disabilities, students with disabilities may face specific barriers when entering employment. A number of initiatives are therefore being developed to support these students:

3.4.11 For 20/21 we plan to introduce a new process to support all disabled students who are going to undertake a placement as part of their course. This will offer them **bespoke guidance and support** in applying for, preparing for and undertaking placements.

3.4.12 The Disability and Neurodiversity Service delivers '**preparing for work**' sessions within its workshops for students with autistic spectrum conditions and mental health conditions. Further workshops open to any disabled student are planned for 20/21 onwards, and will focus on applying for jobs, disclosing a disability, negotiating reasonable adjustments with an employer, applying for Access to Work etc.

3.4.13 The University is also working with **Autism Forward**, a charity that supports those with autistic spectrum conditions to improve their access to employment. This involves 1:1 coaching to encourage and better prepare autistic students for the professional training year and to assist them with employability skills and coping mechanisms for the work environment. Stakeholders including the Disability and Neurodiversity team and Careers and Employability will be involved in establishing and reviewing this project.

3.4.14 As part of **EmployAbility's** Next Generation Inclusive University Partnership programme students are provided support through empowerment workshops, webinars, fairs, and individualised advisory and advocacy adjustments services. They also advise on writing CVs and application forms, and provide coaching for interviews and assessment centres. The University also receives disability awareness and disability rights training to ensure the advice given to students is accurate and that neurodivergent and disabled students are not subject to unwarranted additional stress during application processes and their transition into employment is as fair and non-discriminatory as possible.

## Financial Support

3.4.15 In November 2018, we carried out our **annual bursary survey**. The survey was sent to 956 students in receipt of financial support (871 who received the Surrey Bursary in 2017/18 and 85 who had received the

In2Surrey Award) and we received a 16% response rate. Following the survey, we also ran a focus group. Key findings include:

- 40% students would not have attended Surrey if they had not received financial support in 2017/18 compared to 34% in 2016/17
- 92% students said that the Surrey Bursary was important for their ability to financially continue with their studies in 2017/18, the same as in the previous academic year
- 88% students agreed that financial support helped them to feel less anxious in 2017/18 compared to 83% in 2016/17
- POLAR is an unpopular measurement with students; this view is endorsed by the Students' Union, who also raised concerns that the bursary scheme has not increased with inflation.

3.4.16 In addition to the above, we used the OfS toolkit to run a statistical analysis of the 2014/15 cohorts progressing into Year 2 (FHEQ Level 5). We compared bursary holders with a group of students with slightly higher household income, and found the two groups to have similar outcomes. This suggests that bursaries are effective.

3.4.17 Following a review of the feedback from the survey and focus group, and in consultation with the Students' Union, we modelled different bursary schemes. We concluded that it is important to both to maintain a meaningful level of award and to target the bursary so that it supports students from LPN areas to access and succeed at Surrey. However, findings from our bursary evaluation have also demonstrated the positive impact that financial support has on sense of belonging and wellbeing, and the resultant impact that this can have on non-continuation and attainment. This, alongside the recommendation from our Students' Union to increase the number of students that we support, means that we will reduce the level of the current bursary to £2,500 per annum to allow those students living in POLAR4 quintiles 3 to be considered alongside students in quintiles 1, 2.

3.4.18 Thus in 2020/21, all new entrants to Year 1 of full-time undergraduate programmes or to a Foundation programme, who have a household income of £20,000 or less, and who are in POLAR4 quintiles 1, 2 and 3, will receive an award to the value of £2,500. This will be awarded in all their years of study (excluding PTY and re-sit years). Students living in University accommodation will receive the award as a discount on the cost of accommodation in their first year of study. Students living at home or in rented accommodation will receive a cash bursary.

3.4.19 This is an annual commitment of £2.0 million in targeted financial support for the University. The University will also run a Surrey Bursary scheme which will target financial support for students in POLAR4 quintile 1 and 2 with a household income of £25,000 or less for all subsequent years of study (excluding PTY and re-sit years). Students living in University accommodation will receive the award as a discount on the cost of accommodation in their first year of study. Students living at home or in rented accommodation will receive a cash bursary.

3.4.20 In 2022/23 we will launch our new **Care Leaver and Estranged Student** bursary replacing the previous care leaver bursary. This annual bursary offers students £3,000 per year plus an additional £500 on graduation to support with moving on costs.

## 3.5 Student Consultation

3.5.1 We are committed to ensuring that students are consulted in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of access and participation work and as a result, we engage students in a number of different ways, as outlined in the points below.

3.5.2 We involve student ambassadors in the evaluation of many of our access programmes and value their feedback highly as key stakeholders in our programme delivery. A recent example of this is the feedback that they provided for our Refugee and Asylum Seeker programme. Some key themes included the importance the students placed on learning about different educational pathways, the impact of dispelling myths ("*[I] think they thought somebody who went to University is someone completely different to themselves*") and the necessity of having bilingual student ambassadors to support the programme; ("*having someone to translate for them and able to communicate in the same language was really helpful for them*").

- 3.5.3 The Vice-President (VP) for Student Voice sits on the SAPA and ULTC, ensuring that the opinions of students are represented within a formal capacity. The Student Union President has recently joined the membership of the Access and Participation Governance Group to contribute to the strategic oversight of our Access and Participation work.
- 3.5.4 Increasing student engagement with our Access and Participation work is a key policy of the Students Union this year and, in support of this, we have opened conversations with the Student Liberation Committee, a committee of dedicated representatives for minority groups on campus, including LGBT+, people of colour, and disabled students. In collaboration with the Student Union President and the Vice- President for Student Voice, we organised a consultation meeting on the Access and Participation Plan.
- 3.5.5 In liaison with the VP for Student Voice, we have also committed to bi-annual meetings with the Liberation Group and the elected sabbatical officers which will be focused on our Access and Participation approach and achievements of targets, the barriers that under-represented groups face at Surrey, the evaluation of key programmes of support, and the development of new initiatives.
- 3.5.6 From our consultation with the Liberation Group, and in relation to our commitment to eliminate the attainment gap between Black students and their peers and the graduate employment gap between Black and Asian students and their peers, we will also be implementing additional student consultation groups next year, specifically with the intention of co-developing different targeted support for Black and Asian students and taking into account the different cultures and expectations that exist within these demographics.
- 3.5.7 We note the issues and recommendations set out in the University of Surrey Students' Union Access and Participation Plan accompanying statement (Appendix 1). We will work closely with the Student Union, via the channels which have been described above, including representation on our advisory and governance panels, to address these and other challenges in partnership over the course of the Access and Participation Plan.

## 3.6 Evaluation strategy

- 3.6.1 The WP&O Department leads on the evaluation of support initiatives of under-represented groups and leads on the implementation and delivery of the University WP&O Evaluation Strategy with oversight from the Access and Participation Advisory and Governance Groups.
- 3.6.2 Our self-assessment of our evaluation practice has highlighted that we are working at an advanced level in relation to placing evaluation within a strategic context, embedding it in our programme design, and in the implementation of our evaluation procedures. The self-assessment tool also demonstrates that we have a good approach to evaluation design, although this is more embedded in our Access and Success work and is in development in our Progression initiatives. There are also some areas where we can further learn from our evaluation, in particular in including our recognition of limitations of our research and evaluation design in our impact reports which we will include going forward.
- 3.6.3 We have used the outcomes-based Logic Model Evaluation Framework to evaluate all our access, success and progression activities. Based on a theory of change, this Framework (Table 1), provides a detailed overview of key Knowledge and Attitudinal Outcomes for each target group, which includes school and University students, parents/carers, teachers and University staff. Underpinning the short term Knowledge and medium term Attitudinal outcomes are the Behavioural outcomes that effect long-term change. In order to measure progress towards delivering the Behavioural outcomes, appropriate indicators have been identified and performance targets set where baseline data is available.
- 3.6.4 Our logic model is the key component to our activity development and delivery, particularly in relation to the development of our Access programme of support and in relation to key support initiatives related to Success and Progression.
- 3.6.5 For each activity, desired attitudinal and knowledge outcomes are agreed for the target groups involved. These outcome form the basis for evaluating the impact of the activity, including identifying areas of improvement where necessary. The overall programme of activities is reviewed against our logic model outcomes annually to ensure continual improvement and ensure that the following year's programme of support meets the needs of key target groups. Templates and resources are used for reporting, including a planning matrix of

the year's activity, evaluation flowchart and question bank. We use a traffic light system to mitigate risk, and assess which activities have met their agreed outcomes.

- 3.6.6 Using the Knowledge Attitudes Behaviour hierarchy, helps us identify how well each activity is meeting pre-defined outcomes for all stakeholders, including students, parents/carers and student ambassadors. To understand the long term behavioural impact of our activities, more in-depth evaluation of sustained activities is conducted, including pre and post event surveys, focus groups, case studies and 'one year on' questionnaires. Evaluation data is gathered from key stakeholder groups, including students, parents, teachers and student ambassadors.
- 3.6.7 The University of Surrey is a member of the collaborative longitudinal tracking system, the Higher Education Access Tracker service (HEAT). WP&O records data about students participating in outreach initiatives on the HEAT database, which matches records to administrative datasets from KS2 to postgraduate study and employment. Where HEAT data has matured it allows the University to understand the relationship between outreach participation, HE enrolment, retention and success, and see the extent to which the University is contributing to the increased participation rates of disadvantaged young people as a whole.
- 3.6.8 By subscribing to HEAT we take an evidence based approach to planning outreach delivery, so investing in outreach activities that optimise progression with disadvantaged cohorts. WP&O have used HEAT's Secondary Planning Datasets to inform our new school targeting (see Section 2) and in future we will consider using the FE planning dataset.
- 3.6.9 In addition to use of the logic model of WP&O initiatives, the University utilises its own data in order to track and evaluate success and progression across the institution and the impact of our interventions on trends in behaviour. Our Management Information System provides data on progression within each academic department in defined categories, including age, gender, ethnicity, disability, social class, and qualification on entry. This data is used to analyse progression trends, identify students support needs and create action plans to meet identified needs. We are able to analyse and report on live data using our Business Intelligence tool, which includes dashboards on applications, progression, attainment, employability. The employability dashboard, for example, allows us to view data from enrolment through to employment and therefore undertake a sustained approach to understanding retention, attainment and progression of different subgroups of students.
- 3.6.10 Following the 2017 pilot, the University launched the annual Shape Your Surrey survey in November 2018, which is open to all students. The survey has a number of objectives, including:
- Gathering meaningful feedback on student life topics including their motivations and wellbeing, their experience of educational provision, academic support, financial support, and employability support.
  - Considering the perceptions of 1st and 2nd year undergraduates, to identify and give time for appropriate interventions and improvements.
  - Reducing the number of *ad hoc* surveys which risk overburdening students, and thus to enhance the quality and robustness of the feedback received through this wide-ranging survey.
- 3.6.11 A total of 2519 students responded, with 1947 completing the whole survey (c.11% of all students). To disseminate the results, qualitative feedback was sent to all departments and an interactive Shape Your Surrey dashboard was created using our Business Intelligence tool which enables data to be filtered by student characteristics, and has enabled academic departments to access and explore their data rapidly.
- 3.6.12 Analysis of Shape Your Surrey feedback has yielded numerous valuable insights which will enable us to target improvements or additional support. For example:
- Inter-item correlations found the strongest predictors of overall student satisfaction to be their ratings of the extent to which they have acquired knowledge and skills, the availability of resources, the support and advice they have received, and their sense of 'belonging'.
  - The strongest correlate of overall satisfaction with learning resources was satisfaction with online facilities; this was particularly high for our virtual learning environment, Surrey Learn, and on-line library facilities.
- 3.6.13 We have begun to undertake further analysis of the data, disaggregating scores by different student characteristics. These will include widening participation criteria, and focus on questions which relate to the

targets that we have set in this plan. These findings will inform the development, delivery, and evaluation of our success and progression initiatives

### **3.6.14 Evaluation Strategy - Update.**

3.6.15 In 2018 The WP Research and Evaluation Team (RET) relocated from the WP team to the Strategic Planning division. This move integrates WP research and evaluation within wider University strategic performance monitoring and reporting. It also ensures clearer objectivity in our reporting and evaluation.

3.6.16 The Student Success Team (SST) was established in 2019 and the evaluation strategy is now well embedded within their work to measure the impact of their work to support students.

#### ***OfS guidance: 'Recording, publishing and sharing their evaluation activity and findings'***

3.6.17 The RET are actively exploring additional places to publish and share evaluation findings externally. This is underway in collaboration with WP practitioners and academic colleagues within the Surrey Institute of Education. Externally we intend to publish our evaluation findings (such as our evaluation of the impact of Year 12 Virtual Summer Schools) in the Journal of Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning (WPLL) where previous work has been published. Findings from a collaborative project ran by Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO), the University of Surrey and several other institutions to evaluate the impact of Virtual and Residential Summer Schools will be published by TASO this year.

3.6.18 Evaluation findings are shared in collaborative networks including the Forum for Access to Continuing Education (FACE), NEON and at the Access to Higher Education network for London (Access HE) conferences. We will continue to be an active member of the HEAT Research group where we share examples of good evaluation practice with other providers that help to inform the sector and develop our own evaluation practice.

#### ***OfS guidance: 'Increase the volume and quality of evaluation'***

3.6.19 We have continued to develop our evaluation at Level 2 both for their access, success and progression work. Evaluation of our success and progression activity is predominantly at a Level 2 of empirical enquiry where we compare the outcomes of students who participate in interventions with other similar students who did not participate in the programme. We will be developing this work to ensure that all interventions are subject to high quality Level 2 evaluation.

3.6.20 A quasi-experimental approach has been taken to evaluate the impact of key outreach activities, following TASO evaluation guidance. Students who have engaged in an intervention are compared to a group of learners from a similar background who have not engaged. We intend to develop this evaluation approach for other outreach activities where HEAT may be able to provide a comparator group and also demonstrate impact that meets Level 3 evaluation. Through HEAT's new BI dashboard we are able to measure the impact of outreach activity on the absolute attainment of participants at KS4 which controls for any difference in prior attainment.

3.6.21 To increase our understanding of the degree awarding gap, discussions are taking place with the University of Derby to collaborate on a project they are currently running to understand Black students' sense of belonging and the potential impact this has on the awarding gap.

3.6.22 We are in discussion with TASO about potential projects to collaborate on to support institutions develop their theories of change and attainment raising activity/interventions. This will not only have the benefit of developing our existing programme theories of change, but also provide support to institutions developing their own theories of change during the coming year.

## **3.7 Monitoring progress against delivery of the Access and Participation Plan**

3.7.1 Monitoring of our Access and Participation Plan [APP] takes place at several levels:

- The WP&O Department works closely with University-wide departments which are involved in supporting under-represented groups, to ensure that actions are agreed at a local level.

- Progress against the plan is monitored as part of the remit of SAPA, which receives reports on the performance of initiatives designed to contribute to achievement of our targets; this group is responsible for ensuring that targets and milestones outlined in the APP are accurate.
- The A&P Governance Panel, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic, provides senior oversight of the APP, monitoring progress and expenditure against the plan and reporting to the University's Executive Board quarterly.
- The University Learning & Teaching Committee, Senate and the Executive Board receive reports from SAPA and/or the A&P Governance Group on a scheduled basis (normally quarterly) to ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting of benchmarks are in place, and that actions can be adjusted as appropriate.

3.7.2 The strategic risk of not achieving the targets set out in our Access and Participation Plan is listed in our institutional risk register, and the above governance structure ensures that risk is mitigated through appropriate monitoring and reporting procedures

3.7.3 In the event of insufficient progress towards targets, the A&P Governance Panel will task SAPA with investigating and addressing the issues. SAPA meets on a bi-monthly basis and will initiate actions which are as far as possible informed by evidence of effectiveness. These plans will be reported to the A&P Governance Panel, who may also refer them to ULTC and the Executive Board if deemed necessary (e.g. if additional resourcing is required).

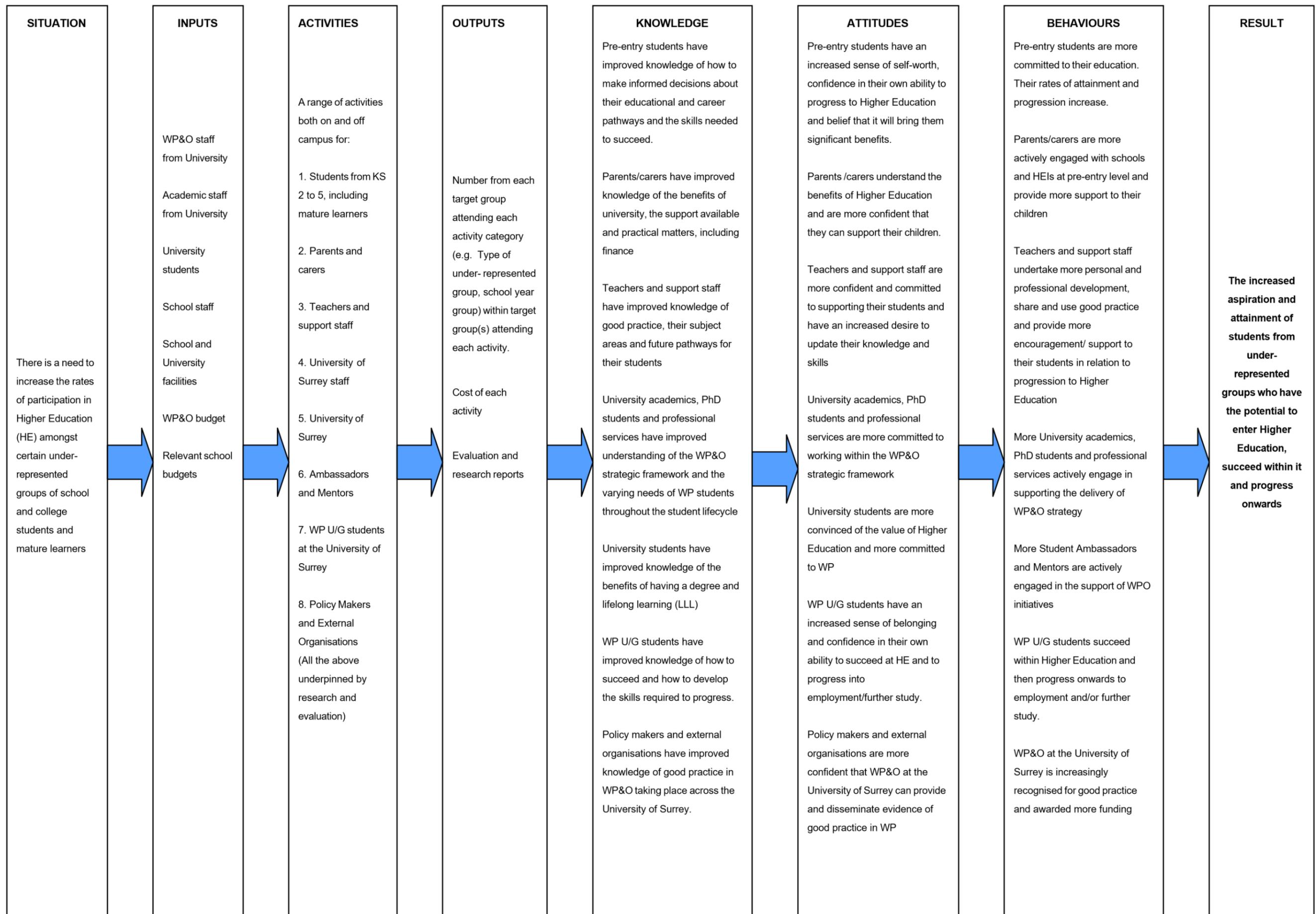
## 4.0 Provision of information to students

- 4.1 Information, advice and guidance [IAG] is central to, and will remain a part of, the University's provision for prospective students. A dedicated team travels to schools and colleges to provide workshops on a range of topics including applying to University, choosing a course and institution, personal statements, student life and student finance. Typically, around 450 such offsite events are held every year in addition to the support provided for on-campus WP target school visits.
- 4.2 The University will continue to provide accurate, timely, and easily accessible information to current and prospective students on fees and financial support via various channels, including the University website and prospectus. This includes clearly communicating the eligibility criteria and the level of support that students from under-represented groups will be offered in each year of their studies.
- 4.3 Within the University's Governance webpages, there is a direct link to the Access Agreement section as follows: <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/about/governance/access-plans>.
- 4.4 The University will ensure that the appropriate information is provided to UCAS and to the Student Loans Company.
- 4.5 The University is exploring the development of an online Surrey Finance Calculator tool, following a finding from the 2018 Bursary Survey that only 24% of respondents reported knowing how much financial support they would receive prior to coming to Surrey. Given the complexity of fees and the various forms of financial support available to students depending on their circumstances, it is essential that we communicate this clearly and accurately through a dynamic tool.

## 5.0 Appendices

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Appendix 1 | University of Surrey Students' Union Access and Participation Plan: Accompanying Statement |
| Appendix 2 | Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)                          |
| Appendix 3 | Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)                   |
| Appendix 4 | Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)                              |

**Table 1. Programme Logic Model for evaluating WP activities**



## Appendix 1: University of Surrey Students' Union Access and Participation Plan

### Accompanying Statement

On behalf of the University of Surrey Students' Union (USSU), I am pleased that University colleagues have incorporated several aspects of student feedback, including:

- disaggregating good degree and (some) continuation data by ethnicity;
- closer working with USSU's Liberation Representatives and revised membership of the Governance Group to include the USSU President;
- and, agreeing to secure comparable levels of access and participation funding in future years (subject to financial conditions).

We are very grateful to see these positive steps forward.

The University's Plan provides examples of student representation in creating and executing activities, in addition to broader student surveys. We feel, however, that the initiatives such as the

"Shape My Surrey" survey have not yielded their potential for impactful outcomes, and that the University has the opportunity to enhance student continuation and success through greater partnership and agility in responding to student voice. Several recommendations in this commentary have been made to the University through relevant channels, and we hope that they will enhance student outcomes if implemented.

### The Black Attainment Gap

We are very concerned that the black attainment gap at Surrey has not improved in the past five years whilst the sector has made some (gradual) headway.

Although the University has recently committed to supporting the joint UUK/NUS 'Closing the Gap' report, we are concerned that previous similar research by HEFCE and others had not been championed to the same level. The University should also ensure that its focus on the intersection of BAME students and those entering with BTECs does not come at the expense of addressing deeper issues relating to belonging, social capital, and the curriculum that research indicates also have some bearing.

Over the course of the past two years, USSU has lobbied the University to take measures to address gaps in student satisfaction, continuation, and attainment. This has included: disaggregating NSS data for the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee; leading a session with University Council and Executive Board on the attainment gap as it relates to Surrey; and, convening joint meetings in collaboration with the PCI team with guests Jacqueline Stevenson (Sheffield Hallam) and Nona McDuff (Kingston). Unfortunately,

whilst these fora have opened discussion and debate, they have not generated the level of momentum which we feel is necessary in order to meet the Office for Students' expectations. In our view, the University is also over-reliant on approaches that employ a deficit model in relation to attainment gaps.

**We would welcome additional work to reform support services and teaching to address attainment gaps, and support from the Office for Students in sharing good practice.**

### Disability

The University of Surrey estate presents particular challenges for students with physical disabilities due to the site of the main teaching campus and issues with the connecting public route to the secondary site at Manor Park. Following continued student feedback, the University have now taken the step of paying for bus travel between sites for this cohort of students. Notwithstanding this development, USSU's Executive Committee and Liberation Representatives have expressed a clear desire for greater transparency of capital investment in relation to accessibility. Noting that Surrey has made less progress than the sector overall in relation to increasing access for students with sensory, medical, and physical disabilities, we feel that investment in the accessibility of the estate must be prioritised and that further investment is required.

Several recent significant works at the University have also required retrospective action in order to address accessibility. **We therefore recommend:**

- **adoption of consistent accessibility and EDI standards for capital works;**
- **greater consultation with students on capital works, as is evidenced positively by the University's 'one stop shop' for student queries;**
- **closer oversight of accessible doorway procurement.**

### Bursaries

We are grateful that the University has reviewed its bursary support for students this year, and value the opportunity that the Students' Union and Liberation Representatives have had to contribute to this discussion.

As a Union, we believe that the use of POLAR creates a 'postcode lottery' in relation to bursary support. **We recommend that the Office for Students reviews the appropriateness of POLAR quintiles as a measure of socioeconomic capital.**

In order to preserve the value of bursaries each year, **we also recommend that the University periodically increase the size of bursaries accounting for inflation.**

### Future Opportunities

For the first time this year, the University has captured data on the number of students with caring commitments. Whilst this cohort represents a small proportion of students at Surrey, we feel strongly that more can be done to support them through greater flexibility of teaching and assessment or support. In addition to its Curriculum Design Review, **we recommend that the University extend the remit of its Disability and Neurodiversity Service in order**

**to provide educational adjustments to a wider range of groups, including carers.** We have previously also requested specifically that lecture recordings be provided to students with caring responsibilities (where technologically possible); this request was not adopted.

Students at the University may apply for extenuating circumstances if they experience unforeseen scenarios that compromise their academic ability, requiring evidence to demonstrate the effect on the student. For groups such as carers or those with short-term fluctuations in mental/physical health, it can be challenging to procure the relevant supporting evidence, and cost may present a barrier. In light of this, **we recommend that the University adopt a self-certification option to create a more accessible process for our students, in-line with sector good practice.**

We note from the Office's *Regulatory Notice 1: Access and Participation Plan Guidance* the range of underrepresented groups with whom the Office has jurisdiction. As we know from NUS research, LGBT+ students, particularly transgender, non-binary, and estranged students face specific barriers in HE. At Surrey, we feel that greater work should be undertaken to develop staff confidence and literacy in discussions relating to protected characteristics, and to provide better anonymous reporting pathways for staff or students affected by harassment or hate crime. **We further recommend that the Office for Students consider the experiences of LGBT+ students in education, with a particular interest in the experience of estranged LGBT+ students, and that of transgender and non-binary students.**

At time of writing, future staffing relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion at the University is unclear due to an institution-wide cost-reduction programme. This presents a risk to the University's Access and Participation Plan, particularly in relation to the black attainment gap. It is important that the University adopts actions to mitigate this risk.

#### Contact Details

This commentary was compiled by the Students' Union President, Dr Alex Harden, with input from the broader Officer and Representative team.

For enquiries, please contact [ussu.information@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:ussu.information@surrey.ac.uk) or

Alex Harden  
c/o Alan  
Sutherland  
Union Ho

## Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

\*course type not listed

## Inflationary statement:

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

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
First degree	MPhys, MChem and Nutrition & Dietetics BSc students on a year spent learning in the workplace	£1,850
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0		£9,250
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year		£1,850
Erasmus and overseas study years		£1,385
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,935
First degree	MPhys, MChem and Nutrition & Dietetics BSc students on a year spent learning in the workplace	£1,850
Foundation degree	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0		£6,935
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

# Targets and investment plan

## 2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: The University of Surrey

Provider UKPRN: 10007160

### Investment summary

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

#### Note about the data:

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Total access activity investment (£)</b>	£1,985,402.58	£1,977,774.68	£2,089,068.69	£2,108,131.62	£2,127,575.80
Access (pre-16)	£642,862.42	£635,168.16	£636,547.40	£636,547.40	£636,547.40
Access (post-16)	£982,593.62	£971,547.50	£1,077,028.82	£1,090,138.27	£1,103,509.90
Access (adults and the community)	£90,021.33	£90,705.16	£91,687.89	£92,199.46	£92,721.25
Access (other)	£269,925.21	£280,353.85	£283,804.59	£289,246.50	£294,797.25
<b>Financial support (£)</b>	£2,189,100.00	£2,235,100.00	£2,247,100.00	£2,278,600.00	£2,283,600.00
<b>Research and evaluation (£)</b>	£425,667.49	£433,660.67	£443,583.02	£448,915.09	£454,353.80

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Higher fee income (£HFI)</b>	£31,240,415.00	£30,119,850.00	£29,306,150.00	£28,870,290.00	£28,541,435.00
<b>Access investment</b>	6.4%	6.6%	7.1%	7.3%	7.5%
<b>Financial support</b>	7.0%	7.4%	7.7%	7.9%	8.0%
<b>Research and evaluation</b>	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%
<b>Total investment (as %HFI)</b>	14.7%	15.4%	16.3%	16.7%	17.0%

