Access and Participation Plan 2025-26

Introduction and strategic aim

1. At the University of Essex, our student population of 17,612 includes 10,323 undergraduate students (academic year 2023-24) are taught across our three campuses in Colchester, Southend, and Loughton. Our full-time first-degree cohort is drawn predominantly from our local region.

2. We are equally committed to excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals, communities, and society. We are proud to offer a transformational, research-led education, welcoming students to the University on the basis of their potential, helping them to fulfil that potential, and transforming the lives of all who choose to study here.

3. The University drives innovation and economic growth in the East of the UK with a £619.5M regional economic impact. Our position as the UK's number one institution for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships marks our commitment to, and success in supporting the growth of the regional economy.

4. Student success is at the heart of our mission, supporting every student from every background to achieve outstanding outcomes, preparing our students to thrive in their future lives and nurturing our community of educators to inspire them to do so. Our Strategy 2019-28 sets out our commitment to have no significant equality attainment gaps for measures of student success at the institutional level by 2028. The achievement of these targets is underpinned by the interventions outlined within this Access and Participation Plan (APP) and our established annual Education Action Plans, guided by the objectives set out in our Education Strategy. Where this action and any associated gaps in student success metrics are evident at a departmental level, strategies are devolved and monitored through both faculty and institutional governance arrangements. This commitment means that monitoring and evaluation of the risks to equality of opportunity are embedded within our governance structures and are priorities of staff at every level, including the University Executive.

5. Within our 'One University' approach, our eighteen academic departments, each with its own distinct character and bespoke range of engagement and student experience activity, work with our Students' Union to develop and monitor high levels of belonging within a membership community. Throughout their time with us, students commit to developing their Essex Spirit, to doing things differently, to asking challenging questions, to taking responsibility and speaking out when they see injustice.

6. The University is currently at consultation stage of the development of a new academic framework for implementation from 2027-28. There are many drivers for this initiative, including: complementing our work to eliminate equality gaps; enhancing our academic offer; improving how we support students and staff; and ensuring readiness for the Lifelong Learning Entitlement. A new academic framework is intended to reduce student success gaps by design as an overarching intervention that supports every student at every stage of the student lifecycle. Models presented for consultation are informed by research and sector experience which is translated into structures of learning architecture, reassessment frequency and supported learning experiences for students. The academic framework is overarching within this plan as an intervention at the institutional level. We will monitor the impact of the model that we

implement from 2027-28, and we have committed to undertake impact assessments prior to implementation stage for specific groups that we have identified as facing risks to equality of opportunity in continuation and completion.

7. In a regional context, the East of England has a significantly lower than national proportion of those eligible for free school meals entering higher education at 22.9%, despite our proximity to London where the rate is 46%. Despite this context, the University has no significant Access gaps, with consistently higher rates than the sector of admitting students from IMD Q1[1], students eligible for free school meals and also those declaring a disability. We remain committed to seeking improvement at an intersectional level, where our data suggests that there is a basis for doing so.

8. As well as an innovative programme of institutional outreach, the University has a long-standing position as the lead provider of targeted and impactful collaborative outreach activities delivered across the East of England, working with Anglia Ruskin University and the University of East London through the Make Happen Uni Connect programme. Between August 2017 to August 2023, this partnership engaged over 100,000 pupils at schools across the region. In addition to Make Happen, we also have active partnerships with The Brilliant Club, Essex County Council and the North East Integrated Care Board to deliver attainment and aspiration raising activities in schools. The success of this approach is evidenced in our achievements in supporting students from a range of non-traditional backgrounds to access higher education at the University of Essex and at other providers.

Risks to equality of opportunity

9. The full analysis underpinning our decision to prioritise and address the following risks can be found within our Assessment of Performance (AOP) (Annex A) which will be submitted with the Plan. The AOP is informed by a data-led exercise that was undertaken in Spring 2024 as a series of workshops between our students, senior university leaders and planning and data insight specialists. Each session focused on a separate life-cycle stage and included a review and analysis of the life-cycle data and included intersectional data for each of the characteristics. Throughout the process, the University and Students' Union worked with student representatives to ensure that data were clearly understood and any indications of risk were discussed.

10. Our analysis is based on the OfS Access and Participation dataset as the starting point for our population. We have focused on full-time first-degree students (excluding partnership institutions). Where possible we have appended the OfS data with additional data from the University, which has enabled analysis at department and course level. The Access section of our AOP also includes data and analysis of application, offer and acceptance data provided by UCAS End-of-Cycle data.

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[1] The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small, fixed geographic areas of the UK and classifies these areas into five quintiles based on relative disadvantage, with quintile 1 being the most deprived and quintile 5 being the least deprived.

This process has identified the following risks:

11. Risk 1: Access: although offer rates for both male and female students at the University are higher than the national offer rate, within our internal data we have observed a declining proportion of male students applying to and registering at the University. From 2018-19, the proportion of male students registered at the University has decreased from 51.7% in 2018-19 to 44.2% in 2020-21. This compares with a sector picture of UCAS applications from men, and registered male students, remaining stable at 42% rather than declining throughout the same period.

12. When indices of multiple deprivation are considered, male IMD Q1 students have declined as a proportion of the first-degree cohort at the University of Essex from 51.8% in 2017-18 to 40.39% in 2021-22. Our proposed intervention activities focus on IMD Q1 as a national risk group for accessing higher education and specifically within our School of Health and Social Care, where there has been a sustained period of registrations from men below 16% of the total. We have considered the following risks as they relate to this group: Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance, Application Success rates and Cost Pressures.

13. Risk 2: Continuation and Completion: At an institutional level, there is a lower proportion of students who hold a BTEC qualification at entry continuing and completing their course compared with those who hold an A Level qualification. This is particularly evident when intersections relating to ethnicity and IMD are considered. We are aware that the timetable for the full introduction of T Levels may impact this risk but also that we are likely still to have applicants holding BTECs for the duration of this Plan. Proposed intervention activities have considered the following national risks: Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance with a particular focus on how we might address the risk of Insufficient Academic and Personal Support.

14. Risk 3: Attainment (ethnicity awarding gap). There is a lower proportion of Black students achieving a 2:1 or a first-class degree when compared with White students. This gap at Essex is lower than the national gap but despite fluctuating over the last five years, it remains persistent. At a national level, this may relate to risks such a; information and guidance, the ongoing impact of the coronavirus, and the risk of insufficient academic and personal support, so our intervention activity has focussed on these areas.

15. Risk 4: Progression. At the University, mature students are more likely than young students to achieve good graduate outcomes. This is particularly apparent in non-STEM subject areas, which is a national picture. This is linked to the following national risks which we have considered in our approach to interventions: Information and Guidance, Insufficient Academic and Personal Support.

Objectives

16. Objective 1: The University of Essex will increase the number of applications made to the University by male students to courses within Health and Social Care (where they are currently under-represented) by 5% by 2028-29. Interventions will focus on IMD Q1 male applicants at level 2 (pre-university) study.

17. Objective 2: The University of Essex will increase the continuation and completion of those students holding a BTEC qualification by 4.5% by 2028-29, through targeted academic and personal support and guidance for these student groups. This will mean that no significant gap remains for this cohort.

18. Objective 3: The University of Essex will improve the attainment rates of Black students by 6% by 2028 in line with our institutional key performance indicator (KPI) to ensure that no significant attainment gaps remain by the end of the APP. This will be achieved through targeted academic and personal support and guidance and a review of the academic policy and process in place to support students.

19. Objective 4: The University of Essex will improve the progression rates of young students to national levels (currently 74.8%) for the 2029-30 cohort through our established Graduate Outcomes Strategy and through additional interventions outlined within this APP. Due to the timescales involved in reporting graduate outcomes, within the duration of the plan this will be assessed via our career-readiness metrics.

Intervention strategy 1: Access Objectives and Targets

20. Objective 1: To ensure that applications to the University of Essex by male students to subject areas where they are currently under-represented within the School of Health and Social Care are increased year on year throughout the lifespan of this plan.

21. Target: Our registered intake of male students on these courses will be increased by 5% by 2029-30.

22. Interventions will focus on IMD Q1 male applicants at level 2 (pre-university) study and on courses within the School of Health and Social Care in particular, as this is where male students are most significantly under-represented. This is a long-term strategic intervention which focuses on a national risk and, as such, the achievement of this target is likely to be seen in the final year of the Plan, and beyond the remit of this Access and Participation Plan. As such, we will use attitudinal metrics (such as likeliness to apply to Essex, or to higher education) within our evaluation.

23. As evidenced within our AOP, Essex is demonstrably a university that offers opportunities for all students with potential to succeed. The intervention strategies for Access within our APP complement a range of established and impactful outreach activities, which we undertake both in our own standing and as part of a regional collaboration.

24. For all Access interventions, where schools are unable to identify IMD Q1, free school meal eligibility will be accepted as a measure to identify target groups.

Risks to equality of opportunity

25. We have considered the following national risks as they relate to Access: Knowledge and Skills, Information and Guidance and Perception of Higher Education.

26. Related objectives and targets

    - Objective 2: Continuation and Completion. In particular, the intervention strategy of reviewing the impact of our contextual offers and how we may best support students who enter the University with one.

    - University Strategy, KPI 6: Student Outcomes (Equality and Diversity): To have no significant equality attainment gaps for measures of student success at institutional level.

Intervention Strategy 1: Access

Access	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
Year 9 Mentoring	Existing programme offering 30 students from under-represented backgrounds access to a nine-session mentoring programme. A minimum of 35% of these students will be male IMD Q1 from 2025-26.	Existing staff capacity and operational resource.	Increased access to aspirational role models and subsequently increased aspirations to enter higher education. Increased knowledge and understanding of higher education. Increased applications and registrations from target group.	Attainment (role modelling intervention).
Summer Sleepover	Existing activity with a refocus on providing information and guidance for male, Year 10 students to apply to higher education. 35% of participants will be male IMD Q1. One-night residential stay with higher education preparation/ academic content and bespoke follow up activity. Running this activity in 2024-25 will enable us to benchmark the efficacy of this intervention.	Existing staff capacity and operational resource. Capacity for tracking to be undertaken over a three-year period. Evaluative capacity provided by PhD analysing the impact of our intervention strategies.	Students record higher likelihood of applying to university within attitudinal surveys. Students who attended are more likely to apply to university in 2029-30 (Higher Education Attainment Tracker (HEAT) as an evaluative tool for this). Male IMD Q1 as a proportion of the above increase applications and registrations.	
Campus visits	Attainment raising programme delivered in school and on campus. Existing scheme refocused to ensure that our target group is represented rather than	Existing capacity and resource. Evaluative capacity provided by PhD analysing	Increased knowledge of higher education and the support available. Increased aspirations to enter higher education.	Attainment

Access	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	students selected by schools and colleges themselves. Campus visits reach approximately 1,500 students per academic year. Student participants are from years 9-11. A minimum of 80% of these students will be form an underrepresented group. A minimum of 35% of participants will be male IMD Q1. Role modelling activity and follow up will be bespoke to this group.	the impact of our intervention strategies.	Students who attended are more likely to apply to university from 2029-30 (Attitudinal surveys and HEAT as an evaluative tool for this). An increase in applications and registrations from male IMD Q1 students.	
Year 10 Book Club Attainment raising programme.	Attainment raising programme delivered in partner schools and on campus which offers 30 students from under-represented groups access to a nine session English Literature tutoring programme, led by students from the University of Essex. ale IMD Q1 student participation will be 35%. The 2024-25 programme will be used as a benchmark, with attitudinal survey results and student focus groups used to inform the 2025-26 intervention.	Existing outreach capacity (staffing and operational budget). Tracking capacity over a three-year period. Evaluative capacity provided by PhD analysing the impact of our intervention strategies.	Improved attainment at level 2. Attitudinal surveys show increased aspirations of higher education. Increased knowledge of higher education and the support available. Increased applications and registrations from target group at the University of Essex and to higher education (HEAT as an evaluative tool for this).	Attainment.
Y10 Maths Club	Attainment raising programme delivered in school and on campus and offering a nine	Existing outreach capacity and staffing.	Improved attainment at level 2.	

Access	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
Attainment Raising Programme	session Maths tutoring programme with small group tutoring led by University of Essex students. 2024-25 will be used as a benchmark, with attitudinal survey results and student focus groups will inform the 2025-26 intervention. A minimum of 35% of participants will be male IMD Q1.	Tracking capacity undertaken over a three-year period. Evaluative capacity provided by PhD analysing the impact of our intervention strategies.	Attitudinal survey indicates increased aspirations of higher education. Increased knowledge of higher education and the support available. Increase in applications and registrations from male IMD Q1 students.	
Healthcare Science Centre Partnership	Collaborative activity with the University of Essex Healthcare Science Centre with a reach of 1,260 students. A minimum of 35% of these students are male and from IMD Q1 backgrounds. Activity focused on increasing the number of students applying for and registering on Healthcare Science related courses to address local skills shortages ▪ A three-part progressive programme for 180 Year 10 students. ▪ On campus event to showcase these career opportunities. ▪ A series of in-school sessions to complement the above. ▪ Follow up activities including in-school careers sessions.	Additional investment agreed (of £30,000) for 2024-25 as proof of concept. Budget capacity for 2025-26 will be based on the evaluated impact and learnings from 2025-26.	Increased knowledge of Healthcare Science careers and higher education pathways available. Increased aspirations around entering a career in this area and entering higher education. Increased applications and registrations from underrepresented groups. Applications to courses within Health increase amongst the target group (male Q1) (2028-29).	Continuation and Completion.

Access	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	▪ Targeted role model campaign introducing HSC courses and career options to male students.			
Essex Futures Bursary	Existing activity introduced late cycle for 2023-24 so full evaluation undertaken for the 2024-25 academic year will inform development. Using HESA data, we introduced bursaries for students with household incomes of less than £30,000 noting that, over the previous two years: ▪ enrolments from non-low-income households have remained relatively consistent. ▪ enrolments from low-income households had decreased. These bursaries have been agreed for 2025-26 entry as £1,000 (year one) and £500 in years two and three. Target group: IMD Q1 and Q2, noting that we have used household income as a basis for this intervention.	Estimated cost of £1,752,000 in 2024-25, based on 1,200 students being eligible.	Cost pressures for this student group are reduced. Access, continuation, and completion are improved for this group.	Continuation and Completion.

Summary of evidence base and rationale: Access

27. Analysis of internal data indicates that the increase in the proportion of female students is related to the increase in demand from female students on Nursing and Allied Healthcare subjects, and the expansion of degree programmes that Essex offers in these subjects to meet the regional demand of healthcare providers. While the split by sex of students registered at a University level is in line with the national picture, of the students registered within our School of Health and Social Care only 15% were male in 2021-22. We have focused an intervention on promotion, information, and guidance to support male students to access healthcare programmes as a response to this risk.

28. At the University of Essex, applications from male students at IMD Q1 and Q5 have declined at a similar rate. Our proposed interventions focus on IMD Q1 as a national and regional risk area for access. Students are still twice as likely to go to university in the UK if they are from the most advantaged social and economic group than if they are from the least advantaged. Our rationale for this strategy is our institutional experience, ability and capacity to address this national risk to participation in higher education by lower socio-economic groups.

Evaluation: Access

29. We will evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 2 standards to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. We will also examine how each activity contributes towards meeting the overall objective. The strategy commences in 2025-26, though existing activity in 2024-25 will give us a benchmark set of data which we can use in our evaluation. We will share our findings within our Uni Connect Make Happen partnership, via annual progress reports to our University Executive and via regular blog updates for staff and students in addition to TASO, NERUPI and APPSIG[2] where beneficial to do so. Evaluation of our APP also forms part of a PhD; therefore, publication of our data will be widely available in this form and in related conference activity.

Intervention Strategy 2: Continuation and Completion Objectives and Targets

30. Objective: To ensure that there is no significant gap in continuation and completion rates for students holding a BTEC award at entry and those holding A Levels by 2029-30.

31. Target: to increase the continuation and completion rates of those students holding a BTEC award as an entry qualification so that no significant gap remains by 2029-30. This objective is embedded in our institutional Education Strategy.

32. Our analysis of the continuation rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that there is a continuation rate gap between students who have a BTEC and students holding A Levels as their entry qualification. The data show that in each of the last six years, students with BTECs have had the lowest

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[2] Transforming Access and Student Outcomes, Network Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions, APP Special Interest Group.

continuation rate. This has been 10% or higher in each year, except for 2019-20 where the gap narrowed to 5.3%.

33. Our analysis of the completion rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that this gap is also evident within completion. Within this metric, there is a gap between students who hold a BTEC as their entry qualification and students that have A Level entry qualification. The data show that the gap emerged from the 2015-16 entry cohort and has been apparent in each year thereafter. The completion rate gap has been 12% for the
2015-16 entry cohort, 15% for the 2016-17 cohort and the most recent entry cohort the gap is 17%.

34. Students who disclose a mental health condition also record lower levels of continuation and completion. We have not suggested a target for this group within the APP as we have a range of existing interventions in place which have been recently reviewed and evidenced and which we continuate to evaluate. These include:

- A reshaped wellbeing support offer for students in line with the UUK's *Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities* 2018 report, focusing on proactive and preventative engagements to support students to maintain their wellbeing and access support at the earliest opportunity to maximise their chances of success.

- Membership of the University Mental Health Charter Programme and our continued progress towards a Mental Health Charter award. This preparatory work has led to the following enhancements to support continuation and completion:

  - All students who declare a disability are allocated a named caseworker, with a care plan in place in advance of arrival to support them transition into university and maximise their chances of success once they are here.

  - Improvement of our systems to ensure that the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service is notified of all offer holders who have declared a disability to enable early engagement.

  - Improved publicity to new and returning students of the importance of engaging with support.

- Our Reasonable Adjustments Policy has been refreshed and a series of actions to improve monitoring of adjustment implementation, including a new student reasonable adjustment 'passport', to support both the implementation of adjustments and staff and student reflection on their efficacy, has been introduced for 2024-25.

35. Underpinning these developments, our current Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy was introduced in 2021 and provides a framework to support our students who are experiencing the most complex or severe challenges to engage successfully with their studies. This structured approach enables us to support students to reengage with their studies when they might otherwise have been unable to continue and complete.

Risks to equality of opportunity

36. We have considered the following national risks as they relate to Continuation and Completion: Knowledge and Skills and Information and Guidance as well as the Risk of Insufficient Academic Support and Insufficient Personal Support.

37. Related objectives and targets:

- Achievement of KPI 6 (to have no significant gaps in measures of student success for any group) within our University Strategy.

Intervention Strategy 2: Continuation and Completion

Continuation and Completion	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
Essex Preparation Programme (EPP) extension and increased bursary for BTEC students.	Existing Activity. Higher education preparation programme offered to all students. Redesigned module 2025-26 to provide specific support in academic skills development as they relate to transition from a BTEC. Higher bursary level offered to students who have completed a BTEC to incentivise the course for this group.	Allocated Bursary of £300 for students entering with a BTEC. Academic development of the programme for 2025-26 to tailor it to BTEC students and other vocational learners.	BTEC students will have higher levels of engagement with the EPP and awareness of the study skills programme at the University. This will decrease their likelihood of academic failure and withdrawal and lead to higher continuation rates.	Access. Attainment.
Personal Tutor Referral Programmes	New activity, based on student feedback. Targeted approach to skills development support for BTEC students. Introduction of self-diagnostic survey within the term as it relates to academic confidence, with a 'closing the loop' survey at the end of each year.	Development of guidance for Personal Tutors. Development of survey for BTEC students. Evaluative capacity within the PhD related to the APP.	Awareness of the range of support will be increased through the survey. Personal Tutors will encourage and focus additional discussion relating to academic skills development. BTEC students will increase attendance at Personal Tutor sessions. BTEC students will increase attendance at skills development sessions. Academic failure rates will reduce.	Attainment.

Continuation and Completion	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	Personal Tutors will receive data on the engagement of their BTEC students so that available support can be addressed within these sessions. Follow up undertaken centrally with Student Progress Team on a referral basis.		Continuation and Completion will increase for this group.	
New Academic Framework: Impact Assessments	The University is consulting on the introduction of a new academic framework from 2027-28. A motivator for this consideration is to ensure that sector learning on frameworks, including learning architecture, study intensity and reassessment frequency that may benefit students from underrepresented groups is applied at Essex. These groups will be BTEC students, those with disabilities and those who were previously eligible for free school meals. Sector research suggests that an academic framework could impact	An academic framework is in development utilising existing resource.	Essex (and sector) research will contribute to an understanding of the impact of on academic framework on these groups. The framework can be designed to ensure that it supports the continuation and completion of these students. Continuation and completion for these students will be monitored from 2027-28. The overarching design will improve continuation and completion outcomes.	Attainment.

Continuation and Completion	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	positively on the national risks relating to cost pressures, academic and personal support and reassessment opportunities.			
Contextual Offer Policy Review	Approximately 25% of our applicants receive a contextual offer. The associated policy was introduced in 2024-25 with impact on continuation and completion evaluated from 2025-26. The following groups are included within the policy; Estranged, Young Carer and Care Experienced, Military families, Refugee, FSM, IMD Q 1 and 2. These groups are currently made a lower tariff offer but no other bespoke interventions take place. Within 2024-25, we will monitor the progress of these students as a control group and through consultation identify activity to support the 2025-26 cohort where continuation rates are significantly (5%) lower than the average.	Evaluation capacity (through PhD introduced in 2024-25) to monitor the impact of the strategies within this plan. Operational/ workload considerations relating to co-designing support from 2025-26 will be undertaken in 2024-25.	We are able to correlate a contextual offer to continuation rather than view it as a free-standing access intervention. Students made a contextual offer co-design interventions that will support them. We are able to introduce interventions that support this group. This is evidenced by higher continuation rates from 2026-27.	Access.

Continuation and Completion	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	Due to the widespread adoption of contextual offers, we will work with S10 colleagues to share our learning analysis.			

Summary of evidence base and rationale: Continuation and Completion

38. We have analysed relevant data that relate to the reasons why students who hold BTECs at a national and institutional level do not continue and complete their studies. There are, of course many reasons, though academic failure is the most significant. Using a Theory of Change rationale, we believe that this can be mitigated by the early intervention of the Essex Preparation Programme, (EPP) hence the approach to increase the bursary for students applying with a BTEC to incentivise participation.

39. The data we have for the existing EPP show that the continuation rate for students who completed the course was 90.4% compared with 82.4% for those who did not engage with it. Where students only partially complete the programme, a correlation is also found to higher rates of continuation. Our evaluation from academic year 2024-25 will mean that we have qualification level data available to ensure robust evaluation from 2025-26.

40. The Personal Tutor referral programme is a student proposed intervention, supported by our student representatives, and in response to Nuffield Foundation's 2022 research '*Educational Choices at 16 and University Outcomes'* which found that nationally, students who entered higher education with BTECs are almost twice as likely to leave their course before their second year than those with A Levels. The analysis suggested that those with BTECs overall performed less well on exam assessed than coursework-assessed modules. Our interventions relating to the Essex Preparation Programme and Personal Tutor referral programme are intended to address this, with impact assessments for BTEC students ensuring that we understand where choice of assessment method may improve outcomes within a new academic framework.

41. The implementation of a new academic framework from 2027-28 underpins our commitment to supporting student groups that currently record lower levels of continuation and completion. The aims of a revised framework include improved student outcomes and decreased equality gaps in the educational outcomes for our student body.

Evaluation: Continuation and Completion

42. We will evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 2 standards to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes. For some activities (Choice of Assessment method) Type 3 evidence will be obtained. We will also examine how each activity contributes towards meeting the overall objective. The strategy commences in 2025-26, though existing activity (for example the Essex Preparation Programme) will give us a comparison year which we can use in our evaluation. We will share our findings via annual progress reports to our University Executive and via regular blog updates for staff and students, in addition to TASO, NERUPI and APPSIG where requested or beneficial to do so. Evaluation of our APP also forms part of a PhD; therefore, publication of evaluation of our data will be available in this form.

43. We are aware that BTEC students may represent a declining proportion of our intake within the lifespan of this Plan due to the rolling introduction of T Levels over the same period, though our analysis suggests that we will continue to receive candidates holding these qualifications. Through our monitoring cycle and the evaluation of this Plan, we will identify whether this intervention would additionally benefit T Level students or those holding other vocational qualifications.

Intervention Strategy 3: Attainment Objectives and Targets

44. Objective: To introduce a range of interventions designed to support Black students to achieve a 2:1 or First-class degree in equal proportion to White students.

45. Target: To address the ethnicity attainment gap, so that no significant gap between Black and White students exists by 2029-30. This will require a 6% increase in the proportion of Black students achieving a 2:1 or First-class degree by 2029-30 and is a longstanding commitment within our University Strategy.

46. This ethnicity attainment gap at the University of Essex is lower than the national gap but is persistent. The analysis of attainment data by ethnicity shows that the attainment of Black students has been consistently lower than other ethnicities in each of the previous six years. The gap between Black students and White students, has, however, narrowed markedly in recent years. At the start of the reporting period the attainment gap between Black and White students was 19.6% and remained consistently around 20%. During 2019-10 and 2020-21, the gap narrowed to 12.4% and then to 8.4%. It has subsequently increased to 12%. Closing the ethnicity attainment gap is a target within the University's 2020-21 to
2024-25 APP, and furthermore is a KPI within in the University's current Strategy to 2028. Our intervention strategy and our range of existing activity is designed to increase the attainment of Black students so that no significant gap exists by 2028-29.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Attainment:

47. The OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) suggests that, at a national level, this attainment gap may relate to risks in Information and Guidance, Ongoing Impact of the Coronavirus and Insufficient Academic and Personal Support.

48. Related Objectives and Targets: Attainment

   ▪ University Strategy KPI 6 - to have no significant gaps for measures of student success by 2028. This is also an Institutional Race Equality Charter Commitment from 2026-27.

Intervention Strategy 3: Attainment

Attainment	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
Review of Policies and Procedures	New activity for implementation in 2025-26 as an extension of our 2023-24 review. 2024-25 review will provide baseline data to enable us to understand the usage by and impact of these policies on target groups. All undergraduate students are intended to benefit though this intervention is anticipated to significantly benefit students from underrepresented groups. This is informed by our experience of students using these policies during the Covid-19 pandemic. Polices in scope: ▪ Academic Offences Procedures ▪ Academic Appeals Policy, including consideration of Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Late Submission process.	Senior academic leadership. Senior professional services leadership. Systems development to enable us to track, and evaluate the continuation, completion and attainment of students who utilise reviewed policies.	Increased awareness of supportive policies by target student groups. Improved continuation rates of target groups who have used the Extenuating Circumstances policy. Improved attainment rates from 2028-29.	Continuation and Completion.
Personal Tutor programme	New activity, embedded within our Race Equality Charter Action plan from 2024-25. Based on process within our Department of Economics and the Department of Law, where the attainment gap has been addressed. Target student group: Black, full-time, year one undergraduates. From 2026-27 this will include	Personal Tutor Resource. Dean of Undergraduate Education Leadership.	Increased attendance of target group at PT appointments, monitored by Education Committee. Student engagement by protected characteristics monitored by Education Committee from 2024-25 as a Race Equality Charter, and institutional commitment.	Continuation and Completion.

Attainment	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	year two, and from 2027-28 year three undergraduates. Named Personal Tutor for three-year period for target group. First Personal Tutoring session within four weeks of registration. Priority (centralised and monitored) follow up for missed PT sessions.			
Increased Assessment Choice pilot	New activity for 2025-26. Pilot within two academic departments to be identified by Education Committee. A new academic framework is likely to offer an increased range of assessment from 2027-28. Experience from the Department of Economics is that BA/BSc route coaching increases attainment in target group, though this intervention will be available to all students. Combined with Personal Tutoring approach for target group.	Provision of a PhD based on the targets and interventions within this APP. Senior Academic and Professional Services resource to lead on the development of optionality.	Increased optionality will lead to students choosing assessment options that utilise their strengths. Improved continuation and attainment as a longer-term result of this.	
Belonging at Essex Information and Advice (visible campaign)	New activity based on the findings of our OfS funded Transitions and Transformations (T&T) project (the impact of role modelling), on the concept of Belonging and our Race Equality Charter (REC) commitment as well as sector research on imposter syndrome which found it	Race Inclusion Champion leadership. Equality, Inclusion and Diversity team resource.	Open text responses in the next student and staff survey (2025-26) will provide a baseline set of data.	Continuation and Completion.

Attainment	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	disproportionally impacts on under-represented groups. Sharing the profile and successes of Black SU Leaders, Staff and Alumni via a range of visible communications channels has been piloted within two Academic Departments in addition to T&T and Type 1 evidence links it to reduced attainment gaps. This intervention will focus on our most significant departmental attainment gaps.	Internal Communications team resource.	Staff and Students from target group report an increased sense of belonging at the University from 2027-28. Students with an increased sense of belonging are more likely to succeed on their course.	

Summary of evidence base and rationale: Attainment

49. The University received bronze accreditation for our Race Equality Charter in 2024. Central to the approved Action Plan is ensuring that ethnicity degree awarding gap continues to reduce and progress seen in the last three years continues until the gap is eliminated. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) (PVCE) will continue to meet with departments annually to review their progress in decolonising the curriculum as an ongoing initiative; therefore, we have not included this as an additional intervention strategy.

50. The intervention relating to Personal Tutor referral is a student suggested intervention, based on a longitudinal study from Duna Sabri for The University of Arts, London. This noted a range of factors that underpin the attainment gap for Black and minority ethnic students. Amongst the proposed interventions, reciprocal recognition based on informality and respect was found to benefit progression, summarised as 'recognition in the realm of interaction with tutors is a determinant of student's attainment due to frequent experiences of respect, empathy and esteem'. The recommendations note that 'reflection on and development of the tutor student interaction was one of four promising sites of intervention'.

51. A focus on the student experience within our Essex 2025 programme has meant that we have revisited the key role of belonging as a predictor of attainment over the past two years. We have drawn from this to develop attainment strategies relating to personal tutoring and campaigns to visibly combat imposter syndrome. While the WonkHE/Pearson Student Academic Experience Survey 2022 evidenced that approachable and accessible academic staff ranked foremost in student's perception of their own belonging, regardless of their background, 'Opportunities to interact with academic staff outside the classroom contributed significantly more to the sense of belonging in Black students (24%) than to the total sample (19%). Belonging, of course, underpins academic achievement contributing across the student life cycle to higher rates of continuation and completion as well as to attainment. The same is true of a 'diverse student population' which contributed to the sense of belonging at 47% for black students and 36% of the total sample. A visible campaign highlighting the achievements of our black students and staff is an intervention aligned with our Race Equality Commitment and our OfS funded Transformations and Transitions Project which aims to increase the representation of Black postgraduate students and researchers and has two PhD students engaged in its evaluation.

Evaluation: Attainment

52. We will evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate OfS Type 1 and Type 2 standards to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes of reducing the attainment gap for black students. The strategy commences in 2025-26. Our Attainment gap is also reported as a condition of our Race Equality Charter award and to the University Executive as an institutional KPI. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) has oversight for this APP and additionally is the University Race Equality champion, ensuring a joined-up approach to oversight of this target at an Executive level.

53. We will share our findings via annual progress reports to our University Executive and via regular blog updates for staff and students in addition to TASO, NERUPI and APPSIG where beneficial to do so. Evaluation of our APP forms part of a PhD, as does our OfS funded Transitions and Transformations

project, so publication of our evaluation will be available in this form. We will also host a PhD conference in academic year 2027/28 to share learnings with others undertaking a studentship in this area.

Intervention strategy 4: Graduate Progression Objectives and Targets

54. Objective: To ensure that young students at the University have equal opportunity to progress to graduate level employment or further study after their completion of higher education.

55. Target: To address the gap between graduate progression for young students and mature students by increasing the progression of our young students to the national level (currently 74.8%) by 2029-30.

56. Our analysis of progression data by age group shows that the progression of young students to graduate level employment or further study has been consistently lower than that of mature students in each of the previous four years. In 2020-21, the progression rate was 84% of mature students compared with 71.2% for young students, a gap of 12.8%.

57. Institutionally, as within the sector, we have a gap between STEM and non-STEM subjects, with the latter recording lower rates of progression. These have been considered within our strategies, but we have declined to attribute a target and will continue to monitor these within the whole provider approach outlined in this APP.

58. In 2020-21, Black students also had lower rates of progression than young students, with 70% going on to graduate level employment or further study compared with 71.2 % nationally in the same year. This has not been a consistent trend, however, and the year previously Black students recorded progression above all other ethnicities. Our current work and internal data on career readiness suggests that 2022-23 data will show improved levels of progression for this group. Our proposed approach is to continually monitor progression rates through our governance structures but not to designate a target at this stage. We have committed to progression activity to increase the number of black students undertaking postgraduate study as part of our overall progression target.

59. Our progression intervention strategy provides the detail of the activities and interventions that have been put in place in order to address this performance gap. Due to the timescales involved in reporting graduate outcomes, we will use our 'career readiness' measure (self-declared at each registration period and at the end of the final academic year) for the duration of this plan.

Risks to equality of opportunity: Progression:

60. The EORR suggests that this may be linked to the following national risks: Information and Guidance, Insufficient Academic and Personal Support.

61. Related objectives and targets progression:

   ▪ Our Attainment target, our Race Equality Charter commitment and KPI 6 all relate to the Graduate Progression intervention strategy.

Intervention Strategy 4: Progression

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
Extracted Employability Initiative	Existing activity at pilot stage in 2024-25 within the departments of: Law; Psychology; Essex Business School; Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science; Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies. From 2025-26, the remainder of academic departments (excepting the School of Health and Social Care) will adopt the model. Embedded employability within the course delivery 'every student is engaged with their employability development because it is structurally unavoidable that they do so through their teaching and learning, rather than relying on added or optional content that not every student may choose or be able to access'.	Embedded within our existing curriculum in 2024-25. Academic leadership time for curriculum development. Evaluative capacity from agreed PhD to monitor the efficacy of extracted employability.	Due to the timescale of this plan, reporting on progression data is unachievable. Self-declared increased levels of career readiness (students are asked their career readiness at registration and at the end of their final academic year via a 'closing the loop' survey). In the longer term (from 2029-30), graduate progression will be increased.	Continuation.
Paid student Placements Essex Interns	Existing activity with a refocus for 2025-26. From 2025-26, 106 placements of 72 hours over ten weeks retargeted and	Payment for each Essex Intern. Student Development leadership.	Benchmark data from existing programme and comparison with revised programme shows increased	

Activity	Description	Inputs	Outcomes	Cross intervention strategy
	promoted to students with a disability and from IMD Q1. These placements are subject to employment legislation, as such we cannot restrict appointments to target groups.	University staff mentorship and project development.	participation from students from IMD Q1 and with a disability. Self-reported career readiness post intervention and within the closing the loop survey is increased.	
Review of the barriers to progression to Postgraduate Study for Black students	New activity based on our established 'Transitions and Transformations' Black Researchers which showed that UK Home Black students are the most underrepresented group at Master's and postgraduate research levels. Focus on undergraduate to postgraduate transition in years three and four. Identify the perceived or actual barriers for this student group. Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the bursary for postgraduate taught study black students in line with our Race Equality Charter Commitment.	Evaluative capacity within APP PhD provision. Academic and Professional Services staff time for review. Student focus groups for review. Education Data Insight Advisory Group (EDIAG), overseen by Education Committee and refocus to increase impact (if necessary).	Increased registrations on postgraduate taught programmes at the University of Essex. Graduate Outcomes reporting higher levels of PG study within the sector (beyond the life of this plan). Three years of bursary data enable trend analysis by EDIAG Impactful intervention development.	Attainment (as it relates to the ethnicity awarding gap).

Summary of evidence base and rationale: Progression

62. The University is working in partnership with The Careers Group to develop Extracted Employability within the curriculum. Extracted Employability has a considerable evidence base. A summary is included below:

   - Evidence from The World Economic Forum (WEF 2020) demonstrates a considerable concern around a perceived transferable skills gap in graduates.

   - An approach which ensures students can extract knowledge, attributes, skills and experience as employability-led learning outcomes adapts to the learner, situation and level of study. It can be effectively deployed across our range of subject areas.

   - Academics are effectively already teaching employability skills within the curriculum. The concept of Extracted Employability enables students to articulate these skills and employability to become a shared responsibility.

   - Sector studies and focus groups with our own students tell us that they have limited capacity for 'employability skills' activity that is not within scheduled sessions.

63. We have established a range of Type 1 evidence supporting the case for paid placements during undergraduate study in UK higher education and their positive outcomes for student progression. In general, although the associations between work placements and outcomes appeared to be positive, the problem of self-selection is inherent. Our paid placement scheme will target students from IMD Q1 and those who have declared a disability, noting that we cannot prevent other students from making an application. Our work with the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory services enables us to share our intervention data and impact across comparable higher education institutions.

64. In terms of our intervention to address the barriers to postgraduate study for Black students, our existing Transitions and Transformations project utilises a self-assessment tool launched in partnership with Vitae in January 2024, with longitudinal tracking for target students. The project, and our internal student data as well as sector data, has shown that Black students are under-represented at a postgraduate level. The two PhD students associated with the project held focus groups in 2023 which indicated that Black students faced challenges relating to belonging, community and funding. We have used this Type 1 evidence to inform our intervention strategies.

Evaluation: Progression

65. We will evaluate each activity within this intervention strategy to generate Type 2 standards to establish whether they lead to the intended outcomes of increasing progression for young students. Our findings will also be shared as part of our OfS funded Transitions and Transformations project for which we have four years of data and two funded PhD studentships. We will share our findings via annual progress reports to our University Executive and via regular blog updates for staff and students in addition to TASO, NERUPI and APPSIG where beneficial to do so. The outcomes will also be shared with the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS). Evaluation of our APP also forms part of a PhD so publication of evaluation of our data will be available in this form.

Whole provider approach

66. The targets within our Access and Participation Plan are embedded within our institutional strategy and vision to have no significant gaps in student success by 2028. The three aspects of our Strategy – People, Knowledge and Communities - drive this action across the University, and it is devolved to our supporting strategies and action plans.

67. Performance against our strategic targets is reviewed through our governance structures on a planned schedule throughout the academic year and policies, practice and action plans are reviewed and amended in response to the latest data. This includes where departmental performance does not align with University expectations, where faculties oversee departmental performance relating to the targets embedded within our institutional Strategy and set out within our APP.

68. Our Education Data Insights Advisory Group (EDIAG) draws together all data sources across the University and will monitor our progress through the lifespan of this Plan, reporting directly to our Education Committee. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) meets regularly with academic departments to review activity to address student success gaps which includes the agreed interventions within this APP. In essence, we can identify quickly if our ambitions and targets are at risk and agree revised actions should this become necessary.

69. Throughput the lifespan of the APP, progress will be reported to the University Executive (University Steering Group) and through annual report to Council.

70. The Access and Participation Plan and the risks it addresses has been developed by a group within the University comprising colleagues from a range of areas including the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Outreach and Student Life as well as Students' Union leaders and staff members and our collaborative partnership, Make Happen. Separately to this group, SU officers have been supported by staff to consult with the wider student body and to ensure that their views are heard through a range of channels.

Student Consultation

71. Students have been actively involved at every level of the Plan, from initial working groups to address the themes drawn from data analysis, through to our most senior approval structures. Student membership of our APP group was led by the elected Wellbeing and Community Officer, with support from a senior SU staff member. Students are members of our OfS Advisory group, our Education Committee which oversees the achievement of the targets within this Plan, and the University's governing body, Council.

72. The outline plan was presented to Student Council in February 2024 with members feeding back their views. To reach student groups from a range of backgrounds; societies, course reps and leaders were consulted on the identified risks and proposed interventions. As a result of this consultation, we have made the following significant changes to the proposed intervention strategies:

     a. Students asked why we had not included the full range of existing activity (as it relates to continuation, completion, attainment, and progression) within the intervention strategies. We made some changes to the introductory paragraphs to ensure that this activity was reflected but kept our intervention strategies (within the APP) focused to the target groups.

b. Interventions relating to graduate progression, continuation and completion were made broader to include additional target groups. Students felt that those with the potential to benefit should be included, including international students, but in order to retain the impact and support evaluation, we retained targeted interventions.

c. Responses to the consultation included some feedback that each student should be treated as individuals rather than data identifying and strategies targeting particular student groups who are identified as facing risks to their equality of opportunity. We responded to this feedback further outlining the purpose of this APP and with assurance relating to the support offered to all students to support them through the student lifecycle, regardless of their characteristics.

d. Proposed interventions related to a pilot tutor group exclusively for BTEC students in order to deliver tailored support were not taken forward. Student feedback suggested that this model was perceived as overly deficit and that a referral via a Personal Tutor to relevant skills for success modules was preferred.

e. Some student feedback indicated that there was discomfort in providing different levels of bursary for the Essex Preparation Programme for students with BTECs (as the programme has been running for two years) and preferred that all students should get the same financial incentive. We considered this view but did not incorporate this feedback so that we are able to fully evaluate the impact of an increased bursary for BTEC students. It is worth noting that all students who undertake the EPP will be eligible for a standard bursary.

f. Finally, several students, in particular those who responded to our Black Student Officer, indicated that they were not aware of the range of support and targeted programmes available to support them throughout the student lifecycle. We used this, in conjunction with research on belonging and inclusion to inform the intervention strategy to increase visible role modelling to target our Black student population. We have also committed to reviewing the promotion that we undertake for study skills and employability support.

73. We recognised that our existing evaluation is at an emerging stage and are committed to the development of this. The provision of PhD support to a University of Essex Student will form the basis of the evaluation of this APP and will be jointly led by colleagues in the Institute of Social and Economic Research and Department of Sociology.

Evaluation of the Plan

74. The University has an established Access and Participation Group (APP Group) which comprises University senior leaders, the Planning and Data Insight Team which undertakes analysis and evaluation, student representatives, and intervention strategy leads, as well as senior colleagues from Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The PhD student that we have engaged to develop our evaluation strategy is also a key member of this group. The APP Group's remit involves monitoring the access, student success and progression activities, from the design and implementation through to the final evaluation stages, including the impact of the resources invested in achieving our agreed targets.

75. The APP Group meets at least twice each term to review any issues or areas of performance that have the potential to impact the achievement of our identified targets. The associated data insights are overseen by the Education Data Insights and Advisory Group (EDIAG), ensuring our approach to robust, data-led and evidenced-based interventions. EDIAG reports to our Education Committee which receives progress updates and an annual monitoring report, which summarises our position in relation to our overall objectives and targets. This report is also received by the University Executive and Council.

76. All the identified intervention strategies and the associated activities follow a Theory of Change model. This approach has been embedded to ensure that stakeholders who are involved in the delivery of activities understand how this approach is evidenced and evaluated. Theory of Change reaches across all intervention activities, their rationale and purpose, their monitoring and evaluation, and the data that are used to monitor performance of the activities and the impact that is resulting. Our approach is consistent with the guidance published by the Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO).

77. Using the OfS standards for evidence self-assessment tool, we have assessed that our current approaches to intervention design and evaluation practice are categorised as 'emerging' in relation to a high proportion of our interventions and across most stages of our interventions. The following table provides the summary of our self-assessment.

	Max score	University Score	Category
Strategic Context	24	16	Emerging
Activity Design	18	10	Emerging
Evaluation Design	9	6	Emerging
Evaluation implementation	20	15	Emerging
Learning from evaluation	22	12	Emerging

78. Following our self-assessment, the University has created a PhD studentship with the aim of advancing our institutional capability and capacity for evaluation and monitoring of educational interventions. They are supervised by a Research Fellow of the Institute of Social and Economic Research who has undertaken extensive research on the impacts of educational support interventions and longitudinal studies of student life. To further enhance the University's evaluation practices, we will continue to be involved in regional and national level research and evaluation groups that are focused on higher education research and evaluation.

79. Through the duration of our Access and Participation Plan, we will advance our evaluation maturity across all stages to achieve the advanced category in each stage.

80. We have recognised a capability and capacity gap that means we have previously not been able to contribute to sharing the evaluation of evidence-based initiatives within TASO, NERUPI or with regional peers, via peer-to-peer review. The investment in our PhD studentship and academic support addresses this gap.

Provision of information to students

81. All applicants and prospective students are provided with information about student fees. If there are any additional course costs, then these are clear in promotional material and the course webpage. In addition to information that is communicated to applicants, we also provide clear and complete information on fees and financial support at recruitment events (Open Days, and Interview/ Visit Days) and via the applicant web portal.

82. Our terms and conditions set out how and when fees will be due, and any inflationary increases that will apply. It also makes clear the University's policies on tuition fee payment and student engagement.

83. When applicants receive an offer of a place at the University, this will include all essential contractual information. Applicants are encouraged to contact our Student Information Team if they have queries; we operate a responsive service with extended out-of-hours support available.

84. In the weeks leading up to new students commencing their studies, all prospective students receive a series of emails (one each week) as part of our 5-4-3-2-1 information campaign. This is designed to ensure all new students are aware of the financial and personal support that is in place to ensure they successfully transition into life at the University. Students who are identified as one of the target groups within this plan will receive additional information to ensure they can benefit from our intervention strategies and our broad range of student support at the earliest possible opportunity.

Assessment of Performance

Introduction

1. Our Assessment of Performance has been informed by a data-led exercise undertaken in Spring 2024. The approach centred around a series of workshops between University students, senior University leaders, and planning and data insight specialists. Each session focused on a separate life-cycle stage and included a review and analysis of the life-cycle data and included intersectional data for each of the characteristics. Throughout the process, the University worked with student representatives to ensure the data were clearly understood and any risks were discussed.

2. Our analysis is based on the Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation dataset, which we took as the starting point for our population. We have focused on full-time, first-degree students (excluding partnership institutions). Where possible, we have appended the OfS data with additional data from the University's Student Record Database which has allowed analysis at department and course level.

3. The Access section of our Assessment of Performance also includes data and analysis of application, offer and acceptance data provided by UCAS End-of-Cycle data.

4. Our Assessment of Performance includes all the metrics from the OfS Access and Participation dashboard (Access, Continuation, Completion, Attainment and Progression). We have analysed Essex and sector level data and, in our Assessment of Performance, we have presented analysis of the following characteristics: Age Group, Ethnicity, Declared Disability, Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Quintile, Eligibility for Free School Meals, Entry Qualification Type. We have reviewed and considered the data for ABCs and TUNDRA but have not included this in our Assessment of Performance.

5. Our interventions have been designed to be tailored to student personal characteristics; however, each intervention should benefit students across modes and levels of study. The following assessment of performance has been undertaken to identify the risks for specific student groups, and, where risks have emerged, we have referenced the intervention strategy that is in place to mitigate this.

Access[1]

6. Over the last six years the University has had a high proportion of undergraduate students registered as full-time, first-degree students. In 2021-22, this group accounted for 92% of our undergraduate population, providing a clear rationale to focus our analysis of performance on

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[1] For further data refer to: Supporting data, Table 4; Supporting data, Table 5

this cohort. This results in focused and targeted interventions that will generate the most improvement in outcomes for the highest proportion of the student body. The University has internal processes that continue to monitor the performance across each mode and level of study, and the performance review and analysis of gaps are embedded into the processes in the University's Strategic Planning activities that take place each year.

7. The University has a track record of successfully widening participation and has consistently recruited students from non-traditional backgrounds. Additionally, the University has been the lead provider of targeted and impactful collaborative outreach activities delivered across the East of England and extending into East London. The success of this work is evidenced in our achievements of supporting students from a range of non-traditional backgrounds to access higher education at the University and other UK higher education providers.

8. In the 2021-22 cohort, 56.8% of the full-time first-degree students were White, and of students from other ethnicities, our cohort was diverse (Black 21.6%, Other 2.1%, Mixed 5.3%, Asian 14.2%). This compares with the sector level data (White 66.3%, Black 8.2%, Other 2.4%, Mixed 5.8%, Asian 17.4%).

9. In 2021-22, 18.6% of our students were from IMD Quintile 1, (and 42.9% from IMD Quintile 1 and 2 combined). This compares with the sector level data of 22.8% from IMD Quintile 1, and 44.1% from IMD Quintile 1 and 2 combined.

10. The proportion of students with a declared disability was 18.3% in 2021-22 and has been consistently increasing over the last six years, up from 10.9% in 2016-17. This compares with the sector level data of 17.5%.

11. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals was 21.8% in 2021-22. While this has been relatively stable over the last six years, it has dropped since 2019-20, a trend that has been seen within the UK higher education full-time first-degree population. This compares with the sector level data where 18.5% of students are eligible for free school meals.

12. The University has increased the proportion of mature students in our full-time, first-degree student population over the last six years. In 2016-17, mature students made up 12.7% of the cohort, and this has increased year-on-year to 25% in 2020-21. The most recent year shows that mature students make up 23.6% of the full-time, first-degree student cohort. This compares with the trend within UK higher education.

13. Reviewing the proportion of students by sex shows that there was a relatively equal proportion of male and female students in the first-degree cohort at Essex. However, from 2018-19 the proportion of male students has decreased, from 51.7% in 2028-19 to 44.2% in 2020-21. Analysis of internal data indicates that the increase in the proportion of female

students is related to the increase in demand from female students on Nursing and Allied Healthcare subjects, and the expansion of degree programmes that Essex is offering in these subjects to meet the regional demand of healthcare providers.

Access – UCAS offer rates

14. In addition to the OfS Access and Participation Data that have been used in the first section of the Assessment of Performance, we have used UCAS End-of- cycle applications data[2] to analyse the offer rates for ethnicity, gender and by POLAR4 Quintile for all ages. This has provided offer rates for Essex applicants that can be compared with the national offer rate data. Our analysis shows that:

    a. Our offer rates are consistently higher for all ethnicity groups except the White ethnic group, where lower offer rates are seen. Our lowest rate is for the Black ethnic group (62.0% for 2023) and our highest rate is for the White ethnic group (70.6%).

    b. The UCAS End-of-cycle data do not contain the offer rate at national level for students from different IMD Quintiles; however, the POLAR4 data show no consistent offer rate gap between students from POLAR4 Quintile 1 and POLAR4 Quintile 5. The offer rate for the 2023 entry cycle shows that 68.8% of Quintile 1 students received an offer of a place at the University, compared with 69.4% of Quintile 5 students[3]. Our offer rate for Quintile 1 students is consistently higher than the sector level offer rate.

15. Our offer rate for both male and female students is currently higher than the national offer rate.

Access – Internal Admissions data

16. Using internal admissions data, we have analysed the offer rate by IMD, Age Group, students with a declared disability.

17. Analysing the applicant data by IMD Quintile show that, over the last six years, the offer rate for IMD Quintile 1 students has tended to be lower than that of IMD Quintile 5 students, however, not consistently. The gap has ranged from 1.8% in 2018-19 to 4.8% in 2017-18. The most recent data show a gap of 4.6%. We will continue to monitor the offer rates by IMD Quintile to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

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[2] https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-resources-2023/2023-entry-ucas-undergraduate-reports-sex-area-background-and-ethnic-group

[3] https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-resources-2023/2023-entry-ucas-undergraduate-reports-sex-area-background-and-ethnic-group

18. Using internal admissions data, we have analysed the offer rate for Young and Mature students. The analysis shows that over the last six years the offer rate for Mature students has been consistently lower. Further analysis, at course level, indicates that the reason for this variance is that mature students have a higher tendency to apply for courses that have restricted intakes. These include the professionally regulated health courses (Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursing, and Oral Health Science). We will continue to monitor the offer rates by Age Group to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

Table 1: Offer rate split by age group.

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Mature (21 and over)	46.8%	1,291	49.4%	1,449	52.7%	1,479	56.8%	1,890	54.8%	1,898	51.8%	1,779
Young (under 21)	73.0%	8,868	76.4%	9,112	78.8%	9,426	79.6%	8,107	82.7%	8,508	82.5%	8,052

19. Using internal admissions data, we have analysed the offer rate for students with a declared disability compared with those with no declared disability. The analysis shows that over the last six years the offer rate for students with a declared disability has been consistently lower. This has ranged from 5.1% in 2017-18 to 3.1% in 2018-19.

Table 2: Offer rate split by IMD quintile 1 and 5.

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
IMD Quintile 1	66.3%	1,605	70.9%	1,667	71.7%	1,782	71.7%	1,636	74.5%	1,633	73.6%	1,618
IMD Quintile 5	71.1%	2,070	72.1%	2,048	76.1%	2,131	75.2%	1,923	77.4%	2,085	78.4%	1,905

Table 3: Offer rate split by disability type.

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Disability declared	63.7%	873	66.8%	1,011	71.4%	1,213	70.7%	1,146	73.4%	1,336	71.5%	1,428
No known disability	68.6%	9,243	71.6%	9,494	74.1%	9,596	74.4%	8,749	75.9%	8,934	75.0%	8,251

Continuation[4]

20. In line with our focus on the full-time, first-degree student population that has been assessed for Access, and to ensure that our interventions reach the highest proportion of our student population, we have focused our Continuation analysis on the same categories of students. For Essex, this represents 93% of the student data that are provided in the OfS Access and Participation Dashboard. This approach also has the advantage of not focusing on any indicators of risk with very small populations of students.

21. We have identified that there is one characteristic of interest where there is differential performance within the continuation metric: students that have declared a disability compared with the performance of students with no declared disability.

22. The gap in performance of students with a declared disability has varied over the last six years. It was at its narrowest for the 2015-16 entry cohort (at just 0.5%, and for the 2016-17 and 2019-20 entry cohorts at 1%). However, the gap has widened to 5% in 2017-18 and has again widened to 3.2% for the 2020-21 entry cohort.

23. Within this performance, we have identified that students who have declared a mental health condition consistently have the lowest continuation rate over the last six years, with the exception of 2020-21, where this was students with multiple impairments.

Figure 1: Continuation percentage point gap for reported disabilities.

- █ % gap between cognitive or learning disability and no disability
- █ % gap between mental health disability and no disability
- █ % gap between multiple reported disability and no disability
- █ % gap between sensory, medical or physical disability and no disability
- █ % gap between social or communication disability and no disability

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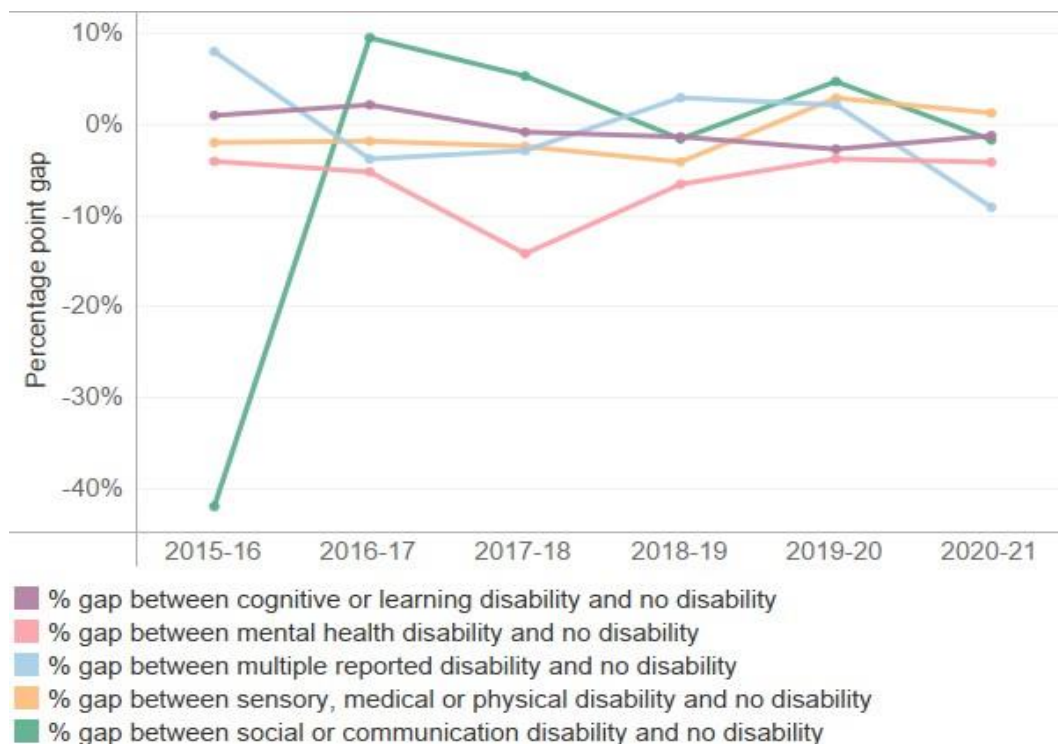
[4] For further data refer to: Supporting Data Tables 6 and 7, and Supporting Data Figures 7 and 8

24. The gaps in performance between ethnicities have narrowed over the last six years. The 2020-21 entry cohort data show the continuation rate as follows (ordered by highest continuation rate to lowest): Asian 89.6%, Black 89.0%, Mixed 88.0%, White 87.8%, Other 84.4%. We are aware that the continuation rate is lowest for students with "Other" ethnicity; however, this represents the lowest proportion of students in our population (1% – 2% of the cohort in each year). We will continue to monitor the continuation performance to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

25. The continuation rates for the UK HE sector for full-time, first-degree students in order of highest to lowest are: White 90.5%, Asian 88.7%, Mixed 88.1%, Other 86.3%, Black 84.8%

26. There is a gap in continuation performance between students from IMD Quintile 1 (students from most deprived areas) compared with students from other IMD Quintiles. With the exception of 2019-20, the continuation rate for IMD Quintile 1 students is lower that Quintile 5 students. The extent of this gap has varied over the last six years. This is consistent with the sector trend, whereby the continuation rate for IMD Quintile 1 students has been consistently lower than the other quintiles.

27. In 2021-22 the continuation rate for University of Essex students from IMD Quintile 1 was 85.2%; this compares with the sector level data of 84.9% from IMD Quintile 1. We will continue to monitor the continuation performance of students from IMD Quintile 1 to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

28. The gaps between students who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not eligible have narrowed, and for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 entry cohorts there are no differences in the continuation rate. We will continue to monitor the continuation performance of these students to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

29. Gaps in continuation rate performance by age group have been variable over the last six years. This had reduced to below 2% for the 2019-20 entry cohort; however, it has subsequently widened to 3.5% for the 2020-21 entry cohort. We will continue to monitor the continuation performance of for mature students to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

30. Gaps in continuation rate performance by sex have been variable over the last six years. The data show that in each year female students have a higher continuation rate than male students. This difference ranges from a gap of 1% in 2015-16 and 1.5% in 2019-20, to 4.3% for 2018-19. The gap in continuation rate by sex has been maintained within the tolerance for

the University's strategic key performance indicator (KPI) reporting and is monitored annually with actions and interventions assigned at department/subject level to ensure this is maintained.

31. Our analysis of the continuation rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that there is a continuation rate gap between students who have a BTEC as their entry qualification and students that have A-Level entry qualification. The data show that, in each of the last six years, students with BTECs have had the lowest continuation rate. This has been 10% or higher in each year, with the exception of 2019-20 where the gap narrowed to 5.3%. The most recent data for the 2020-21 entry cohort show that the continuation rate for BTEC students was 10.3% lower than for A-Level students.

32. Our intervention strategy is designed to close this gap to 5% through a range of activities, and we will continue to monitor the performance of students who enter the University with BTECs and their intersectional characteristics.

Figure 2: Continuation percentage point gap for entry qualifications.

■ % gap between Access and foundation courses and A-Level qualifications
■ % gap between BTEC and A-Level qualifications
■ % gap between HE Level qualification and A-Level qualifications
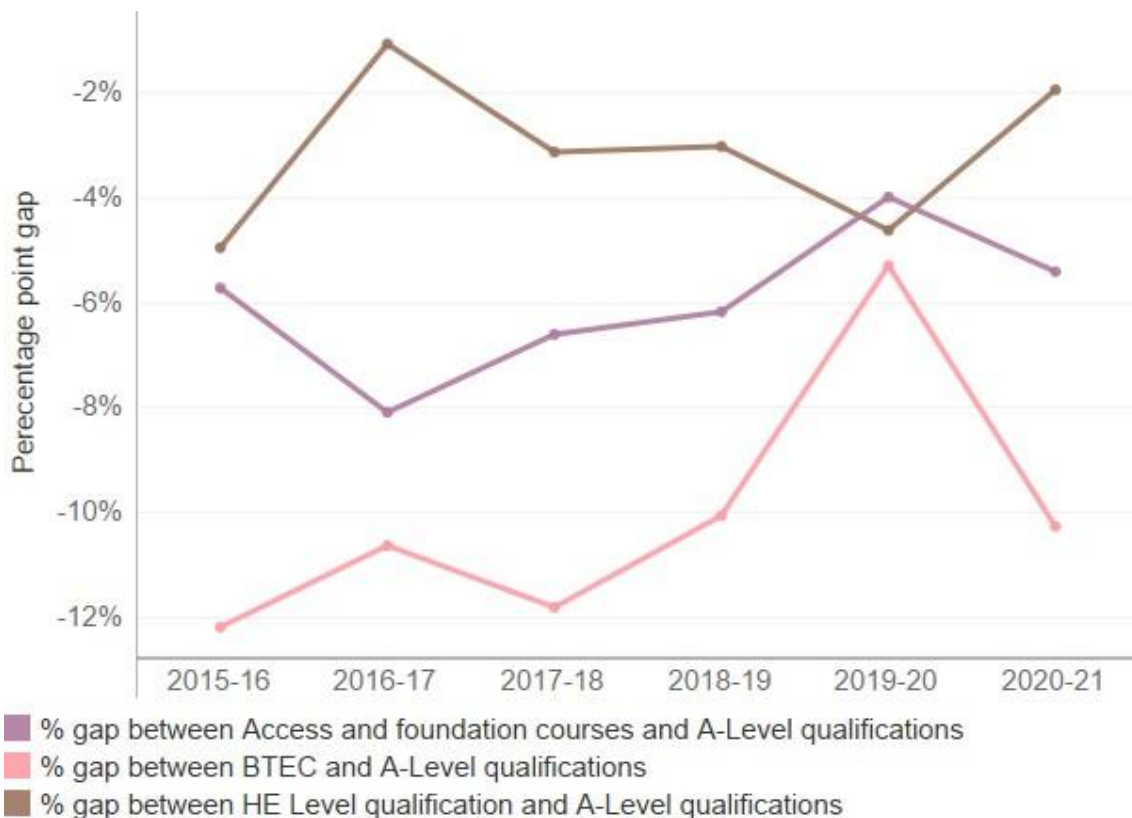
Completion[5]

33. Our analysis of performance has identified a differential in the completion rate performance in the following student characteristics: Age Group, Declared Disability, Eligibility for Free School Meals. As with the previous metrics, the focus of the analysis has been applied to full-time, first-degree students, which the completion metric of the OfS Access and Participation Plan Dashboard shows accounts for 85% of our data.

34. The completion rate for students with a declared disability has been below the completion rate for students with no declared disability for each of the last six years. The gap has narrowed to just 1% for the 2016-17 entry cohort; however, it widened to 3.8% for the 2017-18 entry cohort. In light of this variable performance, we will continue to monitor the completion performance to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

35. There are no identified gaps in performance by ethnicity. The completion rates, in order of highest to lowest are: Asian 90.4%, Black 88.9%, White 87.1%, Mixed 87.1%, Other 80.6%. We are aware that when the data meet the reporting threshold (2013-14, 2015-16 and 2017-18) the completion rate is lowest for students with "Other" ethnicity; however, this represents the lowest proportion of students in our population. Only in 2017-18 has the completion rate for "Other" ethnicity been markedly lower than other ethnicities; however, we will continue to monitor the completion performance to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

36. The analysis of completion rates for students from different IMD Quintiles shows that for most cohorts it is students from Quintile 5 who have the highest completion rate. The completion rates of students from the Quintile 1 have not been consistently lower than any other IMD Quintile. The data show that for the most recent cohort (2017-18), students from Quintile 1 had the lowest completion rate and therefore we will continue to monitor completion performance to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

37. Gaps in completion rate performance by age group have been variable over the last six years. This had reduced to 0.7%% for the cohort that commenced their studies in 2016-17; however, it has subsequently widened to 5.9% for the 2017-18 cohort. We will continue to monitor the completion performance of mature students to assess whether targeted interventions are required. The gap for the 2017-18 cohort at Essex is 5.9 compares with a sector level gap of 9.7%

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[5] For further data refer to Supporting Data Tables 8 and 9 and Supporting Data Figures 9 and 10

38. The gaps between students who are eligible for free school meals and students not eligible have widened for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 entry cohorts. The gap for the 2017-18 cohort at Essex was 3.8%, compared with a sector level gap of 7.8%. We will continue to monitor the completion performance of for students eligible for free school meals to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

39. Our analysis of the completion rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that there is a completion rate gap between students who have a BTEC as their entry qualification and students that have A-Level entry qualification. The data show that the gap emerged from the 2015-16 entry cohort and has been apparent in each year thereafter. The completion rate gap has been 12% for the 2015-16 entry cohort, 15% for the 2016-17 cohort and the most recent entry cohort the gap is 17%.

Figure 3: Completion percentage point gap for entry qualifications

- ■ % gap between Access and foundation courses and A-Level qualifications
- ■ % gap between BTEC and A-Level qualifications
- ■ % gap between HE Level qualification and A-Level qualifications
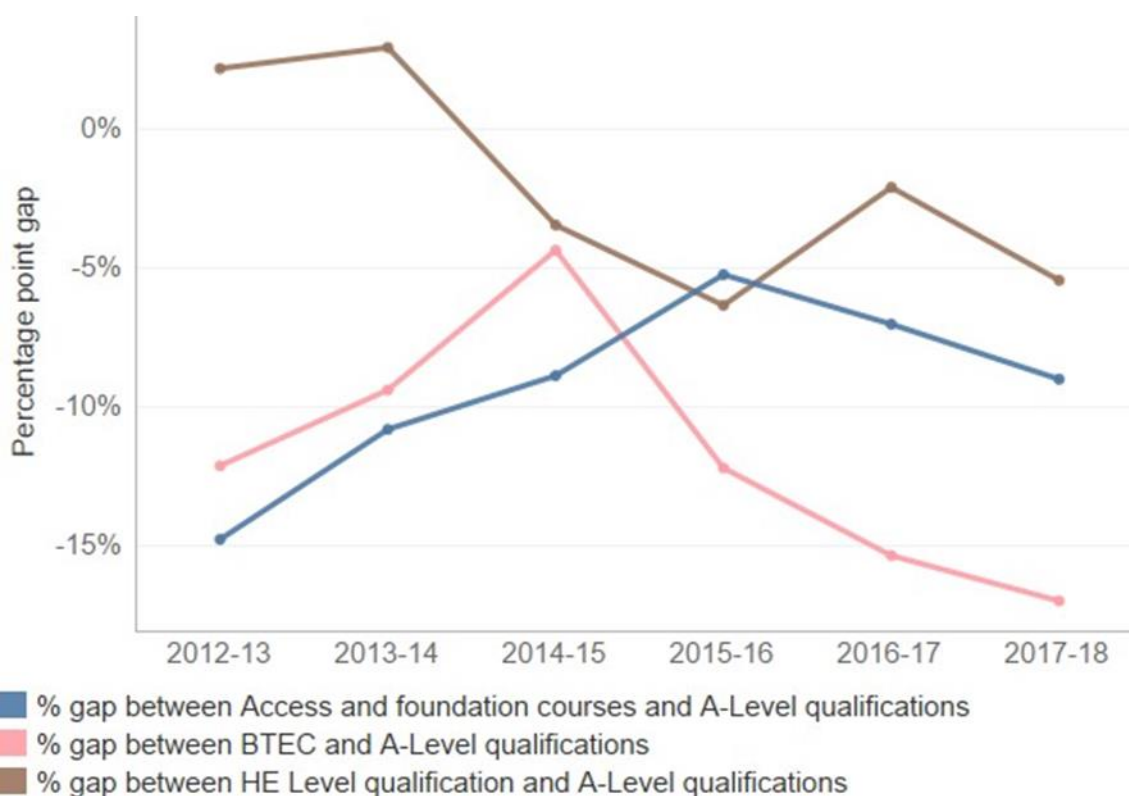
Attainment[6]

40. Our analysis of performance has identified a differential in the attainment rate performance in the following student characteristics: Age Group, IMD, Ethnicity, Eligibility for Free School Meals, Entry Qualification Type. As with the previous metrics, the focus of the analysis has been applied to full-time, first-degree students, which the completion metric of the OfS Access and Participation Plan Dashboard shows accounts for 97% of our data.

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[6] For further date refer to Supporting Data Tables 10 and 11, and Supporting Data Figures 11 and 12

41. The analysis of attainment data by Age Group shows that Mature students are less likely than Young students to achieve a positive outcome (a First class or 2:1 class degree).

42. Over the last six years Mature students have had a lower attainment rate in each year. The gap has varied; for example, in 2018-19, at 3.4% (Young 76.9% - Mature 73.5%), and in 2019-20 it was the widest seen at Essex over this time period, at 7.2% (Young 81.3% - Mature 74.5%).

43. The gap for the 2021-22 cohort of 1.9% is the lowest rate at Essex, compared with a sector level gap of 8.6%. In light of the varied outcomes of students by Age Group, we will continue to monitor the attainment performance of mature students to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

44. The analysis of attainment data by IMD Quintile shows that students from IMD Quintile 1 (those least likely to progress to higher education) as less likely to achieve a positive outcome (a First class or 2:1 class degree) than students from Quintile 5.

45. Over the last six years Quintile 1 students have had the lowest attainment rate in each year. The gap has varied, at its narrowest point in 2020-21 it was 8.2% (Q5 92.6% - Q1 84.4%), and the gap was widest in 2017-18 at 19.6% (Q5 86.9% - Q1 67.6%)

46. The gap for the 2021-22 cohort is 15.3% at Essex, compared with a sector level gap of 18%. In light of the varied outcomes of students from IMD Quintile 1, we will continue to monitor the attainment performance of students eligible for free school meals to assess whether targeted interventions are required.

47. The analysis of attainment data by ethnicity shows that the attainment of Black students has been consistently lower than other ethnicities in each of the previous six years. The gap between Black students and White students has narrowed markedly in recent years. At the start of the reporting period the attainment gap between Black and White students was 19.6% and remained consistently around 20%. During 2019-10 and 2020-21, the gap narrowed to 12.4% and then to 8.4%. It has subsequently increased to 12%.

48. Closing the ethnicity attainment gap between Black and White students is a target within the University's 2020-21 to 2024-25 Access and Participation Plan, and furthermore is a Strategic Key Performance Indicator in the University's current Strategy. Our intervention strategy is designed to close this gap through a range of activities, and we will continue to monitor the attainment of Black students and their intersectional characteristics.

49. Our intersectional analysis of attainment for Black students and other characteristics is shown in the supporting data charts (Figure 12). These show that, across a four-year average, the lowest attainment rate is associated with Black students, Asian students, and Other ethnicity

students who enter the University with BTEC or non A-Level qualifications. These data have underpinned the requirement to have interventions based on supporting students that join with non-A Level entry qualifications.

50. The gaps between students who are eligible for free school meals and students not eligible have widened for the 2020-21 and 2021-11 cohorts and we will continue to monitor the attainment performance of students eligible for free school meals to assess whether targeted interventions are required. The gap for the 2021-21 cohort at Essex is 7.4%, compared with a sector level gap of 12.3%

51. There are no gaps in attainment between students who have a declared disability and those with no disability, which would indicate an intervention is not required. In 2021-22 the gap in the attainment rate was 0.3%.

52. Our analysis of the attainment rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that there is an attainment rate gap between students who have a BTEC as their entry qualification and students who have A-Level entry qualification. The data show that the gap emerged from the 2018-18 graduating cohort and has been apparent in each year thereafter. The attainment rate gap for the most recent graduating cohort and the most recent entry cohort the gap is 19%.

Figure 4: Attainment percentage point gap for entry qualifications.

■ % gap between Access and foundation courses and A-Level qualifications
■ % gap between BTEC and A-Level qualifications
■ % gap between HE Level qualification and A-Level qualifications

Figure 5: Attainment percentage point gap for ethnic groups

Legend:
- % gap between Asian and White ethnic groups
- % gap between Black and White ethnic groups
- % gap between Mixed and White ethnic groups
- % gap between Other and White ethnic groups
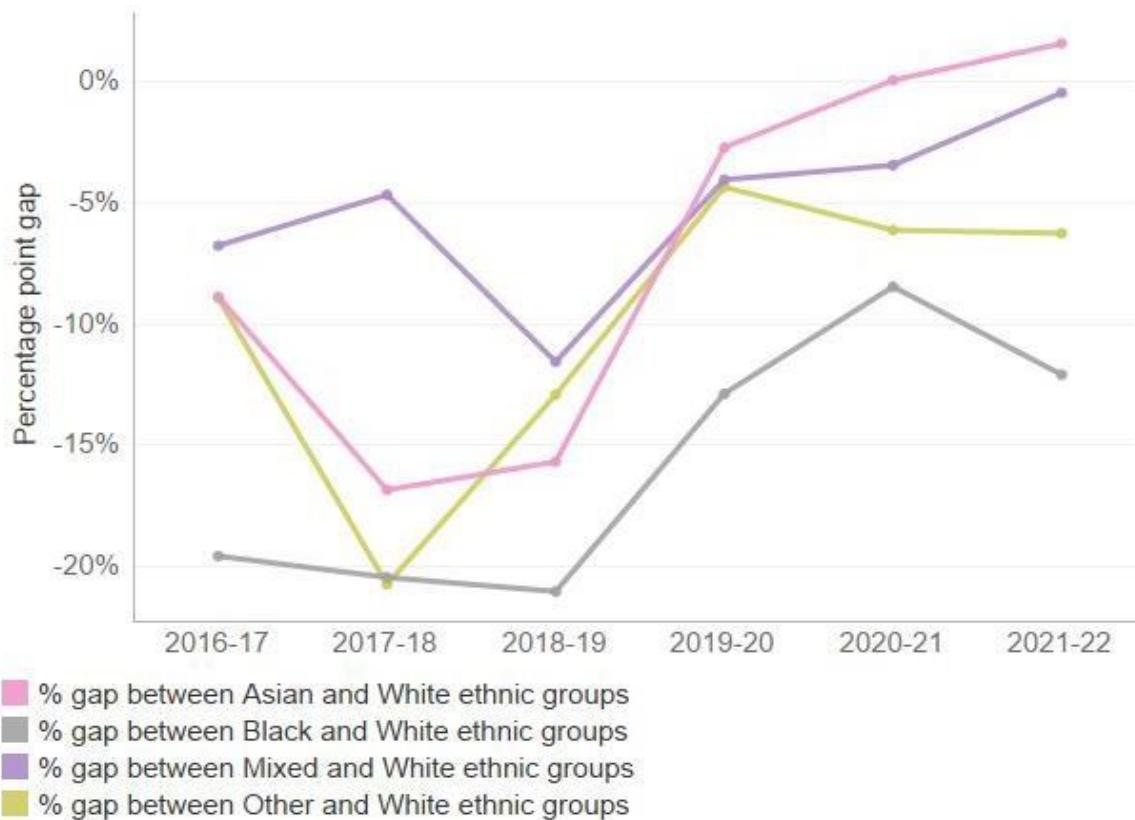
Progression[7]

53. Our analysis of performance has identified a differential in the progression rate performance in the following student characteristic: Age Group, Non-STEM subjects. As with the previous metrics, the focus of the analysis has been applied to full-time, first-degree students, which the completion metric of the OfS Access and Participation Plan Dashboard shows accounts for 91% of our data.
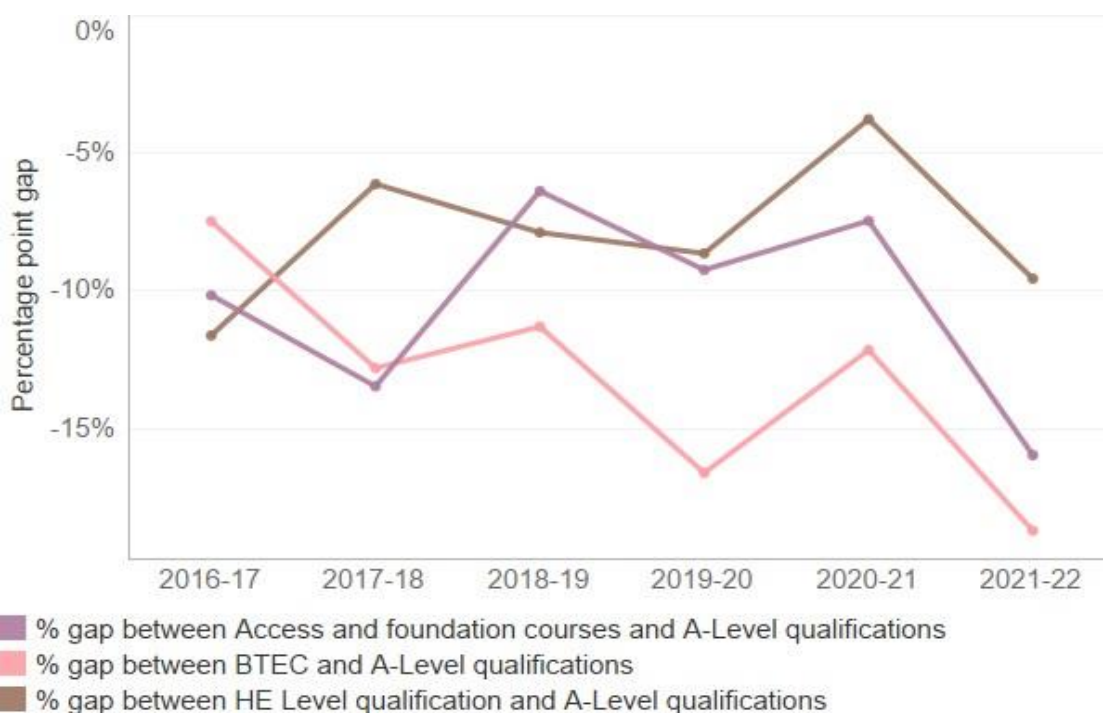
54. There are no gaps in Progression between students who have a declared disability and those with no disability, which would indicate an intervention is not required. The data for 2020-21 showed that students with a declared disability had had a progression rate of 75.8% compared with a rate of 72.2% for students with no declared disability.

55. There are no gaps in Progression between students from IMD Quintile 1 compared with IMD Quintile 5, which would indicate an intervention is not required. The data for 2020-21 showed that students from IMD Quintile 5 had had a progression rate of 73.7% compared with a rate of 72.5% for students from IMD Quintile 1.

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[7] For further data refer to Supporting Data Tables 12 and 13 and Supporting Data Figures 13 and 14

56. There are no consistent gaps in Progression between those who are eligible for free school meals and those not eligible for free school meals, which would indicate an intervention is not required.

57. The most recently available data for 2019-20 showed that students who are eligible for Free school meals had a progression rate of 68.1% compared with a rate of 67.6% for students not eligible for free school meals.

58. There are no consistent gaps in Progression between students from different ethnicities compared with white students, which would indicate an intervention is not required. The data for 2020-21 showed the Progression rates as follows, from highest rate to lowest: White 74.3%, Asian 73.8%, Mixed 70.8%, Black 70.3%, Other 66.7%. The data show that student with "Other" ethnicities have had lower Progression rates than other ethnicities and therefore we will continue to monitor the progression performance.

59. The analysis of Progression data by Age Group shows that the progression of Young students has been consistently lower than Mature students in each of the previous four years. The gap between Young and Mature students has remained consistent, and in 2020-21, the Progression rate was 84% of Mature students compared with 71.2% for Young students, a gap of 12.8%.

60. Our Progression intervention strategy provides the detail of the activities and interventions that have been put in place to address this performance gap and it is anticipated that the impacts of these interventions will be realised in 2024-25.

Figure 6: Progression percentage point gap for Age.

% gap between Mature and Young
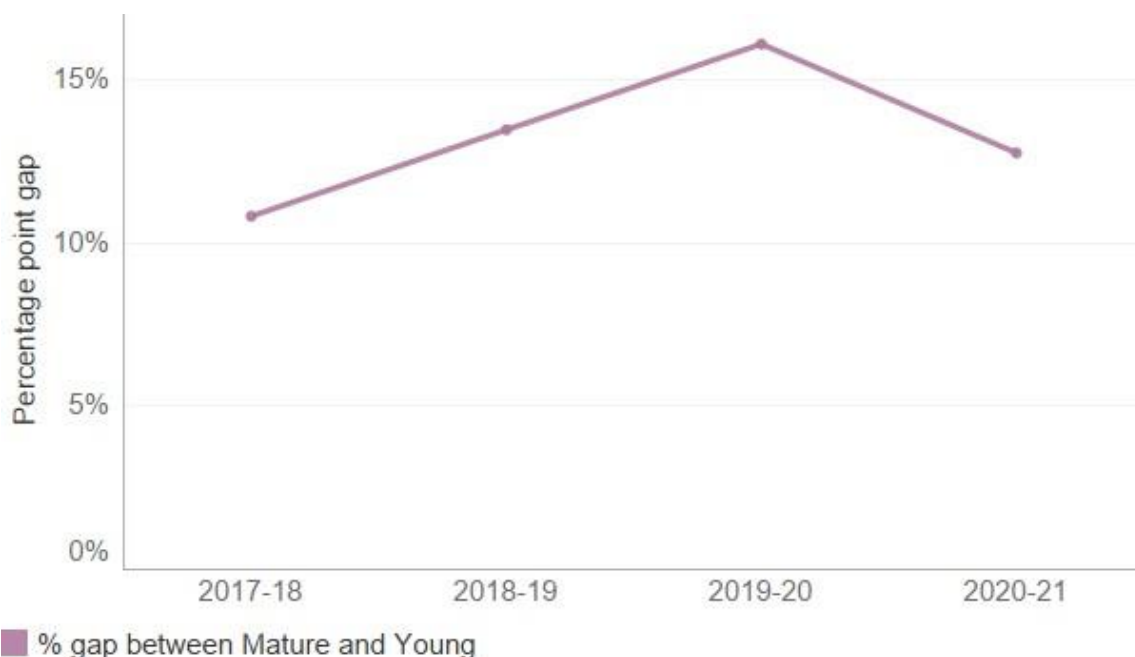
Supporting Data

Table 4: Access proportion of entrants split by multiple characteristics

		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
		%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Age	Mature (21 and over)	12.7%	326	13.7%	377	15.3%	460	15.1%	464	25.0%	788	23.6%	633
	Young (under 21)	87.3%	2,238	86.3%	2,366	84.7%	2,553	84.9%	2,608	75.0%	2,361	76.4%	2,047
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	10.9%	280	13.1%	358	13.7%	412	16.3%	501	18.4%	578	18.3%	491
	No Disability Declared	89.1%	2,284	86.9%	2,385	86.3%	2,601	83.7%	2,571	81.6%	2,571	81.7%	2,189
Disability Detailed	Cognitive or learning difficulties	4.9%	125	4.5%	124	4.4%	132	4.9%	149	5.4%	171	6.4%	171
	Mental health condition	2.5%	63	4.1%	112	4.5%	137	5.6%	171	6.4%	200	6.4%	171
	Multiple impairments	1.8%	46	2.1%	58	2.1%	63	2.9%	89	3.0%	94	2.6%	69
	Sensory, medical or physical impairments	1.7%	44	1.5%	42	1.5%	45	2.0%	61	2.3%	73	1.7%	45
	Social or communication impairment	0.1%	2	0.8%	22	1.2%	35	1.0%	31	1.3%	40	1.3%	35
	No disability reported	89.1%	2,284	86.9%	2,385	86.3%	2,601	83.7%	2,571	81.6%	2,571	81.7%	2,189
Entry Qualifications	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	7.6%	196	10.1%	277	9.9%	297	9.0%	276	12.6%	397	10.5%	281
	BTEC	14.8%	380	14.8%	407	16.1%	484	18.7%	575	21.1%	665	20.8%	558
	HE Level qualification	4.7%	121	4.4%	120	3.7%	112	3.7%	115	7.0%	220	5.7%	153
	A-Level	69.4%	1,780	67.1%	1,840	64.9%	1,956	62.0%	1,906	52.5%	1,653	55.4%	1,485
Ethnicity (All ages)	Asian	12.5%	320	13.6%	372	13.5%	403	11.2%	343	8.7%	274	10.7%	279
	Black	23.8%	606	24.2%	659	23.6%	707	25.8%	790	26.0%	817	23.5%	611
	Mixed	6.5%	167	7.0%	190	7.2%	216	6.7%	205	7.0%	221	6.4%	165
	Other	2.5%	65	3.0%	82	3.0%	91	3.2%	99	2.6%	80	2.1%	55
	White	54.6%	1,393	52.2%	1,424	52.7%	1,577	53.1%	1,624	55.6%	1,745	57.2%	1,486
Free School Meals	Eligible	21.9%	439	24.3%	504	24.3%	544	24.0%	555	22.4%	468	21.8%	386
	Not Eligible	78.1%	1,562	75.7%	1,570	75.7%	1,693	76.0%	1,753	77.6%	1,624	78.2%	1,384
IMD (2019)	IMD Q1	16.9%	428	18.3%	495	17.5%	521	18.3%	554	18.5%	574	18.6%	491
	IMD Q5	18.9%	478	17.1%	462	18.6%	555	18.4%	557	16.0%	497	17.4%	459
Sex	Female	47.5%	1,216	50.1%	1,374	48.3%	1,455	52.8%	1,621	55.8%	1,753	55.2%	1,478
	Male	52.5%	1,346	49.9%	1,368	51.7%	1,557	47.2%	1,448	44.2%	1,391	44.8%	1,199

Table 5: Access internal offer rates split by disability type, sex, age and IMD.

		2017-18 %	2017-18 Count	2018-19 %	2018-19 Count	2019-20 %	2019-20 Count	2020-21 %	2020-21 Count	2021-22 %	2021-22 Count	2022-23 %	2022-23 Count
Overall		68.2%	10,159	71.1%	10,561	73.8%	10,905	74.0%	9,997	75.7%	10,406	74.5%	9,831
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	63.7%	873	66.8%	1,011	71.4%	1,213	70.7%	1,146	73.4%	1,336	71.5%	1,428
	No known disability	68.6%	9,243	71.6%	9,494	74.1%	9,596	74.4%	8,749	75.9%	8,934	75.0%	8,251
Disability Detailed	Long-term health condition	64.8%	81	68.4%	80	77.4%	96	76.2%	109	73.4%	102	69.5%	89
	Mental health condition	67.9%	235	70.6%	317	73.2%	375	73.1%	364	74.7%	443	76.2%	546
	Physical impairment or mobility	66.7%	18	60.6%	20	73.9%	34	86.5%	32	80.0%	20	64.9%	24
	Social/ communication impairment	74.1%	86	72.6%	98	72.1%	98	78.5%	128	80.1%	141	76.2%	157
	Specific learning difficulty	58.0%	321	62.1%	343	67.1%	440	62.5%	361	68.1%	466	63.9%	429
	Blind or a serious visual impairment unc..	65.0%	13	75.0%	9	77.8%	7	70.0%	14	64.3%	9	66.7%	10
	Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	69.7%	23	48.0%	12	75.8%	25	76.7%	23	81.5%	22	82.8%	24
	A disability, impairment or long-term healt..	63.6%	96	69.1%	132	75.0%	138	75.2%	115	82.6%	133	77.2%	149
	No known disability	68.6%	9,243	71.6%	9,494	74.1%	9,596	74.4%	8,749	75.9%	8,934	75.0%	8,251
Sex	Female	64.7%	5,121	66.6%	5,343	70.2%	5,739	70.4%	5,563	71.7%	5,818	69.9%	5,448
	Male	72.0%	5,038	76.3%	5,218	78.3%	5,165	79.0%	4,428	81.4%	4,584	81.2%	4,376
Age	Mature (21 and over)	46.8%	1,291	49.4%	1,449	52.7%	1,479	56.8%	1,890	54.8%	1,898	51.8%	1,779
	Young (under 21)	73.0%	8,868	76.4%	9,112	78.8%	9,426	79.6%	8,107	82.7%	8,508	82.5%	8,052
IMD	Quintile 1	66.3%	1,605	70.9%	1,667	71.7%	1,782	71.7%	1,636	74.5%	1,633	73.6%	1,618
	Quintile 5	71.1%	2,070	72.1%	2,048	76.1%	2,131	75.2%	1,923	77.4%	2,085	78.4%	1,905

Table 6: Continuation proportion (%) and Percentage point gap (% Gap) for each characteristic

| | | 2015-16 | | 2016-17 | | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | |
		%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap
Age	Mature (21 and over)	85.9%	-6.9%	90.7%	0.5%	85.0%	-4.9%	84.9%	-5.7%	90.1%	-1.7%	85.6%	-3.5%
	Young (under 21)	92.7%		90.2%		89.9%		90.6%		91.9%		89.1%	
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	91.4%	-0.5%	89.4%	-1.0%	84.8%	-5.1%	87.4%	-2.7%	90.7%	-1.0%	85.6%	-3.2%
	No Disability Declared	91.9%		90.4%		89.8%		90.1%		91.8%		88.8%	
Disability Detailed	Cognitive or learning difficulties	93.0%	1.0%	92.6%	2.2%	89.1%	-0.8%	88.8%	-1.3%	89.1%	-2.6%	87.7%	-1.2%
	Mental health condition	87.9%	-4.0%	85.2%	-5.2%	75.7%	-14.1%	83.6%	-6.5%	88.1%	-3.7%	84.7%	-4.1%
	Multiple impairments	100.0%	8.1%	86.7%	-3.7%	87.0%	-2.8%	93.1%	3.0%	94.0%	2.2%	79.8%	-9.0%
	Sensory, medical or physical impairments	90.0%	-1.9%	88.6%	-1.8%	87.5%	-2.3%	86.0%	-4.1%	94.7%	3.0%	90.1%	1.3%
	Social or communication impairment	50.0%	-41.9%	100.0%	9.6%	95.2%	5.4%	88.6%	-1.5%	96.6%	4.8%	87.2%	-1.6%
	No disability reported	91.9%		90.4%		89.8%		90.1%		91.8%		88.8%	
Entry Qualifications	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65..	88.6%	-5.7%	84.7%	-8.1%	85.6%	-6.6%	86.5%	-6.2%	89.3%	-4.0%	86.3%	-5.4%
	BTEC	82.1%	-12.2%	82.1%	-10.6%	80.4%	-11.8%	82.6%	-10.0%	88.0%	-5.3%	81.5%	-10.3%
	HE Level qualification	89.4%	-5.0%	91.7%	-1.1%	89.1%	-3.1%	89.6%	-3.0%	88.7%	-4.6%	89.8%	-1.9%
	A-Level	94.3%		92.7%		92.2%		92.6%		93.3%		91.7%	
Ethnicity (All)	Asian	96.4%	5.6%	91.2%	1.4%	91.2%	2.7%	93.3%	4.4%	92.6%	2.2%	89.6%	1.8%
	Black	92.0%	1.2%	91.3%	1.5%	91.0%	2.4%	90.1%	1.2%	94.0%	3.6%	89.0%	1.2%
	Mixed	94.4%	3.6%	88.1%	-1.7%	86.4%	-2.2%	92.0%	3.1%	91.2%	0.8%	88.0%	0.1%
	Other	88.1%	-2.7%	93.7%	3.9%	83.1%	-5.4%	84.3%	-4.5%	89.6%	-0.8%	84.4%	-3.4%
	White	90.8%		89.8%		88.6%		88.8%		90.4%		87.8%	
Free School Meals	Eligible	91.6%	-1.4%	86.1%	-5.3%	85.6%	-6.3%	89.6%	-1.5%	92.5%	0.7%	88.8%	0.1%
	Not Eligible	93.0%		91.4%		91.9%		91.0%		91.8%		88.7%	
IMD (2019)	IMD Q1	88.8%	-3.8%	87.8%	-4.3%	85.6%	-6.3%	85.0%	-6.7%	91.7%	0.4%	85.2%	-5.8%
	IMD Q5	92.5%		92.2%		91.9%		91.7%		91.4%		90.9%	
Sex	Female	92.4%	1.0%	91.6%	2.6%	91.0%	3.7%	91.9%	4.3%	92.3%	1.5%	89.6%	3.2%
	Male	91.3%		89.1%		87.3%		87.6%		90.8%		86.4%	

Table 7: Continuation proportion (%) and count for entry qualifications split by disability type and IMD quintile 1 and 5.

		2015-16		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
		%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Disability Declared	A-Level	94.3%	166	89.4%	178	90.0%	208	91.4%	244	91.0%	244
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	89.5%	17	76.9%	30	88.1%	37	90.9%	40	75.6%	62
	BTEC	85.2%	46	82.0%	50	81.3%	52	92.2%	95	80.0%	80
	HE Level qualification	81.3%	13	81.0%	17	81.8%	18	81.5%	22	83.3%	45
No Disability Declared	A-Level	94.3%	1,327	92.6%	1,455	93.0%	1,531	93.6%	1,469	91.8%	1,228
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	88.4%	84	87.1%	196	86.2%	206	89.0%	194	89.2%	272
	BTEC	81.6%	230	80.1%	262	82.8%	323	87.0%	382	81.7%	434
	HE Level qualification	91.0%	71	90.8%	89	91.7%	77	91.1%	72	91.9%	148
IMD Quintile 1	A-Level	94.0%	189	90.0%	260	90.8%	257	92.9%	274	88.7%	212
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	82.1%	23	78.3%	36	79.7%	47	95.2%	60	84.9%	79
	BTEC	81.4%	70	77.0%	67	76.6%	82	86.5%	109	79.7%	110
	HE Level qualification	75.0%	9	90.5%	19	93.3%	14	83.3%	15	90.7%	39
IMD Quintile 5	A-Level	94.6%	318	92.0%	312	94.5%	341	92.0%	356	93.9%	278
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	100.0%	10	97.1%	34	87.0%	40	79.4%	27	94.1%	48
	BTEC	80.0%	48	88.6%	39	82.9%	58	91.5%	65	80.2%	65
	HE Level qualification	94.7%	18	100.0%	13	94.7%	18	95.5%	21	88.2%	30

Figure 7: Continuation bar chart showing 4-year average (2017-18 to 2020-21) proportions for each characteristic.

Figure 8: Continuation bar chart showing 4-year average (2017-18 to 2020-21) proportions below average continuation for two-way characteristic splits.
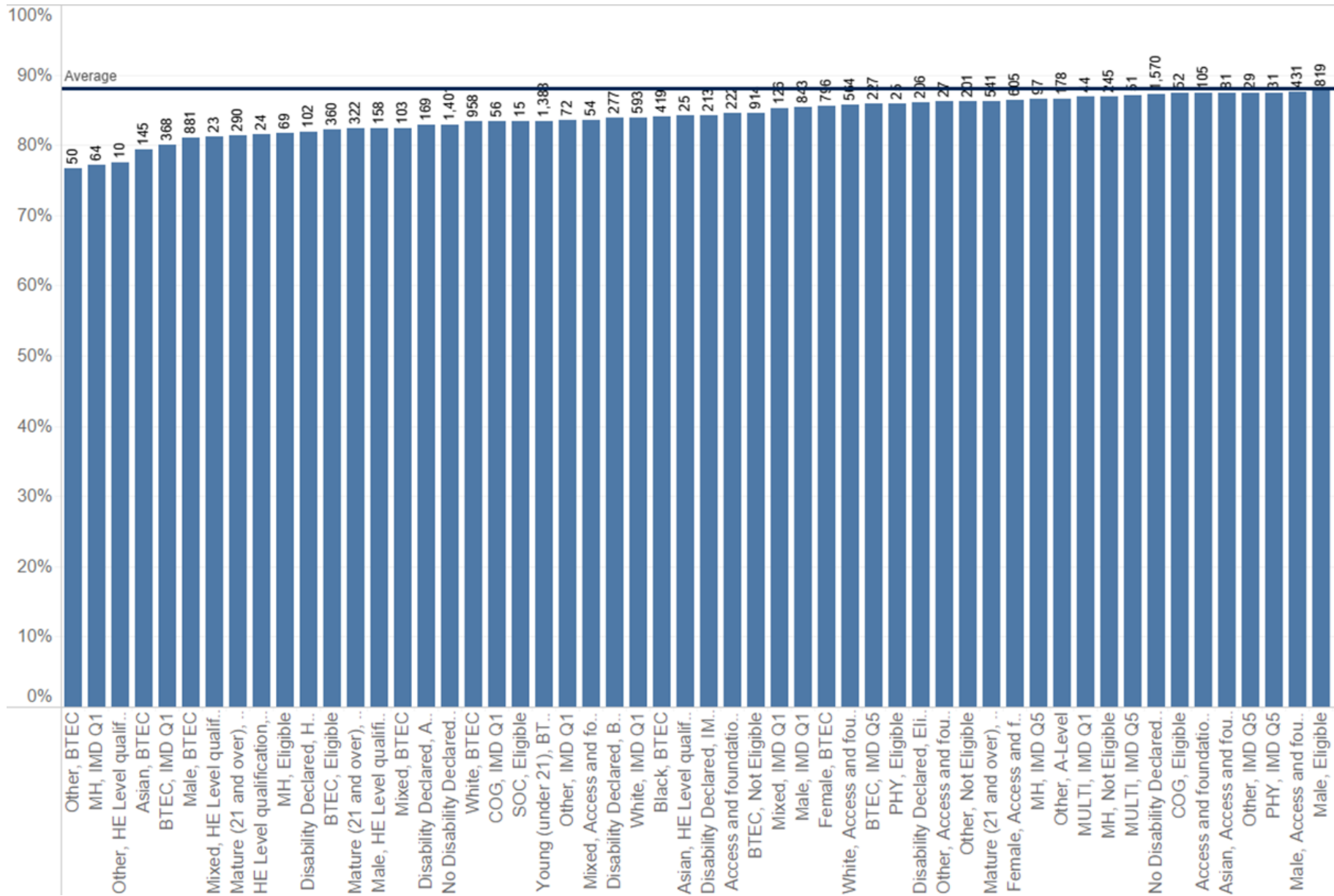
Table 8: Completion data showing the proportion (%) and percentage point gap (% Gap) for students split by characteristic

		2012-13 %	2012-13 % Gap	2013-14 %	2013-14 % Gap	2014-15 %	2014-15 % Gap	2015-16 %	2015-16 % Gap	2016-17 %	2016-17 % Gap	2017-18 %	2017-18 % Gap
Age	Mature (21 and over)	84.5%	-9.0%	84.1%	-9.9%	87.0%	-5.6%	85.8%	-6.8%	90.5%	-0.7%	82.7%	-5.9%
	Young (under 21)	93.5%		94.0%		92.7%		92.6%		91.2%		88.6%	
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	88.2%	-4.8%	91.2%	-2.0%	89.1%	-3.1%	89.6%	-2.4%	90.2%	-0.9%	84.5%	-3.8%
	No Disability Declared	93.0%		93.2%		92.2%		92.0%		91.2%		88.3%	
Disability Detailed	Cognitive or learning difficult..	88.9%	-4.1%	90.0%	-3.2%	90.1%	-2.1%	92.8%	0.8%	95.8%	4.7%	87.3%	-1.0%
	Mental health condition	70.6%	-22.4%	92.9%	-0.3%	95.8%	3.7%	82.1%	-9.8%	81.0%	-10.1%	82.5%	-5.8%
	Multiple impairments	86.7%	-6.3%	94.1%	0.9%	78.3%	-13.9%	94.7%	2.7%	90.7%	-0.5%	80.4%	-7.9%
	Sensory, medical or phys..	96.6%	3.6%	88.6%	-4.6%	87.8%	-4.4%	87.7%	-4.3%	86.0%	-5.1%	88.9%	0.6%
	Social or communication ..		7.0%		6.8%		7.8%		8.0%		8.8%	81.0%	-7.3%
	No Disability Declared	93.0%		93.2%		92.2%		92.0%		91.2%		88.3%	
Entry Qualifications	Access and foundation cour..	80.2%	-14.8%	84.2%	-10.8%	84.5%	-8.9%	88.9%	-5.2%	87.4%	-7.0%	82.9%	-9.0%
	BTEC	82.9%	-12.1%	85.6%	-9.4%	89.0%	-4.4%	81.9%	-12.2%	79.1%	-15.4%	74.9%	-17.0%
	HE Level qualification	97.2%	2.2%	98.0%	3.0%	89.9%	-3.4%	87.8%	-6.3%	92.4%	-2.1%	86.4%	-5.4%
	A-Level	95.0%		95.0%		93.3%		94.1%		94.5%		91.9%	
Ethnicity (All ages)	Asian	94.3%	1.3%	95.3%	2.4%	92.5%	1.8%	91.9%	0.3%	91.1%	0.1%	90.4%	3.3%
	Black	88.2%	-4.7%	93.7%	0.7%	94.6%	3.9%	91.7%	0.0%	91.0%	0.0%	88.9%	1.9%
	Mixed	89.3%	-3.7%	90.4%	-2.6%	90.1%	-0.6%	92.6%	1.0%	88.9%	-2.1%	87.1%	0.0%
	Other	83.3%	-9.6%	87.0%	-6.0%	94.7%	4.0%	90.5%	-1.2%	96.7%	5.7%	80.6%	-6.5%
	White	92.9%		93.0%		90.7%		91.6%		91.0%		87.1%	
Free School Meals	Eligible	94.6%	-2.5%	94.7%	1.4%	93.4%	0.6%	91.5%	-1.5%	86.5%	-5.5%	86.1%	-3.7%
	Not Eligible	97.1%		93.3%		92.8%		93.0%		92.0%		89.9%	
IMD (2019)	IMD 1	87.8%	-6.9%	90.6%	-2.8%	92.9%	-1.4%	89.8%	-4.5%	90.7%	-3.7%	84.3%	-8.2%
	IMD 5	94.7%		93.4%		94.3%		94.2%		94.4%		92.6%	
Sex	Female	94.6%	4.2%	93.2%	0.4%	93.5%	3.5%	93.5%	3.6%	93.0%	3.8%	91.6%	7.6%
	Male	90.4%		92.8%		90.1%		89.9%		89.2%		84.0%	

Table 9: Completion data showing the proportion (%) and count for entry qualifications split by disability type and IMD Quintile 1 and Quintile 5.

		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
		%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Disability Declared	A-Level	91.0%	71	96.1%	98	91.2%	114	91.8%	157	94.1%	160	90.2%	174
	foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff...	84.2%	16	75.0%	9	81.0%	17	84.2%	16	90.0%	27	69.4%	25
	BTEC	85.0%	17	77.3%	17	89.7%	26	84.6%	44	80.0%	32	80.4%	45
	HE Level qualification	100.0%	6	100.0%	9	81.8%	9	86.7%	13	84.2%	16	85.0%	17
No Disability Declared	A-Level	95.3%	977	94.9%	1,107	93.5%	1,358	94.4%	1,300	94.5%	1,424	92.1%	1,410
	foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff...	79.2%	57	85.5%	71	85.0%	108	89.9%	80	86.9%	133	85.1%	183
	BTEC	82.5%	104	86.8%	132	88.9%	168	81.4%	214	78.9%	225	73.9%	229
	HE Level qualification	96.7%	29	97.6%	40	90.9%	80	88.0%	66	93.9%	93	86.7%	85
IMD Quintile 1	A-Level	91.1%	113	94.4%	168	95.4%	228	95.9%	187	94.4%	238	90.9%	249
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff...	68.4%	13	77.8%	21	87.5%	28	92.0%	23	100.0%	33	77.3%	34
	BTEC	90.9%	20	85.7%	30	83.3%	35	77.5%	62	75.8%	50	68.2%	58
	HE Level qualification	80.0%	4	100.0%	2	94.1%	16	80.0%	8	95.8%	23	90.5%	19
IMD Quintile 5	A-Level	96.3%	262	95.6%	281	94.3%	297	95.7%	314	96.6%	336	93.0%	307
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff...	90.9%	10	78.6%	11	88.9%	16	90.0%	9	79.2%	19	97.1%	34
	BTEC	78.3%	18	83.8%	31	100.0%	31	87.5%	49	87.0%	40	88.1%	37
	HE Level qualification	100.0%	8	100.0%	9	93.8%	15	88.9%	16	90.5%	19	92.3%	12

Figure 9: Completion bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions for each characteristic.
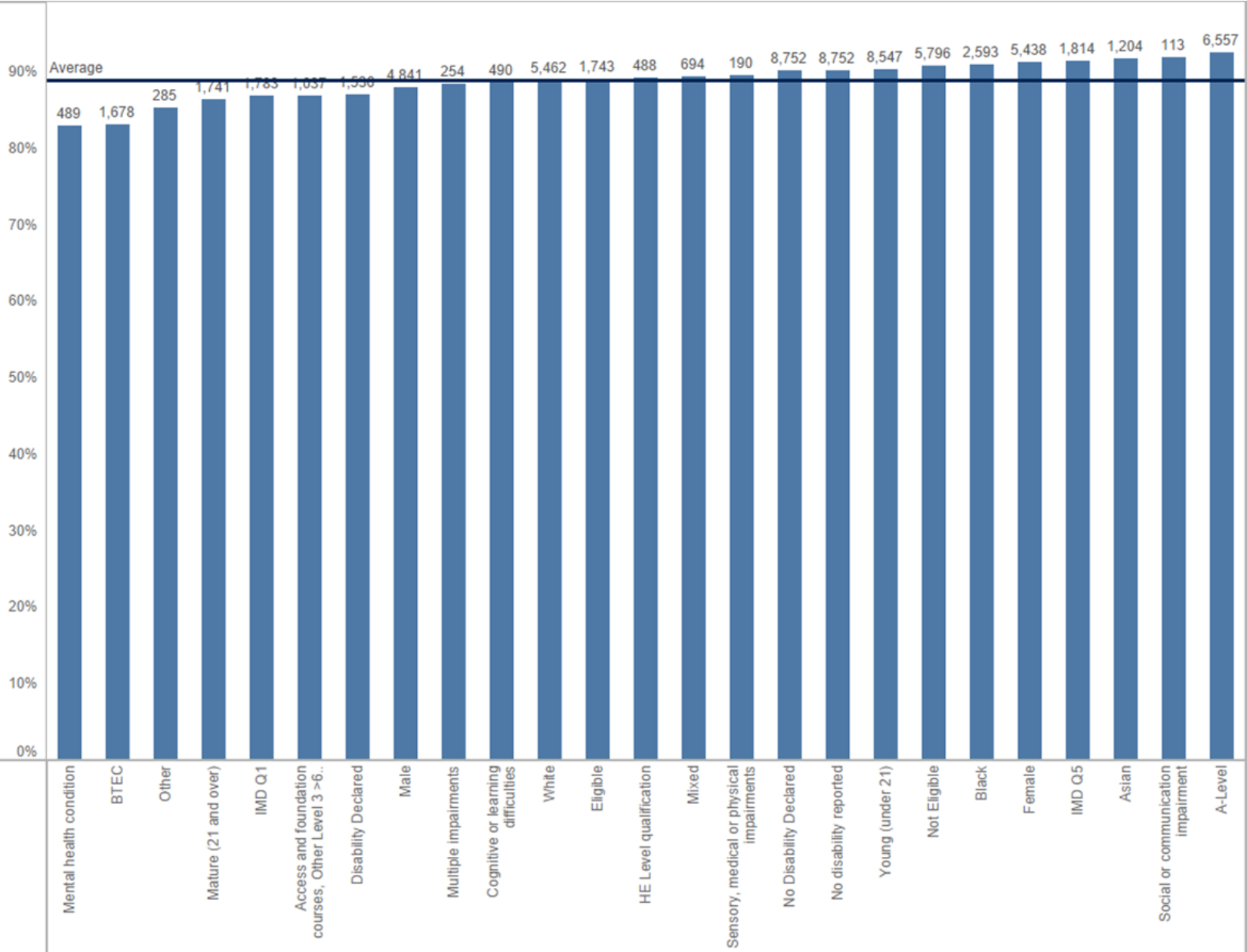
Figure 10: Completion bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions below average continuation for two-way characteristic splits.
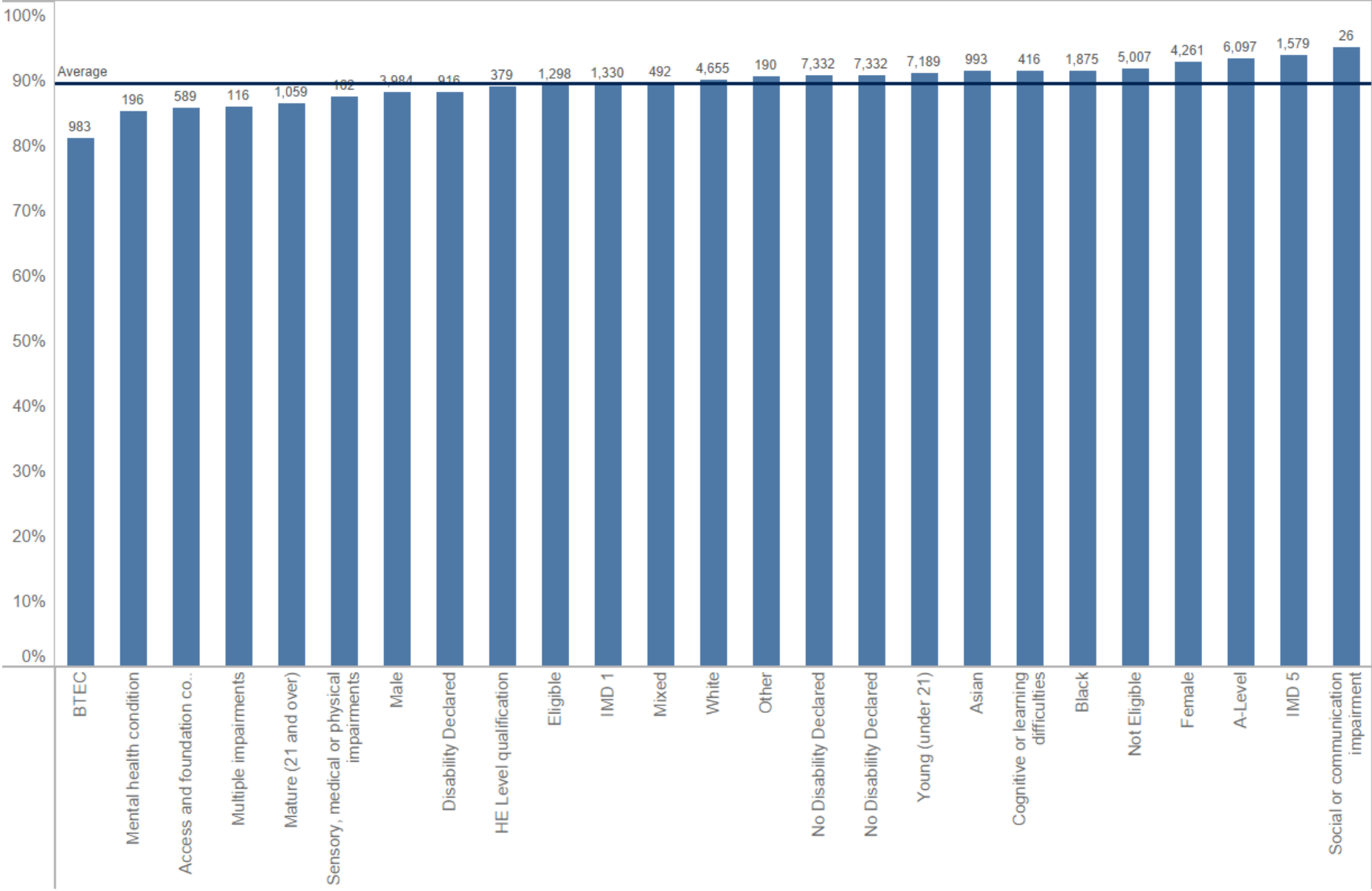
Table 10: Attainment data showing the proportion (%) and percentage point gap (% Gap) for students split by characteristic

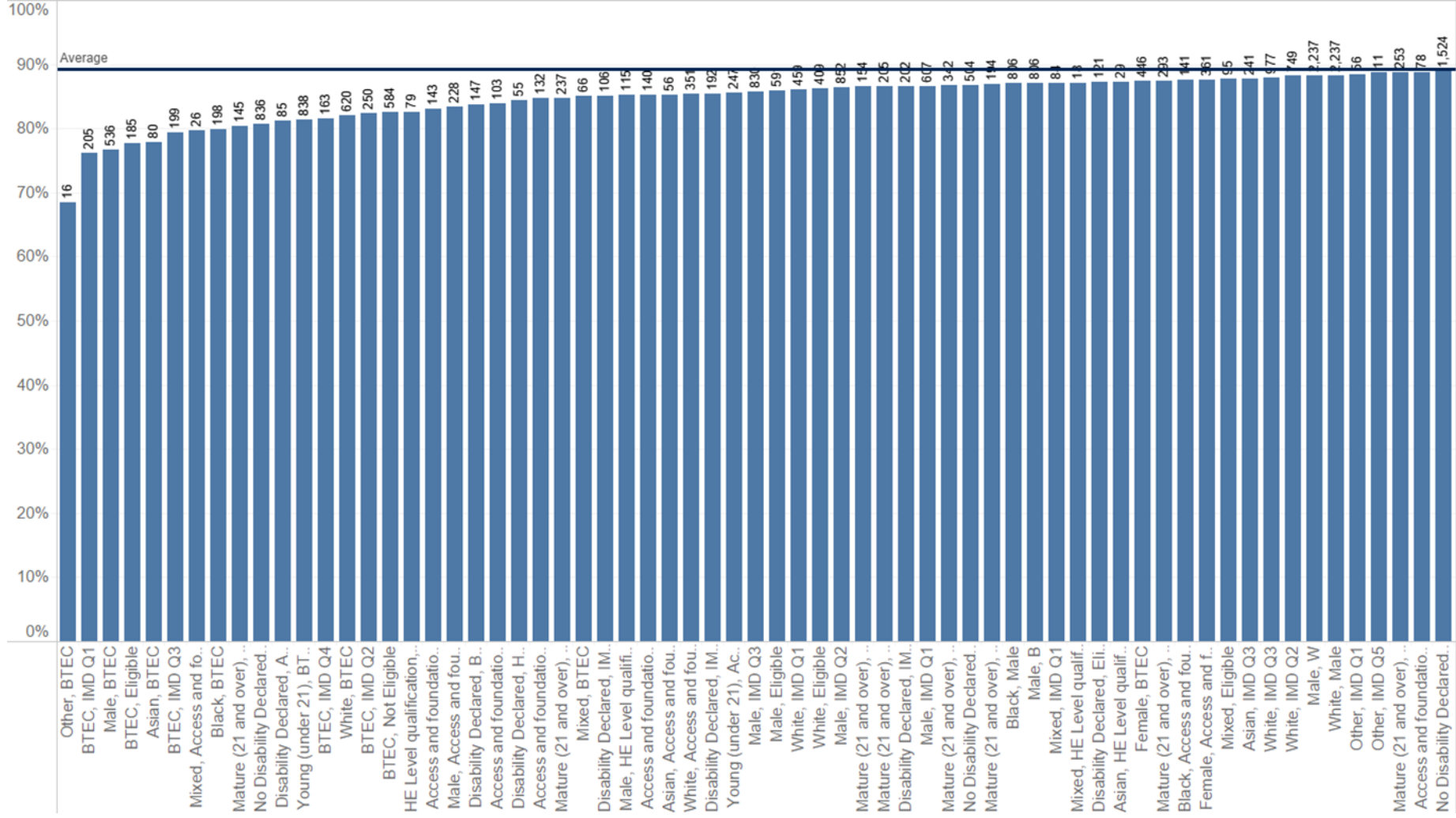|		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
		%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap
Age	Mature (21 and over)	78.2%	-5.7%	72.6%	-5.3%	73.5%	-3.5%	74.5%	-7.2%	82.7%	-6.7%	80.3%	-1.9%
	Young (under 21)	83.9%		77.9%		76.9%		81.8%		89.3%		82.2%	
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	84.6%	1.5%	82.8%	6.4%	81.7%	6.1%	86.8%	7.2%	90.8%	2.7%	81.7%	-0.3%
	No Disability Declared	83.0%		76.4%		75.6%		79.6%		88.1%		82.0%	
Disability Detailed	Cognitive or learning difficulties	88.2%	5.2%	80.6%	4.1%	85.0%	9.4%	87.6%	8.0%	86.9%	-1.2%	77.9%	-4.0%
	Mental health condition	86.7%	3.6%	79.2%	2.8%	78.7%	3.0%	87.0%	7.3%	89.5%	1.4%	83.8%	1.8%
	Multiple impairments	70.0%	-13.0%	96.2%	19.7%	88.5%	12.8%	94.3%	14.6%	93.8%	5.7%	89.1%	7.1%
	Sensory, medical or physical impairmen..	84.0%	1.0%	87.9%	11.5%	70.4%	-5.3%	75.0%	-4.6%	100.0%	11.9%	77.8%	-4.2%
	Social or communication imp..	83.3%	0.3%	80.0%	3.6%	75.0%	-0.6%	92.3%	12.7%	100.0%	11.9%	83.3%	1.3%
	No disability reported	83.0%		76.4%		75.6%		79.6%		88.1%		82.0%	
Entry Qualifications	Access and foundation courses..	75.2%	-10.2%	66.3%	-13.5%	72.5%	-6.4%	75.1%	-9.2%	83.6%	-7.5%	70.7%	-16.0%
	BTEC	77.9%	-7.5%	67.0%	-12.8%	67.5%	-11.3%	67.7%	-16.6%	78.9%	-12.2%	67.9%	-18.7%
	HE Level qualification	73.8%	-11.6%	73.7%	-6.1%	71.0%	-7.9%	75.7%	-8.6%	87.3%	-3.8%	77.1%	-9.6%
	A-Level	85.4%		79.8%		78.8%		84.4%		91.0%		86.7%	
Ethnicity (All ages)	Asian	79.2%	-8.9%	67.3%	-16.8%	68.1%	-15.7%	84.1%	-2.7%	91.1%	0.1%	86.9%	1.6%
	Black	68.5%	-19.6%	63.7%	-20.4%	62.8%	-21.0%	73.9%	-12.9%	82.6%	-8.4%	73.3%	-12.1%
	Mixed	81.3%	-6.7%	79.5%	-4.7%	72.3%	-11.5%	82.8%	-4.0%	87.6%	-3.4%	84.9%	-0.4%
	Other	79.2%	-8.9%	63.4%	-20.7%	70.9%	-12.9%	82.5%	-4.3%	84.9%	-6.1%	79.1%	-6.2%
	White	88.1%		84.1%		83.8%		86.8%		91.0%		85.3%	
Free School Meals	Eligible	79.2%	-6.8%	69.1%	-11.8%	71.7%	-7.2%	72.9%	-12.0%	85.8%	-4.6%	77.2%	-7.4%
	Not Eligible	85.9%		80.8%		78.9%		84.9%		90.4%		84.6%	
IMD (2019)	IMD Quintile 1	78.7%	-10.7%	68.3%	-19.6%	68.5%	-14.8%	75.3%	-8.4%	84.4%	-8.2%	73.9%	-15.3%
	IMD Quintile 5	89.4%		87.9%		83.3%		83.8%		92.6%		89.2%	
Sex	Female	83.7%	1.2%	79.7%	5.3%	80.1%	8.1%	80.3%	-0.6%	89.1%	1.3%	83.0%	2.2%
	Male	82.5%		74.4%		72.0%		80.8%		87.8%		80.7%	

Table 11: Attainment data showing the proportion (%) and count for entry qualifications split by disability type and IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5

		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
		%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Disability Declared	A-Level	82.7%	139	82.9%	145	89.2%	149	92.1%	221	87.7%	199
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 t..	92.9%	13	75.0%	9	85.7%	30	84.8%	28	64.1%	25
	BTEC	79.5%	31	77.5%	31	82.0%	41	86.7%	39	74.3%	52
	HE Level qualification	80.0%	16	88.9%	16	82.6%	19	96.2%	25	79.2%	19
No Disability Declared	A-Level	79.4%	1,062	78.3%	977	83.8%	1,162	90.9%	1,291	86.5%	1,088
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 t..	61.9%	52	72.2%	70	72.9%	121	83.3%	145	72.6%	98
	BTEC	64.1%	107	65.4%	123	64.6%	148	77.5%	200	66.3%	179
	HE Level qualification	72.6%	82	67.9%	72	74.7%	112	84.5%	71	76.3%	45
IMD Quintile 1	A-Level	73.3%	154	71.0%	149	79.1%	189	87.7%	229	83.0%	181
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 ..	53.8%	14	78.9%	15	76.3%	29	73.7%	28	62.1%	18
	BTEC	54.0%	27	63.0%	29	65.9%	29	76.1%	51	56.8%	42
	HE Level qualification	71.4%	15	56.5%	13	64.7%	22	85.7%	12	46.2%	6
IMD Quintile 5	A-Level	89.4%	279	86.3%	259	86.8%	275	95.2%	318	91.8%	293
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 ..	75.0%	6	80.0%	12	65.5%	19	89.5%	34	72.0%	18
	BTEC	75.0%	21	71.1%	32	71.8%	28	85.7%	48	75.0%	33
	HE Level qualification	86.4%	19	66.7%	16	95.5%	21	85.0%	17	100.0%	17

Figure 11: Attainment bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions for each characteristic.
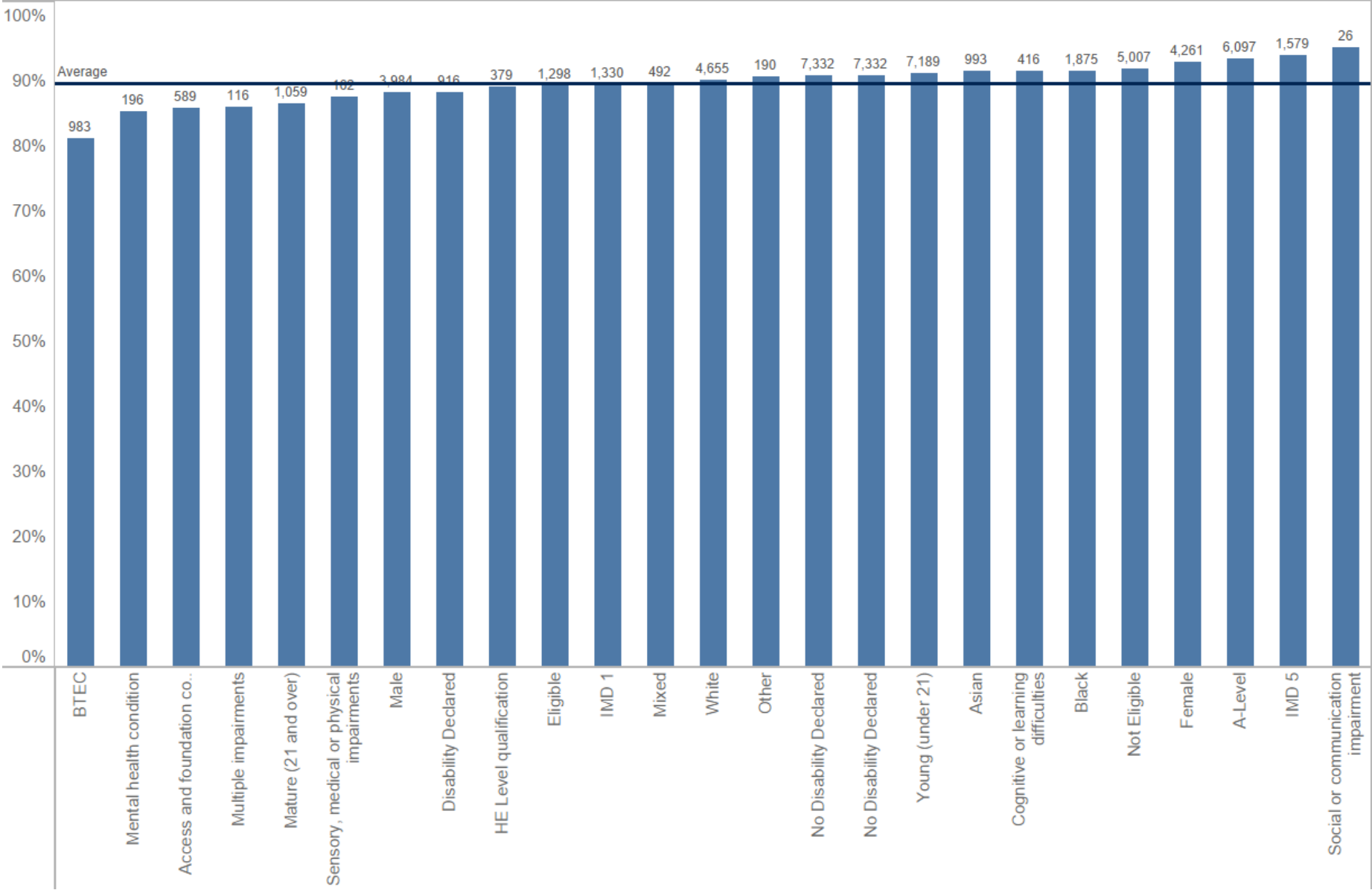
Figure 12: Attainment bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions below average continuation for two-way characteristic splits.

Table 12: Progression data showing the proportion (%) and percentage point gap (% Gap) for students split by characteristic

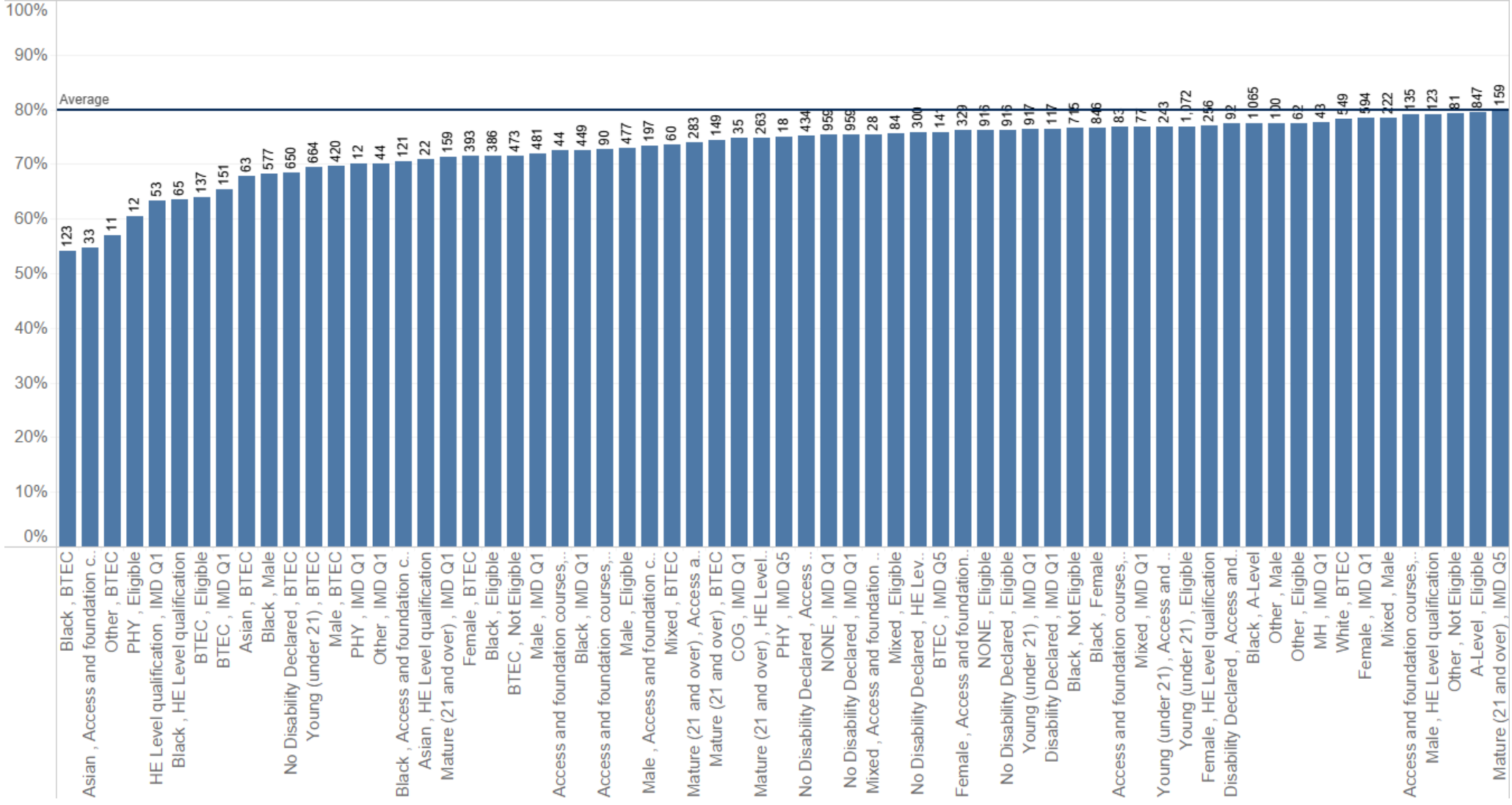|		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
		%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap	%	% Gap
Age	Mature (21 and over)	82.5%	10.8%	80.8%	13.5%	84.9%	16.1%	84.0%	12.8%
	Young (under 21)	71.7%		67.3%		68.7%		71.2%	
Disability Broad	Disability Declared	73.2%	0.2%	68.5%	-0.7%	70.8%	-0.6%	75.8%	3.6%
	No Disability Declared	73.0%		69.2%		71.5%		72.2%	
Disability Detailed	Cognitive or learning difficulties	71.6%	-1.4%	74.5%	5.3%	74.4%	2.9%	78.9%	6.7%
	Mental health condition	81.0%	8.0%	50.4%	-18.7%	64.6%	-6.9%	74.6%	2.5%
	Multiple impairments	62.9%	-10.1%	66.7%	-2.5%	72.4%	1.0%	71.8%	-0.4%
	Sensory, medical or physical impairments	65.0%	-8.0%	89.5%	20.3%	76.9%	5.5%	80.8%	8.7%
	Social or communication impair..	100.0%	27.0%	0.0%	-69.2%	66.7%	-4.7%	62.0%	-10.2%
	No disability reported	73.0%		69.2%		71.5%		72.2%	
Entry Qualifications	Access and foundation courses, Other Level ..	74.0%	2.8%	71.5%	4.2%	79.5%	11.5%	75.9%	4.7%
	BTEC	78.4%	7.2%	70.8%	3.4%	74.4%	6.3%	72.2%	1.0%
	HE Level qualification	85.7%	14.5%	80.9%	13.6%	88.1%	20.1%	87.7%	16.4%
	A-Level	71.2%		67.3%		68.1%		71.2%	
Ethnicity (All ages)	Asian	75.2%	1.4%	70.7%	0.9%	70.6%	0.0%	73.8%	-0.5%
	Black	69.1%	-4.7%	67.0%	-2.8%	74.7%	4.0%	70.3%	-4.0%
	Mixed	72.5%	-1.2%	67.8%	-2.0%	70.1%	-0.5%	70.8%	-3.5%
	Other	81.9%	8.1%	58.9%	-10.9%	63.6%	-7.0%	66.7%	-7.6%
	White	73.8%		69.8%		70.6%		74.3%	
Free School Meals	Eligible	69.6%	-1.8%	60.1%	-8.2%	68.1%	0.5%	65.8%	-5.6%
	Not Eligible	71.4%		68.3%		67.6%		71.4%	
IMD (2019)	IMD Quintile 1	72.5%	-2.2%	66.0%	-4.0%	72.5%	0.2%	72.5%	-1.2%
	IMD Quintile 5	74.8%		70.0%		72.3%		73.7%	
Sex	Female	72.6%	-0.8%	67.3%	-3.7%	73.7%	5.1%	71.0%	-3.4%
	Male	73.4%		71.1%		68.6%		74.5%	

Table 13: Progression data showing the proportion (%) and count for entry qualifications split by disability type and IMD quintile 1 and quintile 5

| | | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | |
		%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Disability Declared	A-Level	68.3%	72	65.3%	65	70.5%	75	74.5%	124
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tar..	60.0%	3	71.4%	5	59.5%	17	77.8%	19
	BTEC	90.0%	18	75.0%	18	76.0%	27	71.7%	19
	HE Level qualification	91.7%	11	87.9%	10	77.8%	14	82.5%	16
No Disability Declared	A-Level	71.6%	537	67.6%	487	67.8%	567	70.6%	603
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tar..	75.6%	34	71.5%	39	84.8%	91	75.4%	72
	BTEC	75.5%	60	69.7%	68	74.0%	92	72.3%	111
	HE Level qualification	84.5%	51	79.5%	45	90.8%	63	89.6%	46
IMD Quintile 1	A-Level	69.7%	78	61.5%	67	70.6%	103	72.2%	114
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	69.2%	9	66.7%	6	82.7%	21	64.5%	10
	BTEC	81.8%	18	77.8%	19	60.5%	16	80.0%	36
	HE Level qualification	83.3%	10	90.9%	10	92.6%	17	70.0%	7
IMD Quintile 5	A-Level	73.8%	147	67.8%	119	71.5%	138	71.6%	150
	Access and foundation courses, Other Level 3 >65 tariff points	66.7%	2	66.7%	6	73.0%	12	83.4%	17
	BTEC	89.5%	17	78.3%	18	79.4%	17	76.4%	24
	HE Level qualification	71.3%	11	78.4%	13	90.9%	10	84.6%	11

Figure 13: Progression bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions for each characteristic
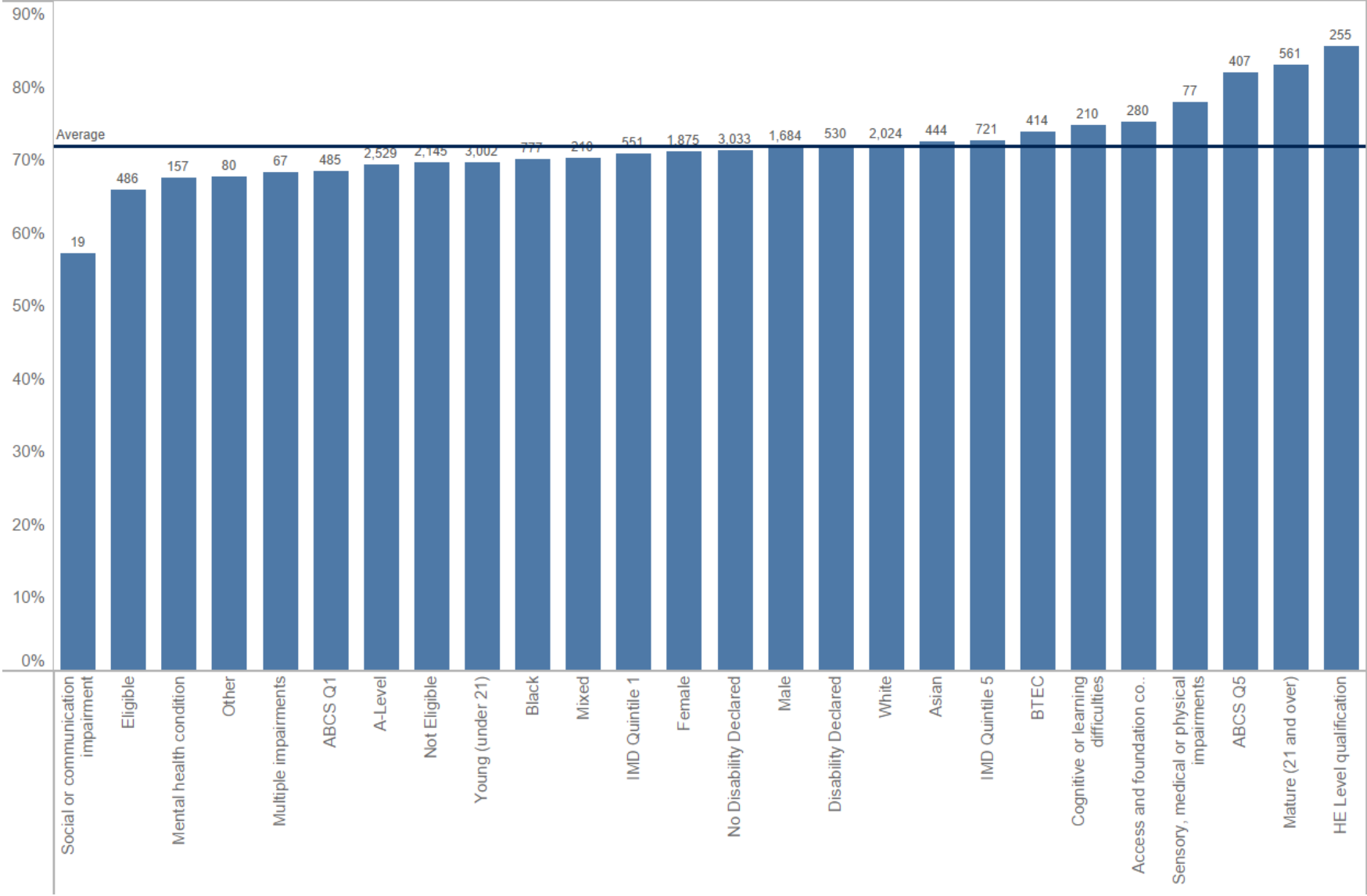
Figure 14:Progression bar chart showing 4-year average (2018-19 to 2021-22) proportions below average continuation for two-way characteristic splits.
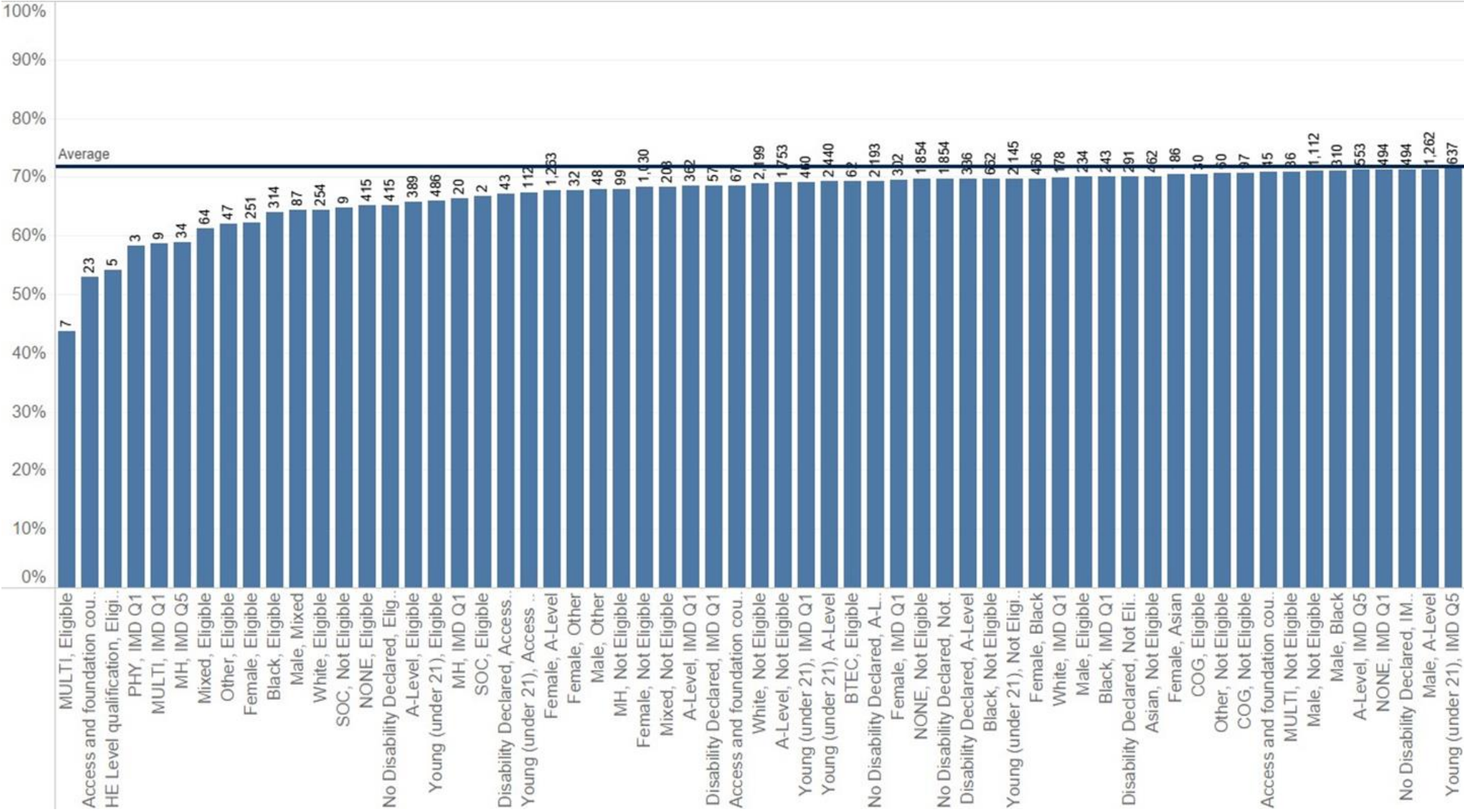
Evidence base and rationale for intervention strategies (further detail)

Intervention strategy 1: Access

1. Our Assessment of Performance (Annex A) identified that whilst the University of Essex has no significant gaps in access measures, in-line with the sector, we have seen men fall as a proportion of applicants and registered students over the past four years. We have a relatively low proportion of men registering on programmes in Health and Social Care. Our rationale draws on this as an objective, but also considers the wider sector picture of underrepresentation by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Q1[1] in accessing university generally. Our success in this area at the University of Essex means that we are well placed to commit to addressing this national risk.

2. Our proposed intervention activities have considered the following risks[2] as they relate to Access:

    ▪ Risk 1: Knowledge and Skills

    ▪ Risk 2: Information and Guidance

    ▪ Risk 4: Application Success Rates

    ▪ Risk 10: Cost Pressures

3. We have a range of established interventions in place, and a mature Theory of Change approach to all our access activities. Our own evidence base and the wider literature available have informed the development of our intervention activities:

    ▪ Mentoring

    ▪ Maths Club and Book Club Attainment Raising

    ▪ Summer Residential

    ▪ Healthcare Science Partnership

    ▪ Essex Futures Bursary

    Rationale: Access

4. Mentoring interventions will address the attainment of Level 4 qualifications in our region. The percentage of residents gaining a Level 4 qualification is significantly lower in some areas of Essex (for example, 21.4% of Tendring residents are qualified to Level 4, compared with 47.3% nationally[3]). Young people within these areas are therefore less likely to have access to positive role models within higher education (HE), resulting in less knowledge of the benefits

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[1] The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small, fixed geographic areas of the UK. IMD classifies these areas into five quintiles based on relative disadvantage, with quintile 1 being the most deprived and quintile 5 being the least deprived.

[2] Equality of Opportunity Risk Register - Office for Students

[3] ONS Annual population survey, 2023

of, and opportunities to access, post-16 education, as well as lower confidence in, and fewer aspirations related to, accessing university. Mentoring is an impactful, progressive intervention for young people and leads to improved attainment.[4] If learners can discuss their options with someone who has been in their position, they make informed choices concerning their course and career choice.

5. We have developed interventions related to the Book Club and the Maths Club as partnership working with schools in raising attainment. There is an attainment gap in GCSE outcomes between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, with GCSE attainment a strong predictor of HE progression and therefore a key priority for the sector. In 2020, nationally, 29.9% of students who were eligible for Free School Meals attained a Grade 5 or higher in GCSE English, compared with 57% of non-eligible students. Our intervention will also address the disparity between some of our local partnership schools. The Book Club will support students to develop analytical skills and capacity for creative and innovative thinking within the curriculum, which will increase GCSE outcomes for the target group.

6. The Maths Club is based on the same raising attainment rationale. It aims to improve Maths outcomes at GCSE level for students who are at risk of not obtaining a Grade 4 from our target groups, by the provision of additional tuition. Small group tuition has an average impact of four months' additional progress over the course of one year[5].

7. Our Summer Residential will provide participating students with the Information and Guidance and Knowledge and Skills to access HE. Internally, we can evidence the impact of this activity on access rates; but we have also considered the available national data. TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education) commissioned an evidence review of 90 studies in 2020 and found that summer schools can provide a structured environment where students can experience university life, which demystifies university and makes it more attainable[6]. We acknowledge that more progress needs to be made in improving the number of male students accessing our Healthcare courses. The intervention we propose has been based on a successful health and social care pilot programme delivered in 2023-24 through a partnership between the University of Essex and the Northeast Essex Integrated Care Board. We will engage with stakeholders across the East of England to ensure students are able to access relatable role models and a programme of activity to engage and inspire target groups to consider training and a career in the sector. Students in the East of England do not have existing high levels of knowledge around healthcare science related degrees and career

[4] EEF framework Education Endowment Foundation | EEF
[5] EEF framework Education Endowment Foundation | EEF
[6] The impact of interventions for widening access to higher education: a review of the evidence - Education Policy Institute (epi.org.uk)

pathways[7] and, although NHS data from January 2024 depict a diverse workforce in healthcare science[8], the 2021 Get It Right First-Time report[9] estimates that the NHS needs to expand its workforce significantly in the East of England to function efficiently.

8. In terms of our financial support package for students from low-income backgrounds, our most impactful intervention to address Risk 4 has been the implementation of our Essex Futures Bursary. Internal data show that this bursary supports both access and continuation. This is evidenced by a wealth of sector research. The Office for Students (OfS) Fair Access Toolkit also supports this rationale, with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) having reported that, nationally, students receiving bursaries are more likely to continue their studies and succeed academically, compared with their peers who do not receive such support. The National Union of Students (NUS) calls this support 'crucial in enabling students from low-income backgrounds to enter and remain in Higher Education'[10].

Intervention strategy 2: Continuation and Completion

9. Our Assessment of Performance identifies lower continuation and completion rates for students entering the University of Essex with a BTEC entry qualification compared with those that entered with A-Levels. Nuffield Foundation national analysis also finds that students with BTEC entry qualifications are twice as likely as students with A-Level entry qualifications to drop out before the second year of study[11]. Students entering with non-A-Level and vocational qualifications are less likely, nationally, to continue their studies (Banerjee, 2018)[12]. To further understand the interventions we can employ to mitigate these risks, we completed a literature review using a range of published academic resources.

10. As set out in our Assessment of Performance, the lower continuation and completion rates for this group were particularly in evidence when intersections related to ethnicity and IMD Quintile 1 were considered.

11. Our proposed intervention activities have considered the following national risks:

- Risk 1: Knowledge and Skills
- Risk 2: Information and Guidance

- Risk 6: Insufficient Academic support
- Risk 7: Insufficient Personal Support

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[7] Measuring the disadvantage gap in 16-19 education - Education Policy Institute (epi.org.uk)
[8] National Workforce Data Set (NWD) guidance documents - NHS England Digital
[9] Reports - Getting It Right First Time - GIRFT
[10] Bursaries, Scholarships and Grants - Fair Access Toolkit
[11] Nuffield Foundation. (2022, January). Students with BTECs are successful across a range of university outcomes. Retrieved from: https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/news/students-with-btecs-university-success
[12] Banerjee, P. A. (2018, May). How successful are BTEC students at university? WonkHE. Retrieved from: https://wonkhe.com/blogs/how-successful-are-btec-students-at-university/

12. Our activities have been designed to address the disparities that students face when entering with non-A-Level and vocational qualifications in, and more broadly where, students face further risk resulting from intersecting characteristics:

- The Essex Preparation Programme will proactively assist these students with the development of their academic skills prior to the start of their undergraduate programme. The additional bursary for BTEC students incentivises students to develop the skills that will support their success at university. A tailored and targeted Personal Tutor Referral Programme, designed proactively to enable academic and support staff to address the opportunities for developing and practising key academic literacy skills that are most relevant to BTEC students and address the risks that face them.

- The introduction of a related self-diagnostic survey within the academic year to understand progress in students building academic confidence. This is an essential element of the academic/student review process. This will be complementary to the engagement data, which provides a range of real time intelligence at key points in the student life cycle, to initiate interventions and support with academic progress or engagement concerns tailored to the student. Additional and dedicated follow up support that is undertaken centrally by the Student Progress Team on a personal tutor referral basis. This activity supports academic staff to ensure early intervention when it would benefit individual students.

- The Academic Framework Consultation will ensure that sector best practice in terms of learning architecture, study intensity and reassessment policy are all applied to the benefit under-represented students.

- The Contextual Offer Policy Review will enable us to understand the impact of the policy introduced in 2024-25 which enables lower tariff offers to be made to some students. The continuation rate will be evaluated in 2025-26, and the completion rate will be evaluated from 2026-27. Where areas for additional intervention are identified, these will be commenced within the lifespan of this Access and Participation Plan (APP).

Rationale: Continuation and Completion

13. Students who enter with non-A-Level and vocational qualifications may not experience equality of opportunity in the context of the identified risks, which can also be exacerbated by intersectionality. This is particularly evident when BTECs are considered but applies to a lesser extent for other vocational qualifications. Proposed interventions have focused on addressing Academic and Personal support for these students as a route to mitigation.

14. Given the diversity of our student population and the range of entry qualifications represented within our cohorts, we do not assume that all students have the same expectations of HE or understanding of the terms that we use in relation to learning. In addressing these challenges,

universities should increase support during the first year of study for students who have undertaken vocational entry qualifications (Thomas et al., 2022[13]). Embedding learning development into course content should include actively addressing where and when the opportunities for developing and practising key academic literacy skills are situated in the curriculum. This 'good programme design' forms part of the rationale for the Essex Preparation Programme and the development of a new academic framework.

15. The Essex Preparation Programme (EPP), our established study skills programme, has proven an effective tool for increasing the knowledge and skills of applicants to the University and provides a range of information they will need to achieve a successful outcome from their studies. Students who complete the programme have increased continuation and completion rates, and achieved higher attainment.

16. The TASO evidence toolkit on financial support (pre-entry) indicates that bursaries, when combined with proactive campaigns and messaging, and when targeted at students using a needs-based criteria (rather than a merit-based criteria), can help prospective students understand and access information that is available to them (TASO)[14]. We have therefore proposed increased bursaries to support BTEC students to complete the EPP.

17. Currently in its initial discovery and consultation phase, our new academic framework will be designed and implemented with the key objective of bringing sector best-practice to the design and delivery of our academic programmes. A range of sector research has been considered within our planning and which we have provided here[15] - it indicates a positive impact on the national risks relating to cost pressures, academic and personal support, and assessment opportunities.

18. The University's Personal Tutoring Programme is well established and continually developed to assist academic staff in further delivering targeted support to students. There is a range of evidence indicating that different tools and strategies can be deployed for students who face risks to student success. The 'What Works Phase 2' final report on supporting student retention and success notes the need for proactive and personalised interventions that are evidence-informed, ongoing, monitored, and followed up (Thomas et al, 2017).[16]

[13] Thomas, P., Khanom, N., Lambe, S., Adelaja, B. and Mehbali, M. (2022). Constructing an academic skills toolkit for embedding academic practices. Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education, 24. https://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/view/832/605

[14] TASO Evidence Toolkit: Financial support (pre entry): retrieved from https://taso.org.uk/intervention/financial-support-pre-entry/

[15] https://essexuniversity.box.com/s/adqgy6ng7eoh94iwr2hvwie2ynpjrem7

[16] Thomas, L., Hill, M., O'Mahony, J., & Yorke, M. (2017, April). Supporting student success: strategies for institutional change. https://documents.advance-he.ac.uk/download/file/document/4761?_ga=2.161516348.1467210747.1720449251-1237425787.1720449251

19. Personal Tutor Programmes need to consider the different experience and requirements of students entering with vocational qualifications. Curriculum considerations, learning styles and environment, and timetabling may all be unfamiliar to BTEC students entering HE (NEON, 2020)[17]. The TASO evidence toolkit outlines causal evidence that learner analytics interventions can improve students' outcomes by enabling early identification of the challenges they may experience[18]. The University continually reviews and adjusts our Learner Engagement Analytics Portal (LEAP) and the data that is monitored to improve student outcomes.

Intervention Strategy 3: Attainment

20. Our Assessment of Performance process identified that Black and Minority Ethnic students face risks to their equality of opportunity in terms of attainment. Outcomes vary by ethnicity group with Black students facing the highest risk. To further understand the potential rationale and the activities we may be able to employ to mitigate these risks, we completed a literature review using the range of published academic resources.

21. Lower attainment rates were particularly evident when intersections related to ethnicity and entry qualifications were considered, and we have considered this in setting our intervention strategies.

22. Our proposed intervention activities have considered the following national risks:

- Risk 6 – Insufficient Academic Support
- Risk 7 – Insufficient Personal Support
- Risk 12 – Progression from Higher Education

23. Our activities are designed to increase the attainment of Black students in achieving upper-second- and first-class degrees so that no statistically significant gap exists between Black and White Students for this measure of student success. These include:

- Carrying out a review of policies and procedures to understand how they affect and could better support the attainment of different student groups. This is an extension of our academic framework review and includes academic offences procedures, academic appeals policy, the extenuating circumstances policy and the late submission process.

- Providing a tailored and targeted Personal Tutor Programme. Successful pilots have already been undertaken and will be embedded in the Race Equality Action Plan from 2024-25. Black, full-time undergraduate students will be assigned a named personal tutor for a three-year period, with the first session delivered within four weeks of registration.

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17 NEON (2020). Guiding principles to inform the successful progression of BTEC students into higher education. Retrieved from https://www.educationopportunities.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/A2300-Pearson-BTEC-Neon22PG-PRF5-1.pdf
18 TASO evidence toolkit: Learning analytics. Retrieved from: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/learning-analytics-postentry/ .

- Increasing the range of assessment types (optionality) to enable students to play to their strengths.

- Supporting belonging at Essex with a campaign based on the findings of our OfS funded Transitions and Transformations (T&T) project (the impact of role modelling), and our Race Equality Charter (REC) commitment.

Rationale: Attainment

24. This ethnicity attainment gap exists across the sector, with the largest gap seen between Black and White students. For more than two-thirds of universities, the gap is above 10%.[19] While the attainment gap is lower at Essex when compared to the sector, it remains persistent. Our literature review outlined the many reasons for the attainment gap and the challenges that Black students disproportionately face[20].

25. The assessment policy was adjusted to reflect our commitment to 'no detriment' to students during the COVID-19 pandemic and, in line with the sector, these adjustments benefited all undergraduate students[21] but most significantly benefited students from underrepresented groups. Alongside this intervention proposal, diverse and inclusive curriculum design and delivery benefits all students and our decolonising the curriculum programme continues with oversight from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).

26. Regular interaction through high quality/effective personal tutor programmes have been shown to have a significant impact on the retention and outcomes of Black students[22]. Personal tutors often act as mentors and role models, helping students achieve a sense of belonging which can increase motivation, engagement, and achievement.

27. Data from our BA/BSc Economics routes show that increased student attainment is linked to a student's ability to choose a module and awarding basis following supported consideration of the assessment type. Wider research implies that this can particularly benefit students from underrepresented groups as they are empowered to make assessment and modular choices that are most likely to result in success. Many empirical studies have directly linked assessment choice to improved academic outcomes. When students select their preferred

[19] Black, Asian And Minority Ethnic Student Attainment At UK Universities: #Closingthegap. Retrieved from: bame-student-attainment.pdf (universitiesuk.ac.uk)

[20] Bunce, L., King, N., Saran, S., & Talib, N. (2019). Experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) students in higher education: applying self-determination theory to understand the BME attainment gap. *Studies in Higher Education*, *46*(3), 534–547. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1643305

[21] Schneider, M., & Preckel, F. (2017). Variables associated with achievement in higher education: A systematic review of meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin, 143*(6), 565–600. https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000098

[22] Pedler, M. L., Willis, R., & Nieuwoudt, J. E. (2021). A sense of belonging at university: student retention, motivation and enjoyment. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *46*(3), 397–408. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1955844

assessment methods, they may demonstrate better understanding and higher attainment. A study by Gijbels et al. (2005) found that students who were allowed to choose their assessment method performed better and had a deeper understanding of the material compared with those who did not have a choice.

28. Imposter syndrome disproportionately impacts underrepresented groups.[23] Our OfS funded Transitions and Transformations project (which looked at the impact of role models) found that visible communications that highlighted the profile and success of Black Staff, Alumni and Students' Union leaders was linked to a reduction in attainment gaps.

Intervention Strategy 4: Progression

29. Our Assessment of Performance process identified a lower progression rate (for students progressing into managerial or professional employment, further study, or other positive outcome) for Young students who completed their degree at Essex compared with Mature students. To understand further the potential reasons behind this, and the activities we may be able to employ to mitigate these risks, we completed a literature review using the range of published academic resources.

30. As set out in our Assessment of Performance, the lower progression rate was also evident when intersections related to ethnicity, entry qualification type (non-A-Level entrants), and disability are considered (see Assessment of Performance Figure 13 and Figure 14).

31. Due to the complexity of risks that students may face, the University is developing an approach that is targeted at students within specific characteristics. Our activities have also been piloted within selected academic disciplines to provide measurable evidence of the impact. This new activity will be introduced in academic year 2024-25 to provide a benchmark, and interim measures have been designed to understand impact. The review of the impact will form the post-pilot phase of implementation.

32. Our proposes intervention activities within progression have considered the following national risks:

- Risk 2 - Information and Guidance
- Risk 6 - Insufficient Academic support
- Risk 7 – Insufficient Personal Support
- Risk 9 – Ongoing Impact of Coronavirus
- Risk 10 – Cost Pressures
- Risk 12 – Progression from Higher Education

[23] Mullangi S, Jagsi R. Imposter Syndrome: Treat the Cause, Not the Symptom. *JAMA.* 2019;322(5):403–404. https://doi:10.1001/jama.2019.9788

33. The activities within Intervention Strategy 3 have been designed to reduce the gaps in students progressing into managerial or professional employment or further study, amongst those groups of students who may not experience equality of opportunity in relation to a broad range of risks.

34. Principally these risks are insufficient academic support and insufficient personal support, barriers to progression from HE and cost pressures that affect access to opportunity. Our interventions are predominantly focused on Young students, but also applied more broadly where students face further risk resulting from their intersectional characteristics:

   ▪ The Extracted Employability Initiative, currently at pilot stage will, in 2024-25, embed employability within courses, to enable all students to engage in the development of their employability skills through the curriculum, rather than requiring students to engage in extra-curricular activities or optional content, that not every student may choose or be able to access.

   ▪ Paid student placements/internships are the re-focus of existing support activity that has been proven to support students in positive progression outcomes. The additional focus, which will be implemented in 2025-26, will include promotion to students with a declared disability and students from IMD Quintile 1 who face additional barriers to success.

   ▪ Increasing the evaluation capacity with the addition of a funded PhD studentship to undertake ongoing review of the barriers that Black students face to progressing to postgraduate taught study.

Rationale: progression

35. Sector experience indicates that Young students are less likely to have vocational experience gained prior to their degree and upon which they can draw when considering their options after completing their degree programme. They may also be subject to time and cost pressures, as well as being disproportionately affected by the pandemic. These factors all impact their ability to engage with activity outside their taught sessions.

36. Our Extracted Employability Initiative has been introduced to ensure that 'every student is engaged with their employability development because it is structurally unavoidable that they do so through their scheduled teaching and learning, rather than relying on optional content that not every student may choose or be able to access'.[24] The Extracted Employability theory ensures that curriculum specific graduate attributes are surfaced and move through three layers (Conceptual – transferring skills, Structural – knowledge, attributes and experience and Bespoke – subject related attributes).

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[24] Services for Universities – Kate Daubney: Careers & Employability (katedaubneycareers.com)

37. TASO has stated there is insufficient evidence on the effectiveness of interventions that aim to teach employability skills that are deemed necessary for success in securing and retaining employment and our interventions seek to address this by surfacing these skills and enabling students to articulate them.[25] The Extracted Employability Initiative that Essex has developed aims to contribute to the evidence base of how employability interventions can impact the aspirations and attitudes, and the behaviours and outcomes for students. The scale of Extracted Employability (which will involve students on all non-vocational courses from 2025-26) will provide us with meaningful data to share. Progression is a long-term measure and through the lifespan of this Plan, we will use annual career readiness metrics to monitor effectiveness in addition to our 'closing the loop' survey, our pre-Graduate Outcomes survey and sector measures.

38. The University has been ensuring students can access paid work placements and internships for many years and our offer has continued to develop since the launch of the award-winning Frontrunners scheme in 2014. A comprehensive research report on employability programmes in UK higher education, published by the Department for Education (DfE) found evidence of a clear association between involvement of students on work placements and positive outcomes for students (DfE, 2021). [26] The DfE research referred to the need to embed opportunities within the curriculum to broaden the impact to all students and to overcome the impact of self-selecting/opting in by high-achieving students who may not face the same risk as under-represented groups of students. This provides the rationale for our refocus or Frontrunners target groups to IMD Q1 and Students with Disabilities.

39. The OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register identifies Black students as not having an equal opportunity to progress to further study.[27] The University has an established project that is jointly funded by UK Research and Innovation and the Office for Students that offers support and role modelling to UK Black students to access postgraduate taught and postgraduate research study levels. The 'Transitions and Transformations' project aims to tackle the evidenced year-on-year inequalities faced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic students in accessing postgraduate study, including the lack of representation, which we are addressing in our attainment intervention strategy [28]. The project will provide longitudinal data on the experience of Black students to access and participate in further study, including understanding

[25] TASO evidence toolkit: Learning analytics. Retrieved from: https://taso.org.uk/intervention/learning-analytics-postentry/ .
[26] Department for Education (2021) Employability programmes and work placement sin UK higher education. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1035200/employability_programmes_and_work_placements_in_UK_HE.pdf
[27] OfS Risk 12: Progression from higher education: retrieved from https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/risk-12-progression-from-higher-education/
[28] UKRI Widening Participation in postgraduate research: retrieved from https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/widening-participation-in-postgraduate-research/

the impact of the degree attainment gap (Portland Press, 2022[29]) and how we promote funding for this student group (TASO, 2021)[30].

40. The University has committed to providing additional PhD evaluation capacity to undertake a range of qualitative research which will contribute to the evidence base of how different initiatives can be deployed to remove the barriers that affect Black students in accessing and succeeding in further study.

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[29] Lived experiences of black women pursuing STEM in UK higher education | The Biochemist | Portland Press
[30] BAME students' access to postgraduate research - TASO

Fees, investments and targets
2025 26 to 2028 29

Provider name: The University of Essex

Provider UKPRN: 10007791

Summary of 2025-26 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflation statement:

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

Table 3b - Full-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	9250
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE		N/A	4157
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	Hotel Management	N/A	11100
Sandwich year		N/A	1850
Turing Scheme and overseas study years		N/A	1385
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 3b - Sub-contractual full-time course fee levels for 2025-26

Sub-contractual full-time course type:	Sub-contractual provider name and additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree	*	*	*
Foundation degree	*	*	*
Foundation year/Year 0	Kaplan International Colleges U.K. Limited	10082570	9250
HNC/HND	*	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*

Table 4b - Part-time course fee levels for 2025-26 entrants

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Sub-contractual UKPRN:	Course fee:
First degree		N/A	4625
Foundation degree	*	N/A	*
Foundation year/Year 0	*	N/A	*
HNC/HND	*	N/A	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	N/A	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	N/A	*
Accelerated degree	*	N/A	*
Sandwich year	*	N/A	*
Turing Scheme and overseas study years	*	N/A	*
Other	*	N/A	*

Table 4b - Sub-contractual part-time course fee levels for 2025-26

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

Fees, investments and targets
2025 26 to 2028 29

Provider name: The University of Essex

Provider UKPRN: 10007791

Investment summary

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

Notes about the data:

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

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

In Table 6d (under 'Breakdown'):

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

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

Table 6b - Investment summary

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment (£)	NA	£2,000,000	£2,001,000	£2,047,000	£2,089,000
Financial support (£)	NA	£3,118,000	£2,848,000	£2,878,000	£2,898,000
Research and evaluation (£)	NA	£196,000	£201,000	£205,000	£210,000

Table 6d - Investment estimates

Investment estimate (to the nearest £1,000)	Breakdown	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Access activity investment	Pre-16 access activities (£)	£960,000	£960,000	£982,000	£1,002,000
Access activity investment	Post-16 access activities (£)	£972,000	£971,000	£993,000	£1,014,000
Access activity investment	Other access activities (£)	£68,000	£70,000	£72,000	£73,000
Access activity investment	**Total access investment (£)**	**£2,000,000**	**£2,001,000**	**£2,047,000**	**£2,089,000**
Access activity investment	*Total access investment (as % of HFI)*	9.7%	9.2%	9.1%	9.1%
Access activity investment	*Total access investment funded from HFI (£)*	£2,000,000	£2,001,000	£2,047,000	£2,089,000
Access activity investment	*Total access investment from other funding (as specified) (£)*	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Bursaries and scholarships (£)	£2,985,000	£2,715,000	£2,745,000	£2,765,000
Financial support investment	Fee waivers (£)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Financial support investment	Hardship funds (£)	£133,000	£133,000	£133,000	£133,000
Financial support investment	**Total financial support investment (£)**	**£3,118,000**	**£2,848,000**	**£2,878,000**	**£2,898,000**
Financial support investment	*Total financial support investment (as % of HFI)*	15.1%	13.1%	12.8%	12.6%
Research and evaluation investment	Research and evaluation investment (£)	£196,000	£201,000	£205,000	£210,000
Research and evaluation investment	*Research and evaluation investment (as % of HFI)*	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

Office for Students

Fees, investments and targets

2025 26 to 2028 29

Provider name: The University of Essex

Provider UKPRN: 10007791

Targets

Table 5b: Access and/or raising attainment targets

Aim [500 characters maximum]	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
Our registered intake of Male students on HSC courses, where they are currently under-represented will be increased by 5% by 2029/30	PTA_1	Access	Sex	Male	Female	Applications to the University of Essex by male students to subject areas within the Department of Health and Social Care are increased year on year throughout the lifespan of this plan, resulting in increased registrations from men on these programmes.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Headcount	15%	15%	16%	18%	20%
	PTA_2														
	PTA_3														
	PTA_4														
	PTA_5														
	PTA_6														
	PTA_7														
	PTA_8														
	PTA_9														
	PTA_10														
	PTA_11														
	PTA_12														

Table 5d: Success targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To increase the continuation and completion rates of those students holding a BTEC award as an entry qualification so that no significant gap (above 5%) remains by 2029/30. This objective is embedded in our institutional Education Strategy.	PTS_1	Continuation	Other	Other (please specify in description)	N/A	Our analysis of the continuation rates for students with different entry qualifications indicates that there is a continuation rate gap between students who have a BTEC and students holding A Levels as their entry qualification. The data shows that in each of the last 6 years, students with BTECs have had the lowest continuation rate. This has been 10% or higher in each year, except for 2019/20 where the gap narrowed to 5.3%.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Headcount	10.3%	9%	8%	7%	5%

Aim	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To address the ethnicity attainment gap that no significant gap between Black and White students exists by 2029/30. This will require a 6% increase in the proportion of Black students achieving a 2:1 or First-class degree by 2029/30 and is a longstanding commitment within our University Strategic Plan.	PTS_2	Attainment	Ethnicity	Black	White	This ethnicity attainment gap at the University of Essex is lower than the national gap but is persistent. The analysis of attainment data by ethnicity shows that the attainment of Black students has been consistently lower than other ethnicities in each of the previous 6 years. The gap between Black students and White students, has, however, narrowed markedly in recent years. At the start of the reporting period the attainment gap between Black and White students was 19.6% and remained consistently around 20%. During 2019-10 and 2020-21 the gap narrowed to 12.4% and then to 8.4%. It has subsequently increased to 12%. Closing the ethnicity attainment gap is a target within the University's 2020-21 to 2024-25 APP, and furthermore is a KPI within in the University's current Strategic Plan. Our intervention strategy and our range of existing activity is designed to increase the attainment of Black	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Headcount	73%	74%	75%	77%	79%
	PTS_3														
	PTS_4														
	PTS_5														
	PTS_6														
	PTS_7														
	PTS_8														
	PTS_9														
	PTS_10														
	PTS_11														
	PTS_12														

Table 5e: Progression targets

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Lifecycle stage	Characteristic	Target group	Comparator group	Description and commentary [500 characters maximum]	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Units	Baseline data	2025-26 milestone	2026-27 milestone	2027-28 milestone	2028-29 milestone
To address the Gap between Graduate Progression for Young Students and Mature Students by increasing the progression of our young students to the national level (currently 74.8%) by 2029/30.	PTP_1	Progression	Age	Young (under 21)	Mature (over 21)	Our analysis of progression data by Age Group shows that the progression of Young students to graduate level employment or further study has been consistently lower than that of Mature students in each of the previous 4 years. In 2020-21 the Progression rate was 84% of Mature students compared with 71.2% for Young students, a gap of 12.8%. Due to the lifespan of this plan we will use our internal career readiness metrics to monitor our progress.	No	The access and participation dashboard	2021-22	Percentage	71.2%	71.2%	73%	74%	74.8%
	PTP_2														
	PTP_3														
	PTP_4														
	PTP_5														
	PTP_6														
	PTP_7														
	PTP_8														
	PTP_9														
	PTP_10														
	PTP_11														
	PTP_12														