Access and Participation Plan: 2020-21 to 2024-25

Introduction

Plumpton College is a specialist land-based further education college with a small higher education (HE) provision. The college is committed to its active role in supporting access, participation and success for all students, including those from underrepresented groups. We are committed to providing an innovative and inspiring learning experience, enabling everyone to fulfil their potential as set out in our Strategic Plan 2017-2024[1].

Our HE curriculum spans a range of specialist areas, including veterinary nursing, viticulture, oenology, equine science, animal behaviour, welfare and conservation, and wine business studies. The college provides primarily foundation and bachelor's degrees, and from September 2019, all programmes will be validated by the Royal Agricultural University.

The higher education population at Plumpton College remains small, with 243 undergraduate students enrolled in 2017-18. Figure 1 below illustrates the student population by the four[2] main underrepresented groups:
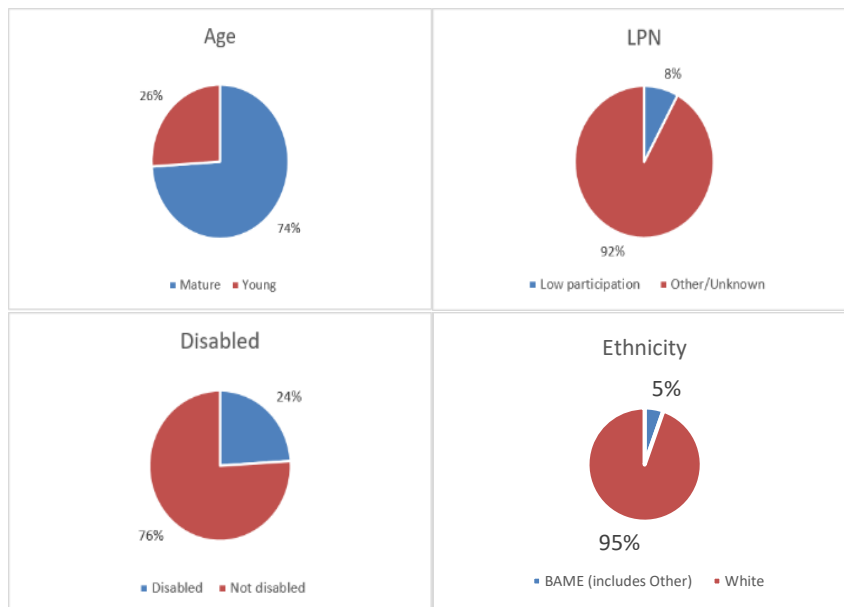

Figure 1: Plumpton College 2017-18 (internal data)

Plumpton College is committed to improving equality of opportunity for all underrepresented groups and is committed to providing a fulfilling student experience of higher education. It has welcomed the opportunity to assess and analyse its performance to date, which has enabled us to set ambitious targets to widening access and participation. We have used data provided by the Office for Student, which includes local and national data, as well as our own internal data to evaluate the impact of our current performance and to identify gaps within our student body. This together with student consultation and

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[1] Plumpton College Strategic Plan 2017-2024 -
https://www.plumpton.ac.uk/fileadmin/uploads/plumpton/Documents/Freedom_of_Information_Act/Plumpton_College_Strategic_Plan_Ver5a.pdf
[2] Care Leaver data is limited and has been excluded here. The college is looking at ways to improve data on this underrepresented group and is committed to address shortcomings.

working groups, which includes members of senior management and the governing body, has informed our access and participation plan for 2020 to 2025.

1. Assessment of performance

Widening participation has been a key focus over many years and is central to the college's strategic aims. The college has embarked on an ambitious seven-year strategic plan (2017-2024) with students front and centre in all that it does. In line with this, the college has undergone an extensive curriculum review, and has redesigned its HE provision to align with its strategic aims. This, combined with the current national decline in student population, has resulted in significantly reduced HE student numbers at Plumpton. The data below (Figure 2) outlines the decline in student numbers as a whole and by characteristics (internal data):

Academic year	Total number of students	% Male	% Female	% BAME	% Mature	% Disabled	% Low Participation Neighbourhoods
2013-14	344	53%	47%	3.49%	67%	26%	9.01%
2014-15	320	50%	50%	3.75%	68%	29%	10.63%
2015-16	345	46%	54%	4.93%	68%	27%	7.83%
2016-17	301	39%	61%	3.99%	69%	27%	8.97%
2017-18	243	42%	58%	3.70%	74%	24%	8.23%

Figure 2 – Data: Internal Plumpton College 2013-2018

Over the past years, we have been leading on a number of outreach activities in the South East, and more recently south London. We provide a programme of activities designed to create a continuum of education engagement; starting with primary and secondary schools, and sixth form colleges, through to 16-18 full-time programmes, and adult programmes of study at level 2 and 3. The college's HE provision provides a progression route for both internal and external students, and completes the learning continuum.

We continuously aim to inspire and raise the ambitions of all our students through the delivery of consistently good and outstanding teaching, enabling our students to not only achieve but to progress to higher education and/or skilled employment. The college improved its Ofsted rating in 2017-18 to Good. Additionally, our NSS overall satisfaction rating has improved over the past two years from 51% (2017) to 69% (2018). The most recent results demonstrate an enthusiasm for the College's teaching quality, with over 68% of respondents agreeing that the staff made the subject interesting, and almost 70% highlighting their lecturer's enthusiasm for the subject matter. The college is also committed to seeing all of its students progress, with 85% of our HE graduates progressing further into higher education and/or employment six months after graduating (DHLE 2016-17).

Our curriculum provides a platform for those from low participation areas (and typically non-traditional backgrounds) to access higher education within the land-based sector. Whilst we are located in the South East, we are in close proximity to low participation areas, and as such can target underrepresented groups within the region. According to HESA data, in 2017-18, 9.3% of entrants in the South East were from POLAR3 quintiles. Over the past three years, the college has invested in this underrepresented group. However, our approach and impact will need to be more closely monitored as, while it has not

decreased, the percentage of students from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) in HE at Plumpton is at 8.23% (2017-18), a decrease from 8.97% in 2016-17 (internal data).

The college has adopted a contextual admissions approach, allowing those with potential to gain access to undergraduate programmes, in particular to study at foundation degree level. This has helped those without traditional A-level qualifications to access HE, as well as students from low participation areas and 'first time in HE' students. Our foundation degrees have proved to be a good option for these students, and many of our students have been successful in going on to top-up degrees either at Plumpton College or at bigger universities. Reportedly, 23% of graduates on bachelor and foundation degrees have gone onto further study after completion, and 61% have gone into employment (DHLE 2016-17). We acknowledge that we lack robust progression data for all students. Whilst we are able to use DHLE data, due to small cohorts and low student numbers it is difficult to analyse and disaggregate the data by characteristics. The college is currently reviewing data capturing processes for leavers and how best to obtain this data.

Whilst the land-based sector typically attracts a male dominant demographic, our HE student body has seen its female population increase from 47% (2013-14) to 58% (2017-18). This is in part due to the provision on offer such as animal, equine and veterinary nursing programmes, which typically attract a large proportion of female students. Our wine business programmes have a more even split with 54% of its cohorts being female (internal data 2017-18). The number of female students on wine production (viticulture & oenology) programmes remains comparatively low at 32% (internal data 2017-18).

The college offered four bachelor honours' degree programmes for completion in 2017-18. Attainment on these has been good with 78% of completing students achieving upper second-class honours or above – 25% first class honours and 43% upper second-class honours achieved (internal data).

1.1 Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status

Access, Success and Progression

Plumpton College has a good working history of collaboration with the Sussex Learning Network (SLN), a consortium of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). Its aim is to close the gap between the current low participation of learners who reside within SLN:COP target wards, and the expected participation rate, as identified by the Office for Students (OfS), based on KS4 attainment. The college's outreach and widening participation activities are largely based within the South East and focused on its low participation wards.

The access and participation dataset shows that in 2017-18, 67% of English higher education providers recruited less than 18.1% of their 18-year-old entrants from POLAR4 Quintile 1. It also shows that 30% of Plumpton College's HE students came from POLAR4 Quintile 5, and 20% from POLAR4 Quintile 1. Whilst Plumpton seems to be doing better than English providers when it comes to access for this group, there is still much to be done. Internal data supports this and shows that participation from low participation neighbourhoods (LPN) from the South East is currently at 8.23% (2017-18) within HE at the college, equating to 20 students. In 2016-17, the college had a participation rate of 8.97% from SLN:COP target wards (27 students). As these gaps are significant, we have included access as a priority target within this plan.

We have set two access targets around low participation, namely, one aimed to reduce the gap in participation between POLAR4 Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 from 10 percentage points over time by almost half to 5.5 percentage points. Secondly, we have set a target specifically aimed to increase participation

for students from LPNs within the South East as identified by SLN:COP. This target will aim to increase participation for those from LPNs from 8.23% to 10.5% over the five-year duration of this plan. We acknowledge that the second aim is not showing a closing of gap but rather an increase in participation rate for this underrepresented group. We aim to increase participation from low participation wards identified by SLN:COP within the South East to 10.5% over the duration of the plan. This may be very ambitious, and we will continue to monitor progress against this target to inform future milestones.

Furthermore, internal data has shown that continuation rates for students from LPNs are also particularly low, measured at 79.41% in 2014-15 and rising to 80% in 2017-18 (internal data). Non-continuation for LPN students shows a significant gap compared to those from non-LPNs. However, we were particularly interested to find that within this group, young males (i.e. under the age of 21) had a continuation rate of 83% in 2016-17. Whereas continuation for males from POLAR4 Quintile 1 and 2 at all English providers were at 88.7% in 2016-17 (AP dataset). Over the same period, continuation rates of males from POLAR Quintiles 3, 4 and 5 at all English providers was at 91.8% in 2016-17 (AP dataset). The gap between our young male students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Q1 & 2) and that of males from high participation neighbourhoods across English providers show a significant gap (8.8ppt). We acknowledge the ongoing work that needs to be done to ensure successful outcomes for students from low participation areas and have, therefore, included increasing continuation rates for young males from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2) as an additional target within this plan. With this target, we aim to increase continuation rates of young males from LPNs at Plumpton. (Refer to Appendix 1: Targets).

Attainment data for students from low participation neighbourhoods within the South East has shown that 89% has either completed or progressed onto the next stage of their programme (internal data, 2017-18). Those on bachelor's degrees had 100% attainment, i.e. achieved an outcome of first-class or upper second-class honours as a degree classification, and 83% of foundation degree students achieved a distinction or merit (internal data, 2017-18).

According to DHLE 2016-17 data, 85% of Plumpton graduates are in higher education and/or employed six months after graduation. However, it was not possible to disaggregate progression data for students from LPNs, it remains a high priority for the college to successfully equip all its students to move into graduate employment or further study at the end of their programme of study. The college is therefore committed to keep tracking students' progression through Graduate Outcomes. As mentioned above, the college is currently reviewing its internal measures to how best to capture progression data. Once progression data has been successfully captured, we will investigate if it needs to be included as a target in future.

1.2 Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

Access, Success and Progression

Published data from Census 2011, found that people from the White ethnic group were more likely to live in the South East than any other region. Whilst the HE student body at Plumpton College certainly reflects this, we acknowledge that Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students are underrepresented at the college with only 3.7% measured in 2017-18 (internal data). There has been no major increase or decrease in the number of BAME students at college measured over the past five years; measured at 3.5% in 2013-14 and at 3.7% in 2017-18. We attribute the low proportion of BAME students to our geographical location pointed out above, as well as the nature of our land-based provision and the fact that BAME students typically do not choose a Further Education College to do undergraduate study at but prefer to choose an urban university setting. Internal data supports that BAME students are provided

with equal access to support arrangements and achieve at the same or higher levels to non-BAME students. The college is committed to creating a diverse student body with students from all ethnic backgrounds. We will continue to focus our outreach activities to include students from all ethnic groups. Additionally, we acknowledge that a lot needs to be done to improve access for BAME students at Plumpton and will therefore engage in a market research activity during 2020-21 to enable our outreach activities to be more efficient in attracting BAME students to the land-based sector.

When it comes to continuation, internal data from 2017-18 shows an improvement in continuation for BAME students (measured at 78%) compared to 2016-17 when it was at 67%. We will continue to monitor continuation rates for BAME students and are evaluating the internal measures employed during 2017-18, which contributed to the improved continuation rate. Attainment for BAME students vary from year to year with a spread of degree outcomes ranging from pass to distinction (foundation degrees) and first-class to third class honours (bachelor's degrees). In 2017-18, 78% of BAME students at Plumpton either completed or progressed onto the next stage of their programme. A quarter of foundation degree students achieved at merit or above as a final degree outcome. Interestingly, students who achieved distinctions also declared a learning difficulty and/or disability, which may allude to the fact that the measures in place for disabled students are effective for attainment. There were no completing bachelor's degree students in 2017-18. (Please note, it is important to point out that due to small numbers each individual student has a disproportionate impact on the overall statistics as each student accounts for more than 10% - 2017-18 internal data).

Whilst certain datasets have been suppressed for the purpose of this plan to protect the anonymity of students, the college will continue to monitor this underrepresented group to inform good practice and build on success in continuation. We monitor the teaching quality, student satisfaction and student outcome on each programme of study as part of our quality cycle to inform best practice and successful outcomes. Additionally, attendance, retention and attainment data are used internally to monitor programme but also individual student performance. As a small college, we have good pastoral care practices in place, which has proven effective in addressing individual student retention and attainment. We also welcome participation in student focus groups from students from all ethnic backgrounds but have to be careful not to single out or label anyone, or any group, in particular, when trying to improve access and participation. It is also difficult to separate data regarding specific ethnic groups due to the small numbers, but we will continue to monitor separate groups to assess performance and inform strategies for improvement.

As mentioned above, we will continue to analyse internal data alongside feedback from student focus groups to further improve access and participation for BAME students. Additionally, student welfare and a 'sense of belonging' remains a priority for the college and it will continue to use good practice adopted to support disabled students and implement it to benefit BAME students too. Whilst small student numbers hinders us from publishing data, it benefits students in that small cohort sizes makes students feel part of a group irrespective of background ('We're all in it together', feedback from students, January 2019).

As mentioned above, the college is currently reviewing its internal measures to how best to capture progression data. We will continue to monitor all stages of the student lifecycle for this underrepresented group and will undertake further analysis to identify colleges or universities with similar characteristics to Plumpton's in order to further inform good practice. We aim to include this as a target once more analysis has been conducted to inform a strategic approach to widening access for this underrepresented group at Plumpton College.

1.3 Mature students

Access, Success and Progression

Whilst Mature students are an underrepresented group within the national sector, the college's student demographic is reversed. Mature students constitute 74% of our total undergraduate student body (2017-18), increasing from 67% in 2013-14. 40% of the 2017-18 mature students are aged 21 to 29, with the remaining aged up to 65 (internal data). We attribute the good mature participation to the curriculum, in particular undergraduate wine programmes, which attract a large proportion of career changers. Application data has shown that young students (under 21) typically apply for animal behaviour, equine science and veterinary nursing degree programmes and are mostly female. Whilst we have a higher than average mature student participation rate, the college remains committed to maintain this, and will continue to support mature students through regular curriculum review initiatives to ensure programmes of study are designed in-line with students' needs.

Non-continuation for mature students has been poor prior to 2016-17. However, over the past two academic cycles (2016-17 and 2017-18) continuation for mature students has improved and remain above the college's target of 90% at 90.87% in 2016-17 and 91.67% in 2017-18 (internal data).

Data from DHLE (2016-17), has shown that 85% of Plumpton graduates go onto further study or employment. Reportedly, 20% of graduates go on to work in managerial roles six months after completing their course, with another 20% moving onto further study. Whilst we lack disaggregated progression data, we can report that many mature students on specifically viticulture and oenology courses have secured employment by the time of graduation. The college is currently reviewing data collection processes to allow for more robust progression data to be collected in addition to DHLE/Graduate Outcome data.

Whilst analysing 2016-17 DHLE data, it became evident that more could be done to prepare students for self-employment as 57.4% of respondents felt that they did not feel their course prepared them well for setting up their own business and being self-employed. We have since incorporated new core modules into our undergraduate programmes to include introduction to business management and a core work placement module (compulsory on foundation degrees). We will continue to monitor feedback from students and graduate outcome data to ascertain if these strategies need further updating. As mentioned previously, the college is currently reviewing its internal measures to how best to capture progression data in order to use it alongside data from Graduate Outcomes in future.

Mature student attainment has been good at Plumpton College, with 76% of mature students being awarded a first-class honours or upper second class honours, and only 4% achieving a third class honours (internal data 2017-18). Of this, 28% were first class honours and 48% upper second class honours, which matches the average across English providers exactly (HESA 2017-18). Foundation degree mature students performed less well with 57% achieving 'good' award classifications (Distinction, Merit) (internal data 2017-18). Drilling down into our attainment data (2017-18), it was interesting to note that mature students over 30 showed better attainment than those aged 21 to 29. The 21-29 age group had a significant drop in attainment levels with only 18% first class honours and 45% second class honours. Thus, below the average attainment rate of English providers measured at 76% (HESA 2017-18), and when compared to mature students' attainment aged over 30 at Plumpton. We have included mature student attainment as a target in this plan.

1.4 Disabled students

Access, Success and Progression

At Plumpton College, almost a quarter of its HE student population has declared itself as disabled[3] in 2017-18 (internal data). Perhaps unsurprisingly, most disabled students have cited a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia or ADHD, as their primary disability followed by mental health. We have found that the 2017-18 figure (24%) has dropped slightly from 2013-14 when 26% of the student body declared a disability. The college launched a campaign during 2017-18 encouraging students to declare their disabilities in a drive to identify and support individuals as well as to remove stigma surrounding disabled students. This was done in light of the poor continuation reported of disabled students in 2016-17. It has become evident from our own data (2017-18) that students have, in recent years, become more willing to declare disabilities, especially those affected by mental health. Our own data suggest that continuation rates for disabled students (88.4%) are worse than those for non-disabled students (88.89%) (internal data 2017-18) as well as when compared to the OfS dataset for Plumpton College where continuation was measured at only 80% for full-time disabled students in 2016-17.

We have further disaggregated disabled student data into disability categories. We have found from our data that the percentage of disabled students listing mental health as a barrier to success in higher education has almost doubled over the past five years: measured at 17% in 2013-14 to 31% in 2017-18 (internal data). This means that 7% of the total student body suffers from a mental health condition such as anxiety and/or depression (internal data 2017-18).

We acknowledge the discrepancy between disabled and non-disabled student continuation rates at our own college and within the national setting and has, therefore, included disabled student continuation as a key target that requires improvement within this plan. We aim to close the gap between disabled and non-disabled continuation within the first three years of the plan and then to increase the continuation rate further over the last two years.

Through our student consultation process, students have expressed a need for more advertised support and better signposting of where to find support whilst at college. This together with the government's national drive around raising awareness around mental health and its impact on day to day living, have informed target setting. As a result, we have included the improvement of non-continuation rates for disabled students as a target within this plan. We aim to improve continuation rates for disabled students, with a specific focus on mental health (although not limited to this condition only). The college is committed to a holistic approach of fully integrated support for all its students dealing with mental health issues and removing barriers for disabled students to succeed at higher education (refer to Appendix 1: Targets).

In terms of progression, internal data shows that in 2017-18, 89% of disabled students progressed or completed their studies. The college continues to monitor students' performance and achievement through internal measures, including through personal tutoring and the availability of centralised support services. Attainment data for disabled students are mixed, in 2017-18, 29% achieved at the upper end (first and 2.1s), and 71% achieved lower second- and third-class honours. Attainment across foundation degrees was good for disabled students with 58% achieving at the upper end (distinction and merits) and 42% at the lower end (pass). The college continues to measure attainment data for all students and aim to collate more robust attainment and progression data in future to inform good practice and to identify

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[3] Disabled within this document refers to students with an ongoing learning difficulty, disability and/or medical health condition(s) as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

gaps in progression and attainment for underrepresented groups. We acknowledge that progression data in terms of continuing to postgraduate study or employment is lacking and as mentioned before will be implementing strategies to gather robust progression data to inform future targets.

1.5 Care leavers

Access, Success and Progression

A West Sussex County Council report[4] published by West Sussex County Council on children in care and care leaver data highlighted that there are not enough care leavers in education, employment or training with a low percentage in higher education. According to the report, only 65% of care leavers remain in care until their 18th birthday in the South East, which has an impact on their education and opportunities to enter into further and higher education. This low proportion means that early intervention is important if this group is to be encouraged and supported to go into further and higher education.

Data on care leavers remain insufficient in the College with no care leavers accessing higher education in 2017-18 despite the availability of bursary and hardship funds for those who have recently left care. Care leaver information is collected at enrolment; however, the college is reviewing its data collection process to ensure an accurate account of care leaver data is collected. Currently, only students under the age of 24 are required to provide this data. Additionally, free school meal data is also being collected to inform practice and funding. Through our assessment of performance process, it has become evident that information relating to support offered to care leavers could be better advertised to target this underrepresented group.

The college has included care leavers in its Access and Participation Plan for 2019-20 and will continue to provide financial support for this group within this plan (2020-2025). However, we have not set a specific target around care leavers for 2020-2025 as we will be monitoring the effectiveness and uptake, if any, of the current support on offer, including the proposed provision of one-to-one support for care leavers through a mentorship programme from enrolment to graduation, and the provision of accommodation at a reduced rate during 2019-20. Once a full review has been completed, we will adjust our targets, if necessary.

1.6 Intersections of disadvantage

We note the importance of considering multiple equality characteristics and that students may experience multiple barriers to higher education. The college has identified young males from low participation areas and/or low socio-economic backgrounds as one such group and has included this group as a priority target within this plan.

1.7 Other groups who experience barriers in higher education

We recognised that there are other demographic groups that experience barriers to higher education within our student population. Whilst we do not currently track these, we aim to improve data on people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, refugees, people estranged from their families and children from military families to allow for assessment of these groups, and to track performance across the student lifecycle stages of these groups.

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[4] West Sussex County Council. (September 2017) *Children Looked After Needs Assessment*
http://www2.westsussex.gov.uk/ds/mis/070318cyp4b.pdf

2. Strategic aims and objectives

2.1 Target groups

The college's Strategic Plan 2017-2024 has informed the strategic aims and objectives of its access and participation plan. The following strategic aims have informed the plan and demonstrate the college's ambition to provide equality of opportunity for all to access, succeed and progress:

- Strategic Aim 1: To provide an innovative and inspiring learning experience enabling everyone to fulfil their potential
- Strategic Aim 2: To offer a dynamic curriculum that attracts students, enhances personal development and supports the future growth of the industries we serve
- Strategic Aim 3: To develop sustainable and enterprising relationships with employers, schools and key partners to enhance student experience, prospects and sector business
- Strategic Aim 4: To provide inspirational learning spaces and state of the art facilities, which showcase best practice, embrace technological advances and maximise student progress.

In line with these overarching strategic aims and through our assessment of performance, including as far as intersectional analysis was possible, the college has identified key targets to improve over the five-year duration of this plan.

We have actively considered the OfS' key performance measures to reduce the gap in participation between most and least represented groups (KPM2); to reduce the gap in non-continuation between most and least represented groups (KPM3); and to reduce the gap in attainment between disabled and non-disabled students (KPM5). Based on the OfS' key performance measures, we aim to prioritise the following underrepresented target groups at different stages of the student lifecycle:

Low participation neighbourhoods – The college has identified students from low participation neighbourhoods as a priority, including those from low income households. We have included two **access** targets around LPN, one to reduce the gap in participation between students from POLAR4 Quintile 1 and Quintile 5, as well as one to increase participation for those from low participation neighbourhoods in the South East. Issues in relation to age and deprivation and to a certain extent ethnicity have informed the development of these aims, their objectives and targets. We recognise that gaps were most significant when considering the entire student lifecycle, however, felt it most appropriate to focus on access, as mentioned above, and success stages for the purpose of this plan. As such we have also included a **continuation** target for students from LPNs within this plan, to increase continuation rate of young male students (under 21) from low participation areas (i.e. POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2). The college acknowledges that its student population is not particularly diverse in terms of ethnicity and is therefore, not limiting this target to one specific ethnic group. However, we expect that interventions directed specifically at this and other underrepresented groups should have a positive impact on BAME students' access and continuation. We will continue to monitor the impact on all ethnicities internally.

Mature students – Whilst the college has a good proportion of mature students at present. We are committed to maintaining the participation rate of mature students at college to align with the OfS' key performance measures, and our own of future-proofing access for mature students. Our assessment of performance highlighted a gap in attainment for mature students aged 21 to 29 when compared to the average attainment rate of mature students at English providers. It also highlighted that mature students at Plumpton over the age of 30 overall achieved higher degree outcomes (1st and 2.1s) when compared

with those aged 21 to 29. Due to the large proportion of mature students at Plumpton, we felt it necessary to include a target for this group. As such, we have included this target aimed at mature student **attainment** for students aged 21 to 29 within this plan.

Disabled – Through our internal analysis disabled students stood out as a target group. The college's data evidenced that students who declare a learning difficulty, disability and/or ongoing medical condition performed less well than their non-disabled peers. We have seen an increase in students declaring mental health as a barrier to **continue** and **succeed** at higher education level. Therefore, supporting this group remains a high priority for the college. We will be looking at 'what works' and build on student consultation to prioritise successful outcomes for this target group. For the purpose of this plan, we have included disabled student continuation as an aim to improve and as such to eliminate the non-continuation gap between disabled and non-disabled students within the five-year duration of this plan.

Student lifecycle – Through our analysis, we have identified gaps in access and non-continuation as key areas for improvement, along with attainment. As mentioned above, gaps in non-continuation for disabled students is an important issue, especially those who declare mental health as a barrier. Additionally, non-continuation rates are particularly high for students from low participation neighbourhoods, and also for young male students from LPNs and with low household incomes. From our analysis, it is apparent that financial barriers often play a role in continuation and have therefore included this group as part of this access and participation plan. It has also come to light that young students (aged 18 to 20) from LPNs and/or low household incomes have a high rate of discontinuing study, particularly young male students. Whilst we acknowledge the current national decline in young, white British males in HE as a specific underrepresented group, this plan targets males from all ethnicities as we continue to aspire to a more diverse student body. We have also included success as a key target for mature students and are addressing lack of data on progression to be able to inform improvement in this area as data is gathered. As mentioned previously, the college acknowledges the lack of progression data and is currently reviewing internal data capturing measures to be able to inform practice in future.

2.2 Aims and objectives

The college is committed to supporting the target groups identified above to reduce gaps in access, non-continuation, attainment and progression between most and least represented groups. We will do this by increasing access, continuation and attainment rates for underrepresented groups as set out below, and in doing so, narrowing and/or closing these gaps.

As set out in Plumpton's Strategic Plan, the college is passionate about developing individuals' aspirations, skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their future ambitions and be role models for others. The college's access and participation plan's aims and objectives are aligned with the Office for Students' key performance measures and its own strategic aims and objects. Our aims and objectives are summarised below against each target group:

Target group 1: Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPN)

Following on from our assessment of performance and available datasets, the college felt it wanted to create two access targets for this plan. One to focus on narrowing the gap between high and low participation, but also one to focus on the college's location. For this reason, we have split access into two separate aims as outlined here.

1) Aim: <u>Access</u> - To reduce the gap in participation between students from low and high participation areas.

The objective of this target is to reduce the gap between new entry full-time undergraduate students from POLAR4 Quintile 1 (20%) and Quintile 5 (30%). Using baseline data from 2017-18, the gap was measured at 10 percentage points (AP dataset). We aim to reduce the gap over time from 10ppt to 5.5ppt by 2025. Thus, reducing the gap by almost half. Looking more long term, we will monitor the impact and effectiveness of the plan and its activities to inform future targets. The objective of this target is aligned with the Office for Students' key performance measure 1.

2) Aim: Access: - To increase the participation for students from low participation neighbourhoods in HE.

The objective of this aim is to increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants from within South East low participation neighbourhoods. We have measured the participation of students from LPNs in the South East at 8.23% (internal data 2017-18) and aim to increase it to 10.5% over the five year duration of this plan. We acknowledge that the Office for Students would like to see targets measured in terms of closing of gaps between most and least represented groups. Whilst our first access target aims to illustrate this, we were eager to include an access target specifically aimed at increased participation based on our locality as a higher education provider in the South East. As such, we have included this target to show progress in terms of increased participation over the duration of the plan. The objective is to target school leavers with a focus on KS4 even though some of our outreach activities include early interventions from primary school level too. It's worth noting that whilst this is not a collaborative target, we do work closely with NCOP and is a member of the Sussex Learning Network. We will be using datasets provided by SLN:COP to further explore our target and inform effective outreach plans. This objective is aligned with the Office for Students' key performance measure 1.

The college is committed to supporting students from target low participation wards through its bursary scheme. Additionally, the college will be offering a £500 tuition fee waiver to new entry students from low participation wards (SLN:COP) and from low income households for 2020-21 entry. The college will continue, and enhance, its programme of activities that includes awareness raising through our sustained schools' outreach programmes and dedicated STEM and land-based workshops, specifically aimed at secondary and sixth form colleges located in South East LPNs.

Target group 2: Disabled students

Aim: <u>Success</u> - To reduce the non-continuation gap for disabled students.

The objective is to close the percentage difference in non-continuation rates between disabled and non-disabled students, in particular those declaring mental health as a barrier. The college reported 75% non-continuation of students declaring mental health as a barrier in 2017-18 (internal data). However, due to small numbers, we have used total disabled data for full- and part-time students. Non-continuation for disabled students has been below the college's internal target of 90% for all students over the past five years and measured at 88% in 2017-18 (internal data). Thus, creating a gap of 1 percentage point between disabled and non-disabled students at Plumpton. We are confident that this gap can be eliminated within the first three years of the plan and the aim is to steadily increase the continuation rate for disabled students over the last two years of the plan to reach a milestone of 90.5% continuation. This objective is aligned with the Office for Students' key performance measure 5 to enable disabled students to achieve positive outcomes. The college will continue to invest in the following to support disabled students:

- Ongoing curriculum review to ensure delivery is inclusive and representative
- Develop induction activities to build confidence and passion to succeed in students
- Develop inclusive teaching, learning and social spaces
- Accessible centralised support and advice for students with regards to claiming DSA
- Offer free of charge pre-screening for specific learning difficulties
- Offer subsidised education psychologist appointments
- Training of teaching and support staff to offer dedicated support for disabled students
- Continued offer of onsite counselling, free of charge
- 24hr access to Student Services Welfare officer for residential students.

We will continue to monitor progress against this target group by regularly reviewing its effectiveness and through student consultation, feedback and focus groups.

Target group 3: Mature students

Aim: <u>Attainment</u> – To increase degree attainment for mature students aged 21-29.

The objective is to increase the percentage in degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for mature students aged 21 to 29. Mature student participation at Plumpton College remains good and the college remains committed to maintain this good participation rate. However, we have included this target to ensure students are continued to be supported to achieve at a high level to enter into employment and/or postgraduate study. As highlighted earlier, mature student attainment for students aged 21 to 29 is below the English average of 76% (AP, HESA & internal data 2017-18). Additionally, we have also identified a gap in attainment between our mature student body when comparing mature students aged 21-29 (63%) with those over the age of 30 (86%). We are eager to increase attainment for the 21-29 group whilst not negatively impacting the good attainment achieved by those over the age of 30. As such we have set this target around an increase in attainment rather than in terms of narrowing the gap. We aim to increase degree attainment incrementally over the five-year duration of this plan from 63% (2017-18 internal data) to 71% and as a result narrow the gap between our own mature student age sub-groups over time to 5 percentage points by 2024-25. This is an ambitious goal and we will continue to monitor outcomes to inform progress and good practice.

A whole college Teaching and Learning Strategy is being launched in September 2019 to improve teaching and learning practices that will benefit all students across the college. Its goal is to equip academic staff with the tools and opportunity to engage in professional teaching development programmes. The impact of this will be monitored to measure its effectiveness on student engagement and attainment. Adding to this, the college is investing further in e-learning resources and technology to assist students with their studies. Additionally, our curriculum has been designed to ensure delivery is inclusive and timetabling to allow students flexibility to study part-time. Group and individual tutorials are designed to support students with academic progress. The college has also implemented a new HE Research Strategy (September 2019) to embed research practices within student-lead projects. Induction activities include familiarisation with e-learning technology, and academic workshops are available to students who have been out of education for a prolonged time. The college continues to invest in individual tutoring training and development to assist students on their educational journey. The college has also made provision for bursary support to mature students with dependent children (Please refer to section 4).

Target group 4: Multiple: young male from low socioeconomic & low participation areas

Aim: <u>Success</u> - To increase continuation rate of young male students from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2).

This aim is targeted at multiple groups to increase the continuation rates for **young male** students from **low participation** neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2). The objective is to increase the continuation rate of young male students (under 21) from low participation neighbourhoods. Our statistics demonstrate high non-continuation for young male students from low participation neighbourhoods. We acknowledge that progression in terms of closing the non-continuation gap between most and least represented group is an aim. However, with this target we are eager to show progress in terms of increase in continuation for young males from POLAR4 Quintiles 1 and 2.

It was interesting to compare our internal continuation data with that of the access and participation dataset for all English providers. The access and participation dataset has shown that the average continuation across English providers was measured at 91.8% (2016-17) for males from POLAR4 Quintiles 3, 4 and 5. This shows a significant gap of 8.8 percentage points when compared with our students from POLAR4 Q1 and 2. For this target, we have used the baseline of 83% continuation for the group within college (internal data, 2016-17) and aim to increase continuation to 90% over the five years of this plan. We will continue to monitor progress against the yearly milestones to inform action plans and the effectiveness of support strategies in place.

The college offers financial support to students who falls into this target group (low participation, young male, low household income) through bursary support. Additionally, eligible students within this identified target group will have access to a £500 fee waiver for new entrants in 2020-21. The college will support students through its centralised support functions (as highlighted), including targeted induction activities, ability to study part-time, extended opening hours to study spaces and learning resources to further enable successful outcomes and completion of course. Outreach activities have a strong focus on educational opportunities within the land-based sector and career opportunities this can lead to, tying in with the college's own strategic aim to offer a dynamic curriculum that attracts students, enhances personal development and supports the future growth of the industries we serve.

Whilst we have not included a progression target as part of this plan, the college is committed to consistently provide high quality training and education that enable its students to be successful. It is confident that through the adoption of supportive strategies, outlined within this document, it will enable all students including targeted groups to progress successfully. Therefore, any investment made in terms of access and participation should have a likewise beneficial impact on students' attainment and progression onto further study or employment. However, as mentioned, the college is reviewing its data collection measures in terms of progression and will be using this together with data from Graduate Outcomes to inform future targets, if required.

3. Strategic measures

The college is proud of its continued activities in supporting access, participation and success for students in the South East. As set out in our Strategic Plan 2017-24, we aim to continue and further develop sustainable and enterprising relationships with employers, schools and key partners to enhance student experience, prospects and sector business. The college has developed an enhanced schools liaison

programme, which we deliver to promote education opportunities. This programme allows us to promote land-based curriculum and the extensive career opportunities it can lead to.

With the adoption of the college's Strategic Plan, it has also implemented a transparent approach to governance and stakeholders in providing an ongoing mechanism to monitor progress toward its goals and targets. It will follow the same approach in terms of its access and participation activities in order to continuously monitor progress towards targets set within this plan.

The college's Access and Participation Working Group will meet regularly and feedback to senior management and governors on progress made and/or if a change in direction is required.

3.1 Whole provider strategic approach

Overview

The college has several teams working alongside each other to aid its widening participation ambitions and enhance student participation and success. These include members from the Schools' Liaison and Outreach team, the Higher Education team, HE academics, Student Services, Finance and Academic Quality & Standards.

Our programme of activities is designed to be inclusive and career driven. There has been a shift in approach with the college's outreach and schools' liaison team focusing on STEM-related projects in 17-18. For example, the college is involved in its biggest pilot scheme yet, launched two years ago. It is a STEM workshop-based project involving 16 local schools where we offer two interventions tracking students over time. The first intervention is done at KS3 and then again at KS4 stage. The focus is on science, technology, English and maths and how these subjects can lead to technology careers within the land-based sector.

Additionally, we have partnered with STEM Sussex to deliver enrichment CPD opportunities for teaching staff. Schemes such as 'STEM in a box' are encouraging young learners to consider careers in the land-based sector and have a focus on food sustainability and farming for the future. The college is hosting the Big Bang event this summer, another example of our focus on STEM and raising awareness of what career pathways these subjects can lead to.

The college aims to enhance the range of student support and enrichment activities to further enable individual student progress during their time at college. Through internal auditing of processes, the college has identified a gap in guidance and advice available to students who would like to continue to higher education. This has led to the establishment in January 2019 of a careers advice centre, the Job Shop. This centre offers impartial advice and guidance for all students to aid progression to higher education and employment opportunities.

Furthermore, the college has been involved in collaborative outreach activities with the Sussex Learning Network (SLN:COP), which develops inclusive opportunities and outreach activities targeted at access to and progression through higher education. For example, in 2017-18 (and continuing in 2018-19) the college collaborated with SLN:COP to invest in a Summer school targeted at Level 3 learners from POLAR4 quintiles. The collaboration has also enabled the college to employ a full-time outreach officer to work directly with learners from low participation wards.

Alignment with other strategies

The College is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and fair access in the creation of a diverse student body which reflects the region. Our Access and Participation Plan is designed to align with our strategic aims and our Equality & Diversity Policy, as is our responsibility under the Equality Act 2010. It reflects the key principles of student access, attainment and progression through targeted support. The College has an Equality & Diversity policy, which the access and participation plan is compliant with. We aim to take all reasonable steps, and make all reasonable adjustments, to ensure that access to College provision is compliant with, and within the spirit of, the Equality Act.

For example, the college's Learning Support Team has been instrumental in providing staff training to teaching staff targeted at disabled students and how best to support these students. We are committed to removing barriers for disabled students by providing dedicated student support and by incorporating inclusive teaching and learning practices within our curriculum. Recent improvements to the online learning environment (such as the addition of a new student support page) have proved beneficial for students and the increased use of the VLE (87% increase in activity in 2017-18, internal data) as well as the increase in NSS score for teaching and learning are examples of its effectiveness.

The college aims to make courses accessible to as wide a range of learners as possible and is committed to:

- Offering an inclusive learning environment which challenges all forms of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypical attitudes and behaviours within the learning environment
- Where possible providing a flexible programme of study within exiting courses to meet specific and individual needs
- Offering an admissions system which will offer guidance, taking into account the particular needs of individual students
- Providing learning materials in a variety of formats to meet the needs of learners and ensuring effective and appropriate learning support is in place
- Embedding equality and diversity into all schemes of work and preparing learners to work in a diverse society.

The college's Wellbeing Committee monitors and reviews its Equality and Diversity Policy regularly in line with legal requirements and external body recommendations.

Strategic measures

The college is continuously evaluating and monitoring its activities to ensure we are working towards inclusivity at all stages of the student lifecycle. This includes engaging with all staff and services (student and professional) and addressing systematic issues to ensure equality of opportunity. The college has a whole provider approach to the curriculum and student support; employability; collaboration; and funding support.

The college's HE curriculum was reviewed during 2017-18, which resulted in newly validated provisions. Thorough market research and consultation with industry has meant that our HE curriculum has been designed to enable successful graduate outcomes for students.

For example, all foundation degrees have a compulsory work placement element attached to improve progression to careers. The curriculum has been designed to achieve successful graduate outcomes for all its students, by providing a natural progression to further study within HE or progression to career

opportunities. The newly validated programmes have employability modules embedded within them. As a result of student consultation, the curriculum has been designed to include more engagement with industry and sector leaders. For example, guest speakers and industry experts continue to deliver lectures on employability and career opportunities. In addition, the creation of the post for a dedicated careers coordinator and the availability of Job Shop have led to improved information, advice and guidance to all students about career and education pathways.

Our partnership with the Royal Agricultural University and their validation process has meant that each programme has been designed to enable students to benefit from an inclusive teaching and learning approach. This has also meant that timetables are designed with mature students in mind and those that need to work while studying, allowing students flexibility to attend lectures whilst providing for their own families. Through our HE quality cycle, the effectiveness and quality of each programme is scrutinised at various stages throughout the academic year. Student representatives play a vital role in raising issues that may be causing barriers to success. They also form part of the higher education board to inform and monitor curriculum development.

Our student support function is currently being reviewed to adopt a more centralised approach for FE and HE students at Plumpton College. The college recognises the need for ongoing support for students, and as highlighted by our analysis of mental health data, the need for a more targeted approach. A referral system is in use whereby students have access to social workers, counsellors and welfare officers. Study skills support to enhance academic attainment is being further developed to ensure students can improve term-on-term to achieve their targets. The college has a good track record of individual tutoring support and students benefit from individual academic support sessions. These sessions include a pastoral care element whereby students have the opportunity to highlight any barriers to achievement and continuation, be it personal circumstances, finances or workload.

The provision of accommodation for HE students on campus and bursary support for those who are from low income households have been incorporated into our access plan. Furthermore, financial support measures are in place to further support students identified within our target groups. The appointment of a bursary officer who provides guidance on financial support and how to access it demonstrates progress in this area. (Please refer to section 4 – Provision of information to students for more detail.)

3.2 Student consultation

We recognise the importance of student consultation, involvement and evaluation in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our access and participation plan.

The College's Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) was formed to ensure representation across all levels. Students have played a key role in the initial consultation phase of this plan and will continue to form an active part of the monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness. The APWG includes representation from senior management as well as the following student subgroups: student members of Course Boards, student representatives, HE student ambassadors, the Student Governor, a Students' Union's representative.

An Access and Participation awareness campaign was launched in January 2019 in order to ensure all students who wanted to take part in the process were able to do so. Continued involvement with the plan has been encouraged with future meetings to update on progress and opportunity to feedback on effectiveness. Of note, the Students' Union is primarily FE focused and as such their contribution has been particularly useful in the designing of the financial support schemes for access.

The student focus groups have been valuable in gaining an understanding of the students' experience of the usefulness and effectiveness of current support available to them. For example, students indicated that mental health support, while available, could be better advertised.

We will continue to use our student voice mechanism to gain feedback from students to inform, evaluate and monitor the access and participation plan. The student voice cycle includes consultation and feedback through the following mechanisms: Programme team meetings; internal student surveys; student newsletters; external student surveys such as the National Student Survey and Graduate Outcomes; student focus groups; and student governor updates.

3.3 Evaluation strategy

In order to measure the impact of our planned activities and support measures, we aim to evaluate and monitor its effectiveness by adopting a logic chain approach. In terms of our access targets, we will continue to analyse application and enrolment data internally and by comparing UCAS data for South East England. We endeavour to work closely with other land-based colleges who are members of Landex to improve our own practices and to evaluate progress as well as to adopt best practice through shared examples.

Addressing access – early intervention

As mentioned before, we have evaluated our current programme of outreach activities both at primary and secondary school level. The focus remains access for those from low participation neighbourhoods and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Our schools' liaison and outreach team focuses on KS3 and KS4 activities, from Year 9 as a first stage through to Year 11. The college has developed a new careers strategy to meet the gaps identified by previous awareness raising activities and the lack of previous focused careers advice available. The approach is an interactive programme that involves and engages young learners through workshops, career networking events, mock interviews and CV writing workshops (to name a few). Alongside this programme of raising awareness of land-based careers and HE opportunities, we have invested in a STEM programme target at KS3 and KS4. This programme was first rolled out in 2017-18 and we offer this programme either within schools or on campus. The effectiveness and impact of these activities are often difficult for us to monitor due to lack of resources that many large universities benefit from. However, we use internal data to ascertain the impact on specific targeted schools. The schools' liaison and outreach team, together with the marketing team, have set targets for schools to involve within each activity. From 2016-17 to 2017-18, there has been a 28% increase in outreach activities in secondary schools by the college. Our schools education programmes forms part of internal targets and are monitored six-monthly. Whilst we rely on SLN for data within the South East, we measure our own effectiveness with internal data, as mentioned above.

It is important to note that our outreach activities are not limited to secondary schools. We also have an early intervention programme, which is aimed at KS2 learners and focuses on primary schools within the South East. We provide transport for primary schools to reach our land-based college and have several educational visits on offer to open young minds to opportunities within the land-based and agricultural sector, such as Field to Fork. This programme is led by the college's Rural Education Centre and creates awareness amongst young learners of where food comes from, intertwining this with the science of sustainability, environmental impact and the importance of agriculture for food security.

Additionally, the college tracks and monitors the impact of its outreach activities with schools and sixth form colleges through our application portal. While tracking of secondary school pupils has been our focus to monitor the effectiveness of our outreach activities, we are implementing a strategy to track the effectiveness of these programmes on progression to HE. It is worth noting that whilst we aim to attract

students from low participation neighbourhoods to the land-based sector, the location of our college and the local demographic often result in converting target students to HEIs within our locality such as the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex.

Supporting disabled students

In order to measure the effectiveness of our student support activities to fully support disabled students with continuation, internal retention, attendance and attainment data will be used. As part of our student voice cycle, students have the opportunity at various touchpoints throughout the academic year to input into the effectiveness of support programmes in place, be it counselling services or academic enrichment workshops. Student surveys form the basis of evaluation for these targets. Our surveys and student focus groups offer the opportunity to intervene and change tack if students highlight ineffectiveness. Furthermore, our HE quality review cycle feeds into the effectiveness of continuation activities where progress is monitored and updates on action plans reported directly to senior management. It also allows for changes to be made to support functions, curriculum planning and student support for the next academic cycle as early as possible.

We recognise that strategic evaluation is necessary to inform best practice and effective outcomes of our access and participation plan. We are committed to reviewing the effectiveness of our programme of activities continuously as outlined above through the various mechanisms we have in place, as well as through the annual monitoring report. Additionally, financial support targets will be closely monitored and student consultation will be used to evaluate the effectiveness thereof. As highlighted in our target and investment plan, the college's HE student numbers have been in decline over the past years, therefore predicted investment will be evaluated to ascertain if resources are available to reach outcomes, and if necessary, more investment could be made, if appropriate.

3.4 Monitoring progress against delivery of the plan

Plumpton College's governing body (Governors) is responsible for the approval of the access and participation plan. It receives regular updates from the senior management team and the higher education team to inform decisions. Additionally, the higher education link governor forms part of the Access and Participation Working Group (APWG). The Vice Principal (Academic & Standards) is the chair of the working group. Work relating to this plan has been presented at Governors' meetings in the lead up to the finalisation of the plan. Feedback and contributions were welcomed and incorporated. A paper highlighting the financial impact of the plan and student number forecast was also presented to Governors to further inform approval.

The APWG will be monitoring the progress against the delivery of this plan. As set out above, this group comprises of student and senior management representation as well as the higher education central support team, the schools' liaison and outreach team, student services representatives, the welfare officer, representation from the students' union and the finance team including the bursary officer. It is steered by the head of marketing, communications and customer experience. Progress will be continuously monitored throughout the academic year and duration of the plan with updates presented to Governors.

4. Provision of information to students

The college provides detailed information on fees and financial support to prospective and current students on our website, programme brochures, and VLE. Fee information and financial support advise and guidance is also available at our information days (Open Days; Taster Days) at college and the

information is provided at school visits. We aim to publish tuition fee information by October each year for the following academic year on our website.

The Enquiries, Advice and Guidance team together with the Marketing department and Higher Education Office provide advice and guidance to prospective and current students at different stages; first point of enquiry, application stage, offer stage and acceptance stage. The college also has a bursary officer in place to provide students with the necessary financial support information, and provides support on how to access available support. The bursary officer runs regular drop-in sessions in the main building, which is easily accessible for all students, where students can seek advice and apply for support. Students can also apply for bursary support online through our website. Additionally, the college is reviewing the cost of living for students studying at Plumpton College and aim to publish guidance on general living costs to inform budgeting.

Eligibility and level of support

The college offers financial support to many of its students, based on need in the first instance. Through student consultation, we were able to identify the type of financial support that benefits our students the most.

The college operates a bursary fund to provide financial assistance to eligible undergraduate students that without support would not have access to learning. The college targets support to those most in need therefore awards are delivered on an individual basis and in a variety of formats. These bursary funds are part of our strategy to support equality of opportunity.

The college will award discretionary bursaries in each year of study for students based on the following eligibility criteria set out below:

Bursary	Eligibility	Year 1	Subsequent years
HE Bursary	Students from underrepresented groups with significant barriers to higher education: • Ethnic minority • Students with a recognised and ongoing learning difficulty and/or disability • Low participation neighbourhood(SLN:COP) • Mature student with dependent children • Household income below £25,000 • Care Leavers • Young adult carers	Up to £1,000	Up to £1,000
HE Progression Bursary	Further education students continuing their study at Plumpton College without interruption.	£500 off tuition fees in Year 1	Not applicable
Fee Discount	Students from the following underrepresented groups: • Household income below £25,000 • Young students (aged 18 to 20) from low participation neighbourhoods as defined by SLN:COP • Care Leavers	£500 off tuition fees in Year 1	£500 off tuition fees

In addition to available bursaries, the college has an annual hardship fund to support students who fall into severe financial difficulties to enable them to continue with their course of study.

5. Appendix

1. Targets (tables 2a, 2b and 2c in the targets and investment plan)

2. Investment summary (tables 4a and 4b in the targets and investment plan)

3. Fee summary (table 4a and 4b in the fee information document)

Appendix 4   Outline of Plumpton College's response to the 4 OfS Priorities, July 2022:

• **Priority A**: *Make access and participation plans more accessible in a way that prospective and current students, their parents and other stakeholders can easily understand.*

The College has provided an accessible version of the plan following the OfS guidelines, this is available on the College website.

• **Priority B**: *Develop, enhance and expand their partnerships with schools and other local and national organisations, to help raise the pre-16 attainment of young people from underrepresented groups across England.*

Plumpton College is enhancing its work with local and regional schools and colleges through visits and events on the college site, the College has increased its outreach work with schools and is extending this work to more 6th Form pupils. For example, the Future Fields initiative is targeting Year 9 and 10 students to learn more about land-based careers and education. This is an annual programme of STEM workshops that target pupils in areas of low participation.

The College works with Sussex Learning Network in raising awareness and in engaging collaboratively across the county. This includes the collaborative work with the Uni Connect scheme through the University of Brighton, the lead provider.

• **Priority C**: *Set out how access to higher education for students from underrepresented groups leads to successful participation on high quality courses and good graduate outcomes.*

The College has several strands of engagement to enable more students from underrepresented groups to both access and succeed in Higher Education. Starting from outreach work through to taster events and experience days prior to joining, and through to the provision of bespoke and broader support resources. The College is renewing its focus on improving internal progression from its own Level 3 programmes to Higher Education through the College careers programme.

The College's priorities are for students to develop a sense of belonging, a knowledge of support available and access to high quality inspirational facilities and environments where they can flourish and succeed.

The College is refreshing its induction programme to better respond to the needs of students, identifying support needs and learning styles, particularly those from underrepresented groups. This is returned to at each stage of the programme and reviewed through each programme's tutorial programme.

The College is undertaking a review of HE learning support with the intention to provide a service that better meets the needs of its HE students. The themes include early identification and diagnosis of disabilities, support in transition to HE and stretching students to achieve higher classifications. The recommendations will begin to be implemented in Autumn term 2022.

• **Priority D**: *Seek to develop more diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of flexible Level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships.*

The College has secured £20 million capital investment in a state-of-the-art new build for an Agri Food Hub that will provide inspirational teaching and learning spaces and opportunities for students and businesses. This will be an asset for students to experience industry standard learning environments that will accommodate the new suite of programmes the College is developing. The centre will open in Winter 2022 with an emphasis on an adult environment and distinct HE spaces.

The College has improved its mapping of career progression routes to ensure that current and future courses meet the needs and demands of the land-based sectors. This exercise has identified where there are gaps in Further Education courses and where progression routes can be developed.

While apprenticeship programmes are available at Level 2 and 3, the routes for land-based programmes at higher levels are not yet available. Plumpton College has been approved to deliver the Land Based T Level from September 2023 with pathways in Agriculture, and Animal Management.

Alongside revalidating the existing HE provision the College is developing a new suite of Foundation Degrees in Agricultural Management, Sustainable Land Management and Horticulture Management for September 2023 start. These are designed to be delivered as full and part time and in a modular format for those entering these fields of work, those wishing to gain more skilled employment options in these areas and those who may have other commitments to work around.

The College acknowledges that while the need to support underrepresented groups is a key priority these measures will be of benefit to all students.

The Access and Participation Working Group (APWG) will monitor and review these areas of work and developments against the targets in the plan and beyond.

Access and participation plan
Fee information 2020-21

Provider name: Plumpton College

Provider UKPRN: 10005124

Summary of 2020-21 entrant course fees

*course type not listed

Inflationary statement:

We do not intend to raise fees annually

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

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare	£9,000
First degree	International Wine Business	£9,000
First degree	Viticulture & Oenology	£9,000
Foundation degree	Applied Animal Behaviour & Conservation	£9,000
Foundation degree	Equine Science & Coaching	£9,000
Foundation degree	Veterinary Nursing	£9,000
Foundation degree	Wine Business	£9,000
Foundation degree	Wine Production	£9,000
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	Veterinary Nursing (Yr2)	£1,000
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

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

Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree	Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare	£4,500
First degree	International Wine Business	£4,500
First degree	Viticulture & Oenology	£4,500
Foundation degree	Applied Animal Behaviour & Conservation	£4,500
Foundation degree	Equine Science & Coaching	£4,500
Foundation degree	Wine Business	£4,500
Foundation degree	Wine Production	£4,500
Foundation year/Year 0	*	*
HNC/HND	*	*
CertHE/DipHE	*	*
Postgraduate ITT	*	*
Accelerated degree	*	*
Sandwich year	*	*
Erasmus and overseas study years	*	*
Other	*	*

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

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

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Plumpton College

Provider UKPRN: 10005124

Investment summary

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

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

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

Table 4a - Investment summary (£)

Access and participation plan investment summary (£)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total access activity investment (£)	£60,000.00	£62,750.00	£64,500.00	£66,250.00	£67,750.00
Access (pre-16)	£19,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,500.00	£21,000.00	£21,500.00
Access (post-16)	£19,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,500.00	£21,000.00
Access (adults and the community)	£18,500.00	£19,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,500.00	£20,500.00
Access (other)	£3,500.00	£3,750.00	£4,000.00	£4,250.00	£4,750.00
Financial support (£)	£72,000.00	£73,750.00	£74,500.00	£75,100.00	£76,750.00
Research and evaluation (£)	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£15,250.00	£15,250.00

Table 4b - Investment summary (HFI%)

Access and participation plan investment summary (%HFI)	Academic year				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Higher fee income (£HFI)	£527,336.00	£566,336.00	£585,753.00	£594,753.00	£605,170.00
Access investment	10.8%	10.8%	10.8%	10.8%	10.7%
Financial support	12.3%	12.4%	12.3%	12.3%	12.3%
Research and evaluation	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Total investment (as %HFI)	25.1%	25.1%	25.1%	25.1%	25.0%

Targets and investment plan
2020-21 to 2024-25

Provider name: Plumpton College

Provider UKPRN: 10005124

Targets

Table 2a - Access

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the gap in participation between students from low and high participation areas.	PTA_1	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	To reduce the gap between new entry full-time undergraduate students from POLAR4 Quintile1 and Quintile 5.	No	The access and participation dataset	2017-18	10ppt	9.5ppt	8.5ppt	7ppt	6.5ppt	5.5ppt	Increase undergraduate participation for POLAR4 Quintile 1 over time to narrow the gap between POLAR4 Q1 and Q5.
To increase the participation for students from low participation neighbourhoods in HE.	PTA_2	Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN)	To increase the proportion of undergraduate entrants from low participation neighbourhoods in the South East.	No	Other data source	2017-18	8.23%	9%	9.5%	9.5%	10%	10.5%	Increase undergraduate participation for LPN POLAR4 Quintile 1 from South East.
	PTA_3												
	PTA_4												
	PTA_5												
	PTA_6												
	PTA_7												
	PTA_8												

Table 2b - Success

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
To reduce the non-continuation gap for disabled students.	PTS_1	Disabled	Percentage difference in non-continuation rates between Disabled and non-disabled students, in particular those declaring mental health as a barrier.	No	Other data source	2017-18	1ppt (88% continuation)	0.5ppt (88.5%)	0.25ppt (88.75%)	0ppt (89%)	No gap- increase continuation to 90%	No gap - increase continuation to 90.5%	Reduce non-continuation for disabled students through targeted support. We aim to eliminate the gap by 2022-23 and then aim to further improve continuation to above 90% in subsequent years.
To increase attainment for mature students aged 21-29.	PTS_2	Mature	To increase degree attainment (1st and 2:1) for mature students aged 21-29.	No	Other data source	2017-18	63%	65%	66%	67.5%	69%	71%	Increase attainment for mature students aged 21 to 29.
To increase continuation of young male students from low participation areas (POLAR4 Q1 & 2).	PTS_3	Multiple	To increase continuation of young male students (under 21) from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 Q1 and 2).	No	Other data source	2016-17	83%	85%	86%	87.5%	88.5%	90%	We aim to increase continuation rates of young male students LPNs from POLAR4 Q1 and 2.
	PTS_4												
	PTS_5												
	PTS_6												
	PTS_7												
	PTS_8												

Table 2c - Progression

Aim (500 characters maximum)	Reference number	Target group	Description	Is this target collaborative?	Data source	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones 2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Commentary on milestones/targets (500 characters maximum)
	PTP_1												
	PTP_2												
	PTP_3												
	PTP_4												
	PTP_5												
	PTP_6												
	PTP_7												
	PTP_8												